Samuel J. Smith

An Oral History

Washington State Oral History Program
Office of the Secretary of State

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Interviewed by Dianne Bridgman

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Ralph Munro, Secretary of State

Sam Smith used his public speaking skills to advance many political causes during his 10 years in the state House of Representatives and 24 years on the Seattle City Council.

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To my wife, Marion.
Sam Smith, 1993

Foreword

About Sam Smith

You could take a snapshot of Samuel J. Smith's life and career and get a sense of his intelligence, passion, drive, and persistence. Born in Gibsland, Louisiana in 1922, he graduated at the top of his high school class; two years later, he was drafted into the army, where he served our country for two years; he married his high-school sweetheart, settled in his hometown of Seattle and started a family; he earned degrees in Sociology and Economics from Seattle University and the University of Washington (respectively); he served as a member of the Washington State House of Representatives for five consecutive terms; and then he came back home to the Seattle City Council to serve for twenty-four years. By any assessment, Samuel J. Smith, youngest child of Steve and Bernice Smith, lived the American Dream.

What this snapshot fails to show, however, is that the American Dream did not come easily to Sam. He had to work to achieve it; and, as a young man who started his career before the civil rights movement began, he had to overcome many barriers. Sam was a man of great hope, vision and courage. He allowed no barrier to deter him from accomplishing his goals. In fact, when Sam encountered a barrier, he saw it as an added challenge, and he made it part of his goal to knock down the barrier permanently—not only for himself, but for everyone who would come after.

It was with this great spirit that in 1958, Samuel J. Smith was elected to the Washington State Legislature, where he stayed to serve through five terms. This is a remarkable and significant accomplishment for anyone, but consider that Sam Smith served his terms during the heart and fire of the civil rights movement—and its accompanying violence and protests—and you will begin to get a sense of how truly powerful and significant Sam's personal accomplishment was.

Washington State and the entire Pacific Northwest region were truly blessed to have such visionary, peaceloving, and tenacious leadership during what was one of this country's most tumultuous and important times. Inspired by the example and teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Samuel J. Smith dedicated himself to promoting equality, respect, and love for all people. Among his greatest accomplishments while serving as a state legislator was the 1967 passage of an open housing law for Washington State.

Soon after the open housing law was passed, Sam became the first black member of the Seattle City Council, marking the advent of a more

progressive era for the city of Seattle, and opening doors that had never before been opened. Predictably, for a man as dedicated and persistent as Sam was, he served on the council for twenty-four years. During his tenure with the council, Sam ran for mayor a total of four times, and served for eight years as the city council president.

Throughout his career, Sam spread his hope and vision to everyone he encountered. He had a particular fondness for young people, because he saw in them unlimited potential and the promise of a brighter future. Wherever he could, he created opportunities for the young people in whom he saw such promise. I was fortunate to be one of those. After seeing me in the community setting on a number of occasions, Sam recognized in me something that I had not yet considered for myself. He told me that I was going to be a great leader someday, and he provided me with an opportunity to work with him and learn from him. Having Sam Smith as a mentor was one of the greatest experiences of my life, and, without a doubt, Sam's confidence in me made a tremendous difference in the goals I set for myself. Now, if I find myself challenged by a difficult or sensitive situation, I often ask myself "What would Sam do?"

Samuel J. Smith was unique as no one ever will be again; his life and work are an enduring legacy.

RON SIMS
King County Executive
Former Sam Smith Aide

Preface

The Washington State Oral History Program was established in 1991 by the Washington State Legislature to document the formation of public policy in Washington State. It is administered by the Office of the Secretary of State and is guided by the Oral History Advisory Committee.

Each oral history is a valuable record of an individual's contributions and convictions, their interpretation of events, and their relationships with other participants in the civic life of the state. By reading these oral histories, the complex interweaving of the personal and political processes that shape public policy is revealed.

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

The core material for the memoir of Sam Smith was derived from forty-four hours of interviews conducted by Dianne Bridgman. As this book was designed to be read as a narrative, rather than as an oral history transcript, extensive editing and arrangement of the transcribed material was necessary. The interview questions were removed and other changes were made to create a continuous flow of remembrance and reflection by Sam about his long and active life. He worked closely with Dianne to ensure accuracy of detail and veracity of feeling and recollection. This publication represents a collaborative effort between interviewee and interviewer/editor to a much greater degree than other oral history accounts.

Recollection and interpretation of events vary. It is the hope of the Oral History Program that this work will help citizens of the state of Washington better understand their political legacy.

Acknowledgements

The Washington State Oral History Program wishes to thank all of those who contributed to this project.

We are thankful for Sam Smith's enthusiastic participation in this project. Sam was a true pioneer in Washington state politics and the civil rights movement; his candid and insightful memories are a valuable addition to our historical record. We also are very grateful to the family of Sam Smith, particularly Sam's children, Amelia, Carl, Anthony, Ronald, Donald, and Stephen; and Sam's sisters, Rosa, Willie Mae, and Mattie. After Sam's death, they carried the project forward and shared with us countless memories, news clippings, and photos of Sam, as well as written work by him. The continued assistance and patience of the Smith family has given Sam's memoir the substance it deserves.

We also would like to thank Karen Winston, Herm McKinney, and Esther Mumford for their encouragement and interest in the success of this book.

We appreciate the members of our Legislative Advisory Committee for their guidance, support, and unfailing interest in this work. The committee includes Senators Sid Snyder, Shirley Winsley, and Al Bauer; Representatives Karen Keiser, Patricia Lantz, Don Carlson, and Kathy Lambert; Secretary of State Ralph Munro, Secretary of the Senate Tony Cook, and the Co-Chief Clerks of the House, Tim Martin and Cindy Zehnder. Ex officio members are Warren Bishop, Dean Foster, David Nicandri, and former legislators Eugene Prince, Robert Bailey, Alan Thompson, and Don Brazier.

We would like to thank the State Department of Printing, including Director George Morton, Dick Yarboro, Doug Dow, Rick Garcia, Don Reese, Jeanese Mabin, Brian Rapacz, and the efficient production staff.

Secretary of State Ralph Munro and Deputy Secretary of State Tracy Guerin have been a constant source of support. Their encouragement and dedication have sustained the program. Many others in the Office of the Secretary of State have lent their assistance to the program in innumerable ways. We thank them for their generous assistance.

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

THE WASHINGTON STATE ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Biographical Highlights

Samuel J. Smith

Samuel J. Smith was born July 21, 1922, in Gibsland, Louisiana. He was the youngest child of Steve, a farmer, teacher, and preacher, and Bernice, a teacher. Sam had four older sisters and three older brothers. Sam excelled at the local schools. In 1940, he graduated from Coleman High School first in his class, as well as winning "Student Most Likely to Succeed," "Best All-Around Student," and the American Legion Award for Honesty, Scholarship, and Service.

In 1942, he was drafted into the army and stationed for a year at Camp Jordan in Seattle. After achieving the rank of warrant officer, he was sent to serve in the Philippines. Sam returned to Seattle with an honorable discharge after two years of service. Shortly thereafter, he became reacquainted with his high school sweetheart, Marion King. They married in 1945, and settled down to live in Seattle.

In 1952, after receiving a degree in Social Science from Seattle University and a B.A. in Economics from the University of Washington, Sam went to work for Boeing. He remained there seventeen years. In the meantime, he and Marion moved to the Central District of Seattle, becoming active members of the Mount Zion Baptist Church. They also began raising a family. They had six children: Amelia, Carl, Anthony, twins Donald and Ronald, and Stephen.

Sam began running for office in 1956, when he lost his first bid for the state Legislature. In 1958, he was successfully elected to the state House of Representatives in Seattle's Thirty-seventh District. He served five consecutive terms. Consistently active in the civil rights movement, Sam deeply admired the teachings of Martin Luther King. While in office, Sam fought a long battle to pass an open housing law in the state of Washington. He finally saw the realization of that dream in 1967, and was honored as Legislator of the Year by the Young Men's Democratic Club.

That same year he left the Legislature to begin a twenty-four year career on the Seattle City Council. As Seattle's first black councilman, Sam worked to ensure programs designed to alleviate urban concerns, especially among Seattle's minorities. He concentrated on providing jobs and keeping young people off the streets.

After two unsuccessful bids for the office of mayor, Sam was elected Seattle City Council president in 1973. He tried twice more for a mayoral win, but

remained president of the council for the next eight years. Observers of the city council described his presidency as a breath of fresh air into the council, opening up Seattle to a more progressive era.

In 1985, the Municipal League named Sam Outstanding Elected Official. That year also saw the declaration of "Sam Smith Day" by the governor, in recognition of Sam's dedication to the state of Washington.

In 1991, shortly after the death of his wife Marion, and hindered by increasingly severe health problems, Sam left the city council to begin a well-earned retirement. In November of 1995, he passed away in his sleep. More than 2,000 friends, colleagues and admirers attended his memorial service.

Prologue

A Conversation with Sam Smith and his Sisters

Willie Mae: I remember the first time I saw Sam. He was a brand-new baby, and I was about four. We had been at our auntie's house when he was born. After we came back, I knocked on Mama's door. Mama was in the bed and I said, "Well, what is that?" And Mama says, "A baby brother." I remember, and I always will remember, seeing him, looking carefully at him. He was so little, and he was all wrapped up. And I never will forget the question that I asked her. I said, "Well, where did you get him?" And she said that Aunt Sarah—the midwife—went out to the woodpile and picked up chips and put them in her lap, and knelt down to the chopping block and prayed and poured out the chips, and the baby was in her apron.

Now, why I remember this is because I said, "Well, I'm going to get me one." And I hung around that chopping block all that day, putting chips in my little dress, and praying and pouring the chips out! I never will forget that.

Mattie: I have fond memories of Sam. I remember holding him once when he was a baby. My mother put a pillow in front of me in a large chair, a pillow on each side, and she let me hold him a little while, while she had to do something.

Rosa: Since I'm Sam's eldest sister, eight years older, I was Sam's baby nurse. I took care of him while he was a baby and all the way, until he didn't need it anymore.

Willie Mae: I remember when Sam had long braids on his head. I don't think my parents cut his hair until he was about two. I most remember me and Lillian, the sister that is right under me, playing with Sam. I can just remember us playing while the other children were gone to school. Me and Lillian and Sam, we would get out there and play in the yard. Oh boy—we'd sit out under the tree and we would say we were making "frog houses," and then we would play hide-and-seek. We'd play all kinds of little games.

The games were passed down from the older children in the family. When the older ones would play, we younger ones would join in the games. My favorite story about Sam is about playing hide-and-seek one time. I don't know whether he remembers it or not. We would go and hide, all except the person who was "it." This time Sam was "it." He counted, and after he got through he said, "All hid?" Then he'd walk away from the counting place, the stump, looking for you. If you could run from where you hid, and he didn't see you, and you patted that stump, you had made it home safe.

So this time Sam had found quite a few, but I was still hidden. I think I was hid behind the smoke house. If he would go that way, I would go around this way to the smoke house. He went around the other way, looking out toward the crib, and I eased around this way while he was looking. I attempted to come back and touch the stump before he got there. I was running, and somehow or another he heard me, and we both met up at the stump at the same time, and hit the stump, and his head hit me right on my cheek! And oh—that hurt! And that cheek swelled up, way up to my eye, and I cried and I cried. And Sam kept saying, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry, Willie Mae. I wasn't trying to hit you!" But for a long time I could feel that dent in my cheek. Do you remember that, Sam?

Sam: Nope.

Rosa: You had one cheek bigger than the other.

Willie Mae: Yes. It just about closed that eye. But he was so sorry, really sorry.

Mattie: The thing that I remember most in growing up is that Sam never attempted to strike one of us. He was mischievous like little boys will be, and he liked to kind of tease us and we'd say "Mother!" and Mama would say, "Samuel has no little boys to play with." But he never attempted to strike one of us, or threaten us, or anything. On the very rare occasions when Mama would happen to go away, Sam would really tease us. If we'd get after him, he would run. He seemed to really enjoy the chase, and could manage to stay just a step ahead.

He was fun-loving, jovial. That's what I remember about him, really. We all played and had lots of fun. And all of us loved each other. If the older brothers got a chance to make a little money and we'd ask them for some of it, they'd give us some of it. There was a sense of harmony and love, and peace in our family. I had thought that was the way it was all over until I went away and found out that it wasn't general. Then I really realized how fortunate I was.

Our mother and father were that way; they were harmonious. And if they differed about anything, if they had different ideas, they didn't discuss it in our presence, they would discuss it to themselves and come back united. We didn't dare try to pull them apart either. If one said, "You can do this," we could do it. And if one said, "Ask the other," then we'd ask the other. But if one said, "No," we didn't dare ask the other, because they stuck together on things. And it was the way of life as far as we had always seen and experienced.

Prologue

Our parents taught us by precept, example and the proper discipline if and when necessary. If one of us did something wrong, we had to report it to Mother and let her settle it. She settled it as she felt was best. She heard both sides of something and she settled it however she thought was necessary. And we knew that we had better tell her the truth.

Sam: She had a left hand and a switch.

Rosa: Peach tree switches—

Mattie: And could use both of those hands, either one, she wasn't limited. She didn't hesitate to use a peach tree switch and whip us, when it was necessary. But she took lots of time explaining why it should be this way, or why it should not be that way. Then if we didn't seem to agree, she'd say we had no choice, we had to do what she said. That's just the way it was in our family.

She took a lot of time to play with us. I wonder now, how did she find the time? Rearing eight of us, and how did she find the time to fix meals and to have some time to play with us, which she did. It seems like a miracle now.

But there was no fighting, no physical confrontation, among us children. Our parents never allowed it, and so we just didn't do it.

Rosa: Well, I'd like to say I remember physical confrontation between us kids one time. I'm the oldest of the girls. There were three brothers older than I. When Mother went away, she left the oldest one in charge of the others—my oldest brother, Moses. I guess I was a little bit hardheaded, but I'm remembering that if Moses said, "You better not do this," I would do some of it anyway.

One time something I did caused Moses to strike me, and I hit back with my little fist—I was smaller than he was—he was five years older, and he was getting the best of the childhood fight. So Samuel joined in and helped me. I was thinking of this the other day, and I didn't know I was going to be telling this. Sam joined in to help me fight. Now my middle name is Betho and Sam hit Moses on the leg and said, "Let Betho alone!" I was his baby nurse and he was just helping me fight. I know we didn't hit one another often, so that fight with Moses was just a fight of childhood, while Mama was away. But Sam helped me.

Mattie: I didn't know anything about that.

Rosa: I know you don't. We were in the kitchen around the woodstove at that time, out on the farm.

Willie Mae: Our parents taught us how to get along with each other, and they taught us other things. The best thing I think that they taught me was to live within your means. And to think a plan through. If you had a plan, think it through, through and through, and then decide on your method of operations. That helped me a whole lot, because I was the first girl to get married. My oldest brother was the first one in the family to get married, and I was the next one to get married in the whole family. What they taught me—to live within your means—I think that's the greatest lesson they taught me. With all those eight children I had, I could use it.

Mattie: They taught us—above all—from earliest childhood, to do the best, honest work that we could get, do that, and live within our means. And our word should be our bond.

Rosa: You're right. We were taught to do what is necessary, whether this is your chosen vocation or not. We learned that out on the farm chopping cotton and picking cotton. Do that, but be looking forward to doing something different in the future.

The most important thing that Mama taught me that has helped me through life, was a sense of responsibility. She gave each one of us, as we got large enough, the responsibility of certain chores around home. For instance, washing dishes at a certain age. Being the oldest girl, I got a chance to accept that responsibility before the rest of them did. I'm remembering that I liked to sew. I sat up many nights until twelve o'clock, helping my mother sew piece quilts, patch trousers or whatever was necessary to fix the clothing.

Mattie: May I add one thing? One of the things that Mother was adamant about—and my father—was that whatever we did, we do it well.

Then to stand by each other. To stick together. My father used to say, "You take a bunch of sticks and take them one by one, you can break them easily. But if they're together, it's harder to break. Stick together." And if we had different opinions on matters of importance, we could discuss them and come to a decision. If one thought the other was on a path that was not the best, we could talk about it. And I thought everybody did that, but I found out otherwise.

Rosa: About making decisions and solving problems in our family—can I add my two cents to that? It was discussed around the table, or the fire if it was cold enough. I'm remembering a discussion we had. My dad, my brother, and the rest of the family were having a family conference. My father had decided something. I don't remember what it was. But he said, "If you

agree, fine, speak up. And if you disagree, fine, speak up." At this particular conference, I disagreed. I was the first one that spoke out. I gave my reason why I didn't want to do whatever it was. Then when I spoke out, my second brother Steven spoke out, and then my mother. And that settled it, we decided then that we wouldn't do it that way. We decided as a family.

Willie Mae: We had a good way of solving problems, my father being a minister and a teacher, too. He always had certain verses of the Bible to relate to the family. And from that he would say what he felt we should do. And I find myself and Sam, too, quoting lots of those verses, scriptures our father would use. They applied so well to all of us. And I took that into my heart.

Mattie: We had to have the blessing and Bible verses around the table at every meal. On Sunday we'd have prayer around the big table, Sunday morning. Our parents taught us to do unto others as we would have them do unto us. To treat others like we would wish to be treated. That was a settled thing. And from that you know what's right and what's wrong.

And helping others when necessary. That was a great part of our training. Helping those who were down, who need it. Children and elderly or sick people. My mother demonstrated that. She didn't believe in just talking about it. She'd say in the home mission, "Let us go to such and such, that one is sick over there." We would go over and do whatever was necessary—wash for them, fix food for them, or carry them food, wait on them. Compensation was unthinkable. We were taught to help those that need it, no matter what our situation. If someone is in a worse situation and we can help them: do that.

Our parents taught us not to hate anybody, that it's wrong to hate anybody. That we really should love everybody. They used to quote, "Love those that hate you. Be good to those that do evil to you." That's what they pounded in us. And really it is the best way to get along. It doesn't mean that you're going to go along with being mistreated, but you do the very best and most constructive thing you can. But you don't do it with hatred; you don't do it by retaliation and hatred. Hatred is not intelligent because it hurts the hater. It hurts the one who hates. It doesn't solve anything; it makes things worse. You see fire and you go add some more to it, you make a bigger fire and it's not constructive. I'm so grateful that I do not experience hatred or fear.

Rosa: You made me think. You're right. We were never taught to hate anyone.

Mattie: Sam was taught the same things and principles that we were taught. He saw the same examples and same precepts that we saw.

Rosa: I'd like to add to that, though. He was my dad's second favorite. As the youngest child, he got humoring. I don't think he would deny that.

Sam: I was waiting for this.

Rosa: Okay. Am I stealing your thunder?

Sam: No, go ahead.

Rosa: We all knew that Samuel and Moses—Moses was the oldest—were my dad's favorites. The youngest son and the oldest son. But it wasn't to such an extent that it had a negative influence on the others. There were emotional reasons. Moses, the first one—they had a lot of trouble with him when he was a baby. He went blind, but he didn't remain blind. He could see as well as the rest of us when he was one or two years old. But Samuel was just the youngest and got all of the humoring. That included punishing me sometimes.

Willie Mae: I just want to say that Sam being the youngest, naturally he got quite a bit of humoring. As the older ones get up and leave home, that leaves a little more attention for the others. And the last one gets the full attention because they're the only one there. So I'm kind of letting you off the hook, Sam. For being the youngest.

Rosa: The truth is he worked in the field just like the rest of us. But one thing does come to my mind. We were out there on the farm in a frame building, and it gets cold in Louisiana sometimes. Sometimes when I thought our father should have called Samuel to get up and make the fire, he called me. By then I was in my late teens, and Samuel was probably thirteen or fourteen. He was big enough to make a wood fire and save me. Yet our father would get me out from under the warm covers sometimes.

Mattie: With Samuel being the baby, my father held onto him, and every night he would take Samuel in his lap to go to sleep. Even when Samuel was twelve years old he would be playing with the rest of us, but when he wanted to go to sleep, he'd go crawl into my father's lap, hang his legs down and go to sleep.

We'd say, "Oh, he's not a baby anymore, Father." I guess we might have been a little bit jealous subconsciously. But as I said, we had real

harmony and peace in our family and that was most important.

Willie Mae: I don't have a whole lot to add to that. We were really fortunate, like Mattie said. But from looking back—times were hard.

Rosa: She's right. When I was a child, where we were born and reared, I went to four-month schools, when the white children were riding these big yellow buses. I never went to a three-month school, but people older than I did. Then we got a five-month school, because the community got a school farm. Somebody had donated land then to have the school farm. We worked cotton: chopped cotton, picked cotton, and sold that to pay a teacher to teach us an extra month. Five months was all I'd ever gone to school until I was in eighth grade. Then my father sent us off to boarding school, if we could work our way, or stay with relatives, or if we could manage to pay.

Mattie: And during the Depression, things got worse. I don't know what they had back then—welfare or whatever—but my father and mother didn't get it. I remember there was one elderly woman that I knew who got a little something called Commodities. She'd get a few beans and rice and some raisins, during the Depression. But they didn't give us anything. They said, "No, if he can afford to send his children away to school he does not need it." At that time it wasn't desirable for blacks to go to high school. They couldn't go to high school, unless they were sent away. I still wonder how our parents managed to do it.

Sam: The government, basically, didn't apply to the black people where we was born and raised up through adolescence. It just didn't. What it meant was that the black people got very little of the welfare, very little of the attention from juvenile court, very little of the protection of the law.

Rosa: Right! Definitely! Are you finished?

Sam: I'm finished now.

Rosa: I don't know if it was written in the law that the Negro can't vote. I don't know of this, but I'd heard of it, and I know my daddy discussed it with me and his brothers, and other Negro men there in the community. He would say, "Let's pay our poll tax." And they didn't have the money to pay the poll tax.

Mattie: Years ago in the South a black person was not going to vote, no matter what kind of taxes he could pay. They just weren't allowed to vote,

that was it.

Rosa: But you know, politics were a part of our childhoods. You'll be shocked, but it is true. Huey P. Long was my childhood hero. I guess it was because he arranged for our schools to get new textbooks. It was the first time that I had all new textbooks going to school. Of course, I actually got the hand-me-downs from the whites' schools, but getting books at all is one of the things that makes me remember Huey P. Long so fondly.

Willie Mae: I really think that Huey P. Long was the first politician that the black people got interested in. I can remember sitting and listening to them talk about Huey P. Long, so he seemed like a good person. One statement I always will remember, even though I was small and I really didn't understand what it meant at the time. They'd had a big meeting at our church, colored people getting together, and they were discussing what he said: "Every man a king." Do you remember that?

Sam: Yes, yes. That's what got him killed.

Willie Mae: Yes. "Every man a king" and everybody really liked him and they were really interested in him. And there at that meeting, they'd cheer and I thought to myself, "Well, he must be a whole lot different than these others." And I was just a child. I didn't know anything about what politics really meant then, but I knew that Huey P. Long had to mean something to our people because they were all discussing him.

Rosa: He was the first politician that I recall that was trying to do something that would legalize and give the black person, the black man, some help. He was the first one I remember.

Willie Mae: That's why they killed him.

Rosa: And I am old enough to remember him.

Sam: About the Depression—I saw my brothers and my dad work on the WPA, which meant that "x" number of days during the week they would be called to work and work on the road, building new roads or something like that. All I remember was it was starvation wages. It didn't really do anything to let you pay your bills and get ahead, but it was subsistence level living. The blacks got that as well as other things under FDR. Even though at that time segregation was still legal, he didn't separate the benefits of government from one group to the other. And I remember his fireside chats. He would

talk on the radio and you would feel that he was talking to you. I was inspired.

Rosa: This talk about FDR and the Depression reminds me of one of my favorite stories about Sam when he was growing up. He and I had a conversation out in the field chopping cotton at home. He said he wanted to be a politician, but there wasn't any chance there in Louisiana. He said he was going where he could have the opportunity—where the opportunity was. Now, he was a fourteen-year old boy at this time, talking to his oldest sister.

Willie Mae: He was right. He didn't have a chance there. The way that I saw things when I was living down there in the South—there were lots of things done that were wrong, and race relations were very bad. And among the whites, those that didn't have the same mind and ideas about things as others, they were just as afraid to go against the mean ones.

Rosa: When they finally integrated schools, one white lady—she was just basically a nice person—told me, "A lot of us disagreed with some of the things that were going on, but if you went against the group, they would gang up, and you would get that trouble you were trying to save the other person from." That was a general idea, too. All one mean spirit. Those who really wanted to help you, and would help you, had to be careful how they did it. A lot of injustice was going on.

Mattie: I remember waiting to get on the bus at the station in Shreveport. The policemen—and we didn't have anything but white policemen then—had billy clubs and guns. They said, "You niggers stand back and let these white folks get on!"

Rosa: But we were never taught that same hate at home. We didn't grow up with it. I never hated any of them, or felt mean to them. I didn't trust them. You tended to your own business, but hate, I didn't have that and I don't have it yet.

I don't know if I'm the first one to mention the word slavery today. Growing up, we heard the stories about slavery, but we didn't really experience it ourselves. Still, it wasn't a secure feeling. The spirit of slavery was dominant in the South at that time.

My father didn't experience slavery, either. But our grandparents, our father's parents, had been slaves. And we heard their stories about slavery.

Willie Mae: I was quite young when I was listening to slavery stories. I

used to go to my grandmother's and sit on the porch, and she would tell us different things. This was our grandmother, Eliza, the only one that we ever knew.

Mattie: The other one was from St. Maurice, Louisiana and was Caucasian. As I remember it, our grandfather was a slave, the son of the man who owned him. Our grandfather came to Louisiana from Alabama after slavery ended and bought the family land. My father said the money for the land wasn't given to him. Our grandfather was allowed to work and his owners paid him, and he saved his money. You see, usually slaves didn't have a chance to get any money. Anyway, our grandfather wasn't sold. He was the yard boy. And when slavery ended, he had this money that they had paid him. My father said he purchased the land with it.

Rosa: I would like to say that my memory is slightly different from what Mattie said about the working and saving. What I remember is that Grandfather's father—and owner—gave him five hundred dollars when he set him free. I remember that Grandfather purchased this land with five hundred dollars. Our oldest brother's wife and his grandson are still living there.

Our grandmother, Eliza, came from Africa, across a big body of water, but she didn't know what this water was. But I would like to say a word to this. I don't mean that our grandmother was sold from Africa, I never heard that she was sold from Africa. It was after she got to the United States she was sold. She did come from Africa, she was a native of Africa, but I didn't mean she was sold directly from Africa. She was sold in Sylacauga, Alabama, when she was a twelve-year-old girl, and then she came to Louisiana from there. I found that out when I was grown and working over there at my grandmother's.

Mattie: To tell you the truth, I don't remember hearing anybody say that our grandmother Eliza came right from Africa. But she was a slave in her young life, because her first two sons were little boys in slavery time. They didn't know anything about the Civil War, but they remembered seeing the soldiers.

Rosa: My father's oldest brother—Uncle Mike, our grandmother's oldest child—was a slave. Uncle Mike remembered playing around in the yard; he wasn't old enough to go to the field. They fed them, all the little children together in the yard, and called them the "Eat All" crowd. Now, that will give you some idea what was happening. Mike was ninety-something when he passed, in 1945.

Prologue

Mattie: Our grandfather had been married before he married our grandmother Eliza. He had two sons who were young men in slavery time. One of them had the name of Ball, and the other Smith. Our grandfather was thirty-five when he married, and our grandmother fifteen. I don't know how old she was when Emancipation came, but she was still very young.

Willie Mae: I have some different thoughts about the slavery stories my grandmother used to tell. I just admired her strength and stamina. Our grandparents had come a long ways, and I felt like they had to have been watched over by God to have come that far.

Sam: I have this to say about slavery and about the time after slavery. You know I was born after slavery, almost fifty years. But slavery didn't have a big effect on me, except somewhere deep inside I was born with the urge to make things better. And I felt a compelling need to do that, not from hatred, not from prejudice, or anything. I knew how things were and I saw part of my mission was to make things better. And I carried that with me both in the Army, out of the Army, and into Seattle. I don't know who instilled it. I think my daddy and my elementary school teacher instilled it in me. It was what I was supposed to do.

Chapter 1

The Smith Element

I freely admit I was spoiled. I was my dad's favorite. I would sit on my daddy's lap and he would shake me to sleep. I did that until I was about twelve years old. I was around home when my three brothers left, and my father and I were thrown together a lot, so we developed a special sort of companionship. He took me fishing with him and he talked with me an awful lot. So I developed a closeness. It was bound to happen, because we were together so much, and he would talk freely to me. Sometimes some things were worrying him, and he would talk about that. He talked to me almost like I was an adult.

We talked about everything. He was a farmer, a teacher, and a preacher. All of this made up his topics of discussion—family business, his churches, and the opposition he got from some church.

And politics. I don't know why my father was so interested in politics. He was the only educated member of his family and he developed his interest from his going around and being disposed to people, white and black. But I never did know where he got it started from. I got it started both from my father and the stories he told me. That sold me.

My father was best known as a preacher and as a citizen for a radius of about fifty miles from where we lived. This was in Bienville Parish, about fifty miles from Shreveport, Louisiana. The blacks called him Uncle Steve. And when they had problems they would come see Uncle Steve.

We had a wooden-frame church about a mile away from home. That church was Saint Rest, our home church. My father pastored there for nineteen years. And he pastored two other churches a few years. One was Pleasant Hill, about seven miles away, and the other was old Sparta. In all, my father pastored churches forty years. At one time he was pastoring four churches—a different church every Sunday. I visited church regularly—I would go along with him to those churches. This was during the late 1920s and the 1930s, and he didn't have a car, so if the church wasn't close enough for us to use the wagon, he'd hire somebody who had a car to take him there. And very often he lost money in going to those churches, but it never dawned on him to cut back. He was paid whatever they collected. And sometimes they couldn't collect enough to take care of his transportation, but he did it anyhow.

One sermon that I remember was entitled "Daniel Purposed in His Heart that He Wouldn't Defile Himself with the King's Meat." That was one of my dad's favorite sermons, and incidentally, it was the last sermon that I heard him preach. I didn't know at the time that it was special, but I have a good memory and every text he would take, I would mentally tape record it in my mind, and I would remember it.

He was sort of long-winded. He almost always preached forty-five minutes to an hour and a half, just whatever he felt. Sometimes he would lecture, but that wasn't very often. He could get down in the Baptist tradition and cause the people to shout.

My father also taught school at various communities. He taught at the school in my home community a little while, he taught at other communities, adjoining communities and others. In fact, he taught thirty-three years, even while he was farming and preaching.

My mother was a teacher, too, for about seventeen years. She taught at the same place that my father taught. They taught at the community seven miles away, and at a community five miles away, and at the school within the community.

Teachers were paid poorly. My father was the highest paid in the group, he made thirty-five dollars a month. My mother was never paid that much.

As a teacher you'd punish people when they did wrong. So in our family, my mother laid down the law. When my brothers or sisters teased me, she would tell them, "You stop that. You don't be caught doing that. You leave him alone. And you children obey!" She seemed to always find out everything I did wrong, too. And I did plenty.

My mother didn't take me as a favorite. She was the one who was the strict disciplinarian. I spent my life knowing that she was the policeman of the house. And I probably didn't value her enough, because she had a lot to do with shaping my life because she kept me on the straight and the narrow. But she was rough.

I would get into mischief and she would use a peach tree switch to whop me. And I needed it. In fact, I wrote her when I was in the Army and thanked her for it, because I was mischievous. I got into mischief picking on my sisters. My mother never singled me out, though. The punishment was always for something that I had done, something that I'd done wrong. My dad only gave me three licks, once in my lifetime. My mother, she gave me whippings when I needed it. My dad would walk out of the house, walk away from what was happening.

My sister Mattie said our mother played with us. Well, she didn't play with me. I was the youngest and by the time I came on the scene my mother was forty years old, and she was aging as I was coming up. My father didn't play with us because he was forty-two years old when I was born. And he was aging, too. But like I said, he talked to me about everything. I was more observant of my father because he was the male image I had to follow. I never had a female image that I wanted to emulate. I don't know whether it was good or whether it was bad, but I idolized my dad.

In the local community they sometimes referred to our family as the "Smith element." My father had thirteen brothers and a couple of sisters. They married out of the community and lived in the adjoining community and we visited back and forth. We all were relatives, and everybody sort of revered Uncle Steve. Like I said, when they had a problem they would come discuss it with him, ask him what to do, and he would tell them.

We never had any friction or outward prejudice against whites. And in the community we had two white families that were just like the other black families. The boys visited our family even when they were grown and they were out away from home. When they visited home they would visit our family. In fact, I remember one statement of a person called Henry; he was the same age as my oldest brother. At that time, you know, it was very prejudiced in the South. But Henry came home and visited us and said, "Bee, I'm just like one of your children." My mama's name was Bernice and everybody called her Aunt Bee. And it was that sort of close relationship. My mother wasn't around whites much, but she never differentiated between blacks and whites.

My father went to work for daily wages, chopping cotton and reaping sugar cane, and sometimes gathering corn. My father laughed a lot, and so he could find a lot of whites to laugh with him. He didn't differentiate by using their names differently than he used blacks' names. They differentiated a little bit, by them calling him "Steve," not "Uncle Steve." The blacks called him "Uncle Steve," and the whites called him "Steve." But he didn't have any problem with that.

He knew that there were certain things that black men couldn't do. But he always challenged these things—like he went up to register to vote each year. He went regularly to the courthouse to register to vote and they regularly told him, "We don't allow niggers to vote in this county." But he never paid much attention to it. He knew that he wasn't going to be allowed to vote, but once a year he would always try to vote. He got a kick out of it. He would almost laugh when he'd come back. And then he'd go back to the county clerk the next year, and ask to register to vote. And always it was the same answer. He just had an obsession. He never stopped trying, and he always

did it in a peaceful manner.

I don't know why, but both whites and blacks had developed the habit of coming to talk with my dad on the porch, or they would follow him around in the field and talk. The white preachers didn't talk with my father, and white teachers didn't. But other whites did. Sometimes the whites would come from about fifteen miles away and just talk. I didn't understand that, but they did it.

And I always went up and listened when the people came around. I didn't have any input, but I always would listen to what they said. My father advised action that was peaceful. Always peaceful. But he had this strange power to get people to listen to him. I saw it, watched it, and listened. My mother would let my father handle disagreements. She would not get in the midst of it.

It wasn't black people who had a lot of differences. It was more or less black people having disputes among the whites. They would talk to Uncle Steve about it. He would advise them how to go about settling it. I don't remember specific things that he'd do. It always would be calm advice. He wasn't a person who was in fights, things like that. He'd always advise them to be calm and be careful about what you say and how you say it.

A lot of the cases pertained to white people wanting to take black people's land. And my father knew how to circumvent that. And when they needed to borrow money they would come to my father and he would send them to the right banker. I remember that black people never could win a case in court. But my father always would find a way to help. I don't know how he did it.

One black was having a problem when some hobos accused him of stealing some pigs, and the man who owned the pigs accused him of stealing, too. The black man said they all lied. But this guy who was accused had all the meat. And that settled it. My dad had advised the guy who took the hogs what the peaceful way to go about it was. And so he—the thief—wound up getting a little time in the county farm—the jail at the time. He got at least six months. I wasn't allowed to go to court at that time. But my father took the case all the way. There was no wrangling aftermath. I don't know whether the thief confessed or not, but he assumed a more peaceful life afterwards.

I was just an innocent bystander then, but now when I think about my father doing that among the people back then, why, I think that was where I picked up my desire to help people. And it went with me from the start of my political career, on to the end. I think that's where I got it from.

But back then, I was a kid and I was just enjoying myself. I was the youngest. Rosa was the oldest daughter, born in 1914, so she was eight years older than me. She was my baby nurse a lot, because of her age. But there were four girls—I have four sisters. When I was born in 1922, Mattie was five, Willie Mae was four, and Lillian, next youngest to me, was two. My three brothers—Moses, Stephen and Arthur—were thirteen, twelve and nine when I was born. So by the time I remember much, my brothers were teenagers, and then grown. The first two didn't have as much rub-off as the third one. My brother Arthur had the most rub-off on me. Arthur was the brilliant one in the family and he remained that throughout his life.

Our house was a shotgun-style house, and before that we had a double-room-style house. My childhood at the beginning was in the two-wing house; the boys lived on one side and girls lived in an adjoining room, and my father and my mother lived in the second wing. The kitchen was there and the dining room was in that wing. But after a few years that house was torn down and another house, a shotgun-style house was built. By then, mostly the older boys were away from home, except in the summertime.

I always found a way to enjoy life as a child. I played a lot of sandlot ball, and when the boys came home in summertime, I'd get them to play with me. The most spectacular thing that I remember was when we were playing in the backyard and I was fielding the balls and somebody hit one up in the sky and I ran to get it and I caught it. But in catching it, I fell and hit my head and knocked myself out. The country

people were not accustomed to that. My sisters were all crying and running from neighbor to neighbor and said that I'd killed myself. But Stephen, my second oldest brother, knew what was happening and he dashed some water in my face and I "came back to life" laying there, all wet. And I asked what had happened, because I couldn't remember what had happened. But that was the one spectacular thing that happened to me.

Our family was a very religious family. At home my father, every Sunday morning, he would pray at the meal. Whether it was breakfast or dinner—at home we called lunch dinner—he would always pray. Sometimes, as a little boy before I became religious, I wondered why he prayed so long. I was hungry. But he prayed every Sunday morning, and every meal we ate he asked a blessing on us, and nobody dared pick up a morsel of food until it had been prayed over.

When somebody passed in one of the churches, my father would be the officiating minister. He buried them. And I remember, as a little boy, it was customary for us to join in at burials and throw dirt in the grave. And we did that. I remember when I did that my first time, it was on a volunteer basis. My mother came to me and said she was proud of me for taking that role. I didn't know what she was talking about. But I proceeded to help bury more people.

It wasn't whether we wanted to go to church, we had to go. But I found it challenging in that in the Sunday school and the church, I was learning something. I think because I was brought up in a religious atmosphere, I joined the church at the early age of eight years old. We had the old-fashioned revival where the people who were thinking about joining the church would go up on the front bench and they would stay there—we called it the mourners' bench—they would stay there until something in the service or outside of the service moved them, and they were moved to join the church.

We had it weeklong, and I remember being on the mourners' bench and there were people who were seeking to get to be members of the church. I stayed on there Monday through Thursday. I didn't feel anything Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday, and for a fact, I was looking, searching, to feel something. And I would go out in the woods and whistle and try to find a change going on, and I couldn't find it. Then I remember at home on Thursday I began to feel some difference—a change in my life—and that night I joined the church.

I didn't tell anybody, but when we came down to open the doors of the church, I put one foot forward and drew it back, and finally I got up enough nerve to get in the church. You go up and you give the preacher your hand. I remember what I said, because at that time, when you joined the church, you'd have to make confession of what caused you to join the church. And I stood up and I remember saying, "The Lord has washed my sins away." And that was my testimony. The following Sunday we went down to the creek and I was baptized.

So that gave me an early religious start. It was a spiritual experience. In fact, we were taught that unless you had a spiritual experience, don't join the church. That was my first spiritual experience. And from then on, my life was voluntarily, somewhat strictly, according to the spirit. According to my religion.

I started teaching Sunday school at the age of twelve. Teaching Sunday school wasn't a problem for me because I had heard my dad preach on the Bible, so I could fill in and start off rambling away. And I did.

Because I've never lost my religious upbringing, I was, shall we say, guided in my political career to not do anything that was negative, that was not in the people's behalf. I always was restrained by that. And most politicians that I met didn't understand it—how I could be in this political office, and was not interested in furthering my material wealth. That doesn't fit my religious belief, so I was guided by that. I rubbed up against people who had wealth and who were willing to depart from it, but I didn't fall into that trap.

That religious belief was strong. We had strict upbringing to not do what we wanted to do, but do what was correct in the Bible. It was my saving

grace. Listen, I would do things people wanted me to do, but I never did it because of money. I did it because I was friends with them.

My family had a tradition of being fairly smart. I had my brothers before me who were good students, and my sisters before me who were good students. It sort of fell as a burden on me to be a good student. And learning was easy. I think I was born different in the way that I always wanted to learn, I had the propensity to learn.

The school for blacks was at Gibsland. Sailes was a little town about one mile away from home where the whites had their school. And the whites went there by bus. Gibsland was a little town about thirteen miles away. We walked the road to school. I remember it well because I had timed it, when I'd leave school it would take me three hours to make it home. And during those three hours I was in the swamp. I hurried to make it through the swamp before it got dark. Sometimes we would yell, "Bobcat, meow, meow, whine!" Never saw anything but squirrels, and rabbits, and raccoons, and possums. But I never felt good in the swamp. Sometimes I would run to make it through the swamp before it got dark.

The only thing I didn't like about school was going with my sister who was just above me, Lillian—she always made me mad. I couldn't beat her, and I always wanted to beat her. I would make ninety-five, she'd make ninety-eight. I would make ninety-eight, she would make one hundred. I wanted to be the best. And she would always outdo me. Of course, I was never far behind, but she was always smarter than me and I didn't like that.

I went to elementary school and graduated at the age of twelve. Our school was a seven-grade school. One or two teachers taught all grades up to seventh, until we graduated from seventh grade. Miss Carrie taught for seven or eight years during that time I was in elementary school. She did lecture us, "If you don't have an education, you are doomed to just being physical—to farming, cutting logs, until you can't do anything else." And "It's your duty to get an education and to make things better for your community and your people." She was a great believer in that, and so she sold me. I think the training rose to the surface in my adult years. But that had been instilled in me by her. I took her seriously. Some of my cousins listened and were exposed the way I was, but none of them chose the field I chose. Most of them wound up being teachers. At that time blacks could be a teacher or a preacher, but not much else. They chose to teach.

And as for my friends in elementary school, most of them were my cousins who were taken from the community where I lived. My cousins were in the majority. And we got along swell. I called it—the school—Smith Summit, but its real name was Saint Rest Elementary. That was named after the Baptist church that housed the place.

I liked to play baseball. So we played cord ball. We had a rubber center and we wrapped the cords around it until it formed a hard ball. We'd say when we got out, "Let's play ball." And that's what we did every lunchtime. That was the only way to have fun, so we did it.

Times got bad in 1929. And they got worse until war broke out. You know, that was the Depression. So it was a very unpleasant time, and a very tight time with us as a family. We were poor, poor, poor. We had to go through life knowing what we couldn't do, what we couldn't have, because nobody was making any money.

My father and I discussed it, and he was full of hope. He always thought things were going to get better. Even when Hoover was telling us that, "Prosperity is just around the corner." My dad thought things were going to get better, but they didn't. The only thing that helped us out was that we were farmers and we raised what we had to eat, most of it. We didn't go to the store regularly because there was no money.

One time it was a little rougher. I was still in elementary school, so I was a little boy. But I was all ears. I stood around and heard my parents arguing.

The trouble was about keeping the family land. I had heard all the family stories about how my grandfather bought the land. He had been a

slave. His owner was his father. When slavery ended, my grandfather got enough money from his father to come to Louisiana from Alabama and buy his own land. I knew my father had promised his dad on his deathbed that he would try to make sure the land stayed in our possession. And he did it.

We lived on the homeplace and two of my father's brothers were living on the place. One of the brothers had his own little place. My father's brothers had gone out and established mortgages on their interest in the place, and they didn't have the money to pay for it. And so my father approached them and they each said, "No, I won't pay a penny of it back."

"Well," he said, "they're going to take the place."

"Let them have it," they said.

And push came to shove. My father had a friend at the bank. He borrowed five hundred dollars to bail it out and paid it off himself. His brothers didn't ever pay one penny of that back to him, even though they all shared the blame. My mother was mad about it—she didn't want us to meet their burdens. But my father did it anyway. He carried out his pledge to keep the place intact. He wanted to keep the place.

It's still in our possession, 280 acres of it. My father had power of attorney as long as he was living and when he died my brother, Arthur, had the power of attorney until he died. Now his son has established a committee to rule over the place.

Government was a savior at that time, during the Depression. It caused us to eat and we were grateful. My immediate image of FDR—he was a savior. He was making sure that people had the minimum to live on. I remember when he started all those programs—WPA, AAA—to put people to work. I remember roads that they built, and I remember the CCC camps. It was just prolific programs he had, and they all went into law. I just couldn't see how he did it.

My father worked on the WPA building roads. What they did was this—they gave each family about as much work that would keep them from the starvation level. My father, because he had some kids, was working three days a week. My brother, Arthur, once he graduated from high school and was in college, he worked on the ERA in summers, teaching the people how to read.

My dad was an avid reader of the newspapers. He kept up with what was happening, and he would talk to me and tell me what end result was going to happen. I knew all about the national parties and the tickets, and the candidates, and he would tell me which one was going to win. I hadn't met any of the people, but he would—from reading the papers—he would share it with me. My father always told me the good stories about politics. The stories that had an ending with a rightful achievement. He didn't tell me the bad stories. And I developed an interest.

Between the time I was ten and fourteen, I read the *Shreveport Times* and the *Shreveport Sun*. We had it delivered to our house. And first I would read the funny papers and then I would read whatever else caught my attention.

From 1932 on, I remember the political party conventions. I was a little too young to be interested in them before. I was ten years old in 1932, and I remember FDR succeeded Herbert Hoover. When the national convention was on, both Democratic and Republican, I was glued to the radio. At that time we visited other neighbors who had a radio, and listened. I remember it took us a long time to get a radio. But when my older brother bought a radio, I stayed home and listened. I dreamed of the words that were being said at the convention. I remember I drank up FDR's speeches.

I didn't have a good focus on the country at that time. I had never been to any kind of convention. I was learning about the world around me, and didn't have a good idea about where I was going. But I was listening to the radio. And the golden voice that I heard was that of FDR. He was seemingly enjoying himself, campaigning. And I visualized him doing that. I remember he made a lot of speeches. They were in terms that I could understand what he was saying and I remember seeing the reasonableness

of it. That was probably at the time I was completely impressionable.

At that time I don't particularly remember what he talked about, but I remember later on in the other campaigns how he talked about the Republicans—making fun of them, sort of. He said, "These Republicans are not only talking about my family, they're even talking about my dog." But I don't remember the Republicans ever bringing up any dirt on him.

That was the beginning of my decision to become a public official. I didn't firm it up until I was fourteen. And I firmed it up by listening to the radio and reading the newspapers. This was the temporary thing that I did, sucking it in from the radio and reading. I wasn't in high school yet, but I firmly knew what I wanted to do.

And this was during the period of Huey Long. Huey Long was another family hero. I was very young when he was on the scene. And he had big ideas for himself, and great ideas for change and his theme was "Every Man a King." He was supposed to be pushing that idea and back in the rural districts the people ate it up. They liked the idea. And I had this outside picture. But in New Orleans and in Shreveport, they didn't like it. They knew the real connotation of it. We just saw it as a better way to get something, trying to better ourselves.

He built LSU, Louisiana State University. He built the state capitol, which is one of the most beautiful capitols in the world. And Huey Long was making sure we got a good education. And he provided free schoolbooks for the kids and he didn't make the distinction—white and black kids both got schoolbooks. You know, before that time you only got a book if your parents could afford it. And I remember reading other people's schoolbooks, because my parents couldn't afford it. But Huey got the free books to everybody in the school. Actually, the books we had in high school were the leftovers, the turnovers from the white high school. But they were the same quality books.

Another thing Huey did is that he established free passage across the rivers. At that time if you wanted to cross the river you had to pay a toll. The toll was made under the state constitution, and you couldn't change it. You couldn't give free tolls. So Huey Long—he was the lieutenant governor at that time—built a bridge on every river or lake that there was a toll bridge, right alongside it. And you could go through the toll bridge or you could go through the free bridge. And naturally you went to the free bridge. And Huey made all the utilities pay for it, the power utilities. And the people voted for Huey.

That was the first taste of equal government for blacks and whites. Huey, he didn't come out for us but he made his laws universally and they applied to us. It didn't have any effect on my hopes to go into politics. But I was glad to receive the benefits that were forthcoming. I remember some of the other politicians, but I didn't admire them.

I remember the day Huey Long was killed, assassinated, in September 1935. He had been in Washington, D.C. as a senator and he came home, and it was in a hearing. They were trying to impeach him, and he had just won the vote and he was a braggart about it. He was uplifted and he had made a speech. And the doctor who was supposed to have killed him was named Carl Weiss. But a strange thing, the doctor had a .32 caliber handgun and the bullet that killed him was a .45. They never delved into that. Some people believe that the bullet that killed Huey was a wild, ricocheted shot fired by one of his guards. But Huey didn't die instantly, he died later on. He wasn't a member of any church, but the Catholic Church had last rites for him.

I remember Huey's brother Earl Long. He took up the cudgel and he got to be lieutenant governor. And after that, he became governor. And the whole family—Huey's wife, Rose Long, succeeded him for awhile and then his son who was in Congress a long time, Senator Russell Long. I admired Huey and admired his son, but I didn't admire his brother. He didn't move me at all.

That's not the extent of my admiration. You remember I admired FDR. I learned to admire Truman, but FDR was deeper than the other

people who followed him. The Democrats appealed to my sense of justice and fairness. I had it inborn in me, and had a just streak about me and they seemed to be following it.

That kindled my desire. My sister questioned me, "How are you going to get into politics, when you can't even vote?" Well, I remember saying, "I'll go somewhere where you can vote." So I developed an idea that when I was grown I would leave the place where I was born and try to get somewhere I could vote. My mind had been made up from the age of fourteen. I was going to be in government. My father and I discussed my desire to go somewhere I could vote, but we didn't discuss when I was going to leave.

I never lost sight of my final ambition. I knew I had a long ways to go, and at that time I thought you had to have a college education, and thought you had to have experience in the community. And I thought you had to develop the role of leadership, and I was biding my time to get that.

My sisters were in school, so I couldn't go to high school right away. We had to live away from home in another town and pay rent to go to high school. Remember, only whites had school buses. And my parents couldn't afford to pay rent for my sisters and me at the same time. And so I just repeated the seventh grade three years, and then when my sisters came out I went to high school.

Rosa went to high school and graduated. And my second oldest sister, Mattie, went to high school and graduated. Rosa went to high school at Bienville Parish Training School in Arcadia, twenty-one miles away, and Mattie did the same. But the two youngest sisters chose marriage. When they got to my third oldest sister, Willie Mae, she went to high school two years and got married. Found somebody that she wanted, dropped out and got married. And then my sister that was next to me, Lillian, got married at a very young age. She didn't go to high school at that time, she got married at age sixteen or fifteen, something like that. But I remember when she married it wasn't with the consent of my family—they didn't like the family she married. And she stayed married about a year and her husband died of pneumonia. And she was pregnant and she came back home. So that was the story of the girls.

And here's the story of my brothers. My oldest brother, Moses, was smart but he wouldn't exploit it. In fact, Moses revolted and ran away from home when he was sixteen. And my dad got discouraged and wouldn't send my second oldest brother, Stephen, to school. Then my mother noticed my third oldest brother, Arthur, and said, "He's going to school if I have to take him to school." And he was brilliant.

My sister said, and I agree, that the oldest boy was spoiled, and that contributed to him running away from home when he was sixteen. Actually, he ran away from home because he was graduating from elementary school and the folks wanted to put him in a religious school. There was another school, a state school, where he wanted to go, where his friends were going. But it's true that he was spoiled.

He ran away and followed the circus. My father didn't know where he was, and my mama didn't know where he was either. There were people who believed in voodoo and they thought they could tell you what would happen in the future, or in the past, and my father even visited one of them. He said, "I have got a boy who left home." And the voodoo doctor asked him, "Was it Moses or Stephen?" And in fact, my father didn't know the guy, and he was shocked that he knew his boys' names. But he said, "Go back home, your boy is coming home." And about two years later, Moses came home.

Nobody knew where he was, nobody searched him out; he just came home. And he was so dirty and black my mother didn't recognize him. He came to the house, and as he was going in, my mother had a broom, she raised the broom to hit him, and he said, "Don't you know me, Mama?" And after that he stayed home.

But Arthur was so brilliant. At that time the state of Louisiana gave the seniors a graduation test. If they didn't pass that test, they didn't graduate. And they sent a supervisor from the state

around to the various schools to administer the tests. And Arthur made the highest marks that any of the students had made, white or black. And so that marked him, and he was in the papers, and that marked him; it followed him all the way through college. And he worked at the college, managing the college bookstore and made enough money to send himself to college. We didn't have enough. But he graduated with honors all the way through high school and all the way through college.

I didn't revolt against my parents. I saw others doing that, but I didn't. There was a lot of things I wanted to do, but I kept myself in check because it wasn't considered right.

I probably ought to tell the story about how I got into high school. I explained that I was two years late going to high school because my sisters hadn't finished. About a month after high school started one of my cousins told a rich white lady—Mrs. Pike—about me. And she drove down on the weekend and visited my parents and asked my parents to let me live in one of her houses and go to school in Arcadia. I was all for it. I didn't know her, I had never seen her, I had never talked with her. But if she thought enough of me to drive down there and talk with me and ask my parents to let me live in a house rent-free, and to go to school, I would like it. So I went. You remember that school was the Bienville Parish Training School.

I never will forget the first test. I was only in school about two weeks before the six-week test comes. I almost flunked. But I picked up the time, and it was easy all the rest of the time. My father and my mother, you know, were teachers. And some of it rubbed off on me. I knew some things, and didn't know how I knew them. But I was not starting off from scratch. So I was a bit ahead of the members of my class, and I just did enough to stay first in the class. I was certain when I went over to the high school I would want to be the best in the class, and Lillian was late because of her marriage, I was ahead of her and I didn't have any competition. I could have done a lot better, but I just coasted along.

In high school my favorite subjects were social studies, history, and science. I didn't like agriculture. I ducked it all the time. But I had to take it. And I had to take shop, and I didn't like it. So I decided that I'd make Bs in it instead of As. And so I did. I made As in all my other classes, but when it came to shop—making singletrees and making flowers—I didn't apply myself, but I was satisfied to make a B. When my transcript came, it came with all my subjects being As except for algebra and shop.

I went to that high school living in the rich old white lady's house. And while I was in high school that year, another teacher was going to be the principal of a school in Gibsland, eight miles closer to my home. So he asked me, would I consider going to this school, and he could get me a job on the NYA—National Youth Administration. So I told him okay, and I switched from that high school, the Bienville Parish Training School, to Coleman High School.

I was a janitor for the National Youth Administration at the school. And they gave me enough money to pay my rent, and enough to give something to the teacher who got me the job. The rent was two dollars a month. I lived in one of my relative's homes, and I always did the cooking. Two of my cousins lived there with me.

There again, at Coleman High School, I had no problem being first in my class. I achieved that real easily. In the Bienville high school I had developed a liking for boxing. I didn't like playing football or baseball as much. But when I changed schools, I got back into playing football and baseball. I didn't start until the last half of the first year that I changed schools. But I made a touchdown the first time I got on the field. I thoroughly enjoyed that, and then I went on to be a running back, and the last year I was the quarterback. Here again, it was easy for me, no matter what I was engaged in. It was easy for me to be the best.

But in high school I was very shy and awfully sensitive. Most people don't believe that. But that was the way I grew up. A bunch of my cousins went to Coleman High School with me, but I still

fell back into my shyness.

During the time I went to that school I met my wife-to-be. She was named Marion Inez King. After we married she was called Marion King Smith. I met her in the summer after the first year, and I called her my girlfriend. I knew her family well, they knew me well, and they were pleased that I was sparking their daughter. But we went along and we sort of broke up the next summer, but I never took my eyes off of her. Before the next school year ended we got back together, and I felt that she was my girlfriend and she was one of the things that I cherished.

Miss Morgan was the only high school teacher I would compare with her mother, Mrs. Morgan, my best elementary school teacher. She was a brilliant lady. She was responsible for our ideas. She was more philosophical than the other teachers. She was quick, and she demanded that you do your best and she would encourage you when you did. But she would really be strict.

They always taught us, Miss Morgan and the other teachers, that there was no difference in intelligence between blacks and whites. That if it came down to a test, we were smarter. So I went to school—all the way through high school—thinking I was smarter than the white people. It was only when I got to Seattle and started college here that I had to acknowledge to myself that there were white people smarter than me. I admitted that quietly to myself—I didn't tell anybody.

I was a senior in high school when my father died, close to graduation. I remember I had just been home on the weekend and it was a Tuesday, and one of the cousins I lived with came up to the school and said, "Uncle Steve dropped dead." And so there was no warning. It took a lot of time for me to soak it in. The funeral was about a week afterwards. And I remember my father's funeral. In those days people had testimonies at funerals. I remember an old man, Fred Capcott, saying, "Steve was just good. Everything about him was good." And I listened closely.

At my father's funeral, when it came my time to go around to view the remains, amid all of the weeping and goings on, I placed my hand on his chest and took a solemn vow that I would try to be as good a man as he was. I took that to myself and didn't tell anybody about it. I didn't know how I would become a good man. But I took the vow that I would try to be as good a man as he was. And it was a vow that restrained me afterwards.

But after he died I still had four months to go in high school. I went on to graduate as the Student Most Likely to Succeed, Best All-around Student, and what was the third one? I won the American Legion Award for Honesty, Scholarship, and Service. And I was valedictorian, of course, because I was first in my class.

I remember I wrote my speech for valedictorian, and I will not ever forget, at one moment in giving my speech I blanked out. Then I swallowed and closed my eyes, and started over again. And I remember the close of my speech. I said, "When the flag of the United States goes by, the Negro's heart swells with pride. And he, along with other men, retake the oath that this nation shall not perish from the earth." That was my closing statement. I don't remember how it began but I remember how it closed because of that blackout. I will never forget that. But it was a fifteen-minute-long speech. I practiced it to the woods and to the flowers and to birds and the bees. I memorized it and so when at the time it came for me to get up on the stage, I had it firmly in mind.

I was scared, desperately frightened, but I did it. I was frightened all the years when I was making speeches, and I developed a practice of speaking real slowly for the first minute and balling my fist up, shifting foot to foot, but after the first minute I would be all right.

One thing I also will never forget was that there was an old lady, Miss Wilson, Miss Marie Wilson, who when I finished threw a bouquet of flowers up upon the stage. I didn't know whether to pick them up or not. I thought that if I had picked them up I would have fallen flat on my face, so I didn't pick them up. I was sorry afterwards when people told me that I should have picked them up. But old Miss Wilson, she thought

a great deal of me. The superintendent of the county said that was the best speech that she had heard in twenty years of attending high school graduations. I was glad it was over.

I wrote the class song, too. It was in the tune of "A Perfect Day." I can mumble the words of it:

When you come to the end of your high school years,
And your mind with joy is wrought.
When you think of the school that you love so dear,
And the joy that the years have brought.

Do you know what the end of your high school years
Can mean to a tired class
Who has done his work with joy and despair
And has come to the end at last.

I sang my one and only solo at the high school baccalaureate service. Usually baccalaureate service was one week before school closed and it was on a Sunday. I never will forget that song. My music teacher chose it for me. And she said, "I'm going to help you learn to sing it." And I said, "Miss Oldemire, I have never sang a solo." But she wouldn't hear it. And she had me practice, and I stumbled through it. It was entitled "Jesus Walks This Lonesome Valley." And I sang it:

Jesus walked this lonesome valley.
He had to walk it by himself.
Nobody else could walk it for him.
He had to walk it by himself.

I must go and stand my trial.
I've got to stand it by myself.
Nobody else can stand it for me.
I've got to stand it for myself.

And I never will forget my mother who was sitting in the audience, she had tears at that time.

I left immediately after high school. I stayed home four days and then went as far as Houston where I got my first job. I had always figured that I was going some place that was not discriminatory. I didn't let prejudice embitter me. I just adapted to the fact of what I could do, and what I couldn't do. And I proceeded along those lines. I wasn't mad or anything.

I was a Christian and a Christian attitude was that I should forgive my brother if he did me wrong. And I felt that these people deserved my forgiveness. And I told you I was deeply rooted in Christianity, and so I couldn't get mad. I came near ruining myself at times, but the picture of the vow I took at my father's funeral always came to my rescue.

Chapter 2

Discovering Seattle

During my teenage years I would sit in a cowhide chair in the back of the house watching the sun go down and imagine what I would do in my life. I knew the way of my society wasn't correct. It wasn't according to what they wrote in the Constitution. I just pictured myself making speeches to change things from a place where I thought I was going to be. That was my dream.

That was how I planned what I was going to do, but I didn't know where I was going to do it. I fashioned myself going to Detroit, but I didn't know. My mother had a couple of sisters in Detroit that I had never met. And the Ford Motor Company was in Detroit and it was the most important factory that I knew about. And I thought I would go there because it was the most famous city I had heard of.

I never did have any strong feelings about leaving home. I knew I couldn't do what I wanted to do at home. So it was a matter of leaving home to find opportunities. And I never doubted that I would leave. That's why four days after graduation from high school, I did it.

I went to Houston. One of the boys who was a friend to me was going to Houston. He had some relatives out there. But I was simply going somewhere. My father had just died. I was sort of broke up. So I chose it. I got out of there by choice. There were some happenings that I really let happen, insofar as going to Houston. I never planned to stay.

While in Houston I got my first job doing construction, and I broke into the urban living. The urban living scared me. Relations between blacks and whites were more violent. They were killing each other, shooting each other, cutting each other. That scared the wits out of me. I just couldn't stand to go to work in the morning and have to step over people lying in the streets. I was frightened.

I didn't have friends. I went there and stayed with my friend's relatives. I met some persons who I called friends, but that wasn't really truly friendship, in retrospect. When I got back to that town—I went traveling through Houston, but I never visited anybody. I never kept contact with anybody. Houston was a blank chapter I wiped out. I didn't formulate anything about my dream there.

That year war broke out, World War II, and that scared me. We knew there would be a war, right up until it started. Even when British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain went to Munich and came back bragging that he secured "peace in our time." We knew it was only a short time. And predictably Hitler sounded the attack—Poland. It was just a matter of time when we got into it fully. My father had been a fortuneteller. He knew what was going to happen; he involved us in what was going to happen. And it did. December 7, 1941, you know what happened: Pearl Harbor. That scared me more.

I had been pretending to be twenty-two years old, and I wasn't but nineteen. So I said I would go back home, and I asked the boss for my paycheck and he said, "No, they're going to glue everybody to their jobs. So you'll have to stay here and work." But it was time to go back home, so I went to work daily, but I didn't do anything. I did it religiously, went there and just sat down. On Friday, he said, "All right, Smith. Go get your paycheck." And I got it, and Friday night I was on the train back home.

So I went home, and people at home were getting jobs at local "shell plants," we called them—the Louisiana Ordnance Company. So I went there and applied for a job and after going there about a week, I got a job—and I was making

$20.59 a week. Imagine that. I started off doing construction, and then I wound up being a laborer at the section where they made powder for bombs. I was content to work there. I kept working and decided I would stay there until they called me into the Army.

About the third quarter my name came up, and I was called into the Army. I said, "If you're going to take me in the Army, don't let me go back home. Send me." I had noticed that they had a rule that you could go back home for two weeks if they accepted you, and clean up your business. I was single, I didn't have any business and most of the single people I saw got drunk, and got into all sorts of messes during their last two weeks. They were filled with the attitude that they didn't want to go in the Army, but they had to. So I spared myself the worry of doing that and it was the right decision, because the other boys that I knew in the community that took two weeks off, they went to France and Europe. I went to Seattle and the South Pacific. I passed the physical test and they said, "You're on this bus to Camp Walters, Texas." I got on the bus that night and pretty soon, the next day, I was in Camp Walters, Texas. That's near Fort Worth.

Training was a challenge to me. I always accepted whatever task I was assigned, and would see if I could beat the colonel doing it. When there was firing three feet from where you were on the ground, and there was live ammunition, I was the first man who got to the end of the hundred yards. And they blew up ammunition in front of me, dynamite like it was hand grenades, and they warned us not to stand up, because if we stood up it would kill us. So I made like a worm and I got to the end, first of the battalion. I rolled over in the ditch and watched the other people struggle. The colonel told me I must have had some goat in my family because I was too fast.

In the Army I had heard them say, "The less you know the better off you are." But I didn't believe it. I did well in my company at Camp Walters—I took the aptitude test and the intelligence quotient test, and I was first in my group. It didn't take them long to pick me out. A few minutes after the test was over they came out calling for Samuel J. Smith and Augustus White. And I didn't know what it was about. And they said, "We're going to give you another test." And so they gave me a radio test and I passed it, but I didn't want it. They said I could be a submariner. I said, "No sir!" I didn't want anything like that. And so they put Augustus White in charge of a small detail and sent them to Fort Sill, Oklahoma. And I came to Seattle after five days on the train.

In Seattle, I was stationed first at Camp Jordan, George Jordan. The name was changed while I was there. When I went there it was called First Avenue Cantonment, and while I was there they changed its name to Camp Jordan. It was located at First Avenue and Spokane Street, Seattle. I was sure I didn't like Seattle at the time. And I was afraid I wouldn't get back somewhere where it didn't rain so much. I learned to love it after all. But I didn't like the climate.

Seattle was the first major city that I had been to during wartime. They had a lot of soldiers on top of buildings in Seattle. And out on the hill they had some chemical warfare plants that they said would create an artificial fog that would cover Boeing and the city of Seattle in case there was an air attack. I was getting accustomed to seeing these sights.

They brought us here, a battalion of some thousand people, because a labor dispute wouldn't let them ship goods overseas. But they could have soldiers doing it, and there wasn't anything the unions could do about it. The battalion at First Avenue—Camp Jordan, whatever you want to call it—they transported down to the port every day and loaded ships. I never thought about unions and strikes. But I never worked at the port, because eight days later I was promoted to PFC.

I stayed in Seattle about nineteen months at Camp Jordan. I progressed from being a buck private after six months in the Army. I was only a buck private in Seattle eight days before I got to be a corporal and placed in the Orderly Room. And when the captain got tired of me—he wasn't a captain, he was a first lieutenant—and when he got tired of me being around the Orderly Room

and memorizing everything, he sent me down to headquarters, battalion headquarters. He didn't like me because I would correct him. That was my mistake. And I would correct the first sergeant in calling the roll. And that was my mistake. But I had to learn about the Army.

I was a corporal for three or four months, and then I was a sergeant. Then I did the unthinkable thing of reading Army regulations. And I read in the Army regulations how you could be promoted and how you could get into OCS. All this encouraged my ambitions. That's when my eyes began to open, and I was glad that I did what I did, when I was in Camp Walters.

I found out that I had the IQ to be promoted and I read how you could get promoted. I could get promoted to officer by going to OCS, and I could get to be a warrant officer by just taking an exam. I put in for both. And the thing that came up was warrant officer.

I was the one who put in the applications, not my commanding officers or first sergeants—they were busy writing their commanding officers, writing Washington, D.C., telling them that the men were low-class in IQ and they had an average IQ of sixty-six or seventy. And I was one of those who had over a 110 IQ, and so that set me apart with the two or three people in the outfit who had that kind of IQ. The white officers spent time advising Washington, D.C. that there was no one in the outfit that had the qualifications. And Washington, D.C. said no, go back and ask for applications. And I was putting in applications already, and so I had the qualifications.

Another boy had the qualifications mentally, but he couldn't adjust to the Army. And there was this white fellow who lived in California and came from Houston, that they gave the test to again so he could come up to the qualifications. Two of us. We qualified. And I passed the test before him, about a month before him.

The captain of my company had planned to make me first sergeant. But I was a buck sergeant, a three-striper. And I waited and said to myself, "If I'm a warrant officer, the only way they can bust me—reduce me in grade—would be to court-martial me. But I can get to be a first sergeant and any day they can come and bust me." So I chose to be a warrant officer.

I took the exam, and when I took the exam the guy told me I passed it. About thirty days later I had a call from headquarters and they invited me down to battalion headquarters and I went and they congratulated me for being a warrant officer. I didn't know a thing about it. I never will forget that I would serve as an enlisted man one year and one day, and then become a warrant officer.

One of the officers took me downtown to Neudelman Brothers. At that time, they had a uniform company, and because I had a $250 allowance the officer purchased me two uniforms. So I had two suits. I was all set.

I had to get started on acting like an officer. I didn't do that very well, because the guys who were my friends, I still had them as my friends. And the colonel quietly called me into his office and said, "You don't mix with the men." So I started acting better.

I made about a dozen good friends in the Army. They were people who were my everyday associates. I knew them before they went home, and some of them still, and we're good friends now. Most of them have passed on, but I remember some of them.

Most people in the Army were wild. They were just wild. It seemed like the worst people were the ones the Army promoted. They used bad words. They weren't quiet or peaceful, and they were violent. I thought, "I'm glad my mother wouldn't allow me to do this." And I thought that I didn't want to be like them.

Usually, the pool hall guys were the ones who were promoted. And actually I never will forget it, there was one fellow who couldn't read or write that they promoted to corporal. Those promotions were made because all of my officers were southern white men, except the colonel and the executive officer of the battalion. One came from Louisiana, one came from Bumping Mills, Tennessee. Another one came from Oklahoma. And another one came from Virginia. And they just didn't understand.

I didn't admire any of them. I could accept the colonel and I could accept the executive officer, Captain Eptinger. And I could accept a commanding officer that I had the last part of my tenure at Camp Jordan. He was a school teacher from Iowa and he had a little bit of knowledge about people. Those three gave me a letter of recommendation. But the other man, the white fellow who they gave the test the second time, had letters from every officer in the group. But I was required to have three. So I just got what was required.

I learned a little bit of poker after I was made a warrant officer. And that was one of the games that the officers played. We went to Sick's—a beer place—and Sick's served us beer and cold cuts, and we played poker for dimes in the Mountain Room, and I made the mistake of beating the colonel. And the other officers told me, "You don't ever beat the colonel." But I didn't know that. Later, I would always let the colonel win.

I formed the habit of going to Madison and Twenty-second and the park between Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth. There was a cafe on the corner of Twenty-second. There was a YWCA, at Twenty-third and Olive was the YMCA. There was a night club, a dance hall that they called the Savoy, at Twenty-second and Madison. And there I met some girls whom I formulated a friendship with. And between that and the YMCA, I formed a habit of going out to see them. That was my early experience in Seattle, because I didn't know anybody.

One of the girls was Lois Pettus. She was from Arkansas, and she had been sent to Seattle by a federal program. And it was her first time away from home. She worked at Boeing for awhile, and she later on worked at Boeing again, after working for a dentist. There was another girl that I met while I was here, and she was everything I had wanted in a partner, but I couldn't think of her anymore than I did a sister. That wasn't the kind of feeling that I was supposed to have. So she lost out.

I stayed Warrant Officer about a year and the time came for me to move overseas. When I left Camp Jordan to be staged, we went to Fort Lawton, in the Magnolia section of Seattle, and stayed there a little while. That's where I got chosen to be the transferring agent, the intelligence agent, for the outfit's transfer to Fort Mason in San Francisco. So that meant that I had to go down to the port in advance of my outfit and get things ready down there.

On D-Day, June 6, 1944, I was at Fort Lawton, getting ready to go to San Francisco. I was listening to FDR. He prayed a prayer on the radio. And I remember he said, "Lord, our boys have embarked upon a mission. Strengthen their arms and strengthen their purpose." And I got lost after that. But I was all ears, and every day I listened to the news about what the Allies were doing. I knew there was some propaganda, but I didn't figure it was my place to separate it. I had feelings all along, that eventually we'd win. I just thought it was closer—and it was.

The outfit didn't come to Fort Mason, after all, they were at Camp Stone in Pittsburg, California. But I went to Fort Mason in San Francisco and had to coordinate everything. And I wasn't supposed to tell anybody why I was there, what I was doing there. While I was in San Francisco, I found out my old girlfriend, my wife-to-be, was in Richmond, California, about twenty miles out of San Francisco. And I kept writing my mother-in-law-to-be and found out where she was in Richmond. And we got together. But I still couldn't tell her why I was there at Fort Mason. And she could figure it out, but I wouldn't tell her she was right. While we were there we decided to get married, but I said, "I'm going off to war. And we will wait until the war was over and then we'll get married." She didn't like it, but we made it. I was out to the house one night and I said, "I'll see you tomorrow." She knew I wasn't coming back tomorrow, because tomorrow I was on the boat.

And we sailed for thirty-two days, zigzag, zigzag. We didn't have a convoy but we zigged and zagged all the way to Milne Bay, New Guinea. And then we stayed out in the water for ten days, and then we went up to Finschhafen, New Guinea. It was a big base, but it was not cleared off

enough—only about a quarter of a mile. But we bivouacked there and we stayed there. We were in Finschhafen through 1944. I wasn't doing anything but figuring out what supplies we needed for forty-five days, six months, a year. Just making work.

At Finschhafen we were ten miles behind the line and we could hear the guns sounding, but we weren't under the strict line of fire. Finschhafen was where we picked up the command of the different troops. And where I really learned to play poker. We got along pretty well that way.

When 1945 came, we went up to Manila. When we were in Manila, first landing at Lingayen and driving a motorcade convoy on down through White Beach, Baguio, and San Fernando North, we learned from maps about the people. I enjoyed the people, but I knew that they could steal gingerbread out of us, or cake, and you would not miss it. But I didn't blame them because they were living under tin shelters, because their houses had been blown up. I made friends with them and they made friends with me. I picked up quite a few friends while I was there. Some of them wrote me awhile, a few years, but gradually we stopped. I always figured they had a right in their own country, and we were intruders.

When FDR died I was in the Phillipines. I heard it over the radio. I was struck, almost as if it was a member of my family, when he died. I just felt bad. FDR, he was like a father to me. FDR's manner of speech and his fireside chats moved me, he was my first political hero. I really had accepted the draft into the Army because he had put his signature on it and I loved and admired him.

When the Army started integrating we were in Manila. At first it was a segregated Army, back home. I was in a quartermaster outfit. But in Manila, before the Army started to integrate, we had quietly started it, before Harry Truman put out the order. We were in a headquarters unit with one black company and five white companies. We had white officers and two black officers that administered the units. So we had started to integrate already. And Harry Truman seeing it, and knowing about it, put out the order.

On VE Day, May 7, we didn't have anything to celebrate. All we wanted to do was hurry up and get it over. I couldn't tell when the Germans were about to give up. They were—all the time I knew—fighting viciously. But I accepted it when they said the Germans had given up. I was glad at that. And they were transferring people from Europe to Japan. I was glad of that. But I didn't go. I was glad of that.

While I was there in Manila I had a close call. When I first went into the Army I thought I was going to get killed. I gave up thinking I would not be killed. Just a matter of time. "I'm going to get killed, so if I'm going to get killed, I'm going to take as many with me as I can." That was my constant thought. I was getting bored in the Philippines, and that was a time when I wrote my mother and said, "I wish they would hurry up and send me on up front where I could get it over with." She thought I was losing my mind. But I got a chance one day. It was the day that the war was over—VJ Day, August 14, 1945. But I didn't know that yet.

There were pockets of Japanese in the Philippines that hadn't been rooted out, but they served no harassment. Some Filipinos came down to our camp and said that there were killer men in their village. So I grabbed my rifle and nine men, and the major grabbed his rifle and nine men, and we took out to where the Japanese were. When we got there they said, "They went that-a-way!" And we went that-a-way behind them.

When we were on top of the hill I heard a clucking sound, like a bird making a noise. I recognized it as one of the Japanese sounds in communicating. So I ordered my group to hit the dirt, and we did. The major was coming on behind me, and he didn't hit the dirt. He had a Filipino guide slicing the undergrowth in front of him, and when he got to the top of the hill the Japanese shot him dead. And then everybody just let loose, firing on everybody. I didn't know whether it was Japanese or my own fellows shooting or not, but they almost knocked me out. One bullet hit beside me, and one hit on the other side of me, and

another one in front of me just before my eyes. And I said to myself, "The next one is going to get me." But I made like a snake and backed out, down the hill and yelled for them to stop. And they stopped shooting and we got out of there. That was the closest call I had.

I hadn't heard that the Japanese had surrendered. I heard that day when I got back to camp. Guns went off all around me and we had a .50 caliber machine gun set in front of my warehouse and it went off, and big guns went off in the port, and I was on the floor. And a guy came to me and said, "Get up, Mister! The war's over!" I was relieved.

I didn't celebrate. I was asking the question of when was I going home. And pretty soon they got the point system in place. We had moved from Novaliches, a town about two miles outside of Manila, to right downtown near the USS California and USS Pennsylvania, and we were just waiting. And when the points came down to my level, I went. There were people who had been in the Army longer than you and were doomed to be first to get out.

I didn't discuss my future with my Army friends. But all of us wanted to get out. We would talk about that quite often. And we would joke about, "If I have a kid and he steps out on his left foot, I'm going to hit him on it." So we didn't like the Army. But all of us basically went up in the Army. One notably, Sergeant Powell, Alfred W. Powell. He stayed in the Army until he retired, and he left the Army and worked for Bonneville Power Company until he retired again. And then he went to school at Seattle University until he graduated, and he was here in Seattle during a time when he couldn't get a job. But he formed his own business for tax accounting and retired the last time as an accountant.

And there was Lieutenant Talbott, he was a second lieutenant or first lieutenant, and he had been in charge of a chemical warfare company, but he was reclassified downward. He went up, and then back down. I always felt sorry for him. There was a Sergeant Lucky who was my first sergeant. After the Army, he went back to Mississippi and then from that to California—Richmond, California. He was down there the last time I heard from him. I have not heard from him in the last few years. And there was Roosevelt. Roosevelt was in the Army and became first sergeant after I left, and he went to California after he got out of the Army, too.

The Army and the war changed my life. It exposed me to Seattle. It exposed me to New Guinea, and exposed me to the Philippines. But I didn't lose my dream. I kept my dream and put it in place here.

It was revolutionary change in Seattle after the war. A revolutionary change that I came to be comfortable with. Blacks were moving from the South to northern cities and they were getting good jobs. First of all, there were the people who were sent here on defense projects. They stayed, and they worked with Boeing and the shipyards until they changed jobs from defense into commercial. But they stayed with their employers. And then some worked at Bethleham Steel. One of the guys that lived in the project when I did worked for Bethleham Steel until he retired.

We all felt a kind of kin because we were black, and we were all subject to the same treatment, a black opportunity or lifestyle. And we developed a clingyness, clinging to each other. A church kind of sympathy for each other and liking the same things. We were sort of conditioned that way. So we grew closer. And I was happy about that. You remember my seventh grade teacher, Miss Carrie Morgan, had always mentioned to us that we should try to make the world a little better for blacks and it fit in with the pattern. And I started trying to make the world a little bit better.

I didn't plan to come back to Seattle deliberately, but I was drawn there—being here when I was sorting out who I wanted for my mate. My first high school sweetheart, Marion King, came up as a winner, even though things had changed between us when I was overseas. She had been married and then separated.

Badine Richardson was another one of my

high school sweethearts. She was graduating the year I left. And I threatened to make her my wife. But I just didn't have the nerve. You know, in those days you had to ask the parents for the hand of a daughter in marriage. And good parents would want to know how you are going to take care of her. And I was in the Army, so obviously I wasn't in command of myself. So I came back for her graduation and I asked the old man, her father, whether I could marry her and he said "yes." And I asked the mother at a separate time whether I could marry her. And she said, "You can marry her all right, but I don't want you dragging my daughter all the way across the country." To me that was a rejection. I read it that she didn't want me in her family, because I couldn't see marrying her daughter and letting her stay there. That gave me an excuse, and I told the daughter that, and she cried and she said, "You're not marrying Mama, you're marrying me." But I was rigidly brought up, and my father had taught me that you don't want to get into any family that doesn't want you. And I read it as a rejection from the mama.

So that sort of broke us up. I didn't hear from her any more. But I really thought about her a lot. And so when I got out of the Army, Badine was the first one that I had to see. And I put her on the top of the list. And I saw her, and some things she confided in me I didn't like, and I culled her, and then I came to Seattle. And the same thing happened to the girl Lois Pettus as happened to Badine, and I didn't like it and so I culled her. And so I sent down to California and asked Marion to come up here and visit me, and she came, and she liked the place. She was from California now, but I couldn't accept California. And I asked her if she would consider living here. So she accepted and so that was it. I told her to "go on back and take care of your business, and I will send for you." And we decided to get married.

We were married in the courthouse here in Seattle, January 29, 1947. While I was getting ready to get married, my wife's father died, and he died suddenly. So I was supposed to get married that Sunday, and it was Friday, and I couldn't allow her to go back home unmarried. So we got municipal judge William Hoel and a cousin of mine, and we got married at ten o'clock. And she caught the train back home at eleven o'clock. And I didn't see her for three more months. I began to wonder if I really was married.

I don't remember what she wore, but it was regular clothes. I think she was wearing a gingham dress, but she had a white suit that she wore back home. But the boys began to joke me about it, saying, "She isn't coming back." But there was nothing I could do about it. But one morning at seven o'clock I woke up and she was there.

My ideas about achieving my ambitions came up just a little later. They came up while I was in between getting a college education, and getting some community experience, and trying to develop a role of leadership. I knew I had to have all three.

My girlfriend had decided I should go to Seattle University—the one that I could only think of as a sister. She'd asked me what I was going to do and I told her that I didn't know. And so she took me by the hand and said, "While you are deciding what you are going to do, you are going to school." And she took me down and enrolled me. And she took one of the tests for me and I took the others and they enrolled me. She was a graduate of Seattle University and so she had a connection with the school. This was in 1946.

I chose sociology because she was a graduate of sociology. And I liked helping people. I had very good acceptance at Seattle University. The Jesuits who were the teachers liked me. And the class was open and accepting. And after they found out that I was pretty smart they sought me out. And so I had no problems.

I went to school at Seattle University two years in the daytime. After two years of day school I switched over to night school. I changed when I started working at Boeing. That's how I was able to keep going to school.

I made some friends at Seattle University, but they were few. I made friends with the four black students out of twenty-four hundred whites that

were there. There was James H. Ard, there was Melvin Minnis, and there was Wyoming Brooks. Later on, every year it increased and Connie Shore came on, and Millie Russell came on, but when I started there weren't many. I made friends with some of the white students. But not many. The white students weren't standoffish. I was more standoffish than they were. I remember—my center of my memories was the white teachers I was more exposed to. And a few of the students, Don Powers and Nan Powers, Nan Powers Wilber, a few of them but not many. I remember one black student who said, "I want to develop to be mayor of this town." He never did but he said it. But we didn't talk about our ambitions much.

I had already found my best friend, Russ Gideon. When I came back to Seattle in May 1946, I was looking around. Russ was a member of the State Department of Veteran Affairs, that was an agency that was associated in World War II, and it was discontinued as the years went by. But I went into the State Department of Veteran Affairs and I met with Russ Gideon there. He was an interviewer there and unfortunately—or fortunately—I gave him a handshake that he recognized as a Masonic handshake. I wasn't a Mason, but I had developed that strong handshake. And he took it that I was a Mason. And he followed me and sought to make my acquaintance. I recognized that he had misrecognized me, but I didn't correct him.

I knew a little bit about Russ. He was a pharmacist in World War II, and was in Boston the year before, and he and his wife had been married twelve years at the time, while I was single. But I developed and cultivated his friendship because I thought he was a good person. And later on, he liked me, and decided that I would be good for his college fraternity. This was Phi Beta Sigma. Russ wanted to start a chapter out here, and he wanted me to help him start it at Seattle University. And we started it, Melvin Minnis and I, Wyoming Brooks, James Ard, Richie Gidgman, and a few more. And they selected me as president. I was the first president of the founding chapter, and later on, I was state regional director, and so forth.

All this was drawing me closer to Russ Gideon. He started calling me his brother, and he said he had finally found a brother. And he was glad for it. And one of the things that attracted me to Russ was that he reminded me of my father. He was older and he had a strong sense of fairness. I could confide in him and he wouldn't take what I told him any further. He was content to have me confide in him.

Seattle University didn't offer an advanced degree at that time. I wanted to go to graduate school and so the University of Washington was what was available. I was there from 1951, when I graduated from Seattle University. I went there in the fall until December 1952. A little bit in 1953, but not much.

It was different because I wasn't a person at the university; all of us were numbers. At the time that I entered there were only 14,000 students. But that was big enough, coming from a school of 2,400, to make me feel not important. I had a new environment and I just had to get used to it. It had a pronounced effect on me, because I couldn't get used to being a nonperson. There was a number assigned to me from each class and I went to school remaining a number. Well, the professors knew my name but I just never got to where I could come through as a real person. I really didn't ever develop the feeling for it. I had no empathy for it.

There were a bunch of black students attending the universities, both Seattle University and the University of Washington, but not many at Seattle University. They found quarters in the Central community because the blacks were there. But I couldn't tell how many black students there were at the University of Washington—it was so humongous.

When I first came to Seattle, before I lived in the projects, I lived in the Central District. I lived on Twenty-seventh Avenue when I was single and when I got married I lived on Twenty-first and Columbia. It really didn't dawn on us how many minority groups there were in this part

of Seattle. And in every town that I had lived in, the blacks sort of gathered in one part of town. Even when I was in Houston, Fifth Ward and Fourth Ward and Third Ward were where the blacks were, and others wouldn't live where the blacks were. And so it became accepted practice. Wherever there were blacks, there was the seed of a community that grew and grew. There developed a kind of kinship among all of us who had come here from other places. I moved to Highpoint, a housing project in West Seattle, in 1948. This kinship gradually developed in Highpoint, too. But my center of activity was always in the Central community. And the folks in the Central community knew me best, even when I was in Highpoint.

I must confess that at one point in my development, I thought that I was getting off track and I thought I was losing the ability to be in line to do what I wanted to do. It was when I was living in Highpoint. I was in college at the time, about second or third year. I was more determined, but I felt myself slipping—it's about the best way I can explain it. And that was a horrible feeling.

Living in Highpoint—no family, no close friends—it didn't compare to living in the South. Living in the South I had a family and support all around me. In Highpoint, I was totally thrust on my own, and I didn't have the kind of job or the kind of situation that lent itself to making things change quickly. You know, the people in Highpoint were not well educated. They were poor, and that was the kind of mix that didn't go with an uplifted feeling.

And I was poor, too! I was thrust there in the middle of poor people, and I was poor. I felt myself getting into the kind of trouble that I was not accustomed to. I couldn't handle the kind of poverty that I was in. I couldn't pay my bills, and I believed in paying my bills.

I thought I was engaging in something that led me off the track. I worked with the federal government at the Veterans Administration about four years, from 1947-1951, and I was trying to establish a publishing business and I was not having good luck at it. The business was a newspaper and job printing. By selling printing, I was exposed to the businessmen—some black. I didn't really want the black business because I couldn't feel justified gouging them. I just wasn't making a success. The newspaper was the *Pacific Leader*. I kept it going two years, 1952-1954, and then I sold it. And after that, I published the *Builder* and I kept it going one year, 1955, and then I closed it down. I never experienced a time when I couldn't pay my bills and this was all befuddling me. And I couldn't have things that were virtually normal to poor people.

I tried to volunteer for the Korean War but my wife came apart at the seams. At that time I was still sort of patriotic and felt that if we were going to war, I ought to be in it. And I was only making less than I would have made in the Army. So I thought about it, but my wife shattered that. Later I was glad that she shattered it.

And I was playing semi-pro baseball. I kept playing it when I got involved in the publishing business and I had my Boeing job, too. I was doing them all. But my wife said something had to go. And my family was growing. Amelia was first, then Carl in 1949, and Anthony in 1951. The twins were born fourteen months later. So we had five children. That's why my wife said something had to go. And I figured out what would do me the least harm, and said baseball it is. And so I gave up baseball. Because in semi-pro baseball I was going every Friday and Saturday and Sunday pursuing that. So my wife didn't have any time there.

I had started to work at Boeing in 1951. I started off as a riveter, a buck riveter. I worked there for about a year. I got proficient in riveting and I knew the practice that Boeing had, if you felt that you were qualified for a better job you could go to personnel and put in for it, and they would see if they had a job for you. And I went to personnel. At that time I was a receiving clerk, and they told me to go back and continue doing my job, and when they found a job they would contact me. And I thought that because I had been to personnel, they overloaded my job and gave me more work than I should have done, but I sped

up and did it. About six months later they called me down to personnel and said that they had found a job for me. It was a coordinator. It was about two years after I started working that I was assigned coordinator. But I had a problem, nobody could read my writing. That has been affecting me ever since I got out of high school. But I stayed at it a few years anyway.

We were booted out of the projects in 1955 because we—according to the rules that they had in the city—we were making too much money. I was making $370 a month. That was too much to be in the projects. So they served us notice. We had to move. So my wife bought our first house, and it was in the Central District. She said, "I don't like it, but it is at least acceptable." So I just said, "Don't bother to show me, don't show it to me; just put down the earnest money."

But I saw many people graduate from Highpoint and get into the Central District community, so that was the trail I had to follow. My friend who worked for Bethleham Steel was making too much; he was making more than I was making. And there were several others, one who was a janitor, making too much.

One notable, Sergeant Alfred Powell, was in Yesler Terrace for a while. He graduated from that to the Central District, the same as the rest of us. The barber that we had in the Army was a property owner there. First of all, the real estate people wouldn't show us anything but the Central community. And then we had been geared to the Central community while we were in the Army in Seattle. That's the community that we attached ourselves to, and when we came back to Seattle that's the community in which we lived. So it was just a natural drawing card. And so I moved into the Central Area.

By the time we'd moved to the Central District, things had gotten better. I had pulled myself gradually up and I got back on track. You remember, I had finished school and I had my job at Boeing and had already been promoted. I had given up semi-pro baseball, and then, in 1956, I sold my newspaper. And religion. I had dropped off attending church regularly for about five years. But always when I dropped off I felt something was missing. So we started going back to Mount Zion Baptist Church. And when I started going back I was fulfilled. I started teaching Sunday school, and being an active member of the Mount Zion Brotherhood. That same year, my first year in the Central District, my youngest son, Stephen, was born. So my family was complete, and that was a blessing. And I was beginning to establish my leadership in the community.

Chapter 3

Formulating My Dream

I knew the goal I wanted—to be elected to a political office—and the goal I wanted was there. I had my idea that you had to have a college education and you had to be an established civic leader before you started to run for office. I projected that I would be elected at age thirty-eight. But my idea was not a definite plan, not a formula. During my first years in Seattle all this sort of fell into place, even though I had other troubles. But I admit, I had thought it all out. When I came back to Seattle, I deliberately started my education and civic activities, and that was cold-blooded planning.

I was getting my college education at Seattle University when I started on leadership and politics. I managed to get elected president of the Intercollegiate and Civic League at Seattle University. That was a group of black college students. We had a number of civic projects while I was president. This started me on leadership. And I also formulated a small business group, a club that operated in the Central Area. From these connections, I was forming a little influence-packed group, and Russ Gideon recognized that as political. He spoke to me about it, and I thought he was political, and I wanted him to run for office. We couldn't work that out because he didn't live in the right precinct. But I got on from that, developing my political skills, and Russ was right there with me and stayed with me all the time after that. In fact, we had a general understanding. Russ developed into a leader in the community, and I developed into a leader in politics. And he followed my lead in politics, and I followed his lead in civic matters. We had a good partnership.

Because Russ Gideon was a Mason, and because I was raised in a Masonic family, I planned that sometime I would become a Mason, too. But I waited and committed to the Masons right after I got elected, because I didn't want them to say I joined them just to get elected. It was almost the same with the Mount Zion Brotherhood. I was a member and they talked about me as president. I told them I wanted to get my career started, and then I would accept the presidency. And at that time, in 1955, I had just gotten back into teaching Sunday school. But I had been doing that since I was twelve. Nobody could say I did that to get favorable attention. So my planning was different for my church and the Masons. I didn't want to be seen using them to develop leadership.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars and my union experience, and managing campaigns, what I called building my image, were my real entree into leadership. When I became a member of the VFW, I worked myself up to the position of commander. I stayed commander two years and won a national citation for the programs I had started, and increased the membership.

By my being a workingman I was close to the unions. I sided with the causes because they were trying to help the working man. I didn't agree with John L. Lewis who was violent—I didn't agree with any union that was violent. But I was sympathetic to unions. Even though the going Boeing union didn't accept black membership for years, I was sympathetic even in the face of that. And finally when we could get to be members, I got friendly with them. It happened like this. The union was having demands upon them to do something denying discrimination. And they decided that they would do it. Some union members took a couple of us black fellows—no, four I believe—out to dinner and gave us drinks, and they footed the bill and encouraged us to drink more and more. And one fellow that was in the group drank and got high, and began to talk a little

out of line. I knew what the trick was—to get us inebriated until they would see what was in us. I didn't get that drunk. And I held it down and let the other fellow rage, and they selected me to be a Boeing union representative.

I proceeded to meet new hires and give them the spiel and I was successful. I was assigned to the union school, and at that time it paid ten dollars an hour. I didn't get ten dollars an hour at work, so this was good for awhile. And I got assigned as shop steward and I took advantage of that because the shop steward couldn't be laid off or transferred until he was the last man in the shop. So I took advantage of that to strengthen my position. The union had made me a shop steward, but I was still sympathetic to the working man. And I wasn't radical. I kept my shop stewardship until I was elected.

I made my first campaign connection in late 1951 with Allan Pomeroy. He was a Democrat, running for mayor. And he was elected, and became mayor in 1952. I was tapped because I was the VFW post commander and had a group of people, seventy-seven members, and he was looking for a new person to handle his campaign in the Central Area. A guy who owned a pool hall in the Central Area, Honeysuckle's, asked me if I would consider it. And I went down and was interviewed by Pomeroy and he liked me and he told me to make a budget and a program. And I made a budget and program and told him how much it would cost, and I put the program into effect.

Among my programs, I put the most effort into registering people to vote. I registered a number of people, a goodly number. We registered them by going house to house, door to door. And we found out that they were not registered, and then we sent cars back to pick them up and get them registered.

Pomeroy won a very slim election. He won the election in the city of Seattle by twenty-seven hundred votes. And we had furnished him, in the Central Area, about twenty-five hundred new votes. And that gave us the claim if we had chosen to use it on the mayor's office. That is what started me off in Seattle politics. But I wasn't ready to become an appointee yet.

Each campaign that I worked in, I did the same thing. I always followed the general theme of the campaign. And I just figured how the black effort could fit in the campaign theme. That was it. Nothing was different. You have to know the candidate, and get a sight of what he'll do, and you communicate that on the local level. But nobody else planned what I was going to do, and they took me at face value, that I knew what to do. And that was all right.

When I first started to be active in campaigns, I perceived that there was no other young person entering into politics, and that was the field that I wanted to excel in. You can perceive there's a void that needs filling, that people don't actually lead themselves. There's a void of leadership that you have to be able to recognize, and you step into it. You cannot predict it. You have to recognize it and be available to fulfill it, according to the people's desire.

To be a leader, you have to be a keen observer, and you have to be careful, and you have to not take the people faster than they can adapt to it. I never became a dictator, a party person who tried to dictate what was going to happen. I only took the people as fast as they wanted to go.

You observe from your daily life. You have to do that, and it can't be taught. But you have to possess Godgiven facilities to do it. And you have to recognize it. And I had it, and I knew it. I didn't coldly plan people's acceptance, but I knew when they were pleased, and when they weren't pleased. But it's a gift. It's a gift. You can't develop it. I say that it came from the Lord, that certain people are gifted and they have knowledge that they didn't learn in books, in college, whatnot. But my gift, I maintain, came from my family. And everything you get from your family is a gift of the Lord. I remember that all of us, from my father's family, received a gift. What we did with that gift was up to us. And so while I was working on others' campaigns I was always pointing towards when I would be active in getting myself elected.

When I arrived in Seattle I thought that I was a Republican. But when I helped Pomeroy, I was a Democrat. It was only when the Republican Party rejected me I switched over.

I just wasn't welcomed by the Washington State Republicans. At that time the Republicans didn't want any more blacks. They had elected a black man, Charles Stokes, in 1950 and he served two terms and then he ran for the Senate and lost. So he was dropped out for a term. I approached Mr. Frazier, who was a money-giver behind Mr. Stokes. He gave a lot of money to candidates. There weren't any differences between me and Mr. Frazier, but I wanted to be a member of the party, and I wanted support. He could not give that, he was obligated to Mr. Stokes, so I accepted that rejection. And I got in with the Democrats, on the opposite side. But Mr. Frazier supported me when I got elected. And supported me thereafter.

Other things contributed to me being a Democrat. The 1948 presidential election was the first time that I voted, and I voted for the Democrat, for Truman. He struck a cord of responsiveness. I was poor and any man who was for helping the poor, I was with him. And I admired Harry Truman because he really had the political courage and the attack, attack, attack. I remember that Harry Truman was cold and he was losing votes when he was speaking from a prepared text. And I remember when he changed over and just spoke extemporaneously, he took off. And I remember him calling the Congress the "Eighty-worst Congress." It was the eighty-first but he nominated them as the "Eighty-worst Congress." And I remember him referring to his opponent, Tom Dewey, as an economic tapeworm. Those all struck my imagination and fired me up. I remember when Truman won, Dewey had started building himself a house in Washington, D.C. His family was going to live in it. I bet you he never thought of living in the White House. I guess he was just going to use it for ceremonies. But Dewey started building a house. And the magazines and newspapers were so confident that Dewey was going to win, that they had the headlines already printed. And they had to go back and reprint them.

In 1952, Adlai Stevenson was, in my mind, one of the most educated presidential candidates that we had. Before we had Harry Truman and Roosevelt, who were politicians by trade. Stevenson possessed the opportunity to bring it to a higher level, but he didn't succeed. In fact, he was a little bit too high for the people. Eisenhower, I just accepted him as one of the lesser of the evils that we had to accept. We couldn't prevent him from being elected. He just wasn't one of us. I knew Stevenson didn't have a chance. Eisenhower was too popular.

At the same time, there was Senator Joe McCarthy—the bull in the china shop. I knew the McCarthy hearings were damaging to the party because the Democratic Party always attracted ultra-liberals. And at that time ultra-liberals were classified as Communists. You couldn't be a liberal and miss that mark.

And the strangest part of my feeling, I felt sympathy for those persons who were being accused, but I didn't know why. I didn't know what to feel. I felt that I ought to be patriotic to my country and I had the strange cross-feeling of sympathy for them. I didn't know why. I remember the people they were accusing nationally—Whittaker Chambers and Alger Hiss. I just felt sympathy and I didn't feel that they were being treated fairly. But I didn't know what to feel. It was unfolding before my very eyes and there was nothing I could do.

But I didn't get involved in it. I didn't talk to other people about it. I didn't. Because I was afraid to be branded. I didn't want to be branded as such. When I started my career they called me ultra-liberal, but no damage was done. I escaped it.

You couldn't form an opinion about the Washington State Un-American Activities Committee hearings because Canwell almost convicted the people of being sympathetic to communism by the questions that he asked. I was in the housing project at that time and I just looked on. That's all I could do. I didn't form any opinions, but I just looked on it and perceived what was happening.

I knew I had to be known and respected in the party before I could run and win. The way it turned out was that I challenged the party, and won. But I had to pay a price before I was accepted. It started in 1954 when I helped in another campaign. That was Benjamin MacAdoo's campaign for state representative. MacAdoo, a black, and Paul Revelle, a white, were the Democratic candidates, and Hercules Anderson, a black, and Don McDermott, a white, were the Republican candidates in the primary. And MacAdoo ran against the Democratic Party's wishes. But I managed to mobilize enough voters so he won the primary by twenty-nine votes.

Then MacAdoo was removed as a candidate even though he won the primary. He had a problem, a legal problem, in that he didn't live in our district, the Thirty-seventh. His opponent, Paul Revelle, filed a lawsuit to get MacAdoo removed from the race. MacAdoo was removed by the Superior Court and the Democratic Party appointed Paul Revelle. The Democratic head of the Thirty-seventh District political club didn't like MacAdoo, and she didn't like me. Her name was Dorothy Laevell and she instituted action to replace MacAdoo, because he didn't live in the right place. And she succeeded. Dorothy Laevell and the precinct committeeman made the decision. John Robinson was the state Democratic Party chairman, but it was the district that made the decision and the state confirmed this.

My group thought MacAdoo should be placed on the ballot because he had won the election outright. He was the first black Democratic candidate who had been nominated and won the primary for the state representative job. Removing him and then appointing a white guy who hadn't won it—we thought that this was an act of prejudice. Any other black candidate would have been acceptable to us. We didn't settle on any candidate. The only thing we wanted was a black candidate. So we were prejudiced.

We got in a tiff with them. I became known for saying to them, to John Robinson, "If you don't appoint another black man, we will defeat him." Remember, I was publishing the *Pacific Leader* at that point. I knew we could do it. And I knew the only way to teach the party was to defeat their candidate. And we haggled and wrangled ourselves. Then we had a protest meeting. I was behind it, I talked myself into it. Russ Gideon chaired it. We announced it in the papers, that we were having a protest meeting. That was our first formal protest. And the people gathered at Sid's Dining Room where we held it, and the state party chairman John Robinson and Thirty-seventh District political club head Dorothy Laevell were there. We told them we'd been wronged by the party, and that we were going to take corrective action. We told them to their face in public, if they didn't put a black candidate on the ballot, that we would defeat their candidate and elect a Republican. State Chairman John Robinson didn't beg us not to do it, he was sort of defiant—but we did it. Under the leadership of Russ Gideon and myself, we carried out our threat. We were obligated to.

We elected Donald McDermott, a Republican, who later on ran for lieutenant governor. But we had gotten our pound of flesh. They recognized that we did it, and they started to make a place for us. That settled the fact for the party; they were willing, after that loss, to accept a black candidate. And so they knew I was strong, but they didn't know they could trust me. I had to earn that.

I had formed a group of black Democrats in the Central District before 1956. And we gave a dinner at the Washington Plaza honoring John Prim, a now-deceased attorney, and we raised some money for the party. That was the first time that we actually gave money to the party, a few hundred dollars, and I guarded that money with my right arm. Instead of us counting on the party to give money to us, we gave to them. Before that time, most of the people who worked in the party, the black people, had been seeing what they could get out of the party financially.

The Democrats recognized that we were registering voters and that we were contributing money, and this surprised them. I recall that we had the dinner just to raise money. My process of

thinking this out—it just came to me: we ought to do something. I made this decision, and my associates followed. I carried it out, and then I had three accomplices—Mr. Lonnie Williams, and Mr. Terry Kruse, and Mr. Russell Gideon. As we were all living in the community, we built up acquaintances and associates, and we just worked the group of people. Russ, after I laid out the plan, he effectively carried it out. We all helped sell tickets for the dinner. We just asked people we knew to buy the tickets and they did.

At that time I didn't have a party office. I knew I couldn't look for anything out of the Democratic Party, so I could spearhead the movement without fear of penalties. We were still at outs with the controlling Democratic Party at that time because we didn't appreciate their action in the MacAdoo case. But the dinner helped change their minds.

Then we were caught up in history. The national civil rights movement was getting a lot of attention. I didn't foresee the movement, and I thought the way I could work best for equality was in politics, not in the civil rights movement. I was scared. I didn't have *any* hope, only fear. I didn't think the South would bend, and I didn't think they would give over. I couldn't see white Southerners giving in to the protestors. I thought the movement would set off violent struggles and uprisings between white and black. I thought white Southerners would look at civil war as an alternative.

I watched carefully in 1955, when Martin Luther King pointed the civil rights movement to nonviolence. He came on with the Montgomery bus boycott. You remember the boycott started when Rosa Parks was arrested—she wouldn't give up her seat in the front of the bus to a white man. In the next two days, the black preachers in Montgomery organized the boycott, and they chose Martin Luther King to lead it. Fifty thousand black people refused to ride the buses—they went to work in carpools, or they walked. The boycotters met every few days in mass meetings to pray and sing and listen to Martin Luther King tell them about nonviolent protest. He told them to act together, but peacefully—no getting even for all their miseries. We are so used to this now it is hard to remember that it was a new idea then, hadn't even been tried, hadn't even been talked about. But the Montgomery blacks listened and understood. So when King's house was bombed, the blacks didn't strike back. When the Klan paraded through their community, the blacks just watched and some even waved.

It took one whole year before the U.S. Supreme Court declared that segregated seating in buses was unconstitutional, and the boycott ended. When the day came for blacks to ride the buses again, they followed Martin Luther King's nonviolent teaching and there was no trouble. But some whites caused a lot of trouble right after. Blacks were shot, the Klan burned crosses, buses were shot, and churches and preachers' houses were bombed. It looked like the beginning of the mass violence I was afraid of. But other whites surprised me. White preachers, businessmen, and even the newspaper came out strongly against this harm and hurt. This hadn't happened before, so some good came out of that trouble. By the time things settled down in Montgomery, Americans were used to Martin Luther King, and black people protesting, attending mass meetings, and acting together in the nonviolent way. They had read about it in the paper and seen it on TV. When these things happened again, and Martin Luther King kept on leading, it seemed usual, ordinary. That was another good thing.

But even though I approved, Montgomery didn't relieve my fear. In my own community I remarked to some people that if ever the stage was set for civil disturbance, it was now. We had been determined to work for equal rights through the legal process, and now that was changing to mass action and protest. I told them I didn't see how we could get around that change, and I didn't see what we were going to do to work through that period of readjustment. But I knew we had to be calm. I knew people would get emotionally upset, and emotions just didn't play a part.

I still had one of my newspapers, the *Builder*, then, so I wrote an article stating my opinions,

stating how we had been struggling and now was the time to graduate, to be steady and thoughtful. I had problems about my attitude with some of the leaders of the community. At that moment Philip Burton and Ray Merriwether were the two primary people. They were more active than I was, and I was sort of calming things down by advocating not being emotional. They didn't last very long and I grew stronger. In spite of them, and in spite of the violence right after the Montgomery settlement, my interest was piqued by the movement. The more I learned about Martin Luther King and his ways, the more I believed. So then I realized that I had to stay closely involved with the movement.

In 1957, I was watching again when Martin Luther King organized the SCLC—the Southern Christian Leadership Conference—so southern black churches would have support for more nonviolent mass action by blacks in the South. Right away the SCLC got a lot of notice. We needed SCLC because other, older groups worked differently. The Urban League was important in helping blacks in northern cities—we had an office here in Seattle—but not in the South. CORE, the Congress of Racial Equality, used direct action, but mostly in northern cities. And the National Association of Colored People, the NAACP, tried to change things in the courts. By the mid-1950s, people were criticizing the NAACP because legal change was so slow. And it wasn't enough by itself. Again and again authorities in the South would ignore court decisions.

That was changing. In 1954 the Supreme Court had made a ruling—they said we had to integrate the schools. They commanded that. I knew this was a turning point. The Supreme Court had spoken, and I knew even white Southerners would have to bow down, one way or the other, to the Supreme Court. I was right. They had bowed down in Birmingham in 1956 about bus seating—but it took mass action by the blacks. And in 1957 the whites bowed down again about school segregation. That time there it wasn't because of mass action by blacks—it took the federal government to make sure it happened.

It was in Little Rock, Arkansas. The governor called the Arkansas National Guard to keep nine black kids from going into the high school. So President Eisenhower federalized the guard and sent in regular Army troops, too. Soldiers had to walk with those black kids into the school and to their classes while the white parents yelled and waved Confederate flags. It was ugly.

Next, I remember the sit-ins in Greensboro, South Carolina in 1960. Some black college students sat in at the Woolworth's lunch counter, where it was against the rules to serve blacks. That started student sit-ins all around the South. Martin Luther King had reached students, and they wrote to him for advice and used his nonviolent methods. Again, this time the newspapers and TV coverage had a big effect. The publicity got the sit-ins going and set in people's minds Martin Luther King and nonviolence. Later that year, young people founded the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee—SNCC.

Thinking it all over now, I can say the civil rights movement was all in place by this time. We had Martin Luther King and nonviolence—the "Montgomery Way," he called it. We had SCLC and SNCC. The federal government was getting more involved. And once in Montgomery, whites had stopped the disruptions by other whites. It was getting to be an everyday thing to watch TV and read the papers to find out about civil rights. And we even had our anthem, "We Shall Overcome." That old song caught on when the students sung it at a sit-in in Nashville.

And by this time, 1960, I had read a lot and thought a lot about the movement. I knew I couldn't do anything to determine what would happen, but I had my feelings of where it was going. I was persuaded that as long as we had Martin Luther King to lead us, there would come more changes than since slavery time. I believed in Martin Luther King and his ideas completely. Sometimes I had to push myself to catch up with him. But it remained the same; I was a student of his, I was caught up in this. It wasn't going to be enough just to be involved in the movement. More

and more I recognized I had to somehow be identified as a part of it.

There was a spirit moving that gave black people the courage that I didn't believe we had. I don't know where it came from, but it bubbled up. It bubbled up in Martin Luther King and other young blacks in their twenties. And the 1954 Supreme Court ruling caused the spirit to generate. It generated in middle-aged blacks in Montgomery and in students in their teens. I was in my thirties and I came along with Martin Luther King's people, too. We were all together then.

At the same time, I was moving ahead with my efforts to get political leadership. That never changed. I always thought my abilities were best suited to working for equality in politics.

Chapter 4

Achieving My Dream

As I got more recognition other people began leaning my way, other groups. In 1956, when Pomeroy ran the second time, I handled his campaign again, but he didn't win. Gordon Clinton won. In this same year, 1956, I managed Rosellini's campaign in the Central District. You recall, because of my activity in the Central community, I was gradually building a political base. And Rosellini saw that, and he had heard about me managing other campaigns, and he asked for me. One of his people came out to my house and asked me if I would help him to get to be governor, and I said yes. I opened an office and I got people to volunteer, and put out literature. We knocked on some doors for him.

I was successful in convincing the local people that Rosellini would be good for us, he would make appointments where there hadn't been appointments made. And when he was elected governor I advised him, and he followed through. I helped establish an agreement with him that the liquor store that was in our neighborhood should be managed by Democrats, black Democrats. Just me with him, I said, "This is what we want." And that was the first time I really asserted myself. He agreed and he came across. He did more for us than any other governor had done at the time, and we made progress. He made other appointments—and that was enough.

At that time, there was political patronage and the liquor stores were not in the state merit system. The manager of the liquor store was the highest-paid black state employee. And we got control of it. Then we got blacks on the parole board and we held on to that spot. So we were gradually moving up. That meant the beginning of jobs identified with us, and those were jobs that brought money into the community.

In the mid-fifties I was sort of at the core of economic change in the Central District, beneath the change. I pushed the people, but I never did come out and try to be a leader. There were separate groups, like the Seattle NAACP and the Urban League, which were pushing for employment and they were getting it. I was part of the movement, but not the center of the movement. Then, after 1956, beginning with Governor Rosellini's appointments, I became the center of the movement.

Jobs were an intrinsic need in the Central District. Not enough jobs—that was the hole in the community. If we could get jobs out of politics—hurrah! But the real economic changes were a result of politics. Politics came first, and by establishing your claim to some benefits, then the jobs fell into place. If you couldn't provide the jobs, you were no good as a politician.

The political jobs were mostly created by my own effort. I didn't have wealth as a goal. That was sort of the essence of my whole political career. I established that. I was reaching for influence and power within the community. I was knowledgeable of other people's efforts to change things. You know, the Urban League had a man, he was executive secretary, and he carried weight. The NAACP had officers and they carried weight. I was trying to work outside of those organizations, yet work within the confines of their goals. And they couldn't help but feel a little negative toward me. I could feel it. There was among the leaders of the community sort of a jealousy, and an effort to make sure I didn't get too much power. It wasn't anything that affected me. I was determined, and nobody had as much determination as I had.

In fact, I had one leader tell me while I was living in Highpoint, "You take care of that community, and let us take care of this community."

But I didn't pay any attention to it. I had been in the Central community, I moved out of it to Highpoint—I knew I was coming back to the community, and my whole life's plan lay in that. I knew what I was trying to do, and I knew that some people weren't that interested in me being successful. I made no secret about what I was trying to do, and I always told them that I was going to run for political office. I said it at the start. My goal was always there.

What I was doing was trying to establish myself in the community as a source to be reckoned with. I saw the need and I wanted to correct it. I wanted to produce. And I felt a consensus didn't mean that we had gathered together and made a decision. I felt the consensus. I felt the NAACP people wanted jobs, and I felt that the Urban League was busy getting jobs. And my group was busy providing the political jobs. So we were in sync.

Blacks generally became acceptable for all jobs. At that time we were breaking the ground for general acceptance, and it worked. And there was a movement in the Central District, established by some people on their own. A grocery store was established, and some other things, but they didn't last long. But this all generated activity. It was working because together we were trying to make it work.

I didn't have a plan for exactly what office I would achieve. But opportunity found me in the Legislature. During the 1954 campaign, I found out that MacAdoo believed in things that I didn't believe in. So in 1956, I said to myself, "I projected this guy, so it's up to me to take him out." And another reason I thought he wouldn't be a good candidate was because he had been mixed up in the district resident issue. Finally, I knew the Democrats weren't really behind us yet, and I knew I could take defeat better than him. So I decided to run and I persuaded him not to. He was an architect, and I told him I would make sure he got some state jobs, and I did later, when I was elected.

I thought that the first time I ran they were going to beat me, the Democratic Party was going to beat me. And I figured I was ready for that, even though I didn't know how much it would hurt. But I got through it, I considered it was part of my purification. It was part of the penalty we had to pay for defeating the Democrat in the Thirty-seventh District. You know, I wasn't really accepted in the party at this time. I was not even very well known. I was just becoming known. And I wasn't knowledgeable of the correct lines when I was starting out. I started out being dumb; I didn't have any knowledge of what was the next step. So some of the wrong steps that I took were because of my limited knowledge.

I wasn't good at raising money yet, and so another reason I lost that first time was because I didn't have any money. I had a total of $385 that I spent in my campaign.

The same people who were my avid followers told me not to run for the Legislature when I ran this time. When I told Russ Gideon that I was thinking to run, he said, "Don't do it." He said, "We can't afford to lose you." But you know me, I had my own mind, so I ran anyway. My other close friends, Lonnie Williams and Terry Kruse, were all for me. And I couldn't afford to talk to other people, because I kept it a secret until I was ready to run. I talked everything over with Marion. And I knew she wouldn't agree to everything, but I kept her informed of what I was going through, all the time.

I did plenty of things right, too. I had convictions and I expressed them. This time I ran and I explicitly stated what I wanted accomplished, and I hung onto it throughout my terms in the Legislature. I wanted equal opportunity, so all of my bills were in that theme. And from this first campaign, I wanted open housing. The only way black people experienced benefits from government was when government was in charge. I was slanted toward government intervention because of that fact, and because of the experience in the South. What I said was that we had to have black participation in government. I didn't measure what couldn't be accomplished.

I didn't have a campaign committee this time

or any other time. But this time I knew less, so having no committee wasn't good.

The Municipal League had a committee and they interviewed all the candidates. And they decided—they rated me superior. And I had been reluctant about the Municipal League, but they rated me superior and I thanked them, but acknowledged that I didn't feel superior.

I lost in the primary to Harry Martin, by only two hundred votes. Harry Martin lost to Charles Stokes in the general, so Stokes was our representative a third time.

When I lost, I was downbeaten. I was sick mentally when I figured that I probably could have won, if I had asserted a little more effort. And I went down to the House of Representatives, to the State Capitol. I stood in back of the room, and I saw me serving there. And I was convinced that it was going to happen. I came on back and was satisfied, and started planning and thinking.

I knew a week after I lost that I was going to be running next time. I spent almost every month thinking about it, and deciding what I would do differently. And, okay, after I ran and lost that time, I still came out with a good taste in my mouth. I had been honest. I had been well rated, and that was my first break with the past of being the quiet fella. And I established that I was going to be elected next time.

After they had defeated me, the Democrats had no taste for constantly fighting, and they came around and they supported me. I had been active, I had caused a protest, defeated their candidate. My running for office in 1956 appeared to atone. They had gotten a bit of blood from the turnip. From then on the party started moving toward me. The only way they could have an influence on my actions was to give me a position. And so they did it. Beginning in 1956, I was a precinct committeeman for years and my group basically was enfolded into the party.

As precinct committeeman, supposedly I would go around and put literature out to all the members of a precinct, and get them registered, and get them to vote. But I never carried it out. My activity was not confined to my precinct. I covered my precinct, and a lot more—I never kept it narrowed down to my precinct. I got other precinct committeemen, and at one time I had seventeen precinct committeemen who were more loyal to me than they were the district chairman. And we could be the balance in swinging anything we wanted to do in a vote.

I had learned to be a party man. I had gotten into the good graces of the party. The state chairman was Luke Graham. I had gotten into his good graces. I just approached Luke Graham and his predecessor Carstensen and told them that I could deliver the black community. When they looked back on the figures of the Pomeroy election, George Dahl, who was chairman of the party in King County, was convinced that I could not only deliver it, but I had the information that could help me deliver it. I had the registration of the black community. So he passed it on down and they accepted it. So I just continued down the line.

Governor Rosellini gave my district chairman, Dorothy Laevell, who was fighting against me, a job at the state where she couldn't be chairman any longer. She was not very favorable to blacks. Then the governor named someone chairman with instructions to help me. He was named Howard Williams, and he did. Howard Williams was the chairman when I was elected.

I was never a slave to the party, one who carried out the party direction. I just was associated with them. I saw it, more or less, that I was working from my personal convictions, and the Democratic Party fit my label. Some people, when they had gotten elected, became subservient to the party of their choice, and I was convinced that I wouldn't do that. I worked within the framework of the party, and had no problem with that. But I didn't call myself a slave.

The party cleared the way for me to run in 1958 by getting other people who wanted to run to stay out of the race. They did it by talking to the people. I assumed the party county chairman did the talking. If someone else wanted to run, he was told, "No, Sam has worked hard for this, and

he is due it." It wasn't commonly done that way, but it was done that way in my case. And I accepted it graciously.

When I was considering getting elected, the Boeing union made a counter offer to me. They wanted to make me a permanent business representative and send me to Wisconsin to school to learn how. And at the pay they were giving, it made me consider it. And I considered it seriously, but something within me wanted to be free of obligation. And I told them no, I wanted to get elected.

I was determined to win. Like I said, I had been thinking and deciding what to do since I lost in 1956. I got my ideas when I was asleep in bed, when I was laying in bed they came to me out of the fresh blue sky. I formulated the idea, and I would know every aspect of it. I don't know where the ideas came from, but that was how it happened. I didn't get them from people. I just got the idea; it would come just as if someone was talking to me. And I just followed it out. I had a very good memory. After I formulated the idea, I would remember it all in completeness and put it together and pounce it on people unsuspectingly.

If I had an idea I wanted to try out, I would float it in front of Marion. I kept her informed of the progress of all my campaigns, and she would let out disagreement anytime she felt like it. And her reaction was the average reaction. It gave me a measurement of how other people would accept it. And she was good at it because she wouldn't hold back. She would say, "I think that is a stupid idea." And I knew that I had the most information, but she was my measurement.

I didn't ask for advice from anyone else but Marion. That was my weak point. I decided everything myself. Then I sold the ideas to the guys. I didn't delegate responsibility for deciding and planning things. I made my decision from in my mind and sold it. I didn't mind the others doing the work, because I could plan that. And I would get the idea and tell my close friend Russ Gideon my thoughts, and he would execute them. He did it so well I couldn't have done it any better myself. I thought that was unusual. When there were disagreements within my group—I overpowered them! I assure you, I was so strong in my belief that I prevailed.

So I don't remember Governor Rosellini's advice, but I know he gave me advice. My mind was made up on what I was going to do, and he supported me, and encouraged me.

I decided I would never have an active campaign committee. I always had a committee in name, but not active. Russ Gideon was my chairman, but like I said, I made all the plans, and I planned the action I was going to take part in. So I was my own campaign manager, in fact. I had a lady who was the wife of a friend of mine; she was called my campaign manager, Mrs. Covington. Vivian Covington. She had a group following out of the Lutheran Church. She exploited them, she kept them behind her, and they made some effective contributions to my campaign. They were active and they were part of the plans I had of going throughout the district.

I knew I had to have more money than the $385 I had in 1956. Here, I ought to say that the Boeing union was a big help. They came over to my side and gave me what amounted to the victory, the amount of money that I needed. They gave me a thousand dollars, and I raised about four hundred somewhere else. But among the things I didn't like, was that the Boeing union wouldn't just give me the money. They said, "Make the bills and send us the bills." But I did it.

Governor Rosellini did what he could, again. He gave me some money. I said I don't remember his advice, but I do remember his money.

And I had planned something else. I knew from studying election results, if you could get nominated in the primary in my district, and go on to the final election, if you were in the range, you could win. And I was basing my facts of politics on that. So I worked hard to get other people out of the race, and I succeeded, except for one that the Lord took away—one died. But I succeeded in persuading two others to get out of the race, Dave Ogden and Ulysses Stevens. I got them out of the race so that it would boil down to

me and the Republican, Charles Stokes.

I kept using campaign methods I had learned in the campaigns I had managed. I put literature out. I made up my own literature, stated what I was going to do when I was elected, and it involved people who fully wanted equal opportunity. And I told them I'd be a fighter for that, and I was.

And I had thought of some new things to add. I told Luke Graham that if I could get a picture with Harry Truman, I felt that was a way of helping the campaign. And Luke set it up. When Truman visited, he made a place for me at the head table with him and I've got a picture of that. And he made it possible for me to get a picture shaking his hand, and I got a picture of that. That's the one I like the most. So I made twenty thousand copies of it and circulated it among the district. I wanted to circulate it in the white community and I bought an ad, paid seventy dollars for it, in the white paper, the *Capital Hill Times*. And the publisher would not print it. He didn't tell me that he wasn't going to print it. He just left it out. And I was so mad, oh, as mad as I've ever been. I retrieved back the copy of my ad and I had it printed. And I had the boys circulate it on Capital Hill and in the black community. And I had it printed and circulated before the end of the week, and that was one thing that I counted for putting me over.

Another effective thing I did to campaign was to go around in the district and knock on doors. I knocked on the doors and said, "My name is Sam Smith, I'm trying to get elected state representative, and I want your help." I did that in what I considered the favorable parts of the district, and of course, Pomeroy had taught me, "You get out your strength where you're strong. Don't go where any other person is strong, because you are fighting him." So at that time the black community was fifty-five percent of the district. And I was working on the blacks. So I didn't spend any time in Leschi and Madrona. I campaigned on the two streets—Thirty-fourth and Thirty-fifth. I didn't go any deeper into it.

And I had decided to parade the district. We made a pretty interesting sight with my campaign car at the head of the parade, and people from the Lutheran Church in all their cars. The people in the district, the blacks, had never seen this before. And I broke them into it. And they flocked to my support.

The people accepted my efforts. They were ready for leadership—they flocked around me. I was dynamic and creative. And because I was young and I believed in my ideas, I was really a hot leader.

I was forcing my way to leadership by answering the people's needs or desire. I perceived that all people wanted equality, equal opportunity. And all my efforts were in that theme. The people couldn't help but recognize me if I promised to cause something good to happen. They could see it. And I could tell when the people were pleased. Up until the time I ran for office, in the black community it was generally thought that lawyers, doctors, and teachers would be the candidates. I was just a Boeing worker, and at first, that did not classify me as an upcoming leader. I knew that there was some reluctance to me because I wasn't a professional. I started the idea that you don't have to be a doctor, lawyer, or teacher. You just have to have a vision of what you want to do, and follow it.

You never try to convince anyone until you are convinced. If you are convinced, you can impart that conviction to others. That's why I say I overpowered people, not just my own group, but voters and other politicians. I was so convinced, and I could impart that, that it would influence another person that had no conviction. That's all it is. You are convinced yourself, and then try to convince the others. And the manner in which you try affects the other person. Yes! Yes! Yes! First, I was convinced. And as I was convinced, I convinced other people.

So I could tell I had good popular support. And the Municipal League stuck with me, and they re-rated me again, the second time I ran, the same thing. When I was rated superior the first time, Mrs. Gladys Kirk was also rated superior. The second time Joel Pritchard was rated superior,

and Dan Brink was rated superior. And I was rated superior. This time I didn't figure that anybody was more superior than I was.

One person I wanted to favor me, but he didn't. That was Reverend McKinney, the preacher at Mount Zion Baptist. He was not friendly to me. He had been favorable to Charles Stokes. Stokes had made it a point to be on the selection committee when they called him to preach. So Reverend McKinney was, more or less, bound by something between them that had made him be on the other side. Later he came around to my side.

I did get along with Charles Stokes, though. In fact I voted for him a couple of times. I would have voted for him in 1958, except that I was in the race myself. And by then, there was more difference between us. He had adopted more of the Republican philosophy.

I wanted to be behind Charles Stokes in the primary by about three hundred votes. I was behind him in the final primary count about six hundred votes. That excited me. But in the final vote, the final election, I was ahead of him by about a thousand votes.

So I won. At that time I ran around to the key precincts, I drove around to the key precincts, to find out how I had done, and I was finding out the good news. The good news was that the precincts that I considered key, or bellwether, I had won tremendously. I knew that the Republican candidate was going to beat me in Leschi and Madrona, but I ran to all the other precincts and I was winning by so much, that I knew that I had won. I was thirty-six, two years younger than thirty-eight, which I had planned as the ideal, golden age to first be elected. And all my education and civic leadership experience was behind me. So I was happy. I was happy! The night I won was the high point of my career.

I never did celebrate, didn't believe in celebrations. I accepted it quietly and humbly, same as when I was elected to city council, ten years later. I accepted it pretty much on my knees. But I didn't celebrate.

I had learned to understand my district, and my place in it. I was a factor in the Democratic vote in the Thirty-seventh District, but just because people voted for me didn't mean they voted for everybody else who was a Democrat. Even when I was getting elected, I thought we were in a marginal district. It all depended on the candidate, not on which party was pushing.

The early fifties were my political initiation and I remembered everything. You've got to have principles that you stand for. And you have got to be able to defend those principles. And you've got to know when to compromise, and when not to compromise. So long as you can keep your principles in line with the public thought, it's fine. But when you decide, "I'm right and there is nothing else anybody can tell me," you're on the road to disaster. Usually, people exercise their principles in quiet ways. There are not too many people as vociferous as I was.

I observed that real leaders are scarcely found. And real leaders are people who stand up for principle. And there are a lot of good politicians that want to only go so far. But there are principled people who go beyond that. You find some now and then. But you can't tell. You can't tell when a guy is principled until he has a situation facing him when he has to exhibit that principle. You don't know whether he is principled or not until he faces the music.

I pushed myself in front without knowing all that first. But it was my conviction that pushed me there. And I became accepted. I was achieving my dream.

Chapter 5

Learning to Legislate

Driving to Olympia is like coming to a shrine. I couldn't understand the feeling. But every time I rounded the curve on the Interstate and saw the silhouette of the Capitol Building—I never stopped being overwhelmed.

The building was like a piece of history, and I felt proud to be a part of it. It was the design. That Capitol Building is so historic and so much like the United States Capitol that it just overwhelmed me.

I almost felt like kneeling when walking up the steps to the Capitol. I think my dedication was like my father's dedication to his faith. And it renewed my faith anytime I saw that seat of government; I renewed my vow to serve honorably. That's why I didn't get into trouble.

I always wanted a public career, and this was a fulfillment. I felt that I was beginning my dream, and this was only the starting point. It was the beginning of me being included in history, and it seemed like the state of Washington lent itself to me so I would become a part of history. I always wanted to be an important person. I had been working to that point. And I saw myself finally achieving it.

When I attended the opening day ceremonies in January 1959 I felt great. The ritual and ceremony impressed me. When I left to join the Seattle City Council, I didn't see how they could hold the same ceremony without me.

Chief Clerk Si Holcomb called the House to order that first day. Si was from Hoquiam, and he was the technician. He knew the art of being chief clerk better than anybody else I knew. And he was fair—he would always give you the correct information. In fact, he didn't act like somebody from Grays Harbor County, but he was. He was the epitome of fairness.

After an opening prayer, Si read a message from Secretary of State Vic Meyers certifying that we had all been fairly elected to our positions in the House. Vic Meyers was from Seattle, and he was an old-time politician. And old-time politicians go along with the party and keep their word. Vic Meyers was that kind of politician. He was friendly to me, and later when his son got to be a state representative, his son was friendly to me.

Next we elected our Speaker. We elected John O'Brien Speaker of the House—for the third session in a row. He served four times overall. He was dedicated to principle, politically. John O'Brien was Catholic and he had liberal beliefs. He was an example of a politician who if he gave you a commitment, would stand by it. He supported me. I told him what committees I wanted to serve on, and he saw to it that I got those committees. I could go to him and ask him what bills he would support, and he would tell me. As long as he was Speaker of the House he was a stalwart in my behalf.

When I got elected I didn't have any idea how the system would work, but I found the other legislators willing to open their arms and accept me, and welcome me. But that took awhile. I hadn't read any books on politics, state or local, when I came to the Legislature. I learned the way things go by just keeping an alert mind and seeing other people and how they got things done. Nobody taught me. I just learned my lessons and kept them in my head. I absorbed and remembered them. And I was an apt student.

Of course, I knew what the parties were like, and that the Democratic Party was closer to what I liked, and that I could maneuver within the boundaries of it very well. I was working for something that the Democratic Party stood for: equality. I provided them the opportunity to do

more about it. And they accepted. Even though I wasn't big enough then to have an impact on the party, they would have been embarrassed had they not fought along with me when I was doing things which were in the party line.

But I didn't know how committees worked. That's why I asked so many questions—to see how they worked. And by my questions and answers I found out. What really goes on is this: the committee chairman is the boss. Bills can be sent to his committee, but he decides when they will be taken up for a vote by the committee. And when I became vice chairman of State Government Committee in 1959, the old man who was chairman, W.E. Carty, brought me in on how it worked. The committee chairman and the clerk get together and they agree what will be put on the calendar, and they bring it up and if it has enough votes, it gets out. You just need a majority. But they can just discuss it and the chairman can announce that he's not going to bring it to a vote—the chairman has that privilege and nobody can overrule him. That first session I just learned, so when I became chairman the next session I knew how it worked.

The discussion on a bill is about whether or not it's good public policy, whether or not it's good for the committee, for the people of the state. And always there is somebody on the committee who disagrees and they put their arguments forth, and you put your arguments forth. And the sponsor of the legislation is invited in to tell why he sponsored it. The discussion is worthwhile because it determines whether you get a law passed out of the committee. If they don't agree with it, it's just too bad.

But even if the committee people favored you and you got a bill out of committee, it still had to go to the Rules Committee. And the Rules Committee was made up of powerful people. You didn't get anything out of the Rules Committee unless you spoke to somebody. And the somebody that you spoke to had to be on the Rules Committee. You knew you had to go through two hoops—the standing committee and the Rules Committee. And once you succeeded in one committee, then you worked on the other. The Speaker was chairman of the House Rules Committee and the lieutenant governor was the chairman of the Rules Committee of the Senate.

I remember being on the Appropriations Committee that session. I knew it was an important committee, so I was always on it. And in 1959, I was chairman of a subcommittee called Institutions, which had to do with buildings being constructed. And I paid particular attention to a bill for building construction at the University of Washington. There was a new building that I helped get money for—I think it was the business administration building. I made sure to include it in the Appropriations Committee and I helped get it passed. But at the time, I didn't really know how responsible we were for the University of Washington. And I never will forget the first time President Odegaard came before the committee. He used four hours. Four hours. Odegaard called me later and I passed the word to him that he shouldn't do that.

It was Warren Bishop, Rosellini's budget man, who kept urging me on with the building appropriations. But after he left the Legislature, he went to Washington State University where he was vice president. He was the one that influenced me to send my oldest son to WSU. He said, "Your son has a technical record, he's eligible for a scholarship," and he assured me that there would be one. And I had a good relationship with WSU. I helped them when Clement French was president. I was a good friend of his.

At first I didn't know that Augie Mardesich and the Everett group had control of the House. And they didn't want anything to pass that they didn't like, and they made sure it didn't happen. In fact, all Augie Mardesich had to do was to speak to the Rules Committee and you wouldn't get your bill out on the floor for a vote in the Senate or the House. I never did get that cold. He was operating with strict provisions. And that was it.

I don't know who else belonged to the Everett group, but I remember Wally Carmichael. I can't remember the name, but there was another man

from Snohomish County who was a confidant of Augie Mardesich. I learned to keep Augie Mardesich as my friend. I don't know how I did it. But I just did it. He was always friendly to me. One thing, when he was in tough campaigns I wrote him letters endorsing his campaign. That put him sort of indebted to me.

And for most of my years in the Legislature, the Everett-Snohomish County group was the most pronounced. Nobody else had control of the Legislature as much as they did. They used cold-blooded power. That they did. If you crossed them, they would remember it. And if you didn't deliver what they expected of you on a particular bill, they would come to you and explain why they needed to pass it. And you either went with them, or you lost a powerful friend. But they did it quietly. You would be opposing their bills and wouldn't know what had happened to them, and then a truck would just run you over. I knew that something was happening and then somebody finally told me. Then I took steps to make friends. But it took me a couple of sessions to find out that it was the people from Snohomish County. I learned their guidelines and I learned to live inside of them.

And I found out who had the power in the Senate. If I wanted to get my bills out of the Senate I spoke to that person. He might not be on the committee, but he had the power to jar it loose. I found out that Mike Gallagher was a power in the Senate and so I spoke to him. He had worked up in the Senate to where they couldn't pass anything that he didn't want. And I found out Martin Durkan was also a power in the Senate, so we made a pact that I would support his bills in the House, and he would support my bills in the Senate. So he had the power, and sometimes he had to force it.

And Bob Greive was sort of that way in the Senate for awhile. He got the power by collecting money and distributing it among the people he wanted to be in the majority. And he did it. That's the way he used to control the Senate. There was nothing illegal about it. I didn't know about it at first. I found out about it only after I had been there for awhile—after I had served a couple of sessions.

At first Bob Greive was dead set against me, and he said I would never get anything out of the Senate. But then he came around and was for me—he helped me get things out. I don't know why he was against me, or why he came around. But he came around to be one of my strongest supporters. And all the years he was on the King County Council, he was a strong supporter of mine. I think that people changed their opinion of me as they began to get closer to me, and to see in depth that I had no axes to grind, that I was just interested in the welfare of my people. But different people took different amounts of time to change.

My first session was a learning session. I was favorable to the subjects that I was supposed to be. I was liberal and had made my votes liberal. In fact, I was called ultra-liberal because I wanted open housing. But I didn't get it passed that time. My principle interests besides open housing that session were increasing employment security and eliminating discrimination in credit applications. Increasing employment security was an effort for all the people, but the credit application was for the black consumption.

Joel Pritchard and Dan Brink and I introduced the first open housing bill, House Bill 70. When I got to the Legislature, I found that Pritchard and Brink were all set to join me. I didn't compose the bill. I don't remember who exactly composed it, but a group of people wrote the bill and contacted me and gave it to me. Pritchard and Brink, they had agreed to cosponsor it, but I was the lead sponsor.

Dan Brink was a liberal and he believed in what he said, but he couldn't put other people who didn't believe in what he said in proper context. So he left the Legislature after two terms. Joel Pritchard, I didn't get close to him, but close enough to get him to cosponsor the open housing bill. He was a liberal Republican, but he was willing to let the other Republicans have their way, and so they passed it out of the House and killed

it in the Senate. This was a constant thing—in the House they were favorable, but in the Senate they deep-sixed it.

I remember the bill promptly passed the House. So I felt good. I thought it was going to pass the Senate. I had to learn the ways of getting something through one house and then watching it get killed in the other. I had to learn that. It died in the Senate. And I remember some of the terrible feelings that I had after visiting the Senate committee. It just wasn't going to be.

I wrote a letter to the editor of the *Seattle Times* about open housing that year. My bill got a reasonable acceptance in the press. And I must admit that I did a lot of my own PR in the black newspapers. I wrote my own articles, sometimes I wrote them under an assumed name, but I was always looking for the people's approval. I don't want to give out what the names were, but I used names to express some thought that I didn't want to come from me, but I wanted it to be in my line of philosophy. And the response was favorable—favorable from the people in the community. My constituents called me, and they wrote many letters.

And the response was mostly favorable from other legislators. They knew that I was for open housing. I had indicated that I was for it, and they expected me to put it in. But in1959, they weren't really serious; they had other plans. They expected to pass it through the House so as not to embarrass me. It died in Senate Rules on purpose. It wasn't brought out. As lieutenant governor, John Cherberg was the chairman of the Senate Rules Committee. He was friendly to me and didn't have any objection to it, but he was only the chairman of the committee—he couldn't supply the votes. Washington State was just meeting the question of civil rights and they weren't quite to the stage where they could have passed it yet. But, I felt obligated to work on it 'til it passed.

Even though I was discouraged about open housing, two of the bills I sponsored did become law. I remember House Bill 171 concerning credit loan applications, making it so that you wouldn't have to put down your race on a loan application, and House Bill 84 concerning increasing employment security.

I remember House Bill 171 became law. It established that you couldn't discriminate against a person on loans. They had redlined a lot of reasons why you couldn't get money from a bank. I remember one time I had four thousand dollars in the bank, and I wanted to borrow one hundred and I couldn't do it. The bank had a policy that wouldn't allow them to make a loan to me at that time. And I felt that this was discriminatory, so I pushed for my race-blind loan application bill.

I'd signed on House Bill 84 with a group of other people. It was about labor and unemployment. And I was determined to get action on it. It had been in the headlines almost every day of the session and I finally got action on it by toning it down. I wanted fifty dollars a month for unemployment compensation, and people like Boeing wanted the bill killed. And I think "Wayward Bill" was one of the top guys at that time, and he was writing me to get it killed, to take my support off it. But I didn't do that. And even the labor people wanted to stop action on it. Ed Weston was the head of the labor group at that time. I was successful in getting the bill passed at forty-two dollars a month, and that was seven dollars a month more than the going rate.

Compromise in the truest example means that nobody's perfect. Everybody wants something, and you have to give up a point in your bill to get it passed. In fact, I had bills that I wanted, and I wanted all in one piece, but somebody couldn't support them like that. And so I had to compromise to take a part out of the bill and try again. Sometimes you have to compromise the exactness of the bill, but you didn't ever compromise on your principle, you compromise on the details. I didn't learn much of that in the first session. I didn't. I thought that in order for a bill to pass, it just had to be a good bill. And Mike Gallagher, I believe, wised me up—it could be a good bill, but it may not pass.

And I learned about sponsoring bills, getting cosponsors, and helping other people with their bills. If I was the main sponsor and needed to get

somebody to cosponsor a bill, I asked them. Simple enough. I didn't have them refuse because I more-or-less asked people who were friendly. So I knew who to ask and they volunteered to help me. And I sponsored or cosponsored other bills because I wanted to be a good guy and go along with other people. But that first session, if I was not a main sponsor, people only sometimes asked me to cosponsor. But it wasn't that way all the sessions. After I became a chairman, people from the Senate and the House were lining up to approach me to jointly sponsor a bill with them.

At the end of the first session, the ruling clique figured that they had to give me a little something so that I could go back into my community and point out what I had accomplished. I knew that Speaker O'Brien and the president of the Senate, Cherberg, were part of it. I had succeeded in overcoming a Republican in the black district and they wanted me to hold that position. They wanted me back. And they knew I couldn't do it without something to point to. And so they discussed among themselves what to do. They wanted to give me something substantive to point out. And they decided that the increase in unemployment benefits was one they could give me, and the credit loan application that eliminated racial identification was another one they could give me that would not bring the wrath of the other legislators down upon them.

But I wasn't satisfied, even though people kept telling me how lucky I was to get two bills passed. And after looking at it, they said, "Nobody gets anything their first year. So you were lucky." I had established open housing as a goal for myself. So I absorbed my lessons and I just kept working on that goal until I finally reached it in the last session I was down there.

I got a lot of pressure from lobbyists. I listened to them when they were right, and I disregarded them when they were wrong. The teachers' lobbyists were the most powerful, because if you had a run-in with the teachers, most of the time you didn't get back to the Legislature. I know of a couple of people who disagreed with the teachers and they weren't back at the next session. The teachers and Boeing were the most powerful. And the state employees were powerful, but teachers and Boeing had the ability to wipe you out.

Basically you had to agree with the teachers' program. Mostly they wanted good salaries. They didn't donate a lot of money; they made mostly modest political donations. But they had a network, and if the teachers put the word out on you, you were in trouble. I knew the facts of life, and I always managed to stay on the teachers' side, except once. That was later in 1967 when I voted for the Professional Practices Act, a bill that would have created a commission to monitor teacher performance. But they let me get away with it. I was lucky, because the teachers were the most powerful lobby in the Legislature.

Boeing has a lot of influence because they help legislators get elected, and some of those legislators were beholden. Boeing exhibited that when they came down on something, and they could come down on something. But they knew, even though I was a Boeing employee at the time, that I was not going to allow them to dominate me. Boeing, in regards to me, was sort of strapped. I was a Boeing employee and was touted as an ordinary man, an ordinary worker. And Boeing, the big giant, was too embarrassed to come after me.

I don't think being a Boeing employee was an advantage. I had to be sure that I gave off the attitude that Boeing did not affect my judgment, so I did. I didn't want anything out of Boeing. In the first two terms Boeing helped me financially, all right, but not significantly enough for me to be subservient. At that time they didn't have public disclosure, so nobody knew who gave who money.

Boeing never persecuted me, except after the first term. The first term when I got back to work, my job was nonexistent and I had to take a reduction in pay in order to stay on the job. My reduction in pay was part of the KC-135 cutback. I was reduced in grade to a grade eight, which was four grades below what I had been when I

was a coordinator. I was transferred to a machine shop where I had to issue parts that weighed five hundred pounds or more. I detected that was an effort to make me quit. There I was, with a college degree, lifting these parts! But I was determined that they wouldn't ruin me. Then about one year later, a person who had heard about me—he was sort of a religious fellow—transferred me to storekeeping. I got proficient at that, and then they transferred me to the field and promoted me to a grade seven.

After my first term, I attended the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles in the summer of 1960. I was actually participating after listening to all those national conventions when I was growing up. I was an alternate delegate, I think. It was all planned. When I was talking to the state Democratic Party chairmen, Andrew Carstensen and Luke Graham, in the previous years, I didn't want to go to the convention. I helped provide the impetus for other people to go, in fact, for nine other people. But when I got around to this convention in 1960, I felt it was the right time, and I had always wanted to attend a convention when the person running was going to be elected president. I could sense the movement in the air. And I was correct.

I fell right in with the Kennedy brothers when they were running for office. I didn't know whether I liked them or not, but they were doing things that I approved of. John Kennedy received the nomination, and I was careful to make sure I was on his side, even though down inwardly I felt pretty close to Adlai Stevenson. But I determined that Kennedy was going to win, and I got on his side. I just came to the conclusion that he was going to win. And then my own district was about forty percent Catholic. I felt I couldn't go wrong.

I was awfully careful at the convention. I knew I was going to meet a lot of people, and I wanted to affect them the right way, and I did. I had studied up on all of them, and I was careful not to insult anyone, and to appear to be on their side. To meet people, I had the party chairman from this state, I believe it was Luke Graham, introduce me. I worked through him and the chairman of my district, Howard Williams, and it was easy. I told them what I wanted to do and who I wanted to meet. I met Hi Ruskin of the Illinois party, and I met Burton from Iowa. And I met the big, tough, union leaders like Carmine DeSapio, from New York, and I was careful to affect them favorably.

And I met Robert Kennedy several times during the convention. Robert had held out until the last that he wanted Scoop Jackson for vice president. If he wanted Scoop Jackson for vice president I couldn't disagree with that. I was on the campaign committee when Scoop Jackson was first elected to the Senate. I admired him because he showed strength. And generally I shared his views on foreign policy. He wasn't a strictly party individual, but he was full of what was good for the people. And I admired that. I sort of emulated that for awhile. But LBJ walked into the scene with a pocketful of delegates and that ended Scoop Jackson. Robert Kennedy made several trips over to our delegation, and said it was not his choice, but his brother's choice.

I grew to be impressed with Robert Kennedy. I feel that it is true that Robert Kennedy was the brains behind his brother. When John was campaigning, Robert was there, out front. I just pictured him as being the brains. Nobody told me that, but I gathered that on my own perception.

Robert Kennedy was known to be tough—he was a tough cookie. Robert Kennedy gave the impression that he knew what he was doing, he knew how to do it, and if you got in his way, you were just out of luck. So I wanted to be on his good side. You remember he got those two labor union guys. The labor union guy who was in the Teamsters, Jimmy Hoffa—he had him pulled down from power and he had used a friend of mine named Charles Z. Smith to do it. He also used him to bring Dave Beck down. Charles Z. was the lead prosecutor and I asked him several times how he did it. And I still don't know how he did it, but he succeeded in putting both men in jail. I was afraid for him—those

were powerful men.

Charles Z. was from Florida. He was part Cuban—his daddy was part Cuban. But I didn't get to know Charles Z. very closely, personally. I knew him when he was in law school at the University of Washington. I found that he was like a ticking clock. He was always precise. He thought like that, and he worked like that, and whatever job you gave him, he did it. I admired him for his competence. There was nobody that was more competent than Charles Z.

When he was working for Kennedy, and he would read the papers and notice that I had done something worthwhile, he would claim me as his brother. If I did something bad, he didn't know me. But I didn't do anything bad, so he claimed me as a brother. And through Charles Z. I was listed in the "Blue Book" in Washington, D.C. at that time.

But I remember how disappointed I was when we heard that John Kennedy was going to accept Lyndon Johnson. Actually, it was the only way for him to get elected. I met Johnson and I made a movie around him that I used in my next election. It was laid out for me. And that was good. People were glad to see me with the vice president, shaking hands and quoting him.

While I was down there at the convention, I wrote my wife and told her that I had succeeded in maneuvering my position to where I could have everything I wanted. I started by wanting to work in Washington, D.C., and I'd set the scale that I could do that. I had met enough people to be able to maneuver that. And I was trying to. But I wrote my wife and said, "I'm in position to maneuver myself to achieve what I've always wanted. But somehow or another, I have this uneasiness that I don't want to do it. So I will keep my position as state representative and go on."

I probably sensed that there was something lurking in the background that I couldn't interpret. I knew there was something in the background, and I don't know what it was, but I felt uneasy. I felt afraid. And I knew that I had to play to the people's music who were in power, I had no choice of that. I was afraid that I would get out of line, by my actions and by my speech, and by more conversation with them. I don't know—all the people I met at the convention were strictly party-liners and I didn't know whether I could be a party-liner, pure and simple. Anyway, I was so disappointed when Scoop was not appointed, that I left on the train the next day, the day they actually announced it.

When I got back from the convention I got started on my first re-election campaign. I organized that campaign in 1960 differently. And I called it the best campaign I ever ran. I sought to show how I was making the state progress. I hired a movie photographer and he went with me to the state institutions where minorities had been shut out, but that had started to open up. We went to the state prison at Monroe, and we went some other places where minorities were beginning to break through, and I made a little twelve minute movie of that.

I made part of the movie of me speaking in the House of Representatives, and part with me meeting Lyndon Johnson and several other big-wigs in the party. And that was revolutionary as far as my district was concerned—nobody had ever done that before. The idea for the movie came from my head. Nobody planted it in my head, I was just thinking that I had to do something outstanding, and that was it. The photographer was named Henry Portien. He was at the convention with me, and he went to the institutions with me. And it all worked out well.

I never did get rid of that twelve-minute movie, but I never repeated it. The film was necessary in the second campaign, because the people could figure I was a fluke in the first campaign, and so I had to put forth my best effort. And I did, and it sold, so I never had to repeat it. I went to taverns and other places, and I would use the wall as a curtain and I showed this picture, the twelve-minute movie that I had made, and people ate it up.

I didn't have any campaign staff other than my kids. My kids visited the district with me and knocked on doors. I visited all of the Central Area

two or more times—particularly the Central Area. Remember, Pomeroy had taught me, "Where you are strong, get all of the votes out. Where you are weak, don't urge them out."

That year I had a little bit more money. My first campaign in 1956 I had $385 and the second in 1958 I had $1,400. I always got contributions from friends, and that year I got a little more. I remember Brock Adams constantly contributed. I knew Brock Adams from before I was elected to the Legislature. That was before he was a congressman. He always helped me in my campaigns. In fact, when he was a budding young attorney and notary public he went around with me to knock on doors, to ask people to be precinct committeemen and he swore them in right there. I needed to get those committeemen in my district so I could have a voice. He knew I had my eye on Congress, but he was always a friend.

I remember the rally for that campaign. It was at the Old Masonic Hall. I was interrupted seventeen times in ten minutes with applause and it ended with a standing ovation. I remember it because the Democratic group was just beginning to gather around me, and accept me. It wasn't until my second run for the Legislature that people really came around to accepting me. At first I wasn't asked to be the speaker at the Urban League, or the YMCA, but by the second term they came around to the fact that this guy's going to be around for awhile. And they started getting me for those positions.

I remember that election as the only time I approached one hundred percent in the precincts. Those were some of the precincts in the Central Area. John Kennedy, you remember, was running for election at the same time, and it was generally the custom that the state representative candidates got about seventy percent of the votes for president, but I surprised them by getting one hundred percent in some precincts, and outpolling the president in a lot of precincts. The election official asked me what was going on. I couldn't tell him, but I was proud to be accepted in that manner.

I was happy about winning. I had not expected to reach one hundred percent, so I was surprised when I carried a few precincts. But I was just plain happy to win. The first time I won was the first time I had felt that exhilaration. I didn't know how it would feel; it was a new experience in my life. I had never felt that way before. There was a bit of that each time I won, but the first time just outdid everything.

And so I returned to Olympia for the 1961 session. This time I was chairman of the State Government Committee. That was the committee that they called the "cemetery of bills," but I worked to make it not be a cemetery. I got all the bills out. Speaker John O'Brien figured that was the place where I could do the least damage and so he chose me. He figured that would appease me, and it did. He put me there, figuring it's the traditional graveyard, and there was not much damage that I could do. But I was uncontrollable, like a bull in a china shop. I figured my dedication was to the people, whatever the people wanted, and that led me to be not controlled.

The old man, W.E. Carty, who had taught me to be chairman the first year didn't get re-elected. So I was the chairman, and I could put whatever bills I wanted on the calendar. They couldn't reverse me, or override me, so I determined what would pass, and what wouldn't pass. The people who were sponsors spoke on behalf of those bills, and people who were against them spoke negatively. But having a Democratic majority who basically followed the chairman's lead, I could do whatever I wanted.

Four of the bills I sponsored became law that session. House Bill 15, which prohibited discrimination in burial practices, was cosponsored by Mark Litchman and Ann O'Donnell. That bill was the result of when Lieutenant Milton Price couldn't bury his child after it drowned. He had to go from cemetery to cemetery to find one that would accept his child. I didn't think that was right, so I sponsored the bill and it passed.

And House Bill 22 prohibited age discrimination in employment. That was cosponsored by C.G. Witherbee and Max Wedekind. Wedekind

was West Seattle's famous legislator at that time. He died shortly thereafter. That bill was furthering my progress on equality. I was out to make things equal in every facet of life, and wherever I found there was discrimination, I sponsored a bill to cut it out.

The Eagles had been pushing anti-age-discrimination bills before I came on the scene. And I read a book and saw how important the impact of elderly citizens was on the state and I decided to sponsor the bill. And the Eagles were embarrassed, but they had nobody else to sponsor it. They joined me in supporting it, and I got it passed. Every year I had put in the anti-discrimination bill for housing, and this, I think, was a substitute from the ruling clique so that I could show that I was doing something. But it didn't get into the housing issues.

Open housing didn't pass that year, either. And there were other bills I sponsored that didn't make it. My minimum sentence for the shooting of hunters bill was a result of the fact that a guy on Jackson Street had been shot and killed out hunting. And he had identifiable clothes, but the hunter shot him anyhow—killed him. So I had a bill put in demanding that hunters wear bright clothing to identify them, and making it tougher for them to get off from shooting and killing another hunter. But that was my trick bill to get attention. It got a lot of attention, but it didn't pass.

I remember another bill that suffered the same fate would have created a Department of Medical Examiner and abolished the Office of the Coroner in King County. I don't know whether Representative Len Sawyer ever forgave me for that. But I think Ann O'Donnell approached me on that one, so I agreed to sponsor it. She was my seatmate—we both served from the Thirty-seventh District.

I remember Ann O'Donnell was a fine person. And her family had always supported me and I always supported her. I didn't want her to overshadow me, but there was never any danger of that. I saw to it. There are little tricks I could maneuver that kept her just beneath me. One trick was having somebody to run against her who would take part of her vote. I don't know how much the people who ran against her realized that it was part of a maneuver. I told them that it would be a good thing to run against her, but they never won the primary. You see, I would always support her. I don't know much about her early death in 1965—she had cancer. But she was too young to die.

And Ann O'Donnell helped me with my open housing bill that session. That was House Bill 160. I thought it was going to pass the House in flying colors like it did the first session, but it didn't make it out of the Rules Committee. I was downbeaten again, but I didn't lose my focus.

The press knew what was going on. And they were supportive. But they predicted that it would not pass. They supported it, but that didn't change things. They just knew it wasn't going to pass.

I kept trying. There was an open housing bill that I put in the Legislature's special session that year. That was House Bill 47. There had been a ruling that the Legislature would not take up anything other than budget during the special session. If it didn't have an appropriation, they wouldn't take it up. My bill was not to be considered. But I found a trick way that I could make a speech on it, by speaking on the point of personal privilege. So I made an impassioned speech, one of the only speeches that I wrote. I wrote only two speeches in my legislative career, and that was one of them. It was the first speech that I prepared. I prepared it—it was not off of the cuff. It softened up some of the folks. It moved them.

I talked about this bill being an executive request bill by Governor Rosellini. I appealed to the Republicans by their connections to Lincoln. I reminded them that ten thousand minority votes could have given them control of the state executive office. I said it would be good for their party and for the state, good for the country, and morally good for them. But they didn't really listen. The Republicans didn't listen. They had an excuse not to consider it—it wasn't a budget bill.

In this same speech I talked firmly to my own party and reminded them what faithful voters the

minorities had been, and warned them about the tension in the South and I said it might happen here. In fact, I was sure it was going to happen. But just when, I didn't know. And finally I said that I wanted to get this passed because I wanted to be more than just a representative who did civil rights. This had no real effect on the Democrats. But the Democrats always supported me and most would vote with me on open housing.

You must remember, I was trying to get them to change what had been traditional denial of open housing. So I just kept doing what I was doing. I kept hammering and I saw the effect, and so I just kept hammering every session. The hammering was there, and it became more difficult for them to deny it. They were affected by my speeches.

My constituents knew I was pushing as hard as I could. They gave me credit for that. I'd come home from the Legislature with about two hundred letters unanswered, and that after having a full-time secretary every time, except the first time. And those letters—they didn't mince words. I could tell they didn't like it, and they didn't believe it was going to pass. They knew open housing in its purest form would not pass the Legislature. I had a funny feeling—I thought it would pass, because it was a good bill, but I was reminded that good bills don't always pass. So I kept faith with the people by putting in my bill every session.

Everything I did prior to 1967, when I finally got open housing, had an effect. It softened up some of the folks. I can't name the ones who softened—I don't remember. But every time I'd make a speech in the House, it would have an effect in the Senate. You see I had to pass it through the Senate first. But it didn't get the majority that I wanted that session.

Every session I acquired adversaries. Dr. Alfred Adams, Ed Harris, Elmer Johnston, they were the Spokane group, and they led the fight against me. They were adversaries because I was pushing for equality, and they never were. I don't know why they were so much against it. I figure because of the community from which they sprouted out. Because they always voted against my open housing, until the last term. My last term we got it together. But they were able to control the Republicans against me, up until that final session.

The Republican Spokane group and the Democrats from Spokane were behind private power in the private versus public utilities controversy that session. And the utilities lobbyists were powerful! They almost came up to the teachers, and the private utilities were almost as strong as the public utilities. In 1961 we were caught in between those two utilities.

Washington Water Power was at the center of it. They were a private electric company that provided power to Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho. They influenced the Spokane legislators very much, because they had been primary contributors to the Spokane people. And they helped people all over the state get elected—they even had some people from King County. One of those was Avery Garrett. He was from Renton and worked for Boeing and he was carried as a Democrat, but he was susceptible to public and private power interests.

Well, Avery and Margaret Hurley and Harry Lewis sponsored the Washington Water Power bill. That was House Bill 197. It would have authorized the Spokane people to decide if they wanted their power to come from the private electric company or a public utility district. We were just hogtied in deciding what to do about House Bill 197. We had a call of the House for four days. That meant we stayed in session, and I'd never experienced that before. We were for public power, but there weren't as many of us, so we had to speak up. We just didn't allow it to come to a vote.

It's an old legislative practice dating way back in Congress. It's called a filibuster by amendment. And as long as you have amendments on the table, you must take them up one by one. And speeches are made so you never get around to a vote. It happened very seldom. And that was one of the times where you couldn't get anything passed in the Legislature, and there were

hordes of other bills. But we had to deal with that one. We just wouldn't allow it to come to a vote. And that was the most discouraging thing for the Spokane people. They knew that they had the votes, but until they got to a vote, there was nothing doing.

After four days of doing nothing but that, they gave up the ghost and got tired and sent it back to committee—I remember Avery Garrett got up and moved it back to the Rules Committee. You see, due to the efforts of Norm Ackley, John O'Brien, and others, we influenced the people who were the sponsors, who employed Avery Garrett; we influenced them to back off. But we didn't try to have Margaret Hurley and the Spokane group back off. And some of the Spokane Democrats like Margaret Hurley, Bill McCormick and Bill Day were really upset about the way things turned out with the Washington Water Power vote. And that was the seed of the coalition that would form in 1963 between Spokane Democrats and Republicans.

By the 1961 session, I had developed enough influence so that I could carry out my promise that blacks would have policy positions within two years of my first term. Little by little I carried it out, a little more progress each year. I never got to the end of my rope. I started first with the most basic positions. The Republicans had put some people in the liquor stores and I felt I should have a say who was in our liquor stores, so I carried that out pretty good. And I had promised that I would get somebody on the Parole Board, because Parole was lacking black representation, and I carried that out. The first one was John Prim, the next one was Phil Burton, and the next one was Russ Gideon. I also got some people in the Department of Natural Resources—this was Land Use, as they called it then. And I got some people in Welfare—that was among the departments that I influenced. I didn't have to do much with Social Security; they were coming along automatically.

And everywhere I went I dropped a little person with one of the departments. I talked to the head of the department. I made sure that I had a qualified candidate, and I would ask the head of the department if he had an objection. And most of them that I was dealing with—they weren't going to say no. I appealed to their good sense. I thought they were smart enough to know that if I was dealing with their budget, I would be more favorable to them if they did me a favor.

And another thing I found out about that session was the Bible group. Even though most politicians are not that religious, I found a few in the Legislature who were. Believe it or not, they had a Bible class down at the Legislature! They had a Bible class and certain ones met and discussed the Bible and went on back to the floor, and that had a profound effect on me. They met and discussed the Bible at least once a week. But when I asked them to confront themselves, to confront their professed religious belief and what is right according to that, it was pretty hard to convince them. But they impressed me by how they were grappling with certain things, like open housing for example. Their Christian belief was working toward my position, and I could tell it by conversation. I could tell that they were inching their way toward it. They hadn't gotten there yet, but they were moving that way. And they were discussing it with me, and I would discuss it with them. And they would finally come around. I didn't believe it at first, but they all came around.

I don't know who the members of the Bible study group were because I never attended it. But I found out from listening to conversation that Stu Bledsoe belonged, I think. Stu Bledsoe was one of the really religious people. And I invited him to join me in my crusade. Finally he did. Slade Gorton was a member of the Episcopal Church, and he was sort of into the religious vein, and I developed a closeness with him and he finally joined me. Joel Pritchard was one of those people and I developed a connection with him. Remember, he was one of the joint sponsors of the Open Housing Act in 1959.

But, there weren't many politicians like me. I always figured I was alone and lonesome because I fought the battles that didn't give me financial or political gain, as such. I managed to

adopt enough of the political activities to keep me going, but I never saved anything for myself. I fought the battles that I felt needed fighting. To tell you the truth, I don't remember anybody being like me totally. There were people who were somewhat like me. The closest they came were Joel Pritchard, and early on Dan Brink. And there was Bob McDougall on the Republican side, and Slade Gorton was pretty close. But there weren't many.

Previously, I told you about my dream and how I projected mentally that I could be down there in Olympia, but I didn't know what effect I would have. I didn't know how serious a politician I was until I passed the second term. The community began to accept me. When I first got elected, they took it as a fluke. But after I passed my second term, then they began to take me more seriously. And I began to take myself more seriously. I began to feel that I belonged down there.

I found out some things in the Legislature those first two sessions. First, I found out how it worked, how to get things done. But they didn't let you find that out all at once. It was my second term when I found out. I learned to not be discouraged by what happened. I learned to be consistently persistent. And I learned that if not this time, next time. I forever looked to the future. I began to learn faster and I could see myself getting things done. There's no way to explain how I felt. Exuberant. Yes, I felt exuberant.

Chapter 6

In the Center of Things

Olympia is like a drug. You try it out and you get addicted to it—being in the center of things, being in the spotlight. I became addicted to the Legislature, and I was set on staying in the spotlight and the center of things. I saw myself leaving the Legislature for Congress, and was planning everything with that in mind.

I figured I was elected to bring about non-discrimination throughout the state. I'd have effect that way, because the laws I was determined to get passed would apply all over the state. That's how I was building my reputation. I had that dream of things being better, and what could I do to make them better. That was my inherited slave-driven obsession. Most of the other legislators didn't have that kind of obsession.

The other legislators didn't discourage me because I was the only black. But I knew I was excluded from private clubs in the Legislature. In fact, until I'd served two or three terms, I didn't find there was a private place where people went to have drinks in the Legislative Building. So that would let me know some things were kept from me. Anyway, they had a barbershop on the fourth floor, and along with the barbershop they had some drinking facilities. I never joined it, I never went up to get a drink because I didn't think it was right. Some things you do, and some things you don't do.

When I served in Olympia, the town was quite prejudiced. But when I visited restaurants and cocktail lounges—the Oregon Trail and the Jacaranda, and other places, even Ben Moore's, the owners didn't exercise prejudice against me. But I knew that the way they acted wasn't from the heart, it was from the position that I held. And I figured that they were playing by the rules of the game. It was all right to serve me because I didn't act differently from anybody else. I was accepted as okay. So I just enjoyed myself. And I didn't go out much anyway.

The atmosphere in Olympia was pressure, pressure, pressure. And it wasn't just work pressure. I learned that from a couple of lobbyists who came to my room and visited me about two or three o'clock one morning, and stayed there until daylight. They were lobbying and they wanted to give me entertainment, but I didn't want to be involved. I wanted to ease myself out of all that. So that's why I sneaked away home every night—to get out of that atmosphere. I learned that I could be down there in Olympia in forty-five or fifty-five minutes. I commuted every session except the first one. I remember one session I commuted every night except ten nights. And I wasn't available at home. I didn't let people know I was there and I didn't answer the phone. That way I didn't feel the pressure in Olympia, because I was out from under it. I had a goal in mind. I was all business, all the years I was in the Legislature.

I was all business in my campaigns, too. I was very serious. You remember when I started to run, most blacks weren't sure how much they could trust me. Some still had doubts in 1962. So that year I tried some new things to get them to be more favorable to me. One thing was a handbill I wrote exclusively for them. It said, "I'm Proud Of You," indicating that I was proud of them because they stood up and supported me. I was asking them to do it again. My Republican adversaries had used a divide-and-conquer plan. They urged the people to vote only for Republicans, never to split their vote. It had been working for them, so I reminded my constituents that divide and conquer was still out there trying to trick them. And in the handbill I deliberately mentioned that only two Republicans favored open housing.

And finally in the campaign, I ran an ad with the black Republican running for representative, Ruth Child. It said, "You can vote for two of us and you can cross party lines." That was another way I used to free people—Republicans—who wanted to vote for me. I recognized the pulling effect I had across the line.

I got the campaign money myself. I got it from individuals, law firms, and corporations. I would just go to people and tell them who I was—I never called them. I was afraid that calling would give them an easy excuse to say no. When they looked around, I was appearing in their office and asking for a contribution. And it's hard to turn a person down face to face.

I didn't have other people ask. I was afraid that some would obligate me. I never obligated myself. I didn't want to get too much so that contributors would think I was obligated. I had a limit set for the Boeing people. And I would take that and go right ahead but I never accepted more. And I always got a little touch from labor. But they never did give me more than ten percent of my collections, except when I first ran. I didn't get money from the Greive fund. After I found out about it, I tried, but Senator Greive gave the money from his fund mostly to senators. It kept him in control of the Senate. But he gave me his own personal money, fifty dollars each election. So you can see how I spread my contributors around, so nobody would have a big enough piece of me to feel that I had to do what they said.

Some legislators had an amount given which would imply an obligation, but I won't call a name. But most of the legislators were not corrupt. In the House not more than five had obligations. It was generally known who those five were, and those five did have the power to influence others. But it seemed like they couldn't have a real career in politics—a long one. They usually were out in about five or six terms.

Anyway, my campaign worked—really worked. I got 100 percent of the vote in some precincts again. The voters heeded my warning about divide and conquer, and Republicans voted for me. How else could I have gotten 100 percent of the votes in some precincts? So by 1962 when I moved into the center of my career, my black constituents had found that I could be believed. I had gained their trust.

Everybody who served in the 1963 session remembers it as the session of the great coalition. Democrats had started in 1959 with two-thirds of the House, and dwindled down to a three-vote majority, fifty-one to forty-eight, in 1963. I don't know what accounted for the Democratic losses in the House. I don't know why, but that was the way it was, and that three-vote majority was what made the coalition possible.

The coalition was done for control. Before the session, there were thirty-nine Republicans and six or seven Democrats that got together and said, "We can control this thing." Bob Perry from King County was the leader of the controlling faction, and he recruited Bill Day of Spokane to be his partner, and also to be Speaker of the House. They were both Democrats, but the Republicans would accept Bill Day as Speaker.

Well, Bob Perry and Bill Day, along with the other Democrats who followed them, they were thinking of themselves. You remember the trouble between the private and public utilities people in the 1961 session. Well, the coalition was a mix of Democrats and Republicans who supported the private power companies, especially Washington Water Power.

There was another reason. John O'Brien had done Bob Perry a disservice. I didn't get into how, but he and John O'Brien disagreed. And disagreement was something that Bob took seriously. So Bob was out to get even with O'Brien. O'Brien had been Speaker four times, and he was on route to be Speaker for the fifth time, and Bob prevented it.

Bob Perry was made floor leader. He hadn't been in leadership before. And it wasn't a secret that Washington Water Power was close to Bob Perry, and that Bob favored a closer connection with the Washington Water Power and City Light-Snohomish. And he succeeded in bringing them together. Some *Daily Olympian* reporters claimed

that he had been given $55,000 as a payoff, but at that time they didn't have public disclosure, so he could deny it. And nobody could really prove it.

Margaret Hurley was a member of the coalition and was assistant floor leader that session. I don't think I can be fair to Margaret Hurley because she wasn't against discrimination. That was because she lived in Spokane—both the neighborhood she lived in and the community she lived in. And all of my feelings about her were involved in a statement that she had made against open housing. She was against it until the very end. So I was never close to her, and I was never fair to her.

Dan Evans worked with the coalition. He wasn't governor yet, but was serving his third term in the House and he was Republican floor leader. He had to go along with the coalition, because of his party obligation. I didn't have a lot to do with him, no more than any other legislator. But I got along with him even though he had what I thought was the wrong belief. He was a liberal Republican, but he adhered to the more traditional, more conservative Republican philosophy most of the time. He had to be opposite me on votes, and I accepted it, knowing why. But I saw him the way a lot of the other members did—Democrats got along with him as well or better than Republicans. He was a mighty fine person and later he was a mighty fine governor.

I was offered the chance to join the coalition—I was offered the chance to have any chairmanship that I wanted. I thought it over and I decided that it would be best for my future to remain loyal to the Democrats, and I didn't accept a chairmanship. There were seven of us Democrats who'd been committee chairmen the session before. We all refused to serve. Bill Day accused us of not being responsible, but that was just said to make us look bad in the newspapers. It didn't work. He replaced us with Republicans, except for Bill McCormick. Bill was a Spokane coalition Democrat and he replaced William May, a Spokane regular Democrat, as chairman of the Committee on Labor and Industrial Insurance. I had been chairman of Local Government, and Republican Dwight Hawley got my job. I was a friend to Bob Perry, but I was a friend to John O'Brien, too. I couldn't get involved in the problem between them. And accepting a favorable appointment made John O'Brien your enemy, and I didn't think I could afford to do that.

The only harm in the coalition was that it made it so that nothing much happened, because the Senate was Democratic, and wasn't going to pass any of the bills that the House wanted. So, it made for a stalemate. And the private power companies didn't get anything.

I don't know what the effects were for the six or seven Democrats. I wasn't among them so I don't know what negative things the party did to them after the 1963 session. I know that Bob Perry, Bill Day, and Margaret Hurley didn't keep their positions of leadership in the Legislature the next session. I don't remember anything specific said by anybody, but I knew the other Democrats were out to get even.

I sponsored sixteen bills that year when the coalition had the power. I thought I wasn't going to get anything passed, but I couldn't let it be said that I didn't try. It wasn't just the coalition—I knew that because I was the one and only black legislator, I just had to work that much harder to get fifty votes for my bills. By this time I knew what to do to give myself the best chance to get what I wanted.

I had developed the capability to use humor in the Legislature. An example of that was when Speaker Day, as I was speaking, was shaking his head negatively trying to tell the group not to go along with me. I paused abruptly in the middle of my speech and said, "Mr. Speaker, you're trying to intimidate the Legislature! You are coercing the people by moving your head to the side." And he said, "No, Mr. Smith, I was just straightening my neck." And so I said, "Well, in the future if you want to do something with your neck shake it up and down, instead of sideways." And I made every newspaper in the state.

When I was convinced of the right course, I knew I could influence another person that had

no conviction. You remember how I could influence Russ Gideon. I had always been that way. First I would convince myself. And as I was convinced, I tried to convince other people. That's all it was.

But in the Legislature, the *way* you try to convince the others makes a difference. I was a great orator. I spoke from the heart, instead of rambling on with an unconcerned attitude. And I was speaking in a manner that the other members could understand. When I came to speak, they would put down their newspapers and listen. I was effective—I had an influence on most of them. So they had to deal with me.

Sometimes I found out that the manner in which I was proceeding wasn't pleasing or effective. And it was easily readable. Now and then I'd make a real mistake, but I'd quickly correct it, before it went too far. I can tell you about one incident in the coalition session. I was working on the Social Security Committee, and we had a hearing where landlords complained that they gave people credit until the time that their paycheck was supposed to come in, but that the people would get their welfare checks and move out without giving notice, or paying the rent they owed. I thought that the landlords had a point, so I helped pass a bill out of the committee. At the outset I thought that the bill was a good idea.

But that was a false conviction. I proceeded to hear some of my archenemies say, "We got him this time. He's pushing something unpopular." And I waited, and I found out my enemies were right because I sampled the people. I had a lot of people in my district on welfare that didn't appreciate the bill. And there were more of them than there were middle-class landlords, so I switched positions. I came out swinging against the bill that I had voted for in committee. I battled it every time it would come up. I first tried to get it indefinitely postponed. That failed. And then I engaged in delaying tactics. And it was on the floor four different days, and finally nothing came of it. So I did the right thing after all. But helping that bill at first was one of the mistakes I made. You can see I had been proceeding against my constituents, and I didn't like to do that.

Discrimination was always, always uppermost in my mind. Even though I knew open housing wouldn't pass this session, I had to try.

I sponsored two anti-discrimination bills that session. Both bills were written to end racial discrimination in employment, public accommodation, and housing. One was an executive request from Governor Rosellini and it was mostly about housing. But the other one went a little further and named all the kinds of discrimination in employment and public accommodation, as well as housing, that would be illegal. And I remember I had a part in there that would allow the State Board of Discrimination to end the requirement of a photo for a job, accommodation, or housing application. I sponsored that one with Representative Robert Earley, a Republican from Tacoma who was new to the Legislature and was vice chairman of the Judiciary Committee. He helped get both bills through Judiciary to the floor of the House. But both bills died in the Rules Committee. I was disappointed. But I wasn't surprised, knowing the Spokane group was part of the coalition controlling the House. And I knew how they felt about anti-discrimination bills.

But I sort of got my hopes up when another real estate anti-discrimination came along and we added amendments to it so it became just about the same as my bill. But the coalition was just pretending to go along with us. They voted against considering it for final passage. So it went to the Rules Committee. And then I was angry, because the Republicans had put themselves on record with their constituents back home as favoring open housing by passing all those amendments. I called the Republicans' actions "the greatest double-cross since Judas sold out for thirty pieces of silver." And I remember the newspaper reporters all quoted me.

Well, the bill stayed in the Rules Committee, and so we tried to pull it out of the committee from the floor. That was a very unusual tactic, and we couldn't do it with the coalition against us. And some of the more liberal Republicans like James Andersen, Dan Evans, Slade Gorton, and

Joel Pritchard didn't like it at all. They wrote up their ideas for the Journal. They wrote that we weren't sincere, we weren't really trying to solve civil rights problems. I remember that all right, but I really didn't pay much attention to it, because I know how underhanded the Republicans were. I had my dream—my obsession—and I knew others didn't feel that way. I had to wait until the next session to try for open housing again.

I proceeded to achieve one of my greatest victories in the Legislature in 1963 coalition year. I defeated the lien law bill, and because of that I had a big year. The lien law bill proposed that if you had a house, and if you needed help from the government, they would take a lien against your house. Then after you died, your house would be sold, and the state would take back money they'd paid you. The bill was coming to a vote, and I saw that if the coalition prevailed, it would pass. But I was against that bill. And I spoke mightily against it. I remember my speech a little bit. I accused the Republicans of being against the old folks, because at that time most of the people who had a house and needed some government help were older folks. And I reminded them that we had defeated the bill previously when the old folks had come to bat in Olympia and went home satisfied that they were safe. "And while they slept in their complacency," these are the words of my speech, "those gentlemen across the aisle slithered into the Appropriations Room and stabbed them in the back." That was one of my better speeches. It wasn't a written speech. It was extemporaneous. But it followed my heart.

It even tickled the Republicans who had been involved in it. And I got some of the Republicans—the new Republicans—support. I was least expecting it, knowing that numerically we didn't have the vote. But young Republicans bolted and my Democratic colleagues stood with me, and we defeated that vote. I remember Jack Hood, a young fellow named Bob McDougall, Slade Gorton, and one or two more Republicans joined me. And we actually killed the bill on the floor. We killed the amendment that would have given them the authority to put that on the appropriations bill.

I recall I made the headline in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. Stub Nelson was the political reporter at that time. And he wrote a headline story and I was featured. After I killed the lien law, he came to me and said, "That's the biggest thing you ever did." I didn't look upon it as that, but he did—and that was really something. Stub Nelson had been negative toward me, up until that time. I was a good target because I was called radical and ultra-liberal, and Stub Nelson generally didn't like those characteristics. But that changed. After I defeated the lien law bill, he was more kindly to me in his writings.

Some other reporters always favored me. Eldon Barrett was United Press International. I think he wrote for the *Seattle Times*. And Lyle Burt wrote for the *Times* at that time. And they had always been pro about me. But Stub Nelson was the one that I hadn't convinced to feel pro about me, until that lien law fight.

Adele Ferguson was always on my side. Adele Ferguson was a reporter for the *Bremerton Sun*, and she had a knack for writing columns pertaining to Seattle business. Somehow or other I managed to get under Adele's skin and she was always favorable to me. She was friendly toward me when I was down in Olympia, and even when I went back to Olympia, when George Fleming was there. Who was the person that ran up and hugged me as if I was a brother? Adele Ferguson! And I remember she spoke with my son Ronald and wrote a column about his relationship with me, what life had been like with me, and how the boys were involved in my campaigns, and what I was going to do. And she sent me a copy of it.

In fact, she worked with me later in 1964 when I was trying to get Leroy Williams elected state representative from Bremerton. I talked to her about Leroy, and I convinced her. She supported him in the *Bremerton Sun*. And I gathered some money for Leroy, in fact most of the money. Nobody ever found out there was a connection. Leroy was running against Arnold Wang, who was a staunch opponent of open housing. Leroy lost, but later on I got him elected

to the school board with Adele Ferguson's help. And he was a twenty-year member of the school board.

By the end of the coalition, I was still having a hard time financially. The Boeing people, at that time, were against my kind of liberalism. Well, I heard that one time the other lobbyists were talking to the Boeing lobbyists and they asked them, "How do you guys get along with Sam? He seems to be on the opposite side of everything you want!" And the Boeing lobbyists just passed it off, but the others said, "Why don't you do something for him. Give him a better grade." And so during my third term, Boeing got the message how to deal with me.

When I got back to my job after the session, I got promoted from grade seven to grade five. I didn't try to get advanced, but they got the message and they followed through. Dean Morgan and Bruce Johnson were the Boeing lobbyists at that time—Dean went on to be a specialist, a consultant—but I never did discover whether they had anything to do with my promotion. I only heard of their conversation by hearsay.

Boeing transferred me in the same shop to expediting. And expediting was what I was made for. I took to it like a duck takes to water. I became a lead man and I got some good supervisors and they treated me all right. I had a series of bad supervisors along the way, but the good supervisors appreciated me more, and they accepted my ways.

And so I got back on my normal level of promotion, from a grade seven to a grade five and later to a grade two. Boeing had a policy of giving you a performance analysis, and when I was down lower they would grade me four out of ten, but then they got to grading me better, too. That's why I got to be a grade two. That's when I had a twenty-one man crew. This was a normal pathway in promotion, and I was a good employee. But then I got elected to the Seattle City Council after my fifth term in the Legislature, and Boeing had to give me terminal leave. So that was when I could work at my career—my dream—full-time.

Chapter 7

The Civil Rights Movement Heats Up

You recall that when the civil rights movement started in the 1950s, I was scared. And by 1963, things had only heated up. I was still scared. So here I was, old enough to be frightened, but completely identified with it. So I couldn't escape it.

They were killing people at random all over the South, and some of the violence wasn't random, but purposed. The police in the South were carrying out the wishes of the white people, and they were brutalizing black people and wreaking violence on them. Some people got just beat up, some people got killed, and some just wouldn't die. And I couldn't imagine how the black people in the South were volunteering to expose themselves to death. I couldn't imagine how they did it, but they were doing it.

Remember what went on in Birmingham, Alabama, in the spring of 1963? It started when Martin Luther King was called in to lead a stalled desegregation campaign. He got the people marching and demonstrating, and then he was persuaded to let children and teenagers march, too. It shows you even kids—especially kids—wanted to volunteer. And even those kids got no mercy from the police.

Bull Conner, the police commissioner in Birmingham, ordered his men to attack the marches. And his police dogs charged those children, and his fire hoses knocked them down. You don't want to admit violence ever has a good effect, but those pictures of those children getting battered and bruised changed everything. Newspapers and TV stations all over the country carried photographs and reports. And anybody who saw those police reports was stirred, and felt sympathy and pity. The people who read about Montgomery or Little Rock were interested and approving of the civil rights movement. But this was different. Now they were touched, angry, and sorrowful. And it had an effect. So Martin Luther King had started to win white people's hearts all around the country, like he had talked about. The marches kept on and Bull Conner kept on with the hoses and dogs. Three thousand blacks were put in jail. Then Martin Luther King won some hearts in Birmingham itself. The next time Bull Conner ordered the fire hoses turned on the marchers, his firemen couldn't do it. Some of those firemen cried. U.S. Assistant Attorney General Burke Marshall was there to help. So finally the Birmingham businessmen agreed to desegregate.

There was one more fight, though. The whites bombed Martin Luther King's brother's house, and they dynamited the motel where the civil rights leaders stayed. To get even, the blacks rioted. I didn't blame them—I was surprised they had held off as long as they did. But a riot is a mass way of involving violence to get change, and it had to be stopped. So I felt approving when President Kennedy sent in federal troops. After that, Birmingham was desegregated, at last.

I felt favorable about the Birmingham campaign, even though the violence I was afraid of happened. I could hardly stand that it happened to little kids, and when the blacks broke loose in the riot I was even more scared, just like I knew I would be. But the movement was making a difference. Now I had some hope, too. I saw that the movement wasn't just a passing thing. It had been seven years since Montgomery. And nonviolence was working, and Martin Luther King was still with us. So I did start in to have some hope.

A month later, Governor George Wallace was leading the way, standing, like he said, "in the schoolhouse door" to keep three black students

from registering at the university in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. And he was saying, "Try to come in here. I'll never accept it." So we were surprised when he stepped aside and let the students in. President Kennedy had federalized the Alabama National Guard, but he went a step farther than Eisenhower had when he federalized the National Guard at Little Rock. Kennedy went on TV and made an important speech that night. I remember his speech. He said there were problems everywhere in America and nobody was safe. He asked everyone in the country to change things—not just leaders, but ordinary people, too. And what I remember most is he said that waiting wouldn't work. And that's when he urged Congress to pass a civil rights act to end segregation. So now the federal government was getting even more tied into the civil rights movement.

Kennedy's involvement was almost too much for the South to accept. I started to feel there was no way for him to survive.

You remember, as far as I was concerned, Robert Kennedy was the man behind the president. When he was attorney general, he almost took the lead away from his brother in behalf of minorities. In fact, when he got involved, he got deeper involved than his brother. At first he was against Martin Luther King trying to change things in Birmingham. But when he saw how things really were, he came around. He was the one who sent his Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights to make the argument between the two sides in Birmingham. He knew he could personally persuade people, so he called up businessmen all over the country and all kinds of Southern officials. It made a big difference. He was out there churning and demanding that things be done differently. And people said it was Robert Kennedy who convinced President Kennedy to prepare a civil rights bill.

I told you how all this was having an effect all over the country through the news media. Newspapers and TV spent more and more broadcast time on civil rights, and that developed an urgency and a desire to be a part of it. It was a wash-off from the media, not from the movement leaders. I felt it as strongly as anybody did.

As the civil rights movement spread, I made sure that I invited some of the people involved in the movement to Seattle. I wanted to invite the people who were the center of the up-growing activity down South, the ministers. I would read some of their sermons in *Reader's Digest*, and I wanted to get them exposed to us. This was in my position as President of the Brotherhood of Mount Zion Baptist Church, not as a legislator. Sam McKinney, my pastor, wanted these visits, too, and since he had been at school with Martin Luther King, first we asked him. We couldn't get him. Rev. King couldn't get Seattle into his schedule until the next year, so he came in November 1961 and stayed a couple of days. We gave the white churches his services one day, and he inspired their congregations and their church council. The second day he spoke in the Eagles Auditorium. We had him speak there because First Presbyterian, that big church on Eighth Avenue, backed out of their agreement to have him. But twenty-five hundred people came to the Eagles Auditorium. He spoke quietly about brotherhood and love. And he was everything that he was touted to be.

Afterwards, we invited some of Martin Luther King's followers to Seattle, because we were sure that they had the brand of desire for progress that we needed. We started out with the Reverend Kelly Miller Smith I had read about. He came the first time in 1964, and then several more times in the 1970s. He was a young man, but *Reader's Digest* said that he was one of the ten best preachers in the country. And that's where I got exposed to him. He was an idea man, and he was one of the great brain trusts of the movement. And so we got him, and he was a fireball, everything we had heard him to be.

Both Kelly Miller Smith and Martin Luther King—but Dr. King the most because he was the center of activity—had an awakening effect on the white Christians. They were as excited as I was. I don't remember Martin Luther King's speeches, but I remember they were exciting and inspiring, and they helped me to really see and

respect what was happening down South. It was just like a dream come true that this man who was so famous was here in our community, and he was speaking to us. And it was a perfect dream.

Kelly Miller Smith and Martin Luther King provided the extraordinary spark we needed. When Dr. King came here, and each time one of his followers came, some of it rubbed off. I could tell it rubbed off by the action of the people. They picked up his aggressiveness. And they did it in a nonviolent manner that was befitting Martin Luther King. So I felt that he had planted the seed that started the protesting here. And that gave us hope to form a coalition and tack onto the movement.

So that's the way I joined the movement here. I joined it mildly. By now I had come along with Martin Luther King and I had decided the way for me to be part of the movement was here in Seattle. And because I was important in my community, I couldn't afford not to be a part of it. I had always worked for change. That was my career. But not explosive change. I was still the same. I never wanted that. I wanted to be part of the protest only if it was nonviolent. At the same time, I kept to my moderate course, trying to make changes in the Legislature and trying to get the people thinking my way by speaking out. I made a good speech in Tacoma about this time. I remarked how the black community was stronger than I ever thought, that we had the best leaders, and we had moved the whole world. Then I added that we couldn't just protest, we had to get more unified, and do more ourselves to improve our economic condition. It was up to us, I said.

There was another thing. I didn't want to be a leader of the Seattle protest. I wouldn't accept being *the* leader, not even *a* leader. I didn't want to be too far out front. I observed that the people on the extremes always got hurt. You remember that I thought John Kennedy was in danger. From the time Martin Luther King's house was bombed during the bus boycott in 1956, I knew he wasn't safe, either. I didn't want to be identified here in Seattle as the one to take out. So I kept my peaceful way and my peaceful manner.

You could observe how I operated at our protest march in June 1963. I donated signs for the march. The signs said "Stop Racial Discrimination Now" and they stood out in the newspaper photograph. So I did my part, but not as a leader. The march was organized by the Reverend Mance Jackson, and sponsored by CORE and NAACP. We wanted people to see that discrimination in jobs and housing was a problem in Seattle, not just in Alabama and Mississippi, and we asked the mayor and the city council to be sure to make changes. The march started at Mt. Zion church and ended at Westlake Mall, and we had a good crowd. The newspapers set it at seven hundred to a thousand.

Then in late August, I was the main speaker at the Seattle march held on the same day as the Washington, D.C. Jobs and Freedom March. A committee planned our march so they were the leaders. I was identified with the march, but not in charge. It was just the way I wanted it. I spoke at the federal courthouse to a big crowd, about fifteen hundred. They had marched from the Central District. I spoke strongly—I said that all around the country blacks were getting weary of so much rejection of the movement. And I said it was the same here in Seattle. We weren't treated fairly, and we just weren't taken seriously. All the mayor and city council had done was to set up a human rights commission with only a couple of blacks on it. It just wasn't enough. The crowd needed to hear that, and I hoped the whites would take notice, too.

When I got home that day, I turned on the TV and watched Martin Luther King give his speech in front of the Lincoln Memorial. It was the one we all remember—the "I Have a Dream" speech—the most moving speech he ever gave. It uplifted me, but just for awhile.

The Seattle City Council was still holding back. The civil rights movement wanted them to pass an open housing measure for the city. We had proof of housing discrimination in Seattle. A study that year compared the treatment of black couples and white couples trying to rent. The black couples were discriminated against at all

twelve places they looked at. On July 1, the council promised to act within ninety days, but by the end of September they hadn't done anything. Then they set a hearing date for the end of October. To nudge these along, we had a demonstration at the Garfield High School playing field. The people knew open housing was my issue in the Legislature and they tried to urge me out front, but I resisted. I was arranging behind the scenes. I just wanted to be close to the action, but no more. There were more aggressive people on the scene anyway. Dr. Gardener Taylor, a personal friend of mine who was a pastor in Brooklyn and vice president of the New York Urban League, was here in Seattle. He was speaking at the Mt. Zion Brotherhood all that week, and I set it up for him to speak at the Garfield playing field. He made some powerful assertions, and he encouraged us. About three thousand people were there. It was the largest demonstration yet.

A few days later, the city council finally had the hearing on open housing. We had a strong proposal. It would have prohibited all kinds of housing discrimination. And if you disobeyed, you would be fined or sent to jail, or both. Only New York, and two other places I can't call a name to, had open housing laws at that time, and ours would have been the strongest.

The clergy was in charge in that hearing—Rev. McKinney and Rev. Dale Turner and Father Lynch. They had gotten several thousand signatures on a petition to the city council. And so they were there with the others who spoke up for open housing—there was somebody from the Japanese American Citizens League, and state senator Fred Dore and Professor Barth from U.W. And the people who spoke against it, as far as I could tell, were all realtors. They had helped to block it in the Legislature and now they were doing the same with the city council. And at the end of the hearing, the city council voted to leave the question of open housing to the voters at the city's next general election. That way they avoided having to face up to the challenge. That was a loss for us because the city council could have just passed it. And at the general election in March 1964 the people did turn it down—two to one. I don't know exactly why it was turned down. I suppose it was just a little early for the people to make that kind of progress.

The defeat of open housing in Seattle set us back. Some lost heart and some got angry. Even some members of the clergy were edging closer and closer to being in a violent mood. When we couldn't push open housing through the city council, Father Lynch said if he would have been back home in Ireland, and the city councilmen voted against it, there would have been nine dead councilmen. That was strong language. It didn't affect me, but that was a sample of how the clergy was being edged and edged closer to where they were almost suggesting violence. But they didn't quite go that far.

I knew the nature of the clergy, and Father Lynch wasn't speaking for it. And you know I wasn't affected by anybody who advocated violence because I rejected violence outright. But I was downbeaten at that time. It wasn't just that the city council wouldn't support open housing. I knew it would take time for the council to work their way to be in favor of it.

But when the four little girls were killed in Birmingham when their church was bombed on September 15, I could hardly stand it. I wondered how I would get on. I kept thinking about it, remembering it.

The girls were blown up while they were in the church basement. It was "Youth Day" and there were four hundred people in the church for Sunday service. We figured that the church was a target because so many mass meetings had been held there in the spring. But I couldn't accept that someone would decide to bomb a church filled with people. And it seemed like it was always the children that suffered worst. I kept seeing those little girls in my mind—they were dressed all in white, waiting to take part in the adult services. Then they were gone. I couldn't have felt it any deeper if I'd been there. Finally I got beyond it—I can't say how.

I couldn't see that kind of violence coming to Seattle because the white people hadn't forced

us into the kind of conditions they had in the South. But I felt sure we were getting close to some kind of violence here. I didn't know when. I couldn't control it. But I felt it coming.

I wanted to get ready and I was just lost. It was all new to me. So one night I brought my tape recorder to a meeting and I tape recorded the meeting. And when I got home I listened to it. And I tried to find the flash point—what was behind the zings and all of that. And I was able to determine the flash point. So I began a practice of going to meetings and tape-recording the meetings, and going home and listening to them to see what was really happening. But don't forget. It was violent during those years. The mood was getting ugly.

And I still believe that the ugly mood was what led to John Kennedy's death. President Kennedy's death was a personal loss to me, too. You know how after he was elected president, I developed a good opinion of John Kennedy. He had a closeness to the people out in the woods that was unusual. So I got to know him and his brother. Bobby was in on the planning of what my career should aim at, and how it should progress. But that was all blown asunder when the president was killed.

Before President Kennedy was killed, there was knowledge passed around—not like a secret, not a scheme, but a plan—they had plotted out my career path. This planning was political, and there were forces building—a machine—a group that was favorable to the Kennedy cause. And I was in that group. I was supposed to become a state senator because Fred Dore, the senator in my district, wanted to be a United States attorney for the federal government in this region. And he was going to get appointed. Some people had planned for me to go up even further. One man who was powerful at the time asked me if I would like to be the first black governor. I told him no. The first black governor was out of my reach, and out of reach of any black person at that time, and still is now. But that was during the period when the people were dreaming. And I kept on dreaming too, but I didn't ever let my dream get out of hand. I was realistic.

So the Kennedys had it all planned. They were going to make Fred Dore a federal attorney, and they were going to move me up in his place in the state senate. But that step never came about. All of that ended on November 22. Those plans were shattered when John Kennedy was assassinated, and Bobby's influence was cut off.

I had the feeling when the president was going to Texas that somehow he wouldn't survive that trip. When I heard the news that he was killed, I was at my office at Boeing. And when I heard, I left the office and came home and laid down and dreaded what would happen. I was afraid that there would be more assassinations, not just the president.

I was so frightened, and other people were, too. More and more of us were tense and troubled—we thought our society could collapse. When Kennedy was assassinated, there was a airplane load of people from city hall in Seattle headed for Japan and they turned back—came back and landed. Gordy Clinton was mayor at the time, and he was afraid that there was going to be a breakdown in government. So he put the city council on standby.

Right after Kennedy's death, I remember I gave a speech in a Tacoma church. And in that speech I said, "If the man who controls the FBI and the CIA isn't safe, how safe are you and I in our little homes?" And I got a lot of "Amens" on that. But I was speaking from the heart, because I was frightened that all hell would break loose. Since John Kennedy was not there anymore to restrain violence, I didn't see any hope.

Kennedy's funeral impressed me. It was the most beautiful funeral that I had ever witnessed. The riderless horse—I had never seen that in a funeral procession. Walking behind the casket with the flag, that horse brought me to tears. I felt we were all as alone as that horse. But the beautiful funeral helped head off trouble. And other things prevented the things I dreaded. They appointed Chief Justice Warren as the head of the investigation. He had a lot of experience handling touchy situations because he had been governor

of California before he was a Supreme Court justice. He handled it just right. And the Catholic Church didn't indulge in what it easily could have. They didn't allow any statements about religious prejudice. They kept it in perspective. And I can't forget the four days that the TV did nothing but talk about John Kennedy and his assassination. I hadn't ever seen that before. But it worked to keep things calm.

And then Lyndon Johnson came on the scene and restored my hope. When he was sworn in that day Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, he came through as very calm. He made a statement indicating his calling upon God to help him rule the country. He let Bobby Kennedy and others stay in power for a long time. It took me awhile, but Lyndon Johnson got through to me. You remember my admiration for LBJ didn't develop from that first meeting at the 1960 convention. It developed when he got to be president. I remember part of one speech he made before he was president. He said that we weren't blind to color and that we had to work to guarantee freedom to the free.

The next summer, 1964, northerners got to know a different violence and a different South. That summer was called "Mississippi Summer." SNCC and CORE had planned a voter registration drive in rural Mississippi, and SNCC had invited white college students down from the North to help. The SNCC people counted on the blacks being tough, and they were right. Blacks did register to vote and came to the "freedom schools" that SNCC set up. These were country blacks—sharecroppers who lived scattered around, and had to be sturdy to survive.

Some older movement leaders were worried, though, because the isolation meant blacks and civil rights workers could be ambushed on those country roads. They were right, too. There was a habit, you could say, of beating and lynching blacks in Mississippi. And there was another thing. By 1964, reporters were usually on the scene of any civil rights movement activities in towns. Because the reporters were there, they kept the violence down because Southerners didn't want the bad publicity. But reporters couldn't be on every road in the Mississippi countryside.

Martin Luther King didn't fret and bother so much as other leaders. He went to Mississippi to give speeches. He and just a few others traveled around in cars. He knew how dangerous Mississippi was, but he was loyal to SNCC. He had helped them get started and he looked up to them in 1964 because they were so firm and purposed. But I read that Martin Luther King was truly bothered by something. The SNCC people called him "De Lawd" and complained because he just gave speeches, got the applause and drove away while they stayed to do the hard work. Well, I just passed over this even though it was the first I knew of young people in the movement being peevish. There was much more of that to come, but I only remembered much later how the SNCC people acted in Mississippi.

Like before, I was slow to come alongside Martin Luther King in my thinking. At first, I didn't know why people from the North had to go South to help. All I could see was the confusion and hate that would for sure be set off. I just couldn't get rid of that feeling that it would all take fire and get out of control. And I didn't think there was any way that could be stopped. Then I developed a feeling, more like Martin Luther King's, that we blacks were privileged that white students had been moved so much that they were willing to come south to help. They could have been sheltered all away from it. This was another time I didn't know what was happening in the land, but I figured it must have been a movement of the Lord. He touched them and they were willing to do this, subjecting themselves to danger.

I admit I felt guilty. I felt a pain at having left the South so that I could not be a natural participant. But I knew it was my duty to try to make things better here. So that's what I did.

Violence was sure to happen, and it did. Civil rights folks were beaten, and a hundred or so houses and churches were burned. And then towards the end of June, three civil rights workers disappeared near Philadelphia, Mississippi.

Everybody thought they were killed, but their bodies couldn't be found. President Johnson sent in the Navy and the FBI, but the only bodies found were dragged up from the Mississippi—two blacks, one with his head cut off, and the other sliced in half. Two weeks later, the movement workers' bodies were found buried in an earth dam. The movement was changing by chance and by choice, and by now all of that was a national issue.

Martin Luther King was grieved by the deaths and cruelty. He thought the federal government should set up some permanent police in the South, and that would permit a real uprising. I wasn't sure that would work.

Then in July 1964, LBJ got the Civil Rights Act passed. By that time the Congress had worked their way to be in favor of it, but it was his support that made the difference. The bill was a stronger version of what Kennedy had sent to Congress the year before, and it outlawed discrimination in voting, employment, education, and public accommodations and facilities. LBJ got it passed and he invited people like Roy Wilkins from the NAACP, Whitney Young from the Urban League, and Martin Luther King to be present at the signing. LBJ signed the bill and he gave all of them a pen that he used to sign it. We had all felt relief when we had the president on our side. It was expected that he would not be. And I felt good. It was a fight that we won.

I took care to extend my beliefs to my campaigns. In the 1964 campaign I had these ideas about the way the movement was going, and I stuck to them. One of my flyers for the primary had a photograph of me with those signs I donated to the Mt. Zion-Westlake march that said, "Stop Racial Discrimination Now." The caption was "Sam Smith Active in Fight for Equality in Legislature and Community." That was by deliberate choice. That was exactly what I was doing and I wanted it known that way. I knew this was an asset to my campaign, and I used it vigorously.

My constituents reacted favorably. I knew because I kept my ears open, and the word came to me. That was just general talk, not letters or calls. My ears were sensitive. All you had to do was to keep your eyes open, and your ears open, and the people would point to what they were interested in.

It looked like the primary that year would be quite a fight. After I got in front of the black vote, other people wanted to be in front of it, too. My district was a little over half black and the rest white. My opponents decided that they would split up my votes. They put in five other blacks of good educational standing and three whites and then they proceeded to try to give me the works. Only one of the other candidates gave me credit for having done a good job. He was a Little League baseball director. He asked the people to vote for him and me. The others were trying to discredit me in some ways.

I told you about that brochure I had printed to take from door to door. Like I said, in this tabloid I tried to give a broad view of my beliefs. But after all my work in writing it, the thing that I heard the most about was the "wonderful family picture," which seemed to be the easiest thing to look at and not very much reading to it. Something must be wrong with me because I thought the writing about my opinions was the best thing about it. The part I liked most was what I wrote about the Negro Republicans' "Uncle Tom Mobile." I suggested we wreck it.

Anyway the other candidates made quite a formidable array. But I didn't let them get ahead of me, so I wasn't detracted by them. When the vote was in I won the election at the top of the list, but my vote in the primary was the largest primary election vote I had ever received. And also it was the largest vote that any state representative ever received in the primary election in this district in its history. I thanked God for being kind to me, for it did not have to happen that way.

Then I went on to hire the Little League director to be my campaign manager for the general election. I wrote a newspaper article announcing my choice. I stated that he hadn't been

influenced by people who weren't really interested in our community. I wrote as if I was talking directly to the people. And it got through, like it always did.

I had one standard way to get campaign money: people. I just approached people. I knew the guys who had money. I knew who the lobbyists were. In 1964 I just set out to get the money, and I got it. This was way more than the fourteen hundred dollars I had the first time I won. I don't know how much, but as I stayed in the Legislature the money got easier and easier to raise, and I raised money easily when I got to the city council. I had the know-how.

Except for the civil rights issue and the crowd in the primary, this campaign was just the usual kind. My foot soldiers were a group of liquor store workers. I had gotten them jobs. They knocked on doors and handed out my flyers. But the further along I got, the more the family was my team, and they did that. They were automatically well known in my district because of my using them in photographs for advertising in my campaigns.

By this time I could hardly find any constituent that didn't know me, and they identified good things with me, even the kids. During campaigns, kids would run out when I was driving my old truck. That truck was famous by 1964. It was a 1950 model Chevrolet. I kept it for at least those fourteen years and the kids didn't need the sign on it, they just knew it. I would go through the community blasting on my speaker and they would run out to the truck and I'd throw them some candy and I'd give them a bumper sticker, and say, "I would encourage your following." And some of those kids grew up to vote for me.

The kids found out who I was from their parents and the newspapers—I didn't use any TV. I didn't generally use TV in my state representative campaigns. But I was known just by my being on TV in the news. For a couple of years, whenever they flashed on the news, they would flash me as a Democrat, and Joel Pritchard as a Republican. They would flash down on us and then they would go on with the news. That was helping me.

Even at this stage of my career, I stayed as close to my family as I could. Our children were growing up, and I didn't have any family life, so far as being home a lot with family. So I found things to do outside that included the family. So family life for me was growing up with the kids.

Most weekends I spent getting the boys to parks. Since I had five boys, I played in the parks with them until they were grown men. We would play baseball games against another men's group at the playing fields—my family and a couple of other kids. Kids of all nationalities joined with us, partly because they couldn't get their dads to play with them. One time one of my twin boys said to a kid who had tried to join with us, "You go home and get your daddy to play with you." He was jealous, but I enjoyed having other kids with us. But I suffered from my exercise. Monday, I'd *creep* into the office.

My family had developed a practice of going on picnics to Green Lake on every Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Labor Day. All the family was included. Marion would cook the chickens, and the cakes, and the other picnic things. And we'd buy a watermelon out there from Albertson's. We had a good time, we just had a ball. That practice stayed with us until the boys grew up, too.

About twice a year my family would visit Olympia. I would invite them down. They just happily joined in. My oldest boy was set to be a page when the coalition broke out in 1963, and I couldn't have him because the coalition cut down my quota. Later, the twin boys were pages for thirty days. And every session I invited the youngest one to ride down to Olympia with me for several days.

Remember, I said that I told my wife about politics, I always talked to her a lot. I didn't talk much about it to the kids. They didn't question me, they really didn't. But they were perceptive. They had observed the Legislature in the TV news because I was connected with it. When they visited the Legislature, I didn't have to tell them what was going on—they knew. But they weren't

trusting of it because they knew I wasn't safe. I was never safe, all during my political career, but it was worst starting in those years when I became visible in the local civil rights movement. I had brought up my sons to be brave, to help me out in case I got in a jam. So all of them were ready, all of them were aggressive and willing to fight. I really wanted my oldest son to get into politics, but he didn't want to. He said, "Dad, I couldn't take all the stuff you take, and so I don't want ever to be in that." I admit all my boys had a negative view of politics because of my career.

You recall I said that to me, there into the center of my career, politics was still the best way to change things. And I still enjoyed it all, including campaigning. In 1964, even with all the competition in the primary, I had looked to win.

But I didn't look for LBJ to win in 1964. And I was least expecting it to be a landslide for him. I was accepting of him, but I didn't detect that so many others were. I had made a personal connection with Johnson that year in September, the day after our primary election. Johnson was staying in the Olympic Hotel to speak at a dinner I attended. He had to walk right by my table on his way to the honored guest table. Naturally I managed to shake his hand. Marion was standing right behind me and she was not trying to shake his hand. But when he saw her he reached over my shoulder and shook her hand anyway. You would have seen her light up like a light bulb at that time.

The story does not end here. Earlier in the evening I got a call from Senator Magnuson's office to be at the airport gate early the next morning. They didn't tell me why. So I went. Secret Service men and the president's campaign coordinator in Washington State were at the gate to greet me. They invited me out to the airplane to see the president off to Portland. So I was stationed at the steps of Air Force One. When the president came, Senator Magnuson was ahead of him and he stopped the president and said, "Mr. President, this is Sam Smith, who represents the legislative district which I represented when I was in the Legislature." I was flabbergasted, but shook the president's hand. He gave a broad smile and greeting as well as a wink, since he and Senator Magnuson were buddies. The president got in his plane and took off. The television cameras were grinding away all of the time. Later in the afternoon when the television news came on, there I was shaking the president's hand in the news. That picture showed the people that I was getting right to the top. I wrote to my family in Louisiana and told them about this. I remember that I wrote I was on "cloud nine."

So LBJ and I had struck up a good friendship, and he remembered me afterwards. He wrote me some letters pertaining to my Boeing employment. Those letters were indicating that if I wasn't satisfied, I could work for the federal government. And anyway, LBJ was elected. But I didn't expect the landslide. And the next four years weren't easy for LBJ, or for any of us, any American. And those years changed my life.

Chapter 8

The Fight for Open Housing

The 1965 session wasn't so much of a stalemate as the 1963 coalition session. But we had another big problem: redistricting. We couldn't agree on redistricting in 1963, so there was a series of court decisions and appeals, all the way to the Supreme Court. Then the district court ruled that we couldn't pass any legislation in 1965 until we passed a redistricting bill. We could introduce bills, hold hearings, and committees could act, but we couldn't pass bills. Redistricting is unique. It's an issue all to itself. It's not for the people, it's for politicians. Politicians try their best to make it sound like it's for the people, but it isn't. Each politician is out to keep his district the same, and everybody else wants to change that district. Nobody comes up voluntarily, wanting to change the district and give up some of his voters. So it starts as a conflict, and the major politicians who have the power—they're the ones who succeed. They always take care of themselves first, then the rest go on from there.

The Democrats were divided. The 1963 coalition had slowed down any progress of the Democratic Party even though we were in the majority. And John L. O'Brien's group still held a grudge, and they disliked the ones who had been in the coalition, and so there was a seed for disharmony. The people who had been part of Norm Ackley's group were part of O'Brien's group, and they were ultra-liberal. They set the tone of the session for the Democrats.

The Republicans were well organized and they stuck together. Dan Evans was the new governor. I didn't change my mind, I still thought he was a fine person. And I still got along well with him and so did most of the other Democrats. But he was on his party's side during the redistricting, just like I expected him to be.

We tried to get a redistricting bill passed before Governor Evans was inaugurated. In this bill the Democrats protected Senator Fred Dore more than they protected me. They took some of my district that I had revived by getting people to register and vote. They took it away from me. It was a deliberate lessening of my strength. Like I said, I had done the unthinkable job of getting people registered in my district. People who had no desire to register, I had gotten them registered. They were voting for me. And the Legislature, by its action, it was transferring those people to other districts. And I wanted to keep them for myself. I was upset. I had believed that the Legislature wouldn't purposely do that, and I found that they were doing it, and I was upset. I felt that most of it was personal where I was concerned. Senator Fred Dore was still afraid I would get more votes than he would, and he wanted to cut down my ability to do that. The people who were in control of the redistricting agreed with him. They did that to me and they did it to Slim Rasmussen. I had discovered the plot to weaken me. I was not intending for them to do that. I was a fighter to the end against it. So the other Democrats knew they weren't going to get this bill passed before the inauguration, because they knew that I wasn't going to vote with them. I was one of thirteen Democrats who voted against it in caucus.

After the inauguration when the redistricting came up, I recall we were hung up for forty-seven days. We couldn't do anything. Finally a Senate compromise was proposed, a combination of a Senate bill and House bill. It kept most of the first bill. It was when this compromise bill was before the House that I spoke out against it. I didn't let them keep it a secret. People still comment on that speech—they call it my "puppy dog" speech. I took a map I had created of the bill's districts and showed them how much my district was like

a puppy dog, and I said, "He's eating out of a can." I spoke at length about the powerful people who were trying to so-called "get me," and take away my constituents, and said how I felt strongly about it. In the speech I referred to two senators, one was Dore and the other was Greive; he was the main Senate power at that time. When I vented my feelings the House was completely quiet. They were listening to it, but they didn't talk about it to me. It was a conversation piece among themselves. I knew that because I knew how to just keep my ears open.

My speech didn't change the way they voted. The bill passed. Six Democrats who had been in the coalition voted for it. And enough other Democrats joined with them and the Republicans so that it would pass. I felt so strongly that when the bill passed I went to my hotel room and cried. That was the first time in the Legislature that I had ever been so emotionally moved. You take your duties as a legislator very personally and when redistricting does such negative things to you, you just lose heart.

But you had to keep living beyond each act. So that act was detrimental to me. The rest of that session and the next, I was up and rolling.

Later in the session, I didn't fight against the bill which made sure there would be automatic redistricting every ten years. It passed, and it was all right. The automatic redistricting bill set the mechanism where we wouldn't have to go through that bitter fight in the Legislature, with no benefit for the people.

By 1965, I knew I was reaching my apex. By that time I knew so much about how things worked that only something like redistricting could surprise me. I knew some bills I sponsored were important, and more of them weren't very important. But that's the way it should be. I understood more about what I told you I learned my first sessions—it takes more than one session to get something you want. And even if you get it, the law may have to be changed again and again to make it work better. I had certain things I worked for. Some things I wanted so I could get people on my side. Other things I did for my districts just because they were the right things to do. My constituents were mostly working people who had never had enough money to feel safe. So I wanted to help. But it was still most important to make things better, to change discrimination.

I had developed a small group that generally would follow my lead. They helped me and I helped them too, because I was the leader. My group of five or six followed me in substance bills. I was against taxes and I hid out in the Legislature so they couldn't pass a tax without my vote. And so that was five or six people who said, "I won't go unless you go." Now I can't remember who they were.

It's hard to remember when I sponsored things. So I've almost forgotten my 1965 bills. I sponsored or cosponsored about thirty, I think. I was chairman of the Local Government Committee, the second largest committee in the Legislature. In order to get the bills out of my committee, you needed me for a joint sponsor! So I had a lot of signatures, a lot of bills passed.

One that we passed out of my local government committee and became law allowed a sports stadium to be built. There were thirty-eight of us who sponsored that bill. That gave us the Kingdome.

Then there was a bill to liberalize police pensions—that's how I forever got the police in my debt—that entitlement. Liberalizing it meant that the city would pick up a bigger portion of it. I got another law passed to protect the police pensions from being garnished. The police didn't need to encourage me to support them. I had laid out my "must" line of action. And it said, "I must keep the firemen and the policemen on my side at all times." I spent part of my legislative career building up their support. This was still the time when the police and firemen were a strong part of the system, and if they didn't go for you, you didn't make it. I didn't know what I was building police and fireman support for, but payday came when I first started out to get elected for the city council. But as time passed, the police went downhill, and of course, the firemen stayed up a

little longer than the police, but the firemen went the way of the police.

One of my other bills helped low-income retired folks. When you hit sixty-five and probably you're on pension, you wouldn't have to pay taxes on your first few thousands of dollars. That was a boon for the older folks with low income. It became law, and Martin Durkan continued to work on it next session, and it became even better.

Finally, several of us sponsored a joint resolution to try to get Congress to make federal law more in force in Mississippi. We thought there was just too much lawlessness there. Civil rights workers had been killed, and the black people were just fair game. The bill didn't get out of the Judiciary Committee, but we'd made our point.

That year I pointed the people to think even more about discrimination with the open housing bill. I told you how the open housing bill was traditional. For three terms we had put it in and the House passed it, but the Senate killed it. It was introduced in January as usual, requested by Governor Evans. We knew we'd be held behind with redistricting, and the bill was a weak one, too. It would have kept real estate salesmen from discriminating, but owners could still refuse to sell to minorities. I said it was about all we could get, and the newspapers were carrying me saying that.

Two or three hundred people crowded into the room when the House and Senate Judiciary Committees held their hearing on the open housing bill in February. I took it that now people had worked their way to become favorable. The Urban League and the Council of Churches were with us. But the newspapers called that hearing a "word battle" and it was.

I spoke out strongly. I said that those against the bill were no better than race-baiters or the Ku Klux Klan. The realtors who testified against the bill got into how it would be dangerous to our freedom and change our American life. And one said the sponsors should disappear in their own "slime." That was his word, "slime." People were more stirred up in 1965, no doubt about it.

Winning any of our other causes was twined together in a coincidental way with the voting rights campaign in Selma, Alabama begun in January 1965. Every time something happened down there, it made for more understanding of civil rights and more pity for the movement up here. So I tried to use that sympathy to get the people to make a difference here. And of course, I wanted open housing most.

Birmingham had Bull Conner with his firehoses and dogs, but Selma had Sheriff Jim Clark, who was even worse. He and his posse used cattle prods on student marchers. Colonel Al Lingo was the leader of a squad of state troopers, and he was another bad one. In Selma, on February 18—right after our open housing hearing here—Jimmy Lee Jackson was shot in the stomach by a trooper. Those troopers had laid in wait for the marchers and then started clubbing and chasing them. Jimmy Lee was trying to keep them away from his mother and grandfather when he was shot. He died two days later. I felt that as close as if it was a member of my own family.

Martin Luther King saw it was time to do more. He planned a march from Selma to the state capitol at Montgomery, about fifty miles away. The marchers figured to give Governor George Wallace a petition asking him to declare that all blacks could vote. Wallace wouldn't give his permission for the people to march, and he told the troopers to keep things quiet. On March 7 the marchers started out toward Montgomery anyway, walking on the Jefferson Davis highway. On the Pettis bridge leading out of town, the troopers were lined up, wearing gas masks, waiting. They clubbed the marchers before they gassed them. Then Jim Clark's mounted posse rode them down, and beat them with rubber tubes wrapped in barbed wire. But that wasn't all. The marchers ran and the posse followed them, right into the blacks' neighborhood. The posse beat people on the streets, and even went into a church and threw a young man into a stained glass window. The window was a picture of Jesus leading the people. All this was on TV and in all the papers and magazines. They called it "Bloody Sunday."

That was another time I didn't think I could

get by. It was happening, the violence I was afraid of. It was increasing—more people, more often. I just have to think I was being tested, because I surely didn't look for people to answer back like they did. All around the country, people protested, all kinds of people, in all kinds of ways: rallies, marches, vigils.

Just like other times, I didn't have enough faith in Martin Luther King. I didn't look for him to turn it around like he did. He sent telegrams urging civil rights supporters, especially the clergy, to come down and join him in a march from Selma to Montgomery on Tuesday, March 9. Hundreds of people answered his call. And they didn't waste time—they were in Selma the next day. That was Monday, and the leaders hadn't been able to get the march set up yet. It ended up that a federal judge wouldn't allow the march, but Martin Luther King went against him. He and his people—2,000 this time—marched across the bridge where the troops waited again. The marchers prayed, and then went back. Some of them wanted to go on, but Martin Luther King prevailed. You know he always tried to be peaceful.

That peace ended that same night when one of the clergymen from the North was killed. He was a young white Unitarian minister, name of Reeb, James Reeb. He wasn't protesting, just walking with two other whites, when he was clubbed to death by some Selma whites. People were even more angry this time—this was a white man. So there were more marches, all over the country, again. And here in our state there were marches all over, not only Seattle, but in places like Spokane and Tacoma and Walla Walla.

Well, I wanted to do something, too. I felt the urge—I sorely wanted to go down South and join them. My own pastor, Reverend McKinney, went to Selma. This time I was sure I belonged down there, too, taking pride in the movement, because I felt part of it. But I rejected it because my wife didn't want me exposed to more danger than I was already in. She wouldn't hear of it. I had a little woman who said, "No, no, no." And I abided by her wishes, so she's the cause of my staying here. So I stayed, but I didn't pull back.

Selma was affecting President Johnson, too. He hadn't been helping—he didn't give the marchers federal protection. And he hadn't come out in favor of a voting rights act, not until Reverend Reeb was killed. Then on March 15, he made a speech to get Congress to pass a voting rights bill. And this was when I admired him most. He said that we all had to "overcome" injustice. And then he said, "And we *shall* overcome."

I had determined to speak out forcefully in the Legislature. So on March 15, the same day as LBJ's speech, I spoke on a point of personal privilege. I engaged in the habit of personal privilege speaking. That was the only way I could speak on the subject of open housing because they still had the bill bottled up in the Rules Committee. I determined to persuade the Rules Committee to vote it out. That first day was when I talked about Selma. I admitted that I almost cried when I heard about what was happening there, and I said it was like the way Hitler treated the Jews. And then I reminded the House how I had spoken for open housing over the years, and how there were more and more demonstrations here in Washington over those same years. I wanted to let them know we could have violence here. I said we shouldn't wait till we heard the "hue and cry" in the streets. I wanted to speak strongly. But I never made threats, and I didn't then. I ended by speaking out for us legislators leading the people not "to a path of violence" but "into a path of brotherhood for all men." My father had preached those words and I used them like he did.

That speech was my lead-in. When the reporters talked to me afterwards, I spoke up firmly and I assured them this was only the beginning. And the newspapers were still writing about open housing—they used my words that this was my "no-holds-barred campaign." I could tell the legislators were starting to pay attention. When I got up and spoke, they put down their papers. They lay their papers down and hung on every word I said.

Nothing happened that day on open housing, so the next day I invoked personal privilege again.

I reminded the House that even though our President had grown up in the South and had learned all the southern ways, he had asked us to work for equality for everyone. I talked about how the people who would be helped most by open housing didn't have any confidence that we would do anything for them. I used my father's way of speaking again and pleaded with them to "heed the call." The legislators still didn't comment, just kept it to themselves, but they were hurting. And later that day, I got some action, finally. After adjournment, the Speaker called a meeting of the Rules Committee. They finally voted the open housing bill out, because I was just making it too hard, and the newspapers were still following it, every day, all across the state.

It was front page news when the House passed it, four days later, on March 20. Most of the reporters were favorable to me. They liked my manner and quoted me saying we were on our way to walking "in the light of justice."

One reason the open housing bill passed was that some legislators sought divine guidance. The ones who were very good Christians, they not only voted with me, but they told me that they had prayed over it—Slade Gorton and Stu Bledsoe—and I think, Jack McDougall. Others voted with me just because they believed in equality. The other legislators who didn't vote with me, they were quiet and silent. They were worried. They didn't want the problems of the South here, the murder of kids and murder of grownups. And they didn't want to be linked with them in the South. But the fight wasn't over—there was still the Senate vote to go.

And in Selma, the people were even more impatient for the march to Montgomery to happen after all the waiting. The federal judge finally let the march go ahead, and he kept the Alabama troopers and Jim Clark's posse from doing anything. This time LBJ federalized the Alabama National Guard and sent in federal troops, too. So there were men to protect the marchers all along the road, all fifty miles. I was sure that March 25, when they got into Montgomery, was going to be the most important day in all the civil rights movement.

But I was here in Olympia, coaxing and urging, trying to get open housing passed. We had our own march on March 25, to our own capitol, in support of open housing. A preacher from the Council of Churches led it. It didn't make any difference at all. That afternoon the House and the Senate killed open housing for that session. First, the House voted down a bill that came over from the Senate—they had put an open housing amendment on another bill. I spoke from my heart—I asked why we shouldn't "treat everyone fairly?" And I appealed to them personally—I said, "Aren't I fit?" But they weren't ready yet. I couldn't say why. Then, in the Senate, Fred Dore tried to get my House Bill out of Senate Rules, and he was voted down, too. I just lost heart.

Fred Dore was an ally, sort of. I doubted his sincerity in really trying to pass open housing. A politician always wants to respond to his constituents and I felt that Fred Dore was answering that call. He couldn't control what happened in the Senate Rules Committee. But I could tell he wasn't downbeaten like I was.

Watching the goings-on in Montgomery that night on TV turned me around, and it wasn't just me. Everybody—marchers, reporters, and other people watching at home—I think we all had more hope.

A few days earlier, at the beginning of the march, the whites along the roadside had waved Confederate flags and yelled out ugly words. The marchers, about 3,000 of them, carried American flags. They were quiet and serious. Three hundred had been chosen to march the whole fifty miles. The others who wanted to be part of it would join up when the march got to Montgomery.

On the twenty-fifth, when the march got to Montgomery, 25,000 more joined them. First they stopped at the place where slaves used to be sold and sang, *We Have Overcome*. Then they went to the Capitol building—the Confederate flag was waving there, too. Governor Wallace hid himself away and wouldn't come out to get the voting rights petition. But those 25,000 people listened to Martin Luther King give his speech.

Reverend King said even though we were winning, our hard times weren't over. He kept repeating, "How long?" and then answering, "Not too long." He said that justice will win and that a lie can't live forever. He warned us, though, that the road ahead was rough, and wouldn't be easy going. The last times he said, "How long?" he followed with the words of the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*. The last words, "Be jubilant, my feet, our God is marching on," caused me to choke up, even though I was just watching him on TV.

Four months later, the Selma campaign had its most important effect. Congress passed the voting rights bill and LBJ signed it on August 5 that year, 1965. Johnson gave his speech standing in front of a statue of Lincoln, and he talked about how the Voting Rights Act was a victory for freedom, as important as anything won on the battlefield.

Remember, I told you I had come to detect what made the movement work? Selma had it all. It had Martin Luther King and the nonviolent protestors. The TV and newspapers carried it, and the federal government helped. People worked together, and the violence wasn't so bad that it destroyed the order in that little town. At Selma there were more blacks and whites working together to change things than ever before. And they were from all parts of the country.

The stories in the newspapers and on TV news that week were all about how the Selma campaign and Martin Luther King's nonviolent ways were responsible. But I thought about how violence against the marchers and the other nonviolent civil rights people made the general public look at them in a different way. The public was coming along to be sympathetic. White people were moved—they were more tolerant of the marchers and more tolerant of the cause. And that change in public opinion hurried the Congress along to passing the bill. I didn't want to admit that violence ever had a good effect, but this time it did.

The words of Martin Luther King's speech in Montgomery stayed in my mind. And those words kept on restoring my spirit. I knew open housing would happen, but "how long" would it take? Then I saw it was part of my "rough road" to proceed to keep helping it along. I was so uplifted by Dr. King's speech that I knew I had to keep open housing in the people's thoughts as much as I could. So I spoke out right way, in the next few days after it was voted down. I told reporters, "It will come, it will come." And they put that in an article featuring me, and I was getting known so much now that the article was appearing in newspapers all over the state.

At the same time, I was busy trying to find another way to get open housing. I asked Governor Evans to help. I wanted him to put out an executive order to the State Board Against Discrimination. My idea was that the board could hear people with housing problems and decide if an anti-discrimination law was being disobeyed, and make a recommendation. My impression was that Governor Evans was a sincere supporter of this plan. He had worked himself around. I don't remember how many times we discussed it, but he would come by my office and I'd visit him in his. I asked my pastor and the Council of Churches to help, too. Nothing came of that plan, though. But I was still determined on getting open housing. And I was right when I said, "It will come."

But four days later I was sure we were going to have a revolution. The black people who lived in the Watts section of Los Angeles rioted. They burned buildings, stole everything they could carry and fought the police and the National Guard. I think it was more than thirty people killed. At night it was all flames, sirens and people screaming. Stories went around that you could see Watts burning from Beverly Hills.

One flash had caused the Watts blaze. The police stopped a black man for speeding. A policeman killed him when his car lurched and it looked like he would get away. My mind was eased when the police got it quieted down, but I knew the people who lived in Watts were still violent.

Martin Luther King had warned us something would happen in the cities. So when he visited Watts, he was accepting, but just desolate. You can understand—he talked to some young men

who had no jobs. They told him they "won" because "we made the whole world listen to us." Revered King wasn't surprised, though. The year before there had been riots in Harlem and Newark. He'd been warning us for years that something this bad was sure to happen in the cities, and he called the riots "the language of the unheard." I felt the same. Seattle was better than the big cities but the same things had happened. After World War II, blacks came to the cities to find jobs. But by the mid-sixties there weren't very many jobs, and the black churches and lodges didn't have the long tradition to keep the kids steady. And the families were smaller—more than likely, the grandmas and the uncles were down South.

Watts was the breaking point. It wasn't civil rights, but it had its effect. Whites who had been with us saw the flames in Watts on TV and turned on the civil rights movement. After that, summertime race riots in the cities were ordinary. You remember we called them the "long hot summers." I think there were six or so the next summer. It was just a common thing. And that's what Martin Luther King and I were so scared of.

Martin Luther King had more reason for fear than I. He had started a campaign in the Chicago ghetto. And when he did, I was satisfied for the first time that in some way the North would be included. He lived in the ghetto in the filth. He knew that Chicago was a lot like Watts—the people had no jobs and no hope. The young men fought and kept alive by stealing. Well, Reverend King knew he needed a new way to help. He figured he'd start a "ghetto union," have demonstrations in the street, and try to bring together a community—I think he called it a "blessed" community. But in July there were riots in Chicago—his work just didn't have enough effect. But when Martin Luther King begged the rioters to stop, they did.

In August, the blacks marched through the white neighborhoods. Then, finally, there were results. Mayor Daly met with Reverend King and they agreed that the city had to enforce open housing, and that the banks had to cooperate.

Jesse Jackson continued the campaign, but found only a few jobs. I read that Martin Luther King felt bad about the Chicago campaign, and so did I. But I was like my father, filled with the "zeal of the Lord" to achieve *my* cause, open housing.

Another change was the anti-war movement, the protest against the war in Vietnam. I didn't anticipate it, and I wasn't in the anti-war camp at all. I stayed aside from it. I had gone to war, I had fought, and I felt other people had a right to fight, too.

But some people who had experience in the civil rights movement joined hands with people who were leading the anti-war movement. So at first, the civil rights movement and the anti-war movement were one and the same. They were not distinguishable and you couldn't separate them. In 1965 and '66 the anti-war protestors had marches like the civil rights marches, and the teach-ins like civil rights sit-ins, and they had conferences, and they picketed. All this was nonviolent. I don't think it was directly imitation, it was just that the people in the anti-war movement who were from the civil rights movement knew certain ways to get things done—for them it was a natural way to do things. I remember a few of those marches and sit-ins in '65 and '66. It seemed like California was out front. By the end of 1966, I knew they were having sit-ins at the University of Washington.

I got to feeling concerned when Martin Luther King started to speak out against the war. I recall it was during the summer of 1965. I was so much with him in my beliefs that at first I didn't know how to feel or what to think. Then I observed that I was bothered because he was spreading himself a little too thin. And that was another one of a number of things that worried me.

You remember I told you about my missing the importance of the times the young people of SNCC disagreed or withdrew from demonstrations—Selma to Montgomery was one. And then I fretted about the angry young black men without jobs in the cities. Some joined the anti-war movement, but too many were so impatient they

banded together in militant organization.

It started in 1966. James Meredith, a young black man from Tennessee, was shot by a white man. Meredith had started to walk alone from Tennessee to Mississippi to urge blacks to vote when he was shot. The civil rights organizations were furious when he was attacked, so COFO, SCLC, CORE, SNCC and more, I think, joined together to finish his walk. Martin Luther King led. But Stokely Carmichael was the chairman of SNCC by then, and he didn't think nonviolence was enough. He wanted to use the slogan "Black Power." The march ended with bad feeling, another turning point.

During the summer SNCC, CORE and the Urban League endorsed Black Power. In October, Stokely Carmichael organized the Black Panthers in Oakland. I don't recall if I heard about it then, but I knew about it soon enough. They organized in 1968 in Seattle, and they did cause trouble.

I had my mind on my campaign in October 1966, so I probably wasn't alert to anything about Oakland's young blacks. You remember I had my new "puppy dog" district. Some of my campaign brochures and posters were different than before. I wanted to show myself to my new constituents as sophisticated but still a friendly neighbor. So I put in my going to the civil rights conference in D.C., and that I had turned down two better job offers. This was my way of telling them that my commitment to them was most important. But I put in my legislation for tax relief for retired citizens, too. That was to reassure the constituents in the remaining part of my old district.

Finally, I described redistricting as someone with power trying to get rid of me. That was all I needed to say. And my people, they sided with me, on *my* side. And I got support where I wasn't supposed to get it. Down in Leshi among the rich people. They had been moved. They had been the most strongly negative area against me, and now they turned out to be one of the strongest precincts for me.

I felt secure in my district—and I knew I'd need that when I went after open housing with the "zeal of the Lord." But don't ever forget, 1963 through 1966—those were the years I was searching for the light.

Chapter 9

At the Apex

I remember when open housing passed. It was the last big vote on the last day of the regular session of 1967. You recall it took me ten years in the Legislature, five terms, to get open housing passed, but I was urging its passage from the beginning. There never was a year that I didn't urge it on them. Every year, I was knockin' on the door, and every year, the same thing would happen—the House would pass it and the Senate would kill it. And it wasn't until 1967 that I caught them in the mood to pass it. But it had been building up, and it finally paid off. I did that with the whole Legislature's support. We passed it with everybody on board, both Republican and Democrat.

Sponsoring bills against discrimination over and over was building public opinion, and it got so that there was less and less public opinion that was negative. And so during my fifth session, open housing passed without a great debate. I passed it with no opposition in sight.

In shaping public opinion, I always wanted the minority community to desire to help me. And when you express the need for someone's help, it makes you a little bit more humble. That was my approach. I wanted that, and I worked for that. The fourth and fifth terms in the Legislature I found out I could have an effect beyond my district. And I wanted to encourage the people outside of my district to support me. They couldn't vote for me, but they could express the desire to be on my side. And they went along with my thinking.

For example, I made speeches away from home anytime I was invited. That was not too often, but I found a way to reciprocate if they requested it. I made speeches in Tacoma, and that was like home. I remember most vividly, I made a speech in Tacoma right after Kennedy's death. When I made speeches in Yakima, that was a little farther away, but the same tenor. It worked magnificently. I didn't get any financial support, but I got visible support by expression. When I introduced bills like open housing, people from these areas turned out at the Legislature. They made the bulk of my crowds. I would see buses from Yakima, buses from Spokane, and they were all there in support of my bills. So I had an effect statewide.

I met a little racism when I was trying to get open housing passed. I encountered some off-color remarks by certain groups during the open housing hearings over my ten years in the Legislature. At that time the apartment operators and the real estate people were the primary opponents, and some of their people casually made statements that were off-color. I shouldn't have been that surprised, though. I remember reading a Seattle Urban League study where a realtor responded to a housing request from a black person, "Nothing available here. It's our policy: no pets or Negroes." Well, I didn't call it unforgivable; it was just a shock to me. But those real estate people turned around and embraced me when I got to the city council! I didn't understand it. But other legislators never made off-color remarks. They just saw me as being in a bad fight.

In 1967, we were the minority party. So I knew it was going to take some extra maneuvering to get an open housing bill passed. My tactic was to plead for them to see the light, the rightness of my cause. And I remember one time when I corrected Slade Gorton, the brilliant Republican majority leader. He was trying to make a point that the Republicans were used to being in the minority in the Legislature and he said, "Mr. Smith doesn't know how it feels to be in the mi-

nority." And I said, "Oh, yes I do!" My comment caught him off guard. And everyone laughed—Democrats and Republicans—they could see that I spoke the truth with humility and humor. And so they gradually came around to accept my position. And I taught Slade what he was saying. But Slade and I were friends, and I remember Shelby Scates wrote that Slade was a "not-so-secret Smith admirer."

I started my fight for open housing that session just like the sessions before. I sponsored House Bills 117 and 426. House Bill 117 was a stronger bill that would have denied discrimination by the real estate people and the home owners. But it didn't go anywhere—it died in the Judiciary Committee. 426 was a milder bill. And I wasn't about to see the same fate for it. I had a plan for getting it out of the committee.

At that time I had a general build up of speaking under the terms of special privilege. I had done it two or three times already that session, and on the fiftieth day I found a way to speak on the subject of open housing even though the bill was not out on the floor. I was very emotional, and I made a motion to relieve the Judiciary Committee of the bill and place it before the body of the house. I told them that voting against the motion would say to the minority groups that they were good enough to go to Vietnam and die, but not good enough to live in an integrated community.

Yes, I made a pretty good speech and it passed. Newman Clark was chairman of that committee and I rolled it right over him and took it out, and transferred it to the Rules Committee. The Rules Committee got it, and that was the first time in twenty-five years that a motion such as that had passed. Many people had tried that kind of maneuver, but their efforts just died by the wayside. I had done something that hadn't been done before and that was evidence that I had broad support.

And I did that with the help of sixteen Republicans. They reluctantly decided to go along under the appealing tenor of my speech. I never spoke in demanding terms. I spoke in pleasing terms. And I would mix it up with a little bit of humor. I developed that manner of speaking as I got into the open housing fight. It's a characteristic of mine, and I was careful not to turn them against me. I was convinced that this was the right course, so I was able to convince them to go along with me. And so with a little humor and truth, I succeeded. I convinced the young Republicans to go in directions other than where their leaders were trying to get them to go. And the young Republicans got a "psyching out" from their leadership for doing that. And folks were surprised.

That softened most of them up. I had found the main softening point of the Legislature. But not everyone came around to me right away. I remember our minority leader John O'Brien came to me and said, "Are you trying to fire us?" And I said, "No, I just need that bill passed." He always voted with me, but he had his white constituency, and it was pulling backward.

But I had rolled it over the chairman of the Judiciary Committee and the floor leader, Slade Gordon. They got wounded so much from the divisions I had created in their caucus and they were tired of taking the wound, so they came to me to make a deal. But they didn't want to appear to be bowing to me, so they hatched up a scheme. Slade Gorton just openly approached me and said, "Well, you pulled a fast one, but we can't afford to pass that bill. You're not going to get that bill out of Rules. But if you can find a bill that is coming over from the Senate that you can hang it onto as an amendment, I'll help you pass it. I'll help you pass it by amendment if you don't record the vote." So they agreed to pass it by voice vote. We didn't identify their names with a roll call vote.

I don't know what went on in the Republican caucus, but they were willing to support me, particularly after they realized that their floor leader was not against it. But I had the attitude, "Let me see if it will happen." You learn to not accept anything as fact until it happens. I didn't share that knowledge with anybody.

So I waited for the right bill to hang my housing amendment on. And I knew you had the regulation that a bill couldn't embody more than

one subject, so I couldn't use any old bill from the Senate. But I waited and it came. The bill was Senate Bill 378. It was a "housekeeping" regulatory bill for the real estate people.

First Gordon Richardson, a Republican representative from Spokane who was also a realtor, proposed an amendment eliminating temporary real estate licenses. We passed that. And then I proposed an amendment that embodied the principals of House Bill 426—the one that Slade Gordon killed after I pulled it out of Judiciary. That was known as "the Sam Smith amendment." And the Republicans and the Democrats all went along with it on a voice vote.

The Republicans had rallied around me to get my amendment on that bill. And Richardson and I had agreed to support each other through the House and the Senate, so he had spoken for my amendment and I had spoken for his. But two people from Spokane County had come to me and told me that because they lived in a certain area they couldn't afford to vote for the bill with my amendment on it. They clearly admitted that they couldn't vote for it because the folks at home wouldn't understand it. But they promised to help me get it passed, and they did. Those were the leaders of the Spokane group, Dr. Alfred O. Adams and Edward Harris. They weren't really aboard, but they had talked to me about it, and they had friends and they persuaded their friends to go along with it.

And so the amended bill passed the house 84-8, and then went back to the Senate for approval of the amendments. The Senate considered the Richardson amendment and my amendment separately. There was some opposition to the Richardson amendment—now I can't remember why, but I know Wes Uhlman was against it. I think he may have been representing national real estate interests that supported temporary real estate licenses, but I'm not sure. So they defeated Richardson's amendment, but they passed mine. The Senate approved of it. I don't remember how many senators I talked to, but persistence paid off. I had been always pushing for it and I never let up.

But it wasn't over yet. Because the Senate refused the Richardson amendment, the bill had to go back to the House. And at the end of the last day of the regular session, we took up Senate Bill 378 one more time. Richardson wanted to stand firm on his amendment and take the whole bill to conference. But I was not about to let that happen. It had taken ten years to get the measure this far. And on the sixtieth day, the last day of the session, a conference committee not only was a death knell, it was a funeral. So I made a motion to recede from Richardson's amendment and approve the bill.

Well, that created quite a stir, because Richardson said that I had agreed to support his amendment, even if it came to conference. But that wasn't our deal—I had agreed to support him in the House and in the Senate. And I remember what I said when I was questioned. "I am a man who will not back down on my word. We did not discuss a conference, because we never dreamed we would go this far. I have gone as far as I can go. The moment of truth is now. We either pass a civil rights bill now or we decide we are not going to."

The Republicans were in a real bind. Most of them supported my amendment, but they were caught between voting with me, and being loyal to Richardson and the Republican caucus. I remember how angry they were with me for making them choose between their conscience and their party. Most went with their party. Some, like Representatives Leckenby and Zimmerman, went with their party but issued statements declaring their support for civil rights. And then there were some that went with their conscience and took the beating from the party leadership. Those were people like Alan Bluechel, Paul Barden, and Mary Ellen McCaffree from Seattle, Homer Humiston from Tacoma, and Don Brazier, Marjorie Lynch, and Sid Morrison from Yakima.

Ten years of knocking and hammering came down to that vote. I told the other members that they would be reaching out and touching history if they went ahead and passed the bill and kept it out of conference. And many of those young

Republicans went with me, and my motion to put the bill on final passage won by one vote, 48-47. And on final passage the bill had almost no opposition. I finally breathed a sigh of relief. It had passed.

I felt good. It was the end of a long fight. I had won. And I was more-or-less satisfied. I was in the news headlines the next morning from Seattle to Spokane. The *Times* wrote that it was one of the most far-reaching civil rights measures passed by the Washington Legislature in years. But I was quoted as saying it was only a small step forward. I was right and they were right. It began the progress that led to full open housing in the city of Seattle, the state of Washington, and throughout the country. I look at it now as a significant step in the history of civil rights in the state of Washington. At the time, I felt that it was just another milestone and that it was a pretty big milestone, but it didn't signal that the job was finished. I wasn't a brand new legislator after five terms—my goals had not changed. There was still discrimination and denial of opportunity and equality, so my people continued to look to me for leadership.

In fact, my constituents needed me because the open housing bill was challenged by the real estate people just days after Governor Evans signed it into law. I didn't think there was a reasonable person who could be opposed to such a mild housing law. But before the month was out, the real estate people had filed a referendum to put my open housing amendment to a popular vote. And then they collected enough signatures to put it on the ballot at the next general election—which wasn't until November 1968. That meant that my open housing amendment would be on the ballot statewide for the people to vote on just like we did in the Legislature—if they voted for the referendum, they would be voting to uphold my open housing law, and if they voted against the referendum, they would be voting to kill it. But I was not downbeaten because I did not think the voters would vote down my open housing law. I just knew. I felt that all that would be accomplished with the referendum would be to upset the community. And Dan Evans came out and he supported the referendum after the real estate people used scare tactics to try to get the people to vote down open housing. So that helped, and my statewide influence had an effect, and in 1968 the referendum passed and my open housing law was upheld. And it stayed on the books until 1972, when the proviso was dropped and the law was strengthened even further. And I believe that version remains on the books today.

But by 1967 I had become so powerful in changing and shaping opinions in the Democratic Party, and the Legislature, that I was ripe to move on to some other place. I was like a loose cannon going off—you couldn't tell where I was going to shoot. I wasn't tied down to anybody. And I was effective. You see, the people who controlled the party, they wanted to keep control, but I was threatening their command. Other people threatened to get control of the party machinery, but I was coming from a different direction. I was coming in from a different side and threatening to disrupt their control. So at the end of my fifth term when I was getting too powerful, Shelby Scates and one other person started talking about me for chairman of the Democratic Party. But I never was interested.

I still had my eye on Congress. That was my ambition from the start. And I considered offices like state senator, and secretary of state—I started with those steps in my pathway. But I never got a chance to recognize them, because we always had a Democrat state senator and I wasn't going to run against him.

But I knew it was time to leave the Legislature. I had become too powerful. I was powerful because I could persuade people to go along with me. Even though I wasn't a party officer, when I spoke I could persuade people. I don't know whether it was welcomed or not, because I was getting power beyond my position. So it was not news to me when I was aware that people in the Legislature wanted to get rid of me. Most of them who were in power were accustomed to wielding it. I wasn't accustomed to it. This was totally

new to me.

I was voted Legislator of the Year at the end of the 1967 session. I was at my apex. I had been voted one of the ten best some session earlier, but I was voted the best in 1967. I promoted myself to be named Legislator of the Year. I just talked to the right people. And the right people had noticed my work, and so the Democratic Party organization voted me Legislator of the Year. It helped me in my campaign for the city council. And they were trying to help me. They wanted me out of the Legislature and into the city council.

And the press was engaged in pushing me actively, giving me the favored spots in the newspapers, and reporting me only in a good light. I detected it and I said to myself, "What's going on here? I'm getting too much good press." The press knew that I was going to be requested for the city council. But they didn't tell me, and some of my friends in the Legislature knew it, too. The reporters giving me this good press were Shelby Scates down there for the *P-I*, and the UPI reporter I mentioned earlier, Eldon Barrett—they were both writing favorable things about me. And I got long well with other Seattle reporters like Mike Conner, Sam Sperry and David Sophia.

But being a city councilman wasn't part of my plan. I didn't seek to be a city councilman. I thought it was a dead-end job, and I proved that right. In fact, I didn't get involved with the city council until 1967. I found out then that somebody was planning for me to be a city councilman. I heard rumors. That's when I began to think about it. And then I was informed that it was going to happen. I thought about it, and I hadn't made up my mind when a person came to talk to me about it. That was Jim Kimbrough. He was a messenger. He came to me and told me that the business people in Seattle had taken a vote, and they wanted me to come to the city council. And I was notified that the fire and police departments were in my corner, and so I decided to go.

I decided that making history as the first black city councilman was inviting, and I couldn't pass up a chance to make history. And I didn't like the people who were being considered as second choice. I thought I had nothing to lose even though it was a job that I didn't like. I was still planning to go on to Washington, D.C. I decided I would hold onto my desire to become a congressman, but still make the step to be a city councilman.

When I saw Jim on my way to a committee meeting in Olympia, he asked, "Will you do it?"

And I said, "O.K. I'll do it. Now can we go on to the committee meeting?" And Jim repeated that story over and over—he didn't believe I could make up my mind that way. But I did.

In the power groups, they had a poll taken and they figured me for the first choice. They used to have a President's Club that met in the Rainier Club, and they were for me. I didn't understand it. I came out either first or second, but I had more first place votes than anybody else. I don't know what kind of poll they used—I wasn't privy to their polling. But they had chosen me, and they were right. They just expressed the desire to have me come to the city council.

So I started off with the Seattle power structure behind me. I'm talking about the guys from the fire and police departments, businessmen and part of the liberal community. Jim Kimbrough and the clergy were representing the liberal community. And he asked me to run, but he was only the first to make contact with me—he wasn't the main one. Harold Fuhrman from the *Seattle Times* asked me, and a policeman asked me, and at that time, they were powerful. And the big businesses like Boeing and Washington Natural Gas helped me, and they were powerful, too.

I don't know how they did it, but they were behind me—the real leaders of Seattle at that time—and they triggered my coming to the city council. Elected public officials, we never did control things. All across the country in every major city there is—I call them the shadow group—they are really in control of things. The people in elected office just manifest the desires of the shadow group. Virtually every large American city has a leadership group that operates behind the scenes. In Seattle they were strong in the late 1960s.

They were a nonpartisan group. But they

worked through the more conservative wings, the Washington Research Council and the Chamber of Commerce. But they dealt with the issues of the day on the face of what was the worst of it. If it was going to have an effect on the city, they were much involved. If they wanted something to happen, it usually did.

None of the members of the shadow group—I call them the controllers—in any city are publicly known. But you don't have to look far to find out who they are. It isn't hard to find out. The economic controllers and the leaders in the downtown group are part of the shadow group in every big city. Seattle was no different. We used to have the Norton Clapps and then T.A. Wilson, and Bill Boeing.

The controllers in the shadow group were a generation older than I was. They were in their sixties, most of them. Some in their late fifties, but most of them were in their sixties. And they have mostly passed off of the scene from having a direct active influence in city affairs. They developed less and less control. They didn't do it—time just did it. And their replacements weren't as strong as they were. The group which followed the ones who wanted me in the city council was less able, less powerful and less dedicated. And this younger group basically passed when Norm Rice was elected mayor. That mostly ended their reign—they have dwindled on down. And I don't think that there is another group now.

I do not know how much of this influence was inherited. About the time I came along, a few powerful families more-or-less ruled the city of Seattle. The Clise family and Sicks family and oh, there were about five or six other families that ruled over the city of Seattle. But that ended about the time I got involved with the city of Seattle. SeaFirst had been handed down through a few prominent families, but that ended being a practice. Joshua Green and Henry Broderick and the Weyerhaeuser people I didn't succeed in getting close to. They were sort of left out of dealing with me. And I didn't get close to the Bullitts—Mrs. A. Scott Bullitt, Stimson Bullitt, or Dorothy Bullitt. But Henry B. Owing was close to me—at that time he was president of KING Broadcasting.

Sometimes the shadow group manufactures public opinion so that it will reflect their desires. They can do that because they are the guys in charge of publication of the media itself. And so they can pretty much form public opinion. The public is not aware of this. I don't know whether the people knew of them at all. I don't even believe that the people who were involved in the protests knew of the shadow group—they were not inside. I just knew of them from my own knowledge. I just picked it up by keeping my ears open.

I managed to hook onto the shadow group unknowingly. While I was a representative in the Thirty-seventh District I managed to have an influence all over the city and the state. My limit of influence wasn't just the Thirty-seventh District—I affected people beyond. And my actions in the Legislature drew the attention of the shadow group.

I do not know how many other city council members were supported by this group. They had been significant in electing all of the old city councilmen. But they made the decision to inject some new blood. I do not know how many public officials that they disapproved of were replaced. I think their influence was intended to be that way—a mysterious process.

And the controllers thought that if I went to the city council they could control me better, because I would have a larger constituency. Judging from my past, I adhered to my constituency in the Central District. But my new constituency would be broader and more divided and that would make me adhere to other people more. And they were right.

But mostly they were concerned about the direction of the city. In particular, they were concerned about the Central District and the potential for trouble. Like the rest of the country, the civil rights movement was splitting the black community and black power was gaining influence and threatening to make things more extreme. In fact, just after I passed open housing

in the Legislature, Stokely Carmichael came to Seattle and urged us to give up the fight for integration, and turn inward and accept his message of black power. This made the people in Seattle nervous, especially the white community. They knew and I knew that Seattle could have riots like there were later that summer in Newark and Detroit if they took the wrong step. The Central Area didn't have ghettos like the cities back East, and everybody was fighting to prevent it from getting that way—like Chicago, D.C., Newark, and Detroit. In Seattle they were of a mind that, "We want to head this off. We don't want it to come to Seattle." That was the verbatim thought of the shadow group. They needed my leadership in Seattle. But in truth, I was just as lost as they were in dealing with it. They thought that I had some magic cure. I didn't. But they didn't believe it.

I announced that I was running for city council at the Seattle Chamber of Commerce. I told the people that I was sad to leave the Legislature, but I believed I could bring new life to City Hall. In fact, in one campaign speech, I said I'd "add a little color to the council." Like I told you, that was my approach—to mix the truth with a little humor.

My constituents in the Thirty-seventh District didn't want me to be a city councilman. They were afraid that my movement out of the Legislature would dilute their effect of getting civil rights bills passed. So they didn't want me to leave. And there were some pretty vivid discussions about that. They told me personally.

But citywide people were strongly for me. They were for me and they showed it. The people figured I'd be a good city councilman. So I led a charmed life and I didn't understand it.

I think my humorous approach eased tensions that were running pretty high at the time. People were feeling the pressure from the riots in the cities that summer. They happened one after the other: Boston, Tampa, Cincinnati, Atlanta, Newark, and Detroit. I remember LBJ even appointed a special commission to figure out what to do. Here in Seattle, Governor Evans met with the young people and that eased tensions somewhat. After those riots started, some of my white friends who had encouraged me to run thought I should withdraw. But I remember my response: "All people of good will deplore the riots and the conditions that lead to them, but I can't believe the people of our city would penalize me for the irrational action of others." In fact, I knew that there was a need for more candidates like me to address the issues we were facing.

I tried not to let the unrest disturb me or keep me from my goals. We needed new ideas and new programs to meet the urban crisis. But I also recognized that I would have to be reasonably militant to achieve these goals. I knew we were going to have to accelerate our gains. And I knew I had to make progress to keep the extremists from leading people astray.

So I unleashed my plan for keeping future summers cool. I felt that the city government should take the lead in planning to prevent racial disturbances. Before I came on the scene, the city council did nothing but wait for the governor and mayor to take preventative action.

I proposed that planning groups be established to include business and labor leaders, and members of the minority community and the city council, in order to decide on ways to increase employment. Out of those sessions I felt we could provide summer jobs for youth that would give them valuable experience. And we would seek to solve the problem of discrimination in apprenticeship programs.

When I first proposed this kind of approach during the campaign, they were all looking at me in wonderment, if I could pull it off. The more liberal blacks, the real radical protest types, thought I was siding with the police—and I was. They were cautioning me not to go too far. But I pounded away at the theme that if we are to keep our society orderly, it called for a highly professional, well-paid law enforcement department. Strongly, I urged that efforts be made to get our best young men interested in this field, and that both firemen and policemen should be well paid. I was trying to split the mark, with police and fire,

and not lose my black support. And I succeeded.

Crime in the streets was always a good topic. And the people were afraid of crime in the street, so we could trade off in that. We were just getting past the riots, and stopping crime in the street meant safety from the riots. And so according to what connotation you put on it, it was a good topic. And my general connotation was safety.

Another thing that I wrote and talked about during my campaign was growth and urban planning. Seattle was growing faster than any other city on the West Coast at that time. But I was coming down on the side of planning for that growth. I recall the term I used: "urban sprawl." I said that growth was a blessing, and that we were not "hopelessly caught" at that time. We were just seeing the beginning of growth appearing at that time. And that growth came into permanence. Little cities were formed and they took on permanence.

The business people liked what I said. The more radical people were cautious, but they wanted planning, and I appealed to them when I indicated that growth had to be planned. Urban renewal programs like Forward Thrust and rapid transit were the key to growth at that time. I thought about those issues when I started campaigning. They appeared to me to be good issues to go on.

Urban renewal was already active in the community when I started my campaign. And so I just embraced it. I talked to the people leading the charge. But I didn't talk to Jim Ellis. Sometimes I talked to a retired colonel from Chicago. That was Colonel Cannon. And I was filled with my own ideas. Some of my ideas were negative about urban renewal, in that leaders didn't give the people much choice of whether they wanted it or not, and they wanted to move low-income and small business people out forcibly. It was a difficult issue because I wasn't for that, but I wanted the area to improve.

I came out strongly in support of a comprehensive rapid transit system extending from the north end of Seattle to the industrial south end, across Lake Washington to Bellevue and Kirkland, and south to Renton, Kent and Auburn. I knew that if we lessened the need for highways, the federal government would be in a position to grant up to two-thirds of the money needed to create rapid transit. And Governor Evans was willing to allocate funds from the gasoline tax.

Another point I made in my campaign for the council was Seattle needed a new approach as to whether the council ought to be legislative or administrative. I thought it should be legislative, and I thought the membership of the council should be increased by two. And I also proceeded to inject the council into a little bit more of an administrative field. And gave leadership back to the mayor's office, as we got along in the establishment of the council's role. We made mayors Clinton and Braman stronger. They had been mostly ceremonial before we took action. That was when I was in the Legislature that we strengthened them—with House Bill 20, which gave budget-making authority to the mayor. But before that, the city council made up the budget, approved it, amended it, and passed it. I influenced that bill during my last term in the Legislature in my capacity as a senior member of the Local Government Committee. But it didn't take effect until I was on the city council.

But most of my efforts were aimed at finding a way to close the gap between the affluent and the disadvantaged, the senior citizen, the poor, and the uneducated. I believed that the city was the place where most problems concerning these groups developed. And so I believed the city should offer the answers.

I was a self-starter in that first campaign for city council. I grew while I was campaigning. I told you before that ideas came to me in the night. While I was asleep in the night—not before I went to sleep. Sometimes I would wake up and ideas came to me. And I just accepted them. I consulted my wife on every move. She was aware of my thoughts. She didn't express many different ideas in this campaign. She was willing to follow my lead. But if she turned one of my ideas down, I didn't go any further with it, because she was an ordinary, normal woman. And if she turned

thumbs-down on it, I figured that other people would turn thumbs-down on it.

I didn't raise a lot of money; I only raised $12,000 the first time I ran for city council. That was the total amount—I raised that myself. My opponents raised $38,000. But I still won. I had support among the liberal doctors; they helped me. And they did it voluntarily. I didn't know who they were, so I couldn't go to them and ask them. But they voluntarily came up with the money. I didn't get Weyerhaeuser the first time. Later on they joined me, but they weren't in the vanguard.

But I had others that were behind me. There was the Friedlanders—they were an old Seattle family that had a successful jewelry business. I met them when I was in the service here. I served with Jack Friedlander in the Army at Fort Lawton. They didn't help me a lot, but they helped a little bit. They endorsed me. And they were in the power clique that exerted influence statewide.

There were other business leaders that publicly endorsed me, like Patrick Goodfellow, Stuart Oles and Arnie Bergh. Patrick was not in the power group *per se*, but he was in the group that controlled the commercial interests in the University District. Stuart Oles was a conservative businessman, but he was concerned about inequality and I remember in an endorsement he said, "There has been far too much talk and too little action. ... When an intelligent, articulate and responsible Negro runs for a nonpartisan city office, we have a chance to do something instead of just talking about it." And I had served in the Legislature with Arnie and so he was a supporter of mine.

And of course, like I said before, my colleagues from the Legislature endorsed me. I had the endorsements of Fred Dore and David Sprague from my district. I could always count on Sprague; he was favorable to me all the time. And then there was Wes Uhlman, who had been my seatmate in the House and was a senator at the time. He knew that I would have the right influence on the council when he endorsed me and he said, "Rarely does the right man come on the public scene at the right time as is the case with Sam Smith." And there were two young Republicans, Alan Bluechel and Joel Pritchard, who let me use their names on my campaign literature. They were favorable to me. I didn't ask them why, I just accepted the fact that they helped me and attended fund raisers for me. I was a good member of the Legislature, I had been friendly for the length of the term they had been in office, and I was trying to get elected to the nonpartisan city council.

But CHECC did not endorse me. I will never forget it! CHECC (Choose an Effective City Council) had been organized by young Seattle professionals and their objective was to reform city government. But CHECC was a younger group than the shadow group, which wanted me. They hadn't caught onto the passion. And they set out to make their endorsements by interviewing all the candidates for city council. They were looking for candidates who they felt would bring new energy to the council. But they decided to focus their efforts by choosing just two candidates to endorse and assist with campaigning.

They had a meeting and there was a lot of discussion. They had been discussing me and my opponent, Bob Dunn. He had friends in CHECC, and his friends supported him. Among the liberal whites—young liberal whites, they weren't sure of me yet. They didn't have any specific reservations. They didn't have any that they could point to. I sat there and heard it. It wasn't negative. They just discussed the positive part. They wanted Bob Dunn. And my liberal Democratic friends wanted me. But they were split right down the middle. And so they didn't endorse either one of us. They endorsed Tim Hill and Phyllis Lamphere. But they endorsed me afterwards in future elections.

Never again was CHECC so split. It was twenty-seven to twenty-seven, and the president could have untied it, but he was reluctant. That was Peter LeSourd. But I was a member of CHECC, and I told them not to split themselves on account of me. Just move on past the point. I think Peter LeSourd was glad I did that, because he was more-or-less leaning toward Bob Dunn.

And Bob Dunn was so good a candidate, if I hadn't been running I would have voted for him myself. But I told them not to split in an open meeting. I didn't know what effect this would have. But I just felt that I wanted to get them past the point of making me the division. So I got up and told them not to worry about that, I would make it anyhow. And that was a brave thing for me to say. And I was right. And later on, when Peter LeSourd wanted to be appointed city councilman, I used that against him. I used it to not vote for him. He didn't make it.

And so I made it through the primary in September. And after that, I picked up the endorsements of Bob Block and Bill Sears, who had been my opponents in the primary. They called upon their supporters to support me in the final election. And I split the newspapers' endorsements—the *P-I* endorsed me and the *Times* endorsed Bob Dunn.

You know, that was my first run citywide and I didn't know how much support I had in the communities outside my own. At the time, I figured that there were fifty thousand blacks in greater Seattle. Now I know there were more like forty thousand. But I knew our numbers were small. And I might confide that a number of my black constituents left a vote for me in Seattle, even though they moved out. But I knew I would need to reach beyond the black community.

And in the other communities, I found that people were accepting me. People all over the city were opening their arms to me, and I hadn't expected that. In areas like Laurelhurst, Lake City, West Seattle and Ballard, where I expected to receive some rebuffs, people accepted me with genuineness and a desire to help. I remember talking to a Boeing carpenter who was a major in the Army, and he told me that either I had people in the north end of town hoodwinked or they all felt that I would make a good city councilman. And I remember some white kids from Hamilton Junior High School in the Wallingford District swarming around my old station wagon to ask if they could pass out campaign literature for me. I was pretty popular. But that was news to me.

And after several coffee hour appearances, I received checks in the mail. Early on, I had been having coffee hours, but no money had been raised. And then I had one coffee hour in Laurelhurst. And in that coffee hour they volunteered and donated three hundred dollars. And that was a surprise to me. That was the first coffee hour where I raised money. The second time I raised money, somebody in the Central community had a coffee hour in the Lake Washington District.

I carried this support to the final election in November. I won a close election over Bob Dunn. I just happened to be in the right place at the right time. But Bob Dunn ran a high-minded campaign. Our race was treated just like any other election contest, and I was impressed with the open-mindedness of Seattle voters. The *Times* praised us "for making a careful effort not to exploit the racial issue." But my election had great impact upon the black community. And you recall I had not wanted to be there, but once there, I gave it my best shot.

Chapter 10

The Seattle City Council

Seattle was a great city. As I began my work on the council I was confident that the dream for Seattle was the dream of America. This was the closest place I had found that was fertile enough to reach the point of accepting an individual whether he was black, Indian, or Chinese. Accepting him for the way he was without blackballing him, or without having something prejudicial against him. I was out to make Seattle not only the first place in the nation that had lived up to the Constitution, but the only place. And 1968 was going to be my year.

I came into office with the mayor of Cleveland and the mayor of Gary, Indiana. All these elections were a breakthrough for blacks, but particularly for me because Seattle didn't have a large black population. In the cities of Cleveland and Gary, there was a large black electorate in those cities. Just like Seattle, a re-settling of the black population accounted for all the blacks in other northern cities.

And then the northern cities had come face-to-face with the "problem" of black voters. Somehow New York got through the explosive stage. And later on, in Detroit there were enough liberal whites to add to the blacks and make a majority and a difference. The same thing was true in Los Angeles. Los Angeles had half a million blacks, and when you add the liberals, you've got victory.

But it's still easier for blacks to become a member of a so-called power group in the South than it is here, because you've got the votes there. My brothers-in-law in Louisiana wouldn't have become deputy sheriffs, had it not been for black votes. And Houston wouldn't have had a liberal mayor like Kathy Whitmore and a couple of black councilmen if it hadn't been for the black votes. They had the votes there. And Los Angeles struggled mightily with electing Tom Bradley, but they had the votes. And if we had a large minority population in Seattle, it would have been spread out in the votes.

I knew Tom Bradley, the mayor of Los Angeles, through the annual Congress of the National League of Cities. I knew Carl Stokes, the mayor of Cleveland, through the same connection. He didn't stay very long. Dick Hatcher, the mayor of Gary, Indiana, stayed in a long time. And Detroit had a long struggle, but finally they got Coleman Young and he hung on, and hung on, and hung on. Then Mayor Gibson was in Newark, he stayed on the scene a while, but they finally got rid of him. And I remember in Richmond, California, Douglas Dallahide was the mayor. And in Highland Park, Michigan, we had Robert Backwell there and later there were more.

These men were the modern day saviors of the cities at the time. And they added a new emphasis to holding public office. Like I said, I was meeting all those people nationwide through the National League of Cities. We were at the seat of that movement. We talked about the toughness that we had to exude. I was well recognized by that group. I could have been president of the organization, but knowing that Seattle had a borderline black population, I didn't want to be president. I thought the president had to come from a city with a large black population.

We were the subject of many national and local publications and carried the same wave in the news. Herb Robinson, who was the associate editor of the *Seattle Times*, compared my victory to black victories in other cities. He said that Seattle voters felt it was important to have a minority person in a position of power to defuse racial tensions and improve communication,

especially after the previous summer's events. But it was difficult. It's difficult to be tough enough to take a stand and get things done, and still be moderate. It takes people like me who prepare the way and take the beating—that's what you've got to have.

Even though I hadn't wanted to be there, I was ripe for the city council. I felt free of party pressure. I saw myself in a different setting, and I saw a different need. I saw that something had to be done to ignite the fire in the city to do something. The city hadn't done anything, hadn't stepped up to meet the challenge, because nobody on the city council knew what to do. And I was fresh and brimming over with ideas. And the people just fell in behind me.

I had an open wing of liberals who were supporting me, and it was like they were happy to see me on the scene. But I had to do something to attract my black supporters who had been unhappy because I left the Legislature. They felt that they lost ground, which they did. The Legislature was fully white after I left because the Democratic Party appointed Dan O'Donnell to fill my seat. But we remedied that by putting George Fleming in there after the first election.

I wasn't the spokesman for the black community. I was trying to quiet the black community, so that we could have a peaceful situation and make progress. But my constituency was no longer limited to the Thirty-seventh District. My constituency was citywide. And my goal was always to represent all of the people, and to work for the improvement of the total city. But I couldn't ignore the black community's problems. I kept track of protest by moving in among the people—general, ordinary people who were my former Thirty-seventh District constituents. I mixed in with the protesters, black and white, antiwar and civil rights. I had conversations with them, and I picked up their strong feelings.

Nobody wanted a riot in the city of Seattle. But we were getting awfully close. Nobody was prepared for what was happening across the country, because we had never experienced it. So everybody was flying blind. Because nobody was prepared, nobody had any idea of what we were going to be faced with. There was a real fear of the unknown. Fear of the unknown, that was the fact. The pure fact of the unknown. And, as I told you, that was part of the movement to get me to the city council, a position that I didn't want at first. But I saw the sense of it later on. The idea was we didn't have anybody in the city council who had any experience, who had any connection with the community, so we'd better get someone there and get them there first before the explosiveness reached the city.

Seattle had been a city—up until the protests started in the South—that was free of obvious participation in racism. The black neighborhoods certainly were not on the verge of exploding. Later, it spread like wildfire; it just caught on after the explosions in other cities. But the leaders of Seattle were trying to make progress. They wanted the racism to be out of the city. They didn't encourage it all. So it was a model city, measured by other cities.

And the city succeeded by electing me. And you know, pardon me for being boastful, but with my moving to the city council, the reporting activity centered on a city councilman the first year—not so much the Legislature. This affected people's awareness.

Here in Seattle, my election was a victory for change on the council. A newspaper article stated that voters were angry at the approach of the council before we were there. Phyllis Lamphere, Tim, and myself were voted in to break tradition. I agree with that. We broke up the city council being made up of members all over fifty-five. We stopped that trend. I was forty-five and Tim was in his thirties, and Phyllis was about my age. We were reasonably young. And I felt early on that we would change Seattle. I felt that was the start of the reform movement that would gather steam. And it did.

The voters had lost all confidence in the old city council to take care of any problems. When I first got to the city council, I remember Phyllis, Tim and I were described by the press as the reform group. At first I didn't know what they

meant. But as I got farther into the city council operation I understood. Those who had been on the council a long time were fat and lazy. They were against the changes we wanted in the way the council should conduct business. We were out to make the council more legislative and less administrative. But the "old guard" said our proposals would have to be approved by the voters as city charter amendments at the next election. So we couldn't go in there and radically change things.

One of my first suggestions was for the council to meet out of City Hall—out among the people. I was so interested in changing the image of the city council, and changing the way it worked, and I thought this was a good idea. But the "old guard" didn't take to it kindly. One councilman thought the council might be charged with sneaking around and avoiding the public by constantly changing the meeting place. And Floyd Miller argued that city hall was like the legislative chambers in Olympia, and we just shouldn't meet anywhere else. One member even said that formal meetings might be too boring to hold out in the community. But I couldn't understand it. I thought meeting outside of city hall would be a healthy exercise in democracy. And during my campaign, I found that people were eager to see the council in action. But this was just the first of many fresh ideas that Phyllis, Tim and I proposed that the council deep-sixed.

Another one was for the council to change its meeting schedule. I proposed meeting for a three-month period and having one month off for research, or meeting for a two-month period and having one month off for research. Phyllis and Tim were with me, but there was that six to three majority against us. So we never got it passed. Later on, I still thought it was as good an idea as when I first came to the council. But I could read and count—it took five votes to get it passed, and I just didn't have the votes.

The last organizational reform I remember trying for was to have a book of the bills introduced so I could scan them in my free time, like I did in the Legislature. But the council was set in its own ways. We had somewhat of a delivery service for the bills, and finally we got around to getting the book, but it took a long time.

We did increase the council staff from twenty to twenty-eight. We did that because when I was elected to the city council one secretary had to serve two councilmen. Phyllis came up with the idea of us having assistants and I supported her. I had campaigned on that, that I would get an assistant. And working together, Phyllis and I were able to get it.

But it was a pretty well-known fact that we didn't get very much passed at that time. We were voted down six to three fairly often. But we kept working at it and the city council kept changing, and so the voting pattern changed. That developed later on. As the reform group, Phyllis, Tim and I developed more influence after Don Wright was appointed to the council in 1969.

They wanted to make me chairman of the License Committee, but that was the committee where there was a lot of corruption and a lot of heat. I didn't want to be involved in that. I was aware that the problems that were erupting in cities all over the country might happen here, and I didn't want that. You've gathered that I was pretty perceptive, even when I was in the Legislature. I could foresee the problems that were coming because of what was happening in the South. And I knew that finally, it would reach home in Seattle. I knew that the Central Area and the police were going to be a problem. So, I sought to be appointed chairman of the Public Safety Committee.

I was always trying to get things on an even keel. I didn't have any kind of information that things were going to get tougher in '68 than they had been before. I just was alert, and tried to respond as things happened. I couldn't even tell what was going to happen, but I had to be alert and draw upon all of my intelligence to interpret what was happening. So I wanted to get into a position—the strongest position I could be in—to help calm things down. And I could do that from Public Safety.

Floyd Miller, who was president of the

council, didn't want to make me chairman of Public Safety. He threatened me and acted as if he had the council members' votes in his pocket. He would say, "Look, if you don't go along with me, it will be a six to three vote against you." But I forced him psychologically to give in to me. I told him if he wouldn't make me chairman of Public Safety, I would just sit down and not do anything—conduct a sit-down strike. He was sort of upended about that, and told me I couldn't just come in and demand what I wanted. But I appealed to the reasonable side of him. I said, "At the present time, it appears that the black community is going to have a lot of problems with the police. And I want to be in charge of that committee, because it has to do with the police. I could be a mediator between the police and the city." And finally, he gave in, and I was appointed the chairman of Public Safety, which I remained for twelve years.

I considered my action would be opening another frontier in the city council. Not a different frontier, it was going to be civil rights all right, but a frontier that hadn't been breached in Seattle. And so on the day I was sworn in, I didn't waste any time. I introduced the programs that I had proposed during my campaign. I proposed a Youth Patrol and a teen advisory jury. And then my big one—I wanted to establish a seminar on racial equality and harmony. Those were all part of my campaign promises that I quickly introduced, as soon as I was on the city council.

I envisioned the Youth Patrol as a group of young people between seventeen and twenty years old that would work in pairs and patrol areas frequented by teen-agers, like parks, beaches, drive-ins, dances and high school athletic events. The patrollers would be trained by the police in first aid, law enforcement and self-defense. They would be paid about $2.50 an hour and have some kind of uniform and carry two-way radios. The teen advisory jury would recommend to a judge what kind of punishment a teen-age lawbreaker should receive. The judge would then take the jury's recommendations into account when making the sentencing decision.

I had gathered the idea for the Youth Patrol the summer before I went to the council from cities that were in trouble like Charlotte, Dayton, New Haven and Tampa. These cities had established something on the order of the Youth Patrol. And I had read at that time that the youth juries in Houston were successful. I was picking up anything I found that was successful, that could help us head off the explosion.

At that time, anything that was going on with young people was worse than what had gone on five or ten years before. Crime and lawlessness moved to a new level in 1968. Teenage junkies, militant activism, and moderate civil rights activism were so mixed up and combined that it affected the general public's perception. And so the general public was moving away from supporting the civil rights movement. They became ambivalent. All that extremism sort of moved them away.

But I was fighting against that movement by the public just to hold things where they were. My efforts were twofold: to get the young people acquainted with the police, and to enforce the law. I also thought that giving young people this kind of responsibility for policing themselves was important. And if they got into it, the youth would be more law-abiding themselves. So I had in mind a twofold effect. The Youth Patrol would get them involved with the enforcement of the law, and psychologically it would have an effect on their conduct.

I had others that supported my efforts to establish a Youth Patrol. The press was for it. I remember the *P-I* supporting the Youth Patrol in an editorial. And the superior court judge Lloyd Shorett endorsed it. And Archie Richardson, who was my old teacher at Seattle University and a well-known expert in law enforcement, endorsed the Youth Patrol.

In March 1968, we had a three-hour, standing-room-only Public Safety hearing on the Youth Patrol. The young people that came to the hearing were against having the police involved. I remember Elmer Dixon was there, speaking against the proposal. He was active in SNCC and

was associated with the Black Panthers after they got started in Seattle in May of that year. His brother Aaron was head of the Panthers. But I didn't really know Elmer. I just knew he was from the Dixon family—Elmer and Aaron Dixon. And I knew him from the movement. He believed there was no justice. He expressed that quote saying, "There's no justice for the black man." He was radical, and as far as I was concerned, he had no hope, and he expressed it. But I just couldn't accept it.

And the police were against the Youth Patrol at first, because they feared I was on the road to disarming them, and taking away some of their power. But even though the police came around to it, the Youth Patrol was voted down by the council. And the jury idea didn't really go anywhere on the council either. My ideas turned out to be just too far out for the council to accept.

So the Youth Patrol proposal was not established. But, although the council didn't accept my original proposal, they voted for a trainee program with the Seattle police for ten additional positions to be recruited in the minority community. And they did enhance a program in place through the Central Area Motivation Program (CAMP), called the Detached Workers Program, which was, in essence, the Youth Patrol. There was a lot of support for creating a patrol out of CAMP's program. Frank Hanawalt, the former principal at Garfield, and someone from the Seattle-King County Bar Association favored expanding the Detached Worker Program to achieve the goals of the patrol.

The modified program worked very well. They had a capable man in charge of it named Tom Givan. A board representing the City Parks and Recreation Department, the Youth Commission and the police department oversaw the program. Half of the patrollers were detached workers from CAMP and worked in the Central Area, and the other half were affiliated with other community groups like the YMCA and worked in another part of the city. But the detached workers didn't wear uniforms or use two-way radios, because they were concerned about the stigma of being associated with the police. They began patrolling in 1968. Later on, after we got through the hard times there was no particular need for the program, so it broke up. But it worked very well in the early years.

My big accomplishment was establishing the Seminar on Equal Opportunity and Racial Harmony. I'd call that my major achievement during my first term on the council. Although my seminar covered many subjects, it had two objectives: to prevent immediate trouble and to provide long-term solutions to the housing and employment crisis. It gave people the chance to speak out and to do something to create racial harmony and equality in the city of Seattle. And the city responded to that. I considered the seminar a means to put remedies to racial discrimination into motion.

But it was a difficult period. The threat of a riot was uppermost in my mind. But it happened at a time when I was young enough to be sort of filled with determination to do something to stop it. You remember, I was at the apex of my thinking capacity—as high as it had ever been. And though this was the most dangerous part of my life, I was at the apex of my capacity to formulate plans, and figure out what to do to curtail something from happening. And I did it. But I don't think you could know how much time and attention the threat of violence took, because I didn't share a lot of my inner thoughts. In my thinking, though, it was predominate all of the way.

I virtually started working on the seminar the minute that I got my hands on the city council. I worked with Ed Pratt and Phil Hayasaka, but they were forced into the role of acting as my assistants. We planned and they carried out the stuff that I had in my mind. Phil Hayasaka was, at that time, the head of the City Human Rights Department, and Pratt was the Urban League executive secretary. I was a little closer to Pratt than I was to Hayasaka, but we all worked well together. Hayasaka sort of fell off after the seminar was completed. He sort of fell out of it, but Pratt hung on.

When I was in the Legislature, I hadn't known Ed Pratt well at all. I had just known him as being

the head of the Urban League. And I thought he would be favorable to my suggestions, and he was. In fact, he ate them up. I don't know how widely it was known that I was making the suggestions that he was carrying out. I think because I was associated with him that all the suggestions were perceived as coming from me, but I don't know.

We had a number of planning meetings. We agreed on who should be invited and that we should discuss the status of equal opportunity in Seattle, and ways to make it better. And we worked out a two-day schedule for the seminar. The first day would be spent hearing from public and private programs on the promotion of equal opportunity. And on the second day, we would discuss new ideas and methods of achieving quick results. I wanted to include business and labor, civil rights groups and militants, and ordinary citizens. Representatives of CORE, and SNCC, and the NAACP were there. We wanted to get the total community together, and we did. I don't know how we did it, because we had not engaged in activity of this kind before, and it was new to the city council, and new to the city. But we did it—with the help of Ed Pratt especially.

The first session was on March 22, 1968. And we started with a general session and then we sort of divided up into groups and took on subject matters that we wanted to address. We got the whole city council into the act by having them moderate the group discussions. I remember the public safety section: Russ Gideon, Tim Hill, Gordon Vickery from the fire department, and representatives from the Sheriff's Office and the King County Prosecutor's Office were all there. And the police, they were there, too. They weren't as widespread publicly, but the police department was there and they participated. There wasn't a lot of disagreement in the small group discussions. That's where we came up with our goals. Everybody was afraid and trying to come up with something that would answer the occasion. And then we set the second session for two weeks later to approve the goals that we had settled on.

One of my proposals that we discussed was establishing a series of dialogue sessions to be held between civil rights activists, militants, black power advocates, ordinary citizens, and police officers and beat patrolmen. I think these dialogues did occur, but I don't remember how they worked out. But my idea was, "As long as we've got them talking, we don't have them shooting at each other." So that was a movement to take a certain amount of air out of the situation by dialogue.

Before we adjourned that first day, I spoke to everyone at the general session. And I remember looking out at the crowd of people in the Washington Junior High School auditorium. Among the crowd were a number of businessmen and federal officials that had attended and participated that day. And I started speaking from a speech I had prepared:

"I am a bit embarrassed that we have a need to be here because of all of the other progress we have made in our country, surely this little primitive problem of living together should have been solved. Maybe it has not been solved because we have kept it too low on our priority list. Let us put it at the top of the list and proceed to do something about it."

But then I warned them that there were people who wanted us to fail:

"Some want us to erupt in turmoil so that they can point a finger in accusation, saying, 'See, I told you they would not treat you right.' Some want turmoil because they want to say, 'I told you the only way to handle them was by force instead of giving in.' Still others want turmoil because they want to be able to show once and for all that they have the necessary force to show who is the boss. Tonight, as you sit here, I would like to make it clear that *you* are the answer to this kind of crooked thinking."

And I invited them all back to the seminar's second session on April 6 to bring about the objectives we had established that day.

On April 4, just two days before the second day of the seminar, Martin Luther King was assassinated. I foresaw what was going to happen. I foresaw that he was going to be assassinated. I

didn't know when or where, but I foresaw it—I felt it in my bones. Most of the tragic parts of the civil rights movement I foresaw. For example, I also foresaw that Robert Kennedy would be assassinated. And I didn't know when or where, but again, I felt it in my bones.

I felt hurt. First there was John Kennedy and then Martin Luther King. Their demise had hurt me to the nth degree. After that I couldn't be hurt anymore. But I knew it was going to happen. You recall that the night before King died, he made a speech saying, "I've seen the promised land ... and I'm not fearing any man." And next day he was killed. I can still see him lying, shot, on the motel balcony. I remember Coretta King's calm dignity at the funeral. And the civil rights movement, I knew, was dead, too.

The wife and I had discussed whether or not Martin Luther King would survive, and we came to the conclusion that he would not. It was not whether he would survive; it was just a matter of when he would be taken out. I felt that no man can change the system at the rate he was changing it, in the manner he was changing it, and survive. Abraham Lincoln changed the system from slavery to free, and he couldn't survive. I put Martin Luther King in the class of Abraham Lincoln. He had a message; he was not afraid, and he went into the most dangerous places and he couldn't survive that. I knew it. So I was not surprised when they said he was killed.

Of course there was violence, turmoil, and destruction all over the country when Martin Luther King was killed. Martin Luther King's death caused violence. That took the cap off and there was not enough police. In the days after, there were riots in at least 110 cities. I remember at least thirty-nine people were killed and more than 2,500 were injured. Twenty-one thousand blacks were not just arrested, but charged with crimes related to the riots. More than 75,000 members of the National Guard and federal troops were called in to keep the peace. There was disorder in Seattle, Detroit, Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles, among other cities. There was burning of buildings and stores, and we just got a little taste of it here. But it set off some pretty awful things.

In the Central Area, rioters broke the windows of most of the white people's stores. They burned a bakery. I went over to see it and every window in the place was shattered. And some truck drivers who had been driving through at Twenty-third and Jefferson had been stopped and pulled out of their trucks and sort of roughed up. That was all part of the aftermath. The people who were so angry and did these things were young people who were automatically set off by the disruption. The other black leaders and I didn't take any steps when that was going on because there wasn't anything to do. The disruption happened spontaneously. There was no preparation, no planning for it to happen. It was: poof, and it was going. By now I understood that this generation didn't respond to nonviolent marches—they were angry, and unstoppable.

During the first hours after Martin Luther King had been killed, I was in the process of preparing for the second day of the seminar. It was going to be the next day. Ted Best called me up and asked me, did I want to go on with the seminar? Best was the chairman of the Finance Committee and brought forth out of his committee the emerging plan to put people to work. I told him that it was needed now more than ever. People were so upset they were out breaking windows, and I said, "There's more need to go on with it now than there had been at first." And actually, I don't know why—I was so upset—but I should have been scared myself. But at that time I was bound up in my determination to do something good.

The seminar was my role in calming things down. It was a success at a time when we had other things happening that didn't play up to snuff. I didn't want to assume too big or visible a role with the seminar. I was content to let other people assume the leadership role, while I was sort of the brains behind it. And so we went ahead and put on the second session of the seminar at Garfield High School.

I recall it was a somber occasion. We had an

auditorium full of business people. I had a congressman out from California for our speaker. He tried to be encouraging and told us that a bill prohibiting discrimination in federal housing was going to pass. It was similar to open housing. And he told us what day it was going to pass. I remember that on April 11, President Johnson signed it. But in Seattle we had to do something more, and we were urgently trying to find the right key. And we found it. We got promises that the business people at the seminar would hand over three thousand jobs to the minority community. And that helped quiet things down.

I started the effort for the community to pitch in and help get jobs for some of the people. Those were the young people who were living in the streets. What we were doing was pressing private business to come to the rescue, and they did. I told them that people who were working didn't have time to foment riots. So they bought it! And out of the seminar we got three thousand jobs, and that was three thousand less threats. I remember that we had eight hundred firms as well as the city agreed to hire minority youths. And with government agencies, they actually provided about 3,500 jobs that summer. In fact, the business community surpassed a pledge of one thousand permanent jobs as well. So that made us have an impact on the youth employment picture which otherwise had been dim.

I remember Alan B. Ferguson from Sick's Rainier Brewery chaired the job drive for the National Alliance of Businessmen, and O.C. Scott from Boeing led the Chamber of Commerce drive. When I came on the scene, Alan Ferguson was the head of Sick's Brewery, and he helped me in the name of Sick's Brewery, but he was transferred to Canada soon after that, so I lost him. So I didn't keep that connection with Sick's Brewery, but I still had a connection with the Brewer's Institute.

After our initial success that summer of 1968, the city came up with a program that's still in effect but in minor numbers. It's called the Summer Youth Employment Program. The program went through its ups and downs, and in the 1980s when social service programs were being cut, it went through some hard times. But it survived and provided jobs and was effective in the summers. I think during the summer of 1992 the program created about eight hundred jobs. And private businesses got more involved, too, by expanding youth internship opportunities that year. The leaders in Seattle wanted to avoid the disturbances like the riots in L.A. following the Rodney King verdict, so they followed a page out of my book.

The momentum from the seminar and its recommendation for an open housing ordinance carried over to the city council. You remember in 1964 while I was still in Legislature, and I started to push open housing in Seattle, the people voted it down that time two to one. And you would think, after turning it down two to one, you would have thought that I would be reluctant to push it through the city council when I came on. But I wasn't. I felt open housing was even more necessary than ever with urban renewal and the Model Cities programs uprooting people in the Central Area.

When I got to the city council, the realtors and apartment operators who were always against me in the Legislature reversed themselves and were for me. And that was almost unbelievable. I don't know why they reversed themselves. My enemies became my friends, but they didn't control me. So I came behind it on the council and reversed the situation. And all of my other supporters joined in pressuring the council. In fact, some people threatened to oust the city councilmen who went against open housing. The argument that persisted from some quarters was that if they didn't pass it, there would be danger of a riot. Nobody wanted to have it on their conscience that they caused a riot. And Floyd Miller—he was president then—he was a strong factor in convincing the other councilmen to go along. Nobody wanted to be hung out there. And under pressure like that all nine city councilmen voted for it.

We got it. Open housing passed the Seattle City Council on April 19, 1968. We passed it with an emergency clause so it went into effect

immediately and couldn't be blocked or delayed by a referendum. And in my mind, after the jobs we got out of the business community at the seminar, I would say that getting open housing passed was the second major achievement during my first term on the council.

The night before open housing passed the city council, I got the Urban League Award for Outstanding Contributions to Race Relations in 1967. Ed Pratt, who I had been working with on the seminar, called me and made sure that I would be there at the awards dinner. I remember he gave the word to me, "You'd better be there." And so I was there. I think it was a setup. I didn't know anything about it, but there were people on the Urban League board who were appreciative of my effort and they voted to give me that award. There were, I think, 850 people at the dinner. It was in the Seattle Center—just another dinner, nothing unusual about it. But I was completely surprised when they said that I would get the award, because some people had been belittling my "feeble" activity with open housing, and the seminar and the youth patrol.

Chapter 11

A Year of Testing

Around that time, the Black Panthers tried substantially to recruit me. They stated that because I was in the forefront for black progress that I should join them, because they fought for the same thing. But these were guys who were going around with guns and I couldn't afford that image, so I just declined politely. I knew that they were apostles of violence. That was the message of the Panthers. They played on people's fears, both black and white. They had the effect of frightening the people to get off their duff and do something. The Panthers didn't make the moderates look more acceptable. They just made the militants something to fear.

Their Black Power philosophy was rooted in Stokely Carmichael. I was never tempted to join him, but I was always close to his philosophy. So I was never identified as against him, even though I must admit that the blacks who were identified with the more radical movement didn't trust me. Black radicals like the Panthers didn't trust me because I wasn't a leader. I was always on the fringes. And so I was in as much danger from them as I was from the whites who were against Black Power.

I didn't discuss the Black Panthers with my Thirty-seventh District black constituents or white friends and other associates. For example, I don't know how most city council members felt about them. We didn't discuss it very much. But I know that city council members were afraid.

Omar Terry and Eddie Wright, to some extent, they were the ones trying to persuade me to join the Black Panthers. This was at the time Curtis Harris was heading them. They started off with about thirty members, and I don't know how much they grew. Later on, the Dixon family was prominent in leading them. Aaron Dixon was captain and Curtis Harris was co-captain. I never had much interaction with the Dixons. I didn't know anything about the family or have any personal contact with them until they emerged as leaders of the Black Panthers.

I remember one encounter with the Black Panthers. In May of 1968, a reporter called me and warned me that the Black Panthers were coming to my council office. He called me just a few minutes before they got there and said, "I hear they are coming to your office," and so I got ready to receive them. The reporter who had tipped me off knew because the press followed the Panthers. But I will never tell you his name, because he was going against what they wanted.

They burst in without warning. But I was a little taken aback that they had gotten their way in so easily, even though I had been tipped off that they were going to do that. I blamed my assistant for letting them bust in without my invitation, and that made up my mind to get rid of my assistant—I fired that assistant later on.

Aaron Dixon was there and said that he was captain of the Panthers. There were ten or twelve of them. And my office could hold about half a dozen sitting down and the rest were standing up. Did other people come in—you kidding? No, the Black Panthers were feared by all of the others, including the mayor. They didn't come in because they didn't want to, and they didn't need to. It was just me and the Panthers. I don't remember if they had their insignia black jackets on—they dressed in their usual dress. I just remember their presence.

They had twelve charges against me. They read twelve suggestions—objections—of things I had not done. They claimed that I was behind a patrol group called the One Hundred Black Immortals, saying this was the Youth Patrol I had proposed. And, you remember, some of them had

been at the Youth Patrol hearing in March. But I denied that and said I didn't even know about this group. I didn't even try to find out about the One Hundred Black Immortals. So I don't know anything about it. I dropped the subject as quickly as they brought it up.

I suppose they were sensitive to patrols being formed in the Central Area because the Black Panthers were first formed in Oakland to patrol the black neighborhoods and to monitor the police. So the Youth Patrol, or the detached workers, was a group sort of wading into their territory. And even though the patrol had no connection with the police and had become part of the Detached Workers Program, they still thought I was planning a patrol in connection with the police.

I don't remember the other charges. But they were asking for things like full employment, housing, an end to police brutality, exemption from military service and a release from prison of all black men. Everything that they could blame me for, they did. They were demanding that I do what they wanted. I was just listening, and they were reading off their demands. I didn't get into any arguments with them. There has to be two sides whenever there is an argument. Since I was making no replies, it was a very short meeting. They stayed about fifteen or twenty minutes. And they left on their own volition.

The reports in the press following this encounter were from the Panthers, not from me. Of course they tried to get my reaction, but I gave none. It was a guarded period. If I said the wrong thing I could infuriate the Panthers and I didn't want to do that. After that I just avoided the Black Panthers. I remember one time they were protesting something, and George Fleming called me and said they wanted him to come over to the location where they were protesting and join them. And he asked me if I was going to go and I said, "Well, no." But he went.

Basically, the Black Panthers came out of the Thirty-seventh District, where the percentage of families that didn't have a male head of the household was between twenty-five and fifty percent. And I just wouldn't have believed that we would have come to a time when fifty percent of families don't stay together. That was the result of the pronounced effect of the high unemployment rate in Seattle. So many black fathers didn't have good jobs, and so they weren't able to be good fathers. You could say that it didn't give them a father image when they found out their wives could get along better on welfare without them. That situation promoted one-parent families, and it didn't give the boys an image to look up to. If their dad was out of the house, they didn't have the male image. And so it became harder for families to develop even-handedly.

It was a fertile field for dissatisfaction to grow and spread. That's what caused the appeal of the militants, because there were so many young people who weren't firmly guided at the time. The father is the authoritarian figure. He corrects young people when they go wrong. He tells them when they go right. And if he's not there—look where the holding and restraining is. But even families where both parents were working were loosening up and letting their teenagers do whatever they wanted. Parents in the late 1960s didn't raise their kids on the strict patterns that I was raised on. There was no supervision of the kids, and they grew up in this loose atmosphere. They were less inhibited. It left them free to accept new ideas coming from young people like the Black Panthers.

And later gangs were a violent movement towards economic equality. If people had had access to money and jobs, there would have been no foundation for the gangs. Economic inequality is the prime factor that led to their establishment. Gangs were established as an entire system because the alternative wasn't giving them what they thought they ought to get. And so, what I did was try to get a lot of jobs for young people, so they would have something else to think about.

The Black Panthers were successful in playing on people's fears, until the federal government set to wipe them out and then they went underground. In 1969 there was a federal investigation into their activities. There was an

undercover member of the Seattle Panthers who supplied information that they had firebombed the Lake Washington Realty in March 1968, and a Jewish cleaning establishment up on Thirty-fourth after Martin Luther King was killed. The Cleaning Center was across from the Lake Washington Realty. Those incidents happened at about the same time. The connection of the bombings with the Black Panthers wasn't widely known. I didn't know about it. And I never met the undercover Black Panther testifying for the government. But I might have met him, not knowing who he was.

In the late sixties, I think that more than twenty-five percent of young blacks believed that change would only come through violence. But people were trying to do something to divert the attention of the radical blacks and the radical whites. They were trying to show that changes were happening. That was a result of the times. New ground was being broken without—shall we say—the demand for it. That's why Seattle was a leading city for a long time.

At that time the University of Washington was getting in on the action by recruiting minority students for the first time. Charles Evans was put in charge of the program during the summer of 1968. 1 knew him by sight, but I didn't know him personally. And I would agree that that new strategy helped cool things down in the Central District and in the city. And I figured that any shift in strategy was good because it took the heat off of me. I was happy to see it.

But I never got involved in the university uprisings. I just viewed them from a distance, but I didn't do anything negative against them. I thought the black students made a point at their sit-in at the UW Regents meeting in May 1968, and as a result, the Black Studies Program was formalized. Anything that was short of exploding or violence, I was for it. I never got in the way. If violence were threatened and about to explode, then I would do something to negate it. But only then. I never got involved with the university group. They didn't consult me. President Odegaard didn't ask my advice. I visited Dr. Odegaard's home when he invited the city council and the legislators there to have contact with him, but we never talked about the explosive situations.

I came from a different point of view than the white liberals who were frightened. The university people were mostly white liberals, who on the surface were in favor of solving the problem, but did nothing. A bright thinker couldn't help but be worried. An open-minded thinker couldn't help but be worried. But to take a leading role as a white professor was not popular. It was risky. Because they had, after all, their own position to think of. Some took a leading role, but the majority of them didn't. I remember one University of Washington law professor, John Junker, was active in trying to bring up legislation before the city council that would have lifted some of the pressure off. But he was the exception, not the rule. Most had a healthy concern, but they just weren't willing to take the risks involved, or do something about the risks.

But I think at that time or shortly after that time, Sam Kelly was on the administration's staff at the University of Washington. I knew Sam before he became an educator. In fact, I knew him very well even when he was in the military. And he was sort of a connecting link. We had at that time a lot of good people, like Sam Kelly and others, making forward steps. And so I approved of what they were doing at the university, but I didn't get involved.

I remember that the summer of 1968 was a very unsettled period, but because I was involved, not a problem. Things happened, but we were spared, we didn't explode. The summer started with Robert Kennedy's assassination on June 4.

Bobby Kennedy was sweeping the country running for the presidency. When he came to Seattle the people flocked to him. He had won Indiana and Nebraska, and he was on the way to winning California. And—you will be surprised to hear this—my wife and I were talking, and out of a clear blue sky, I said, "They will never let him become president." I didn't know why I said it, but I knew somewhere down in me that he had affected change like his brother. In fact, he was the brains behind the change made by his brother.

I said, "He will never become president. I don't know how they will prevent him, but I know that they will not suffer him to be president." And it happened. I think the memory of RFK lying on the floor, eyes and mouth open, is the one that still causes Americans pain.

The assassinations of John Kennedy and Martin Luther King had hurt me. Then Robert Kennedy's death afterwards. When he was killed, we didn't have anybody left to restrain the country from extremism. These tragedies happening in the same year were almost too much to endure. Once again, Edward Kennedy's eulogy about Bobby only wanting to do good comforted us not enough; I believe we were all changed by those three deaths.

But I couldn't be hurt anymore. In fact, I began to develop hope as these crises came and we got beyond them. The crisis of John Kennedy; the crisis of Martin Luther King; the crisis of Bobby Kennedy: we surmounted all of those. Any one of those was enough to be embroiled in a devastating crisis.

The assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, the troubles of the summer of 1968, and the riots in Chicago at the Democratic Convention had a lot to do with feelings in the community. My determination was centered in doing what I could to keep the community from exploding. I didn't want the police to set off an explosion. And they were awfully close. I could feel the temperature, and I could see that all it took was just to light a match and the community would go up in explosion. I was fighting to keep that flash point from happening. And how did I do that? I used common sense, just common sense.

Our first test that summer came in early July. Three Black Panthers—Aaron Dixon, Larry Gossett, and Carl Miller—had been conducting a sit-in, protesting the suspension of two students and the racial climate at Franklin High School. They were arrested and given the maximum six-month sentence for unlawful assembly. But that sentence touched off rioting that resulted in eighty-two counts of property damage, thirty-three firebombs, and twenty-nine injuries over the first four days of July. The situation was very disturbing, especially with the number of young people involved. Groups of young people—ten kids or even 150 at a time—were throwing rocks and firebombs and attacking people.

I believed that we couldn't tolerate young people running in the streets, throwing rocks and breaking up the property belonging to others. And I urged parents to be more responsible for the behavior of their kids. If the kids were at home with their parents, they wouldn't be out throwing rocks in the streets. In fact, I even proposed a curfew for juveniles later that month to nudge parents in that direction. And other city leaders, like the mayor and the chief of police, as well as Central Area community leaders from CAMP, CORE, Model Cities, NAACP, the Urban League, and even the Black Panthers, echoed my plea to keep the kids off the streets.

Mayor Braman responded to the rioting by appointing the Police Liaison Committee in early July. George Clark, the communications coordinator for CAW, was the chair, and both blacks and whites were on the committee. They worked to improve relations between the police and city residents and to respond to complaints about the police. But this committee came under fire later, when some people blamed them for protecting the police from charges of brutality in the Central Area.

But, at first, the police were recognized by community leaders for handling the situation in the Central Area with restraint. But I remember Mayor Braman saying that, "Sooner or later some real force may be needed." And Chief Ramon wanted citizens to stay off the streets to avoid getting mixed up in the trouble and getting themselves arrested for failure to disperse, or unlawful assembly, or giving cover to criminal activity. I was concerned too, that firmer action might be necessary.

But there were some concerns about the Seattle Police Department at that time. A survey taken by the International Association of Chiefs of Police found that the department did not adequately represent minorities among officers,

and that community relations and internal review units were needed. And the deep concern in the Central Area was that the police were going to take some overt action that would cause a riot. There was that deep concern, but we didn't dare talk about it. If we talked about it, that would open the floodgates to it happening. Some things you talk about out in the open and that permits them to happen.

So I focused my efforts to hold back riots, and to hold back the police, and to have the police accept a new way of action and control. Those were all a part of my greater scheme. And I decided the best approach was to have a meeting with the police. But I wanted to keep things quiet, so we did it in confidence. In fact, I had two meetings with the police, one on day shift and one on night shift. They all met down at the Teamster's Hall, and I lectured them because we wanted them not to engage in anything that would set off the spark. And I advised them as to what procedures to take in the Central Area so as not to stir up trouble. Among the things I told them was when you have to make a bust, don't call for back-up. Let the other officers know that you are making a bust, and let them be in the vicinity, but don't call them to assist you, because it will set things off. And they sat silently and they didn't actually agree with me, but they took it in. It did some good. And I was successful with the police in trying to get them to calm down and trying to get them to be more skillful in making arrests in the Central Area.

I was very candid about these recommendations in private conversation with Police Chief Ramon. Chief Ramon and I had an informal kind of relationship. I talked to him almost constantly whenever something was happening that might cause a negative reaction in the Central community. I wanted to have a hand underneath the covers to quiet things down. But I wasn't doing this publicly. I asked him anytime he arrested somebody who was particularly explosive, to let me know before he let the public know, so I could take action to counter it. Certain people, if you arrested them, could set off trouble in the community. And he did that faithfully while he was there, and I would tell them how to handle it, as best I could.

What I told him just depended on the situation, and the temperature of the community, and who they were having a problem with. Generally, I advised him not to set off explosions with reckless abandon. I don't remember anything verbatim that I told him, but I gave my best advice as to how to counter the negative information that was spread by some groups. To counter these rumors that added to the tension in the community, we started a Rumor Center. We would handle questions from the public. And that was effective.

And I would talk to people in the community to defuse the situation after one of these explosive arrests. I did that religiously. I had certain buttons I could push to let some air out of the tire. I would speak to the head of whatever organization might be involved, whether it was the Urban League, Model Cities, or CAMP. And basically, I was diffusing negative feeling. I don't know how successful I was, but I figured that I was effective because we didn't have many outbursts.

And I believe Ramon and I had an understanding about what could happen. He had utmost faith in me. Actually, I'm appreciative of Frank Ramon. He worked well with me. He and the mayor cooperated in setting up the meetings with me and the police. And I remember when we had police classes coming out of the academy, he had me down to address them. I don't remember when that began, but it was 1968 or 1969. And that carried on past his time, and I faithfully performed my duties.

But, as I foresaw, the tension between the Central Area leaders and the police just needed a spark to explode. On July 29, the police raided the Black Panthers' headquarters and arrested Aaron Dixon and Curtis Harris for possession of stolen property. Aaron Dixon was charged with grand larceny. Many leaders in the Central Area felt that the charges were trumped up by King County Prosecutor Charles O. Carroll to bring down the Black Panthers, and that the police used excessive force in their search of Panther

headquarters. The Panthers called the action a "provocation," and demanded the withdrawal of white police officers from the Central Area. They also wanted the formation of a police review board of black citizens and the firing of Prosecutor Carroll.

The arrest of Aaron Dixon was the spark that set off more rioting in the Central District. There were three nights in a row of rock throwing and firebombing. Finally, Chief Ramon tried a new tactic—he ordered a mass arrest of all the people who remained in a troubled area after they were warned to leave. I urged churches and other organizations in the Central Area to go into high gear to keep young people off the street. And apparently, that had some effect. Of the sixty-nine arrested, only nineteen were juveniles, although that just meant that more older people were participating. But the next day all but four were released on a writ of *habeas corpus* granted by Judge Shorett of the Superior Court. Charges were filed for only thirteen of those caught in the mass arrest.

The Central community was up in arms that the police had "arbitrarily arrested innocent citizens" who were in the wrong place at the wrong time. But Chief Ramon expressed that he had tried to negotiate with all groups in the Central Area, but that lawlessness had continued. And he said in the *P-I* that he still planned to use "whatever action is necessary to maintain peace in the Central Area." I told the same reporter that I had discussed the mass arrest policy with the Chief and didn't think it "too revolutionary" and that I hoped it would cool things down. Mayor Braman added that there would be "no return to a policy of appeasement," and that violence must be handled on a basis of criminality.

Still, there was an outcry over the mass-arrest tactic. Andrew Young from the NAACP called it "a flagrant violation of civil rights and human dignity." And the Human Rights Task Force said mass arrests were "an insensitivity to the rights of individuals." Groups began meeting with the mayor to express their complaints with the police department. The Negro Voters League called for an investigation into police brutality in the Central Area. They requested a corps of black patrolmen be hired immediately to work alongside white police officers, and demanded that police carry nightsticks instead of guns. Another group called the Concerned Citizens of the Central Area, led by my old friend Benjamin MacAdoo, urged the police not to repeat the mass arrest tactic and also called for the hiring of more black policemen. And finally, a group of about thirty leaders from the main organizations and churches in the Area came together in a tense meeting with the mayor, criticizing police conduct and called for a reorganization of the department. They even called for the firing of Chief Ramon.

Mayor Braman was angry about being criticized, but there was some progress that came out of these meetings. He set up an internal investigating unit in the police department to probe complaints about police brutality. And we had discussions and hearings on how to increase black participation in law enforcement in the Central Area. I had an idea that they called the White Hats.

The White Hats was a plan to form a citizen patrol that would be called to duty during periods of crisis in the Central Area. The Detached Workers Program didn't have enough authority to operate effectively in the crisis situations we encountered that summer. My idea was to get a group of one hundred citizens to ride with police in the troubled areas. They would be uniformed with white hats and gloves for identification, but would be unarmed except for nightsticks. I got the idea from a similar program in Tampa. And the concept had been endorsed by the Kerner Commission.

My White Hat proposal was a compromise between groups like the Black Panthers who wanted no white patrolmen in the Central Area, and others who wanted nothing to change. I believed that such special citizen-policemen would have a quieting effect in some situations which regular police officers on their own might tend to inflame. My thinking was that they would be able to somewhat restrain the police psychologically.

So we had a hearing on my White Hat proposal and on one put forward by the Negro Voters League. The League wanted the city to hire a core unit of black policemen immediately and train them on the job while they worked with white officers. Lloyd Jackson said these officers were necessary because Seattle had the lowest ratio of black police officers of any major city in the country. But the League was opposed to my White Hat idea from the beginning. They called it "tokenism," and didn't see it as radical—they were afraid I would get them in a compromising position with the police.

But I had a lot of support for a citizen patrol in the community. The Greater Seattle Council of Churches endorsed my plan, and the Christians and Friends for Racial Equality, as well as ordinary citizens throughout the city. In fact, I was presented with 3,500 signatures on a petition calling for a Central Area citizen patrol like my White Hat proposal. Even Chief Ramon was for it. He said the patrol would be a "fertile ground for recruiting full-time policemen among minority groups."

But I remember certain leaders in the police department were afraid that anything I proposed was a radical departure from the old standard. They were afraid that the White Hats was an attempt to take away their power, and so they were much against it. But I didn't let their fears interfere with my good relationship with the police. We didn't agree and see eye-to-eye on some things, but I assured them I wasn't trying to destroy them. In fact, I kept good relationships with the police all of the twenty-four years I was on the council.

I knew the support of the police was crucial to getting the White Hats through the city council, so I talked to Wayne Larkin, who was president of the Police Officers Guild at the time, and I arranged to speak at their next meeting. I told them that I had always been a friend of law enforcement, and that I had their interests in mind. I told them that the presence of a citizen patrol in the Central Area would calm things down when the police responded to incidents in the area. And I remember saying to them, "To torpedo this program will be the biggest backwards step in public relations you have made in a long time... By your veto over the proposals of the moderate majority, you are pushing the leadership into the hands of the radical minority, and as such you are responsible for the problems that we have." And I let them know that it would be much more difficult for me to fight for higher police pay if they turned me down. And, in fact, after initial opposition, the Seattle Police Guild endorsed the White Hat proposal.

But the White Hats didn't fly. A simple count of votes on the council showed there never were five votes for it. And Dorm Braman put the poor mouth over the program, saying it would cost too much money, and that the city didn't have any money. But it was also voted down by the council partly because of the opposition of the Negro Voters League. Bea Hudson, who was a League board member, was never quite fond of my ideas. She and her husband, Mathew, were in the forefront of the protest activity in the city. They were aligned with Model Cities and other activities that were sort of in the forefront. But I was a little out ahead of them in my approach with the White Hats. And they had a problem accepting that.

I remember I was stunned when the council wouldn't really consider my White Hat proposal when it came time for a vote. I felt it was a real setback that we wouldn't have an immediate solution to the problems flaring up in the Central community. At the time, I remember saying, "Sam Smith didn't lose ... the community lost." And that proved to be true. Later on, when parents at Garfield High School and Rainier Beach High School wanted to set up patrols at the schools after trouble broke out, there was no group like the White Hats to do it. And, even though the council had turned down my version of the Youth Patrol, in favor of the Detached Workers, students had set up their own patrols at the schools. So in hindsight, I was at the forefront, but I was just too far out ahead for the city council to accept at the time.

But the result when the White Hats was voted

down was similar to when the Youth Patrol was voted down. You remember that the council voted for a trainee program with the Seattle Police for ten minority positions when the Youth Patrol was defeated. And when the citizen patrol was defeated, they voted for thirty more trainees, and for bonuses for thirty officers who would volunteer to be specially trained to work in the Central Area. That was pretty much what Walt Hundley from Model Cities had suggested in one of the hearings. But mostly that was the city council's appeasement of me. They took something from me on one hand, and gave me something on the other hand. It was a political tradeoff. I understood that.

But at that time the Central District was not warm to any help and cooperation from the police department to work in the area, including programs to bring in black and other minority policemen and volunteers such as I was doing. The radicals were up in arms against any effort to work with the police. So naturally they were against my efforts. But it didn't matter to me whether the radicals were for me or not. At that point my primary effort was trying to keep down the covers. I didn't mind the radicals turning on me, because that was a diversion. That let off steam. Most of the public and the city officials had more faith in me trying to cool things down.

At the end of that summer of 1968, the community was glad to have me on the council when I helped to cool things down after the threat of a Teamster boycott of the Central Area. At that time the Teamsters were having trouble loading and unloading goods at the stores in the Central community. Some of the drivers were getting beaten up, and they were reluctant to come to the Central Area. The Teamsters were at the point of cutting off the deliveries into the community. That would have stopped taxi service and milk deliveries, or newspapers, groceries and other goods coming in. But I got wind of it and I told them, "Don't do that. You will set off a riot." I didn't want the Teamsters to set off an explosion.

And so I called a meeting of the Teamster bosses and the business owners and the militants and other leaders from the Central Area, and I pleaded with the drivers to call off the boycott. I was persuasive. I could persuade a crowd either to be a mob or to be an intelligent crowd. And when I saw things drifting in a certain way, particularly in the case of the police and the Teamsters, I felt no reluctance to speak to them about it. I explained to them how to handle a problem if it developed. Between me and my connection with the police, I assured them that we would police-up the area. But I also called on the Teamsters to hire more black drivers and to do a better job representing minorities in their union.

Their leaders, George Cavano of Local 174, and Don V. Ellis, President of the Joint Council of Teamsters, had pretty good faith in me. And Chief Frank Ramon worked along with me at trying to keep the lid on things. And they finally decided not to do it. They called off the boycott. That provided a cooling that was necessary. And so we succeeded in getting around another possible explosion. The press read it as that too, and I got a lot of favorable coverage for bringing the two sides together and working out a solution. But if they had cut off deliveries—nothing could have stopped a riot from exploding.

Yes, we were close to revolutionary activity that summer of 1968. I don't know what the people thought, but I was aware with just a little tip of the action, we would have been in it. But the movement was never close to taking over the government. I didn't think we could go that way because of our free electoral process. And the people who were in the midst of it didn't want to take over the government. That was not their cause. But they were hell-bent to bring about equality. They were going to do anything to rush that on.

At that time I was afraid we were going to break out in riots. We did have a lot of criminal activity, and with greater mob violence we could easily have had riots, but the whole city was bent on not having that happen. My constituents didn't want violence. They didn't want revolution. That's why I was moving to head off everything

that could spark the violence. And we did avoid it.

After getting through that difficult summer, the elections of 1968 were fast approaching. I remember Jack Tanner decided to run for governor that year. I was a friend of Jack Tanner, and had been a friend for some time, in connection with the NAACP. But I felt that the gubernatorial office was out of our possible reach—out of my reach and out of the reach of anyone else in the black community. But Jack got something out of running—he got a federal judgeship out of it. So I can't criticize it.

But the election that was capturing the attention of the press and the Central community was the race for my former legislative seat in the Thirty-seventh District. You remember that when I left the Legislature in 1967, right away the Democratic Party appointed a young white fellow—who was a fine fellow—but it was a slap in the face to the black community. So we were faced with another struggle. In fact, I remember at the planning session for the Seminar on Racial Equality and Harmony, Reverend McKinney made the point that it was important to develop a political structure to prevent such a thing from happening again. He was talking about a structure that would have insured that when I moved to city council, another black would have moved into my seat in the Legislature.

And that's when I got George Fleming into politics. I had tried to get him appointed earlier, but I couldn't. But I could get him elected. He didn't have a big family to provide for or any goals to have a big family, so I pointed him toward the Legislature. And I raised about $6,000 for him. I used my connections to raise that money. But he didn't know that for some time.

I gave him advice as to what to put in his campaign literature, and he followed my suggestions. His literature listed the issues which concerned him: schools, labor, job training, fair taxes, and equality, peace and harmony, and justice in urban areas. Those issues were the result of my advice. When George gave campaign speeches, he would talk about his experience working for me as chief clerk of the House Local Government Committee, and the courage and conviction he would display as an elected official. And he spoke of strengthening my open housing law that was before the people as a referendum that election. At that time, I believe there were about sixteen local ordinances throughout the state, but we still needed a strong state law to ensure equal opportunity to housing across the state.

I introduced George to the shadow group. You could say that they came to know George through me. Paul Friedlander, of Friedlander & Sons jewelry store, and an active fundraiser for Seattle's charitable and cultural organizations, got his friends to pitch in to George's campaign. Paul was part of that group that I call the "shadow planners" that were the leading people in Seattle. And some of his friends who may not have pitched in for George's campaign did so because of Paul's encouragement. But they came to George Fleming because they liked him.

And George succeeded in ousting the fellow that they appointed by winning the primary and the general election. He was there in the Legislature for twenty-one years. But I was sort of disappointed in him when he stayed in the House only one term before moving to the Senate in 1970.

But nationally, the Democratic Party was coming apart at the seams. 1968 was a watershed year. They made some progress, and they passed some good laws, but the Democrats were morally bankrupt. They were neglecting an opportunity to exercise leadership at that time. They were going along quietly after the death of the Kennedys, sort of business as usual. LBJ had a leadership role, but after he was gone, Democratic leadership quietly stopped. It was the Nixon years.

I didn't have a candidate after Johnson stepped down. From 1964 to 1968 were the LBJ years. Nationally, he made a lot of progress. But it died as soon as he was out of office. It's true that no president since Lincoln had done so much for civil rights as President Johnson. John Kennedy had the ideas, but Lyndon Johnson brought them to life. John Kennedy didn't live to

bring his ideas to life, but Johnson stepped up to the microphone and he brought them to life. When Johnson decided not to run, many thought it was because he had lost his clout over the Vietnam situation. I thought that it was a loss because I knew down underneath that a Southerner could move the South on civil rights more that anybody else. Johnson was able to bring the South along, to make it progress. And I felt that there was no replacement. I was bereft of a candidate.

Even though I knew it was a losing cause, I was for Hubert Humphrey because of what he had done in the past. I helped Humphrey all I could. I had followed his career since he was mayor of Minneapolis. I remember he started off bucking the Democratic trend in 1948 when he drove the Southerners out of the Democratic Party by his stand. Because of his liberalism, they accepted him as vice president under Lyndon Johnson.

But I knew they would never elect Humphrey president because he was too liberal even for the Democrats from the start. I still wanted Humphrey to win in 1968, even though I made up my mind that he would never be president. It was like how I felt about Bobby Kennedy. You remember I told you he would never be president. I had made up my mind about that. And I had made up my mind that Humphrey would never be president.

But I didn't have any feelings about his main competitor, Eugene McCarthy, because I didn't get close enough to him. When I was in Los Angeles in 1960 for the Democratic Convention, I had heard his remarkable speech nominating Adlai Stevenson for president. But I didn't get close enough to Eugene to know him.

But I really knew Humphrey was finished in August at the Democratic Convention in Chicago when the riots broke out. I felt bad about it, because I knew what it was going to do to him. Toughness and law and order had become the themes of the campaign, and Hubert Humphrey was weeping at the convention, and that made him seem like a weakling. He was a better man than that, but the demonstrators were virtually handing over the election to the Republicans by creating a disturbance. So I wasn't surprised when he lost. I guess I took it for granted and just hoped to get along under Nixon.

Chapter 12

A Dangerous Time

It was a dangerous time. We in Seattle were trying to come to grips with the fact that the disturbance might get here. I remember the late sixties as a time when anything could happen. I had a high point of perceptibility all the way through 1968. Martin Luther King, Bobby Kennedy, what else could happen? I think it was the first of 1969 that my antennas went up. I was aware that it was a dangerous time, and some people were apt to take some radical action. But I had always confronted threats of action. I had heard talk that the next person that was going to be killed might be a prominent leader. I don't know where I heard it from, but I heard it. And that had me on guard. It just moved me. So my ears were wide open.

I don't know when this awareness started. But you recall that I didn't know when Martin Luther King would be killed—but I knew he would be killed. And Bobby Kennedy—I knew he was going to be killed. Each time I didn't know what was going to happen, but I had the feeling that something bad was going to happen. I was aware that something was brewing, but I couldn't put my finger on it. I had a premonition. I knew I was on the verge of possibly getting killed. But I had almost always felt that way for five or ten years.

It was George Fleming who called me. In fact, I think the police department had George call me. He said, "Sit down, because what I'm going to tell you, you'll need to be sitting down." And he told me Ed Pratt had heard a noise outside his house and he opened the door and someone shot him in the mouth.

I was shocked. It just went all over me. That frightened me out of my wits. I couldn't believe it at first. But you might imagine how my head spun. The night he was killed and the next day—it's a haze pattern. I don't know what I did. It wasn't just that next day—it lingered. I just didn't know what to do.

It was hard for me to hear the news. You recall that we had worked together on the Seminar for Equal Opportunity and Racial Harmony. I had been associated with him. He and I were changing things at a rapid pace here in Seattle. We had just called a meeting of the Jews and the young blacks. There was friction brewing between them, and we reached an agreement that capped that off. We got the agreement on Friday and on Sunday he was killed. And that was right close together. Ed Pratt and I were good friends, but I didn't talk to him about these threats before he was killed. He kept them to himself. And so did I. But I only recognized that after his death.

I was so frightened, I didn't know how angry I was. There were two emotions right together, side by side. I just didn't know what to do. And I got a call in the first few days after Ed was killed: "Ed Pratt was first. You're next." That choked me up. It frightened me something awful. I thought it was a close call with them not killing me in the first place, but they decided on Ed Pratt. I think we were both prime candidates—both being well known, and both characters who would upset the black community if either of us was wiped off the scene. That was the case. And so Ed Pratt was killed, and I thank my lucky stars it was not me.

I made up my mind to quit the city council. And then a councilman said to me, "You got Ed Pratt killed." It was someone I respected, and he said, "You got Ed Pratt killed by your haughtiness." But I didn't really hear the rest of the statement accusing me of getting Ed Pratt killed. I just didn't want to hear that. And I don't know what he meant. I didn't say anything in return. I didn't want to talk about it. I just remember that it stuck in my memory that a council member said that.

At that time, I made up my mind to quit. In fact, I threatened to call my mother and sort of confess to her that I was about to quit my public office and my endeavor. She was in Grambling, Louisiana, and was eighty-six years old at the time. I hadn't written her or even told her about Ed Pratt, but somehow or other, she felt it. And she called me and said, "Whatever you are doing, keep doing it and trust in God. Don't give up." I wondered how she knew. I called it a spiritually inspired conversation. My mother's call was the one that hit home. That gave me courage to keep on going. It was the right call to make, at the right time, because I was awfully close to quitting. But I couldn't have been more frightened.

I talked to Marion. I talked with her about what danger I was in. She knew all through it. I had to keep her informed. If she was going to share the danger I was in and she was going to be the loser if they took me out, I wanted her to be prepared mentally. And she could help me take precautions.

And I talked to George Fleming and Mr. Gideon. I let them know how upset I was, but I didn't tell them I was about to quit. I didn't talk to either of them about quitting. I didn't take my friends fully into my confidence. I kept that to myself.

I didn't talk to Judge Charles Z. Smith or Reverend McKinney—any of them—about my wanting to quit. I might have talked to them about how awful this was for all of us, but I don't remember. But I assumed that they were fighting back. Reverend McKinney had been threatened earlier in the protests. And somebody had fired into his window while he was sitting nearby—it was blank, but they fired. So I assume he was as scared as I was. He was carrying a gun in his work sometimes. Charles Z. wasn't as outspoken and he was more in the professional range, so he wasn't as exposed to it.

And I told my kids Ed Pratt was killed. They were just as upset as I was, because they figured I was next. But my children were on board. They were on board through all my difficulties. And we stuck together.

The whole family knew how to shoot, even the boys. I didn't teach the twin boys myself how to shoot, but I taught the two older boys how. They were in their teens when they learned—twelve, thirteen or fourteen. I took them down to Louisiana, and we would go on the range out there. I would shoot and they would shoot. They were always careful. But I wanted them to be able to hit with their shot. I taught them how to shoot, so they were prepared if the worst happened. They were able to help me defend myself if the time came upon that. In fact, they were the bodyguards.

When Ed Pratt was killed, my oldest son Carl was in Pullman, at Washington State University. He made up his mind that they were going to kill me, and if and when that happened, he was just going to drop out of school and come and kill the guy who was responsible. He didn't tell me that at first. He told me that afterwards.

There was some mumbling about them coming to my house and taking me out there. Some of my friends who lived at the edge of the law asked me if they could volunteer to sit guard outside my house. And the police asked me if they could be in my house. And I said, "No. You're welcome to the streets, but anybody who knocks on my door unexpectedly is about to be shot." And I meant it.

I felt sure that they would come after me. I didn't know when or where, but I was prepared. I had been taking precautions, and I increased the precautions. I knew Ed Pratt hadn't taken any precautions. He was a guy who didn't believe in guns, and so he was the one that somebody was going to kill. But I carried a gun at the time.

The police supplied part of my weapons. I had a sawed-off shotgun and a .38 that was supplied by the police. I had a .45 that I bought when I got out of the Army, and I got two other small guns, a couple of .22 handguns, that were more or less an aid for the kids. So I was well-stocked in guns.

I remember one night it was snowing, and the snow was packing up on the outside of my window. I thought I heard somebody climbing up to the window, but I might have been exaggerating

it. Outside was a gutter or something that was hanging down that would have been affected by somebody climbing on it. I was alert and awake, and I started to point my gun at the window. But the gutter broke off and fell before I could shoot. I called the police out there, and when the police came I was walking around with the gun in my hand. And they couldn't find any trace of an intruder, but the snow would have covered their tracks. But that was how alert I was after Ed's death.

It was a rough time for me. It upset me something awful. And I mostly went to work and back home. I didn't venture out at that time. I kept myself close-quartered—closeted. And I was as careful as I could be. The mayor told me he just couldn't have stood up and kept going the way I did. But at that time, I didn't even go to the memorial service because I figured whoever killed Pratt was probably at the funeral. And I didn't want to give them any chance to see how scared I was. So I didn't go. I was just too upset to go.

The annual Urban League Dinner later that year was awful. It was too fresh in people's minds. Ed Pratt's wife had left the city and was down in California, but she came back for the dinner. But it was still awful. They didn't have that dinner for a year or two after that.

All of the people close to me knew I was upset. I didn't get over it very well. It took more than a few weeks, more than a few months even. I never started to feel better all that year. I recognized how awful it was, and I was frightened all of the time for several months. I didn't feel better hardly any part of 1969. It was one of the periods in my life that lingers, even now. It's an experience that in all my public life has enabled me to take more precautions—even 'til the latter part of my service. I had taken mild precautions even in the Legislature. But this was hitting close to home, and it caused me to up my tempo.

I made sure I was under police protection. I couldn't afford to run and disappear, so I still made my appointments, but I had undercover police protection. They definitely knew where I was going to be. I prepared a schedule and it would have been no feat to keep up with me whenever I was going to appear in public. Whenever I'd go to speak at a forum or a discussion, I would have two undercover policemen present at the meetings.

That was arranged by me. I made these arrangements with the Seattle Police Department. I kept that up for a good while. But I don't think the people in the audience, or the people who wanted to do me harm were aware that I was being protected. I even had a private bodyguard when I was in a crowd that no one would suspect.

At that time I was the only black public official in Seattle, so I was the only one who had police protection. Oh! I take that back! Part of that time George Fleming was in office, but I don't think he had that kind of protection. He didn't have the connection. But he found other ways to look out for himself. For example, he had a gun in his car, but then I remember somebody stole it.

My religious faith came to my rescue through personal prayer, and it pushed me on into not giving up. But except for my religion, I would have been grabbing a gun and going out and shooting somebody. I was human enough to get angry, but I didn't let it come over my actions. I didn't let my anger control any of my actions. This was one of the times that I probably was more earnest and more engaged in my prayer life than others, but it was not a radical departure. My family knew I was disturbed, but I was not doing anything that I hadn't done all the time. All through my career I engaged in personal prayer. My religion was the cornerstone of my behavior all through my public service.

I didn't have any idea who killed Ed Pratt, but I had a double suspicion. I suspected the black radicals wanted me out of the way, and I suspected the white radicals wanted me out of the way. I couldn't tell which one it was, but I knew I was in imperiling danger.

By black radicals, I don't mean the Black Panthers. You recall, I was fortunate in that the Black Panthers had tried to recruit me. And I told them I couldn't go that way, but they didn't give up. They tried awfully hard to recruit me. I would

have been an asset to them. But I stayed on conversational terms with them. I had conversations with their leaders, Curtis Harris and Elmer Dixon. I didn't try to discourage them. I didn't bother them. And they didn't want to have a tiff with me. I just never let them get in my way, and I never got in their way.

But white extremists like the Seattle Liberation Front were not the killers either. Frankly, I felt in more danger by other folks whom I choose not to identify. I don't mean the leftists. I choose you to make your own conclusions.

Some people knew who the killer was, and they wanted to tell me. But I told them not to tell me. I'd say, "Go to the FBI, the police department, the sheriff's department." I don't know why they expected me to solve something that the police, and the FBI, and the sheriff's department hadn't. In fact, one deputy sheriff came to me, but I wouldn't listen to him. I said, "No! Don't talk to me!" And I shed that conversation. I was determined not to get involved. I didn't want anything to do with it, because I knew how dangerous it was when I had received that phone call that said, "You're next," after Ed Pratt was killed. Well, I didn't relish that. And so I shed all attempts to involve me in solving the murder.

At that time, I was looked upon somewhat as a savior and somewhat as an agitator by different groups in the city. I received some hate mail. Mostly I would receive newspaper clippings about troubles in the Central District with racial epithets and threats handwritten in the margins. But I didn't get much hate mail, either in the Legislature or the city council. I was most vulnerable in the city, because I was turning the city in the absolute reverse. After Ed Pratt was killed, I thought I was lucky that they didn't choose me to kill. I was a prime target, but I just didn't get it. But you recall, I wasn't the leader of the movement. I was on the side of trying to keep the lid on. And they were fairly careful as to not get me turned the other way. Primarily, I think it came through that I was sincere. And I came to the conclusion that that was the reason that I wasn't killed. I also think the industrial and financial leaders of the city—the Clausens and O.C. Scott, and Boeing, and Al Schweppe, they shielded me. I don't know how, but at that time they were most effective. They were working for me at that time and were taking a role of leadership in what happened in the city.

The federal government was trying to protect my safety during the period of the disturbances—during Ed Pratt's last days and afterwards. You recall that I knew I was under surveillance, prior to Ed Pratt's death in 1969. I knew that was a time that all black public officials were under surveillance. General knowledge about public officials' actions was common. During the LBJ presidency, it was commonly referred to that "Big Brother was watching you." But I was comfortable with that because I wasn't doing anything wrong. You know, during that time a lot of leftists would be gathering around any black public official, and I had them gather around me, but I didn't worry because I wasn't going to accept any of their beliefs. I was going to be steadfast. But I was aware that I was watched.

But I wasn't aware of the protection efforts until after Ed Pratt was killed. During the period that LBJ was in office, most of the black public officials were shadowed, but this was something else. This was protection, not surveillance. Actually, I had federal protection from the moment that I got on city council, but they didn't tell me. But I became aware. I was aware because of my perceptive nature. Only as 1968 and 1969 gathered storm was I aware of the long arm of somebody protecting me. I don't know who it was, but somebody protected me.

I didn't arrange for the Feds who were protecting me, but I talked with them. I was conversant with them as long as Earl Milnes was head of the FBI here in Seattle. I don't remember how I met Milnes—out at a lunch, I think. I was well aware that he was in charge of the Alabama office when the little girls were killed in the church, and he was transferred from there because the local police wouldn't do anything. I was conversant with him. We had a lot of discussions and he told me it was good for me to be seen with him. And we developed a friendship. I cultivated

it—I visited him and he visited me, but he didn't visit me in my home office.

The last time I remember meeting with him, he was working at a bank. I communicated with him only when I felt I had a need. It wasn't often; it wasn't a regular schedule, but when I had a need to make him aware of certain things that were developing. It was just things that I felt he should have knowledge of—sometimes involving individuals. And he gave me information at the same time. I remember he gave me information that a person who was speaking here and who was characterized as right wing, was one of their people. So the information we shared didn't need to be part of any large conspiracy.

But at that time I was attuned to danger. I went into danger knowing it was danger. I made three trips to Louisiana around that time. I went in 1967, and I went again in 1968 and I went in 1970. My wife did not want me to go. She wanted me to stay out of it. Well, I said that I wasn't going to get into anything back there, but I just felt a desire to go home. And I said, "When a man gets so he cannot visit home, he's in bad shape."

I felt I knew what was happening. Martin Luther King had been killed at that time. And I just wanted to go home. But Martin Luther King's death didn't deter me at all. I felt then that I had to deal with it, I had to learn to live with it, even though I felt I was in danger all the time. But as much as I could, I kept a normalcy around my actions. And I knew it was still a violent atmosphere in 1970, but the tone of it was a little less dangerous.

But I was going down in an area that was noted for disturbances. And I don't know what happened the other times, but in 1970—that was the third trip—I was well aware of being followed. Somehow or other, the police were aware of every single place that I stopped. Even when I got home to Louisiana and crossed into different counties, they were aware of it.

I didn't expect it when I started out. I knew I was friendly to the police officers in town, and I felt they had notified the guys that I was traveling and what route I was taking. And I made no secret that I was going. Almost everybody knew I was going. As long as they weren't bothering me, I kept to myself and made sure I didn't do anything wrong. And I thought they were following me for protection. I thought they were following me to make sure I didn't run into anybody.

I didn't think about who was following me on my trip to Louisiana, but I had a sense of someone following me in a big truck. Marion and the kids—all the kids—were with me. Marion was aware, but I don't think the kids were aware. They followed me all the way from Washington State to Louisiana. I would speed up, they would speed up. I'd stop for gas, they would stop a little farther down the road. And as I passed them, they would take up the trail again. But I stayed all night in Texas and lost them. So then I felt that the following was ending.

But the next day I felt that something else was following me, so I was speeding. The speed limit was seventy-five in Texas, and between Childress and Fort Worth I was speeding on one of those flat roads that all you can see is where the road comes together. My wife said I was doing ninety-five, I thought I was doing eighty-nine. But I noticed a state patrolman flagging me down. I ran past him about a quarter of a mile, but I backed up to him. He asked me where I was going in such a hurry. I told him I was trying to get to Fort Worth before night, and he said, "You aren't going to get there this fast." And then I showed my identification and he let me go. He said I had to slow down seventeen miles per hour, so I did, and I didn't get to Fort Worth until night. That was my main event for the trip down.

I called everybody who I was going to see when I got to Dallas. They didn't know I was coming. Actually, I had the habit of calling my brother between Dallas and the homeplace in Louisiana and telling him to put a light in the window, and I would be there about midnight or before. And he said, "I would ask you where you are, but I know it won't do me any good, you won't tell me." And I remember, between Dallas and home, I was cognizant of the state patrol pulling over people who were ahead of me, and pulling

over people who were behind me, but they didn't stop me. And I went on to Grambling that night.

I had two brothers living in Louisiana at that time. One was a retired college professor at Grambling and one was a regular old work boy. But they took care of me, as best they could. Everybody was cognizant of taking care of me. My brother at home didn't let me go out of the house unless he sent his son with me who had a firearm. And I felt protected.

But I didn't do anything to provoke any one toward me. I was just visiting home, and that was all. But the police had knowledge of where I was, all the time. One day, when I was out driving, my brother-in-law who was a deputy sheriff told me that a call came in when I left one county that said, "He's in your county. You have him." And that confirmed that somebody was following me. And one of the sheriffs asked my brother-in-law, "Why is he coming down here? Is he going to start any trouble?" And my brother-in-law says, "No, he's just coming and visiting home." After they found out I was just visiting home they left me alone. I didn't talk to anybody in Louisiana about being followed. So I had no problem, because I wasn't trying to stir up any trouble. And I didn't get perturbed. I was comfortable while I was there.

I think my brother-in-law who was the deputy knew what was going on, because he advised me what route to take out of Grambling. I didn't come out in the daylight. I took a back route and came out about two or three o'clock in the morning. He drove behind me, across a couple of counties. And when he turned around, he said to me, "You've got something else going with you all the way." I didn't know what he was talking about, and didn't bother to ask him, but I accepted it and drove on. And I didn't look for anybody, but kept going. And as I drove back to Seattle on Highway 20, a couple of state patrolmen were laying for me. But my brother-in-law told me how to go around there, and so I did. And I didn't experience any more incidents the rest of the way back to Seattle.

I found Seattle to be a fertile ground for changing. We had a lot of institutional change, which caused permanent changes in the system. I had my hand on many issues on city council. And I was very effective at that time. And I wouldn't do anything differently now.

Law and order was a big focus in those days. Crime and lawlessness had moved to another level in 1968 and 1969. And I felt we had to do everything we could to increase respect for law enforcement. From my position as chairman of Public Safety, I was doing what I could to support the police. I remember supporting an ordinance saying that the police could arrest for probable cause. It was loose so that police could arrest whomever they were suspicious of. I was for that.

And I was supporting neighborhood crime prevention councils. I started out naming it the anti-crime group, but the council didn't like that. So we changed it. But the neighborhood groups was an idea I borrowed from other cities like Indianapolis and Chicago, whose citizens were having success taking certain corrective action that didn't invite crime. There was a concern at that time that we had to stop crime, but we didn't want to invite vigilantism into the city. And I felt the anti-crime groups would organize citizens and stop the threat of vigilante justice. And I was successful, because a form of the anti-crime groups is still going in Seattle. A fashion of it is still intact. And I recall when we were discussing the anti-crime groups, I told the story about my brother picking up the mail at my house and my neighbor didn't know who he was and so the neighbor reported on him. But I cleared him.

People were also concerned that we had a lot of loitering at the school grounds and problems generated from that. I remember when I was going to high school back in the South, they had a lot of loitering around the schools, but they were just peeking at the girls. But in Seattle at that time it was more serious. Sometimes it was peddling drugs, and sometimes it was getting engaged in activities that the outsiders, the loiterers, were pushing. And sometimes it was just fomenting trouble. And I know everybody was sort of up in arms against it. We definitely were trying to

eliminate it. But I was fortunate with my kids. They never engaged in those activities.

We had a public safety meeting on the subject. We proposed an ordinance to protect school children from loiterers on the school grounds. We had gotten help from outside the council to design that ordinance. Almost all of the far-reaching ordinances were sponsored from the outside. They were brought to me by some group or through the mail. And if it was a good thing, I accepted it in my committee and pushed it through.

I proposed gun control and they adopted that. I was trying to appease both sides, and not anger everybody. I was trying to go a little step, to see if I could find the middle ground. And I did. We adopted a seventy-two hour waiting period for the individual who was buying the gun. And he didn't know what you're checking on, but it's a time to check and see if he was buying it for the wrong purpose, or had any mental conditions or problems with going off the handle. And if he did, you could refuse to sell the gun. The militants were for it, as long as I was for it, but the people who were against it were the police department and the anti-gun control people. The anti-gun control people would bristle every time you mentioned anything about gun control—they held up their "right to bear arms." But it was passed.

We had other reforms that I called our liberal group's "pet projects." For example, Tim Hill was for the establishment of the Public Defender System. And I was in line with that. When I was in the Legislature, I was one of the sponsors of a bill to set up the Public Defender System. So when it came up in the city council, that was my game. Tim and I were together on a lot of things. After all, both of us came from the Legislature. He came to the council after just one term and I came after five terms. And my mission in the city council was to be an agent of change—his also.

I remember another one of our pet projects was an ordinance for a detoxification center for alcoholics. I was approached by one of my excellent supporters to sponsor the project, and I supported it. The detox center was pretty popular—and I suppose it is still in operation today.

I would go out and speak to groups about these issues and other pressing matters. I spoke to the Ballard Committee to Welcome Non-White Residents. You remember, at that time Ballard was one of the communities minorities hadn't cracked. I was going to speak the truth, and emphasize the skepticism of minorities about programs like theirs, because there were so many other communities that weren't welcoming. I was skeptical about making the speech, but I was on the pathway that I had to speak the truth. And my ability to speak the truth was something they hadn't heard. I was pleading with the Ballard community to open up. And they did. They were not hostile.

And I spoke to the Regional Conference of Phi Beta Sigma. You recall that was my fraternity. In my talk, I emphasized that middle-class moderate blacks should initiate a dialogue with inner city blacks in order to regain some control of the civil rights movement. The middle-class blacks hadn't assumed leadership. Basically they were more liberal, but they didn't engage in tough situations. They hadn't got into the movement. So I was appealing to the more moderate blacks to assume leadership, because all the leadership was basically assumed by the black radicals. And at that time, it was my perception that that wasn't good.

I had problems with the protests, all the way. Even though I knew that it was doing some good, I was a student of doing things in order. And the protest movement was doing things out of order. I had researched French history and found that the protest movements there had disrupted the government almost every year. And I didn't want to see us get to that stage.

Yet we were stuck with the radicals. They were ripe and ready to explode. The blacks who had not received the blessings of freedom and free enterprise had more to be upset about. It was an open and shut case. But the moderate blacks—the middle class blacks—had to be more careful, otherwise they would lose what they had. But, if you're going to elevate a big group to the middle class—bring in those who had not received the

blessings—that crowds the middle class, and they may be reluctant to accept them. But the movement was never intended to take away from the moderate blacks.

We were making progress. Seattle was fertile ground. The people opened up to me in a way that I didn't believe they would. I even received invitations to functions at those exclusive places like the Rainier Club and the Washington Athletic Club. Those were places that minorities didn't get invited when I first joined the council. And the people who had brought me to the city council had, in the past, blocked me out of attending those places. But they had a total change of heart.

At first I had a grudge against these clubs, and I succeeded in carrying it out before I was welcomed by them. They had formerly excluded minorities and I didn't want them to feel that because I was a city councilman they could invite me. That was my focus. I first turned down the Rainier Club whenever they would invite me. I said to myself, "You didn't want me when I was not a city councilman, so I don't want you to believe that just because I'm a city councilman, I'm happy to be here." But I said it to myself, I didn't say it to them. So the first year, I turned them all down.

And then they caught on to what I was doing—I was always too busy with appointments. And so they said, "Yes, we have it figured out. We'll invite him six months in advance." And they did. So I laughed and said, "I guess I'll go." I got past that. The people who were there welcomed me when I finally came around. After that, I went to the clubs any time they invited me.

Although I wasn't particular about the Rainier Club, I found out that was where I met the people who were in power. I got on a first name basis with many of the bankers and businessmen. But I didn't treat them as if they were something special, I treated them like I treated everybody else. And they responded.

But blacks weren't welcome enmasse like I was. Charles Z. Smith was a judge about the time I was on the city council, so I think he would have been invited, too. But mostly blacks weren't invited unless the members wanted to talk about something. And then they invited us three at a time, but not five at a time.

But when I broke down the clubs, I broke them all down: the Rainier Club, Washington Athletic Club and the Arbor Club. I received an honorary membership card at the Washington Athletic Club, but I never did receive a membership card to the Rainier Club. But we settled that, and I was accepted at functions at both places. And the Arbor Club invited me to functions, and I went around to them.

The Rainier Club was where I met Al Clise for the first time. At one time his family owned about twenty-five percent of the property in Seattle. I had worked with his wife at the federal government level before I was in politics, so she knew me and soon she softened him up. He was one of the people who wanted to make sure I was welcome. And I was surprised, but he worked hard at it. And I cultured and cultivated his friendship. I felt there was a connection there that I had to keep running. And it remained until I was no longer on the city council.

The Seattle community had adapted to accepting my positions on the city council. Economic opportunity was the center of my effort. Just as I had worked in the Legislature for the state to accept minorities in more powerful positions, I carried that effort to the city. The city hadn't broken new ground yet, but we had a starting point, having a minority chosen to be in a powerful position.

I started the whole movement in the city of Seattle by being the first black councilman. All I had to do was to keep pushing, and the city would finally make absolute change. I had dreams of that. My movement included all rejected people. But I didn't get out of line by pushing one group first. I generally was behind everybody. And I found that the community was accepting my ideas of including minorities.

Chapter 13

Knocking on the Door

Before I came to the council, Seattle had its doors closed to minorities. Before 1967, we had only one black fireman and one black policeman. The first black fireman went on to be chief. That was Claude Harris. He joined the department in 1959 and was appointed chief by Charlie Royer in 1985. The first black policeman got to be a lieutenant and a few others followed him. Joe Taliver even got to be captain, but he didn't get to be assistant chief. So I set out to make changes. I tackled it, and made a reasonable success.

You remember the firemen and police originally proposed that I be a member of the city council. Well, my plan included keeping the firemen and police in my corner, and this was a difficult thing to do. But I influenced change by working with the fire chief, who was Gordon Vickery at the time. By the time he left in 1972, he had appointed thirty-six black firemen. And I remember we had about forty black policemen by the early seventies. That was a long ways from just one policeman and one fireman. I even let some other people take credit for the appointment of the firemen. All I wanted was the change.

But I didn't really get into city appointments other than fire and police. For a long time we didn't have any blacks in top spots, other than Walter Hundley who was director of Model Cities, and then director of OMB. We finally got another black, and a Chinese, and I forget whether we got an Indian. But we got lots of Mexicans and Hispanics appointed to city government. And of course there was Phil Hayasaka who was the director of the Human Rights Commission and worked with me on the seminar.

And in the private sector, blacks had trouble establishing or expanding businesses. All over the country, minorities who were in business didn't have equal opportunity. They had a little opportunity, but not equal. When I first came to the council, bankers would not lend to blacks in Seattle. If you were a person who needed seed money for a business, it was a real problem. The bankers redlined certain areas, and among them was the Central Area. I fought that by trying to get them to lift the ban. If you were sitting on the sideline you could deplore it, but that's where it was.

SeaFirst was the first bank that lifted the ban. Other banks followed. I remember Tony Irving, chairman of the board of Washington Mutual, was a key supporter. He was strongly in my favor. In fact, he had his bank take a leadership role in making minority business loans. Shortly after I came to the council, he changed the bank's policy so that they were willing to give minority loans. I remember once I went to him for a loan. I didn't know him, but he took good care of me. And it's a lot better now. For example, my son was able to walk into a bank that he wasn't doing business with, and make a loan for twenty-five thousand dollars in connection with his business. Of course, I had done it earlier, but it wasn't the usual practice at that time.

At that time, the University of Washington had a pronounced policy of not hiring black contractors. The university patterned the full community. And the full community wasn't hiring black contractors, so the university wasn't. All of the big buildings in the city were built without the major effort of black contractors. Black contractors were not getting the big jobs—they were relegated to small jobs. They didn't have experience in the big jobs, so references weren't available for them. And there were plenty of buildings like Martin Selig's going up—his building was just one of them. So the city was growing in leaps and bounds, but leaving black

contractors behind. But this had been going on ever since the city existed.

The situation continued to worsen for the black contractors, and there was no hope in sight. But this was the heyday of Tyree Scott. In 1969, Tyree Scott and Willie Allen formed the Central Area Contractors Association (CACA), a group of black contractors who were pushing for change. They began to shut down jobs because they were denied opportunities. Sometimes they were pushing it faster and harder than I would have pushed by closing down some jobs, but they had that right. And I never interfered with that. I never interfered with other groups that were pushing for equal opportunity.

The university should have been hiring blacks, because at the state level we were financing a lot of their buildings. In fact, I had had a strong hand in getting the university underground garage and a lot of buildings like Roberts Hall financed. But, as I said, they patterned the community, and were not hiring minorities. But we broke that up. There was a lot of protest at the university because there were no black contractors or workers building the underground garage. In fact, a fight broke out at one demonstration and picketers pushed a bulldozer and two trucks into the big pit at the construction site. But I sought to bring about change peacefully by speaking to different groups and by persuasion.

And at that time, the unions were as big a problem for black workers as the developers who wouldn't hire black contractors. They saw adding black apprentices and skilled workers to their membership as a threat to their members. They were scared that there weren't enough jobs to go around. And the apprentice system had been skewed to lessen the impact of black apprentices. But I felt that our economy was creating new jobs, so I encouraged the unions to make it easier on blacks by reducing apprenticeship program lengths, and getting rid of maximum age requirements. And I favored laws that would give blacks equal opportunities in the building trade unions. And gradually they responded. And although we made some progress at that time, bids for minority contracts is still a crucial issue. But it's the hardest one to change, because if you have the money and you have a job to be done, what do you do? You get one of your friends to do it—somebody who's friendly to you, or somebody you know. And that's a difficult habit to break. You don't see it as prejudice, right away. It just happens as a matter of fact.

But, if you're spending money, creating work and jobs, you owe it to yourself and the community to be fair about it. And that means that if there is a minority that can do the job, that you give him consideration, and hire him if he exhibits the ability. But there is the old habit of "money sticks with money." And you can't break it. Money favors people who have money. And money makes the breaks for those who have it. That's a hard habit to break, and we won't break it in our lifetimes.

But the mayor of a city has a lot of influence over who gets contracts. If I had been mayor at that time, I would have started to break those prejudicial habits, like Mayor Maynard Jackson did in Atlanta. He made sure the black contractors got a proportionate share of the contracts that the city was giving out. Under Mayor Jackson, they built Hartsfield Airport, and he made sure that the contracts were spread around among the people. And jobs that were critical, like the public safety director, he made sure blacks were named to those. Of course, that public safety director was later ousted from that position because of misconduct, but still the mayor spread the opportunities around. And they enjoyed a prosperity there that they had not seen before.

As mayor, I would have pattered myself after Maynard Jackson. I would have used my office, assuring that blacks got a portion, not an extraordinary portion, but a fair proportion of the city jobs. Now, minorities are getting consulting jobs and construction contracts, and they don't even think twice. I have a son who is making his living as a consultant for the city. But those were fields that hadn't been open in my day, and that we were engaged in inching toward.

As mayor, I would have affected the city, more than it realized. And that's what the people who controlled the city were afraid of. I had the chance to be appointed mayor in March 1969, when Dorm Braman moved out to join Nixon's Department of Transportation. But I turned down the mayorship because I figured I wasn't strong enough to assume it at that time. I didn't have the courage, and I wasn't convinced that I could hold the mayorship in the November election if I was appointed. I had noted that Seattle had made progress, but I didn't think they had made enough progress to accept me as mayor in 1969. So I didn't want to be appointed. I was afraid that it would be the death knell of my career, because I would have been defeated at the next election.

There was a sizable group of people who came to me and wanted me to be appointed mayor. They had the votes and could have done it. But I saw passing up the appointment as a way to continue my career. I didn't give them an answer right away, but they weren't satisfied with appointing Floyd Miller until I had turned it down. So I came out for Floyd Miller, because he needed my vote to be mayor. But I could have had the votes myself—I shied away from it. But not many people believe all that actually happened.

At the time, I wrote a letter to the city council explaining my decision: "I believe that a decision that is as unusual as my selection as mayor would be, should be participated in by all the people of this city in order for the majority to speak their opinion." I knew that Seattle wasn't ready for a black mayor. And I did not want to thrust myself on the city without broad support.

But I decided to go ahead and run for mayor in the November election shortly after that. That way the people of Seattle could choose. But looking back, I felt I was misunderstood when I went on and ran for mayor after turning down the appointment.

My purpose in running that time was not to win. I didn't expect to win, but I wanted to plant the seed for a different direction other than violence. I wanted to give the people who were urging the radical movement something else to think about. My intent was to plant a seed for a higher thought pattern in the community. And I succeeded.

CHECC didn't play a commanding role in this campaign as they had for my city council run. But I had the support of the shadow group of city leaders again. And Dorm Braman, to his credit, had faith in me. People gathered around him and said, "Which of the city councilmen is worthy of our trust?" He named me first. And he named Floyd Miller second. And at the President's Club meetings at the Rainier Club, they were sampling me out. They had me, and Mort Frayn, and one or two more candidates, that they were looking at and questioning. And it was in this campaign that the attitude of the Boeing people changed. They began to feel that I would be better off in the local scene and supported me.

One of my earliest supporters was Alfred Schweppe, who I've mentioned. He had been the dean of the law school at the University of Washington, but had been in private practice for years. He always supported me—always. I remember he supported me from the first time I ran for city council.

Jack Sylvester was another supporter when I ran for mayor. I had gone to him and asked for his support, and he bought some tickets to a dinner party fundraiser, but he said, "Don't run, Sam." He was trying to keep me from getting hurt, believing that if I failed I would be down and out. But he didn't know that I wasn't intending to win. In fact, I remember one firm who gave me a five-hundred dollar contribution, and said, "We don't expect you to win, but we want you to look good." And a considerable amount was given from other firms, but I had an awful lot of little people giving me money, too.

I recruited Pat Magillis as my campaign manager. I knew him as a Boeing guard, and he was a man I admired. But he was only my campaign manager in name, since I always controlled my own campaign. But I always gave somebody the honor of being the manager, even though I was the master of my own effort.

In my campaign, I used the strategy of

example to make the point that there was an alternative to radicalism and violence. If I had come out and said to the full community that that was why I was running, I would have been blown out of the water. So I had to express it by example. But I think my message came through. I remember being well-received at a candidate forum when I pledged to prevent civil disorder and to "uphold, protect and defend (constitutional) rights." And the people cheered me on. But I also emphasized law and order: turning back the increasing crime rate, cracking down on juvenile criminals, and protecting citizens from the exploits of clever criminals disguised as social revolutionaries. Other issues that my campaign materials emphasized were city finances, rapid transit and, of course, equal opportunity and racial harmony. And I think people reacted favorably, but it was just asking them to make too big a step to accept me as mayor.

The community, of course, thought that me being elected mayor was as far from reality as I could get. And so I was defeated. I was fifth in the primary run-off. And that showed the people that I couldn't have held the seat if I'd been appointed. But it was nevertheless a statement. My purpose was served.

But that was the election that Wes Uhlman won. It had come down to him and Mort Frayn in the finals. Fred Dore and Lud Kramer had been favored, but they didn't make it past the run-off. Mort Frayn was a good guy, but he wasn't up to the times. He was the conservative nominee. And there was just as much difference in him and Wes as there was in night and day.

Wes Uhlman was thirty-four years old when he was elected mayor in November of 1969. He was a bright young fellow. And he was ultra-liberal, and at that time that was the stripe that was appealing to the people. He had a pretty good reputation. So he appealed to the people and was accepted by them. You recall, he and I got elected to the Legislature at the same time. He was a young whippersnapper, twenty-three years old and still in law school when he was elected. I had been his seatmate in the Legislature in 1965. And I remember that year in the Legislature I had placed his vote most of the time because he was always missing floor votes in his capacity as chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. So I always kidded him that I made him mayor with all those good votes I cast for him while he was off the floor.

We were friendly, and when we both were running for mayor, he never did attack me in any way, and he never stooped to try to degrade me. In fact, he tried to avoid meeting me in debates and so forth. And I didn't attack him, but I thought—and in fact a number of my friends thought—that I had the background to be mayor more than Wes did. And they made a good effort to support me, but it wasn't to be done.

But, by the end of Uhlman's first year in office, a lot of people just thought that he had too much glitter and glamour, and that he was just interested in higher office. All across the nation in the early seventies they were electing good-looking mayors: Mayor Lindsey of New York and Mayor Uhlman, and in San Francisco, Joe Alioto—there you had not a good-looking mayor, but a strong one. But there were good-looking boys gathered together nationwide. They sought to have an impact on government, and they did. They had influence with the National Endowment of the Arts and they tapped into Rockefeller donations and other sources. They had a real influence on nationwide policy. But like anything else, they passed off the scene.

But, when Uhlman came on the scene in the city of Seattle, it was a tough time. You recall, Boeing was cutting jobs because planes weren't selling and they weren't winning bids to design new types of planes. The unemployment rate doubled to twelve percent, and the total number of workers in the Seattle area dropped by 51,000 to 687,000 during his first year in office. And Uhlman didn't have a program that would have met the Boeing reduction and layoff. He didn't have a program because he didn't suspect it. That wasn't his fault. He was just caught in the middle of something that he had no power to control. No one could have done anything more—no more

than anyone could do now.

And when Uhlman came into office, gambling corruption had just been exposed in the police department. Several policemen were indicted by a federal grand jury for looking the other way, and accepting financial influence from some groups—pinball and Teamster groups. In fact, Buzz Cook, who was an assistant chief under Frank Ramon, was convicted of perjury by the grand jury. And two councilmen, Charles O. Carroll and Ted Best, were also indicted, but they were cleared of the charges later. Ted Best resigned in July, 1971 before his term was up, and Carroll didn't run for re-election that year.

So the police department was in turmoil with the gambling and corruption indictments. There were four different chiefs in Uhlman's first year. Wes had a number of people. He started with a temporary chief from within the department, named Frank Moore, to replace Frank Ramon. But when he was called in as a witness by the grand jury, Moore took the Fifth Amendment when questioned about police payoffs. That took him out of the running. Then Uhlman brought in Charlie Gain from Oakland, while deciding who the permanent chief would be. And then he had Edward Toothman. But finally, Uhlman got George Tielsch as chief in September of 1970, and he stayed a while—about three and a half years. And those were rebuilding years for the police department. But George Tielsch had problems with Uhlman and with the old-timers in the department, and he went off to Santa Monica, California in 1974. After that, the mayor got Hanson from within the department. And when he got the police chief from New York—what was his name now—he managed to be a stabilizing force.

And, in the beginning, the police did not like or want to accept Wes Uhlman. The basis of his trouble was his record—he had not been pro-police. But he was the boss, even though they did not like it at first. I think Wayne Larkin helped cure his troubles with the police by being a friend to Uhlman. You recall it was Wayne Larkin who supported me with my idea for the White Hats when he was president of the Seattle Police Officer's Guild. And he helped Uhlman as a newly elected mayor. It helped for a time, but Uhlman wasn't able to keep the police in his corner very long. They just didn't get along.

At that time the press was reporting that Wes Uhlman had alienated the city council, too. They ran stories that we had trouble with him over the budget, but we didn't. We were always at the point where we didn't have enough money, and sometimes we did some things that he didn't like, but he accepted it. But, well, Wes' people weren't accustomed to making decisions that had to be ratified by city council. He let his people run off at the mouth. And we didn't like that.

By the time Uhlman took office, the council had really changed. I remember a definite shift in the voting patterns by that time. The changes had started when Mayor Braman resigned and Floyd Miller became mayor. And Don Wright was appointed to fill Miller's seat. More people were voting with Phyllis and Tim and me. Then, within a few months, two council members died. Mrs. Edwards was replaced by Ray Eckman and Liem Tuai was appointed to Paul Alexander's seat. And then, in the November 1969 election Jeanette Williams, George Cooley, and Wayne Larkin were elected and Liem Tuai kept his seat to join me and Ted Best, Charles O. Carroll, Phyllis Lamphere, and Tim Hill on the council. It was a big turnover.

I remember we faced some big issues on the council with Uhlman that year. One was the R.H. Thompson freeway. Uhlman was against it and was criticized for that by the downtown business people. I spent a long time not expressing an opinion, but I started off sort of leaning towards it. But the folks who were against it had a good argument. They thought it would split up the community, and the minority homeowners weren't going to be paid well enough for their homes—they were paying them peanuts. So I finally got on their side and made a motion to deep-six the R.H. Thompson.

Another issue was the raising of Ross Dam. Uhlman was criticized for holding up City Light's

application to raise Ross Dam, but the argument involved the whole city council. And we had quite an argument—we discussed it and re-discussed it. That was due to the upsurge of the environmentalists and the liberals. At first, I was for Wes raising the dam and if I had voted for it, it would have been raised. I wanted to go ahead—I didn't mind it, but I didn't want to thrust myself. I wanted to play an in-between role, and I tried not to be the deciding vote, but I was. And finally, I just did not want to play a decisive role and be the guy who made Ross Dam possible. Those liberals and environmentalists were supporters of mine. So I voted against it. And Ross Dam never did get raised.

And then there was the issue of busing in the Seattle schools. That was a hot one. I don't know whether Uhlman supported mandatory busing or not. I backed into it. I said in my speeches, "I don't like busing anymore than any of you, but I've got to have an alternative to busing to vote against it. And if I don't have a better way, I'll vote for it." And I maintain that position. I still don't like busing. I think the concept of neighborhood schools is good. But I also support a desegregated education. So, if I can't get desegregated education by any other means than busing, then I accept it.

My wife Marion ran for the postion of state representative in 1970. Earlier—back when she was in high school—Marion had wanted to be a lawyer and stand on her own feet. She had had that early goal, but after she married me and had children, she didn't have much time to go about achieving it. She submerged herself in my achievements and withheld her own desires. And so she felt a deep frustration for not having actually accomplished her own desires for achievement. We kept those things between us and didn't talk about them.

But I was aware of her frustration all of the time, and I suppose I told her or invited her to run. I had just left the Legislature not too long before, and I thought it would be a good excuse for her to be out on her own. I thought making her a state representative would be an asset to her frustration. This was my way of showing that I supported her, because when I had run she always supported me. And she could have done the job with my help. But I wanted her to run on her own name, rather than being Mrs. Sam Smith.

I was always quiet and unassuming, and I never fought back when people were accusing me. She wasn't that way. She had a temper and she would strike back when they struck at me or her. She said—and I knew she meant it—that she "would strike back when my husband keeps silent." She had those feelings of being a strong black woman. She would have been further out front than I was, had she been allowed to—on any issue. I was out front for black progress, and jobs and positions. I was out front for promoting women. She would have been further out front on both issues. But the community just didn't know it. She had submerged herself so well until they thought of her as being just a supporting wife, when she really was a tiger.

Marion came across to the more intelligent voters extremely well. At that time the radical black community was fairly strong, and she was appealing to that part of the community. For example, she made references to the downtown establishment trying to destroy black candidates who wouldn't take backstage coaching. This belief was pretty prevalent in the black community, especially among the radicals.

And she criticized certain newspapers that attacked "brothers and sisters who were trying to help, instead of those who were the enemy." At that time, it was common for the newspapers to attack the people who were protesting. The newspapers never really did assert themselves in a manner to get the system changed. They were always fighting for the status quo. There might have been some media support for real change, but basically I remember the negative more so than the positive.

But jobs was the issue of first importance to Marion. We used the phrase: "Black women feel it first, and most, when a black man is out of a job," in her campaign materials. If a black man

was without a job, he was tempted to get out of the house and let welfare support the family. The unskilled felt that way very often. And unskilled black men were more likely to be out of a job. As far back as I can remember unskilled black men have had an awful time. I recall that it was more pronounced after World War II when the unemployment rate in Detroit, for example, got up to forty-five percent among black men.

And Marion was ready to fight for the black community when it came to law and order issues. She referred in her campaign materials to the lack of black participation in the criminal justice system. She objected to the rating of judges by police, and wanted more black jurors to serve on juries. That was a time when there weren't many black jurors, and there were only a few black judges. But it's gradually opened up.

And Marion took a strong stand on the police killing of Larry Ward. Larry Ward was gunned down after he set a bomb at Hardcastle Realty in May of that year. There was mounting suspicion in the black community that the police were setting up some of the bombings that were taking place. That case skyrocketed feelings that were more or less explosive. But I don't know if the suspicion was justified—I didn't know about it.

Marion wanted to enact a law to prevent policemen from shooting to kill "unless the life of the policeman or someone else is endangered." Her stand was that police should not be allowed to shoot to kill without adequate cause. And I had seen a lot of cases like Larry Ward's when I was in the Legislature trying to get a bill passed to allow judicial inquests in cases involving controversial circumstances with the police. It never went anywhere in the Legislature and Ward's family never got any help either, despite the efforts of Lem Howell, their attorney.

And Marion attacked the Insurance Commission about the proposed thirty-three percent rate increase for homeowners insurance. At that time the black community had problems getting insurance. There was a big hullabaloo about it in the press and they changed their practices. She also felt that taxes, which punished property owners, was a potent issue. Property rates were being increased by reassessment—Ballard was hit hard, but it eventually swept the whole city. Marion took a stand on reassessment in her campaign literature. And she also emphasized pollution control devices on cars and trucks, but it was too costly to manufacture and install the devices. That was an idea before its time. The community wasn't ready to accept it then, but they are now. And, finally, Marion felt that state spending priorities were wrong, that the most important things were not being taken care of first. There were problems with the schools, and we couldn't be sure they were attacking these at an acceptable level. These were issues that went beyond the black community and involved the whole state.

As usual, we followed the practice of giving someone else the title and honor of campaign manager. I named Freddy May Gautier as her campaign manager, but I remained the main controller of what happened. I decided the issues in the campaign and was assigned ghostwriter, but if she didn't like something we didn't do it. I patterned her campaign literature after mine, but I made it sound like her as much as I could. She had been associated with me long enough to accept most of my thoughts. And Marion was familiar with all the issues because she had given me advice on them during my campaigns.

By being my wife she should have won going away. But my liberal friends turned on me. I had developed them as a stronghold, but they just didn't take advice from me that time. I didn't know that people in power would view Marion and I both being in office as a threat. Not many of the big people were for it.

The argument was they were afraid that the power in the black community was too centered on me. They knew I would be helping her make decisions, and they didn't want me to have that kind of reach. They thought I was reaching too far trying to get power. It wasn't that at all, but they thought it was. I was on the city council and had power there, and they didn't want me to have power in the Legislature again, since they had effectively gotten rid of me in the Legislature.

And it's true that we would have collaborated on any troubling decisions. I collaborated with George Fleming the first year he was there—he called me daily. I was involved in all his major decisions, and they didn't want that to happen again.

And that's why they turned some of my supporters against me. I almost had enough power to swing it, but my friends down in the Leschi area turned on me. They supported Mike Ross and they didn't support Marion. And her other opponents, like Cordell Garrett, were radical—there is nothing else to say. Cordell Garrett had attacked me in other campaigns. He was a radical wilder than the Black Panthers. The black radicals were just as solid against me as the white radicals. They didn't want me to have too much influence or power. But Cordell Garrett was too radical for many people to accept. Willie Dones was the one who represented the general public that didn't like it that my wife was running. He took some votes from Marion, but she beat him.

But the people who were truly my friends, they helped. Harold Stockman was the standout and he was all for it. Her campaign was financed by friends and my supporters. I raised the money through my efforts. The people who would support her were not unmindful of my position. It was an adjunct and made them able to support her because they would need me down the line. But I won't say who some of them were because I might forget the main ones.

But the people were guided by radical liberals, and Marion didn't come across well with them because of their antagonism towards me. And the votes that were not for my wife in the primary slopped over to Michael Ross in the general election. And so she lost the election. She felt pretty bad, but I felt worse. Because I knew I had caused her to lose by being so closely associated with her. We went home on vacation and didn't discuss it. And from then on she went back to her former role.

The next year, in 1971, I visited Washington, D.C. with the church group. Something about the atmosphere frightened me. I don't know what it was, but it frightened me. I didn't feel safe there. They had a hotel room for me, and I hadn't been in that room thirty minutes before somebody was trying to invade it. And I went out, I didn't even check out, I just left. I went to the Broadway Street Motel—that was the Holiday Inn, and I stayed there the rest of the time.

You recall that it was still my dream to go to Washington, D.C. as a congressman. But the atmosphere that I found didn't suggest one that I wanted to be mixed up in. There was a sort of lawlessness pervading the atmosphere in the whole city. I can't tell you how I felt it, but I just know I felt it. I had traveled to Philadelphia. I had traveled to New Orleans, and Kansas City, and Houston. But in none of those places did I feel the same lawlessness that I felt in Washington, D.C.

You remember that Nixon was president at that time. And I had a connection with the federal government, even when Nixon was in office, but something about it frightened me. But I didn't get close enough to the federal government to identify it. You recall in 1966, when Lyndon Johnson was president, I had visited Washington, D.C. for a conference of civil rights leaders and I had felt all right then. But when I went back in 1971 and again in 1973 I found an attitude, an atmosphere, that frightened me. So I assumed that it wasn't the place for me to let down my bucket.

I don't know how my connection with the Nixon administration developed. After I saw it happening, I felt that John Ehrlichman had been the connection. I credited him with the connection, but I have no proof. I thought that because he was a local man, and he knew me and respected me. That's the only connection I could figure, but I never could pin it down.

I didn't know John politically, never had any dealings with him. We never worked together on projects, or had day-to-day contact. I hadn't known him before, except that he testified before the Legislature when I was a member on a bill that Dr. Walter Scott Brown was backing to have the Yesler Terrace Building built. I had seen him, but I didn't meet him until he ascended to the

throne, you might say, and became number-two man in the government. Then I was aware of him and met him at places. I met him at several conventions during the time he was in office. And he would go out of his way to recognize me. Actually at one convention, the Association of Washington Cities, he stood up when they introduced me. I didn't understand it.

But while he was second-in-command, they cleared all of the federal appointments on civil rights issues through me. The FBI would call me and ask me what I thought about someone and I would give them my own opinion. But I was shocked that there was a Republican in office, and they were checking with me. I knew a couple of people that I okayed to be appointed, but that was all. When they appointed a former state senator from Spokane to the federal District Court, they checked with me. When they appointed a Spanish-Mexican woman to a committee in Washington, they checked with me. And I was asked to recommend some other minor officials. And although I wasn't asked to recommend him, I did know Arthur Fletcher who was appointed to the Nixon administration. He was from Pasco and had run for lieutenant governor in 1968, but he lost that race. But I didn't understand it. I think they chose me because I was a minority and I had a pretty good sense of what would incense the minority community.

I got along better under Nixon than I had under some Democrats. I didn't know why, but it was true. I had some contact with LBJ, but he never cleared things with me. Mostly LBJ had a connection by recognizing me as the only black public official in the state of Washington. When he came out here he would be sure to include me in some delegation, and he would give me some sort of recognition. But Nixon went farther than any of them. And I didn't understand that.

But I don't know what would have happened with my relationship to the Nixon administration if Watergate hadn't happened. When the Watergate scandal broke, there was nothing to think but that it was all wrong. It wasn't in the beginning that I began to see how widespread it was, but as they moved into it, I got more of an impression of the true nature of it. And that was the start of the exposure of corruption that was national.

I knew of Haldeman, and of course I knew the number-two guy, Ehrlichman. I listened intently to John Dean, but I hated to see how they blackballed the guy that blew the whistle on them. We made a pretty good effort to move out of Watergate, but we didn't get all of the way out. But it was spread all over, and I knew that it was spread bad because the president resigned. And we had never had that in our history before.

I was surprised by Watergate, but I knew there was something wrong with Washington, D.C. from the time that I visited in 1971. It just didn't impress me, and because of that I didn't pursue my ambition. I had really wanted to go to Washington, D.C., but I detected that something was wrong. I detected that there was an abnormality in government. And I detected that I didn't want to be a part of it.

Chapter 14

My Task

There wasn't much progress for blacks in the seventies. The mood was changing nationwide. Articles began to appear in the press about efforts for the advancement of blacks being slowed down. The NAACP accused the Nixon administration of lacking interest in the black population. They couldn't help but accuse him. He was not doing much for blacks. I felt there was developing less concern for the movement nationwide and in Seattle.

But we inched along in some ways. Dixy Lee Ray was all right with us. She appointed Walter Hubbard to the Parole Board. And we got a federal judge appointed. His name was Jerome Farris.

We weren't making leaps and bounds, but I did my part here in Seattle. I was up for re-election to the city council in 1971. And when I came back to Seattle from my trip to Washington, D.C., I knew that the Seattle City Council had become my home. So I looked forward to my campaign that year.

I'll frankly tell you, I don't remember much about my city council campaigns. But I do remember getting eighty percent in the 1971 city council campaign. And I remember, I got it in—of all places—Magnolia and West Seattle. I got about eighty percent in both of those places. And I always had my own district.

I got endorsements from a variety of groups, including the Seattle-Puget Sound Young Republican Club, Associated Republican Women, the United Republican Club of Washington, Metropolitan Democratic Club, King County Labor Council, and the Teamsters. And one of my campaign ads listing my main supporters was headlined by Republican Senator George Scott's endorsement.

These groups saw me in a light I didn't see myself in. The Republican groups, when they compared me to my opponents, concluded that I was good for the city. The Republican Women always endorsed me, and I made speeches to them and other groups like the United Republicans. In these speeches, I just emphasized the same things I emphasized to other groups. I said what I would do, and I pointed out by my record that I had done it, and they accepted me on face.

But my relationship with the Democratic Party hadn't changed. I never did allow the Democratic Party to dictate me. In fact, I added up all the help that I received, and at no time did the Democrats furnish more than ten percent of the help. I saw myself as a free man, able to go in whatever direction I chose.

And the Teamsters always tried to get next to me, but at first I rejected them because I saw them as corrupt at the beginning of my career. You remember I had worked out a deal between the Teamsters and the leaders of the Central community when there were tensions in 1968, and they were grateful for my leadership. And as they moved away from that corruptness, I opened my arms and accepted them.

But I always ran on my record, and that year was no different. I had accomplished a lot during my first term: organizing the Seminar on Equal Opportunity and Racial Harmony, passing the open housing ordinance, creating jobs for the young and disadvantaged, starting the neighborhood crime prevention councils, and stopping the R.H. Thompson freeway. But during that first term, I think the other members of the city council had their hands tied. They didn't appear to be free to go some distance beyond the pattern to fully support me. They were free to go along with me and my seminar on Equal Opportunity and Racial Harmony, and they did. But they weren't totally free to go along with my other proposals

like the Youth Patrol and the White Hats, etcetera. When I think of my fellow councilmen, I think of them as being too closely allied with certain interests.

Campaign contribution limitations became a hot issue in 1971. The effort to regulate campaign contributions was tied to trying to limit corruption. If you had to report how much money contributors gave you, it would make people not go above that amount. John Miller and I got the ordinance to limit campaign contributions passed that year. I had a young lady visiting me in Seattle from Massachusetts. Her name was Maxine Smith—no relation. I hired her and had to give her something to do. So I asked her to write me up an ordinance limiting campaign contributions, and it was stronger than the ones in Minnesota and New York, but we filed it. John wasn't with me at first, and it didn't pass. Later he joined me and we got it passed. The first proposal was a $500 limit. Not to be outdone, some people limited it to $350 later on.

Earlier that year, I proposed campaign expenditure limitations as well—not only for municipal offices, but state offices as well. I had support from the press for this kind of reform. The *Argus* was behind me, and Louis Guzzo, managing editor of the *P-I*, wrote to me expressing his support. Under my plan, limitations for both primary and general elections were based on salary, and varied by office. The Legislature considered my proposal, but they amended it. They had limits on what the total amount could be, but didn't actually tie it to salary.

Another issue that concerned me that year was my cooperative plan for fighting drug abuse. That was one of my fine planks. And I was highly active in my scrap against drugs. Phyllis and Tim tried to help me, but they were just my supporting cast. Nobody was all that hot about helping me. I engaged my plan with an assistant editor in West Seattle, but that didn't go so well. But a superior court presiding judge helped me quite a bit. He spoke to the judges and banks, and pushed my point of view about making drugs off-limits. I did get a bill passed that said if you were convicted on drug charges, that you could be arrested if you were found back in a drug-infested area.

At that time, drug abuse in Seattle was more open than I've ever seen at any other time. It was centered in the University District. I remember on Fridays you could hardly drive out there because there were so many people milling around. The students evidently had a drug craze, and that was during the time that they had the drug that was made in the laboratories—LSD. I couldn't believe it was our city when I got out there. Somehow or another, we broke it up, because they stopped gathering. I advised the police department what to do, how to break it up.

The drug users hadn't reached the Central community at that time. Drug abuse was much worse when it first started off in the University District. When it got down to the Central community it was never as bad as it was around the University. I don't know what whites thought about the Central District and drug use. At that time they weren't paying much attention to it. They were content to spread it among their own. But we had some people in the Central community who would normally not be engaged in this sort of conduct that were. And I have no doubt that crack cocaine was freely distributed in the Central area as the press reported.

But things have changed. Now, supposedly, there are gangs from Los Angeles that are associated with drug dealing in the Central District. The people who search out the background on the gangs know where they come from, and they say it's Los Angeles, and I can't dispute them. I try to keep my pathway and the gangs' pathway going in opposite directions. But it worries me, and if I were a citizen of Los Angeles, it would worry me about being the center from which the worm spreads. If I knew what to do, I'd be a Solomon and I would break it up. But I don't know what should be done.

After winning re-election, I got back to work. Those were the dark days of the Boeing recession, just after federal funding for the SST program was cut. Boeing employment dropped

from over 100,000 in 1968 to under 40,000 in 1971. A few months before the election, the unemployment rate in the area hit an all-time high of fifteen percent.

At the time, they were laying people off, and people didn't have anywhere to turn. If Boeing laid you off, you were out of a job and you couldn't meet your mortgage payments. A number of people gave up and left town. You know, so many people were losing their homes and everybody remembers the famous sign that said, "Will the last person leaving Seattle turn out the lights?" But you remember I was part of the cutback when I was working at Boeing and they terminated the KC-135 Program. I didn't get fired, but I was dropped three grades in my pay scale and was transferred. So I knew what it meant to a person inside, and I knew that the guys were losing their jobs, and there wasn't anything that they could turn to. It was, "You're out of a job? So what? You're out of a job!"

But not everything goes backwards at once in the city. Boeing going backward had a major impact, and Sears Roebuck was cutting nationwide, so we seemed to have a backwards swing everywhere. But other factors were holding steady.

I helped a lot of people. People came to me and said, "Do you know where I can find a job?" I pointed them to where a job was available if I could. Some private, some public—anywhere I could find a spot for somebody. There were jobs to be had if you knew where to look.

During the Boeing recession, I thought we needed more blacks in the bureaucracy. And I proceeded to effect that. And I was favorable of Mayor Uhlman at that time, because he let down the scales and let me have my way. I was busy getting people jobs through the bureaucracy, and particularly through the CETA program, I influenced a great number of black appointments. CETA was a federal program that came on the scene and helped out a little bit, but it was low-class—mostly for people who had no skills. But the CETA program gave a lot of young people work, and I got a lot of people jobs. It stayed on the books for a while; it had direct money from the federal government. But it was a stitch in time. Finally, it was cut out.

Public works projects initiated by the Port of Seattle helped some, but didn't have a great impact. The number of people that they put to work wasn't many. They built a grain terminal and cranes, as well as airport parking—the L1 and the main terminal. But airport construction was not built at taxpayers' expense. It was paid for with revenue from the airlines, so that didn't affect people much.

And at the time, I was on the board of the Seattle-King County Economic Development Council. I didn't like it at all. I didn't like the way they did business. The council was supposed to have discussions about trying to diversify the economy, but they didn't have a long-range policy. They even paid people to come to meetings. I didn't want to get involved because they had a reputation that I didn't want to be associated with, but they put me on it anyhow. I didn't want to besmirch my good reputation. I was always waiting and itching for my time to get off.

And the city council didn't try to do much during the Boeing recession. I don't remember how much time the city council spent trying to think of how to help, but I do remember that we didn't come up with anything. And I don't remember the bankers having a pronounced role, or see how they could have done more. The Boeing recession was so pronounced that bankers had to look at all their cards, because they were left with a batch of bills that they couldn't turn over.

But even the Boeing recession couldn't keep life from moving right along. I was busy on the council. And I was very active in my religious life at Mt. Zion. And my sons were teenagers in those years, so I had to be careful to guide them in the correct manner.

Around that time, I remember I gave one of my most memorable speeches at Mt. Zion. That was *"My Task."* I wrote it from an intense inward feeling. The title *"My Task"* came from a song

sung at my graduation service. I remember the guy's name who sang it, Ezra Pierce. He was singing "My Task," and that was a highly emotional setting, graduating from high school. When I wrote "My Task," it was a very emotional period in my life and I felt that I was expressing that same feeling. I had in my mind that "My Task" was to make the times, and the period, and the city, better. And I felt really dedicated to that task. I was dedicated to that task and I think I fulfilled it.

But to tell you the truth, the speech doesn't mean as much to me now as it did at the time I wrote it. Reading it over a second and third time now, I'm not sure that the feeling comes through. Reading it totally alone, I'm not sure that you get the intensity that I felt at the time. But maybe I didn't miss the mark. I wouldn't change it today, because the intense feeling that I had when I wrote it lingers.

You recall that I knew my task—to help bring about equality—as a boy in Louisiana. When I was in Louisiana though, the black churches didn't have any influence in civil rights. But in Seattle the effect of religion has changed somewhat in the time I've been here. The church in Seattle has developed a growing political influence with civil rights.

Northern churches are somewhat different from the Southern churches. The Northern churches have the same philosophy, but the Southern churches are more the Hallelujah type. There are some exceptions, though. For example, Goodwill Baptist Church, a major church in the Central Area, which started out as a storefront church, is a Hallelujah church. They are more like what I experienced when I was growing up in Louisiana. And I watched them grow over the years. I spoke there a number of times and I always told them that I'd watched them grow.

But we've always been on the fringes of the Baptist Church out here in Seattle. The red-hot preachers stay in the South, New York, and Cleveland. We always got somebody that we had to teach how to preach. When our pastor Sam McKinney came here in 1958, he was very young, about twenty-eight. And he was learning how to preach. He was from Cleveland, but we picked him up and he stayed here. Once in a while, years ago, he thought about leaving, but he stayed and became one of the leading ministers in the Northwest. I reminded him of that this past Sunday at his thirty-fifth anniversary. He responded, "Thanks for teaching me." Because, you know, I came from a family of preachers where the preacher was a Hallelujah-type guy—he enjoyed preaching, and he let it be known. But the more intelligent preachers were reserved, and I wanted them to be more direct.

Sam McKinney and I served on the national board of the American Baptist Convention, USA. Charles Z. Smith was on the board too, and he was president of the American Baptist Convention at one time. Somebody out of St. Louis had elected me and supported me to be on the board. Not much was accomplished when I served. They were interested in the lifestyle of people who were involved, and in getting different lifestyles involved in the convention. My goals didn't agree with theirs. But I served on the board until they broke up the way the American Baptist Convention elected their representatives. When they changed the way board members were elected, I didn't have enough strength to survive in the district.

And I was still teaching Sunday school at Mt. Zion. I remember my teaching very much. I had taught Sunday school when I was a young man in Louisiana, but when I left home I stopped. I just got back into it as I was beginning to think more seriously about what I was going to do with life, and when I was going to do it. That was in 1955. The people who were regularly involved didn't think I was serious, but my continuity lasted for thirty-eight years and so they found out I was serious.

I remember speaking before a group of Bible students who had a seminar every year. One year I gave a speech called "Christ in Crisis." Well, I was parroting my father. I remembered his sermons and I gave them the benefit of my soaked-up priorities from these sermons. And I spoke

about the great religions and what it meant to me to be a Sunday school teacher. I drew upon my own personal experiences. I pointed out the value of my childhood lessons in the Bible. Because of those lessons, I always knew quite a bit about the Bible. But my Sunday school pupils didn't know very much about the Bible, and didn't know why they were in church. That's the trouble, young people come to Sunday school, not knowing why they are there.

Mt. Zion, Goodwill Baptist and other churches in the Central Area do a good job teaching kids about the Bible, but it's hard to get the kids there. The kids are small in number. And that has something to do with the gang activity. The group that's not fertile ground for gangs is among Christian youth. But when they have no one to restrain them, or no thought pattern to restrain them, they will go wild.

But I made sure that didn't happen in my family. I accompanied my boys to church every Sunday. And during my thirty-eight years of teaching Sunday school, all my kids joined. They started in the first grade and worked through my class. And they said that I was the best teacher that they encountered. And at home with my family we always had the blessing. When we'd have special meeting like Thanksgiving dinner, we always prayed.

My parents struggled with my oldest brother Moses as a teenager when I was growing up. He left home at sixteen and stayed out a couple of years. And because I had seen my brother disrupt the family, I was looking for that kind of activity to drain down in the family that I was raising. But I was set for that to happen and all prepared to counteract it, and I was fortunate that it didn't happen. They knew that I would be the target if anyone of them got out of line, especially after Ed Pratt was killed. And so they mostly kept themselves in line, because none of them wanted to be the cause of ill will toward me.

I developed man-to-man conversations with them when they were growing up. And it worked. But none of my children had the kind of relationship with me that I had with my father. I had a special relationship with my father, in that the other boys were nine years older than me, and when I was coming on I was the only one available for him to talk to. But none of my boys had that kind of a relationship. They were not distant, but they were not as close as I was to my father. My father and I had a special confidentiality about us. But each generation gets a little farther and a little farther off.

They were gradually leaving for college during my first years on the city council. I gave them all a different education. I sent them all over the country. And every one of them went to a different school, except the twins. They were at Dartmouth together. So I let them choose their colleges, but I was dead set against my kids going to the University of Washington at that time. I wanted to get them out of town and not into the University. Not because of the protests, but because it was a known fact that the University hadn't been warm and encouraging to black students at that time.

I chose Washington State for Carl because they offered him financial assistance, and at that time that was fine, well, and good, if he was going to get an offer like that. And I chose Grambling University for Anthony because I went and visited the campus, and I had a brother who was a teacher there. And I chose it because it would give him a chance to know what a black student body was like. So he went there.

And I chose Dartmouth for the twins because it happened just like something falling out of the sky. A Seattle banker had his son going to Garfield. The son met the twins and was talking to his father about them, and his father called me up and asked me if he could make a presentation to them. And I said, "All right." And they liked the presentation. I had wanted them to get into Princeton, but Princeton wasn't open-minded. So they got into Dartmouth. And they said at first they were going to humor me by going there one year, and by the time that year was up, they were hooked. But they were dead set against going to Harvard. I don't know why, but I couldn't have forced them there.

Carl graduated from WSU in 1972. He didn't

want to graduate, but he did. When he said, "I want to stay out of school for a year after high school," I pounced on him. I said, "No you will not! You will go to school!" I think Anthony graduated in 1973 or 1974. And the twins graduated from Dartmouth in 1974. I remember that because I drove all the way across the country to pick them up. And Stephen was graduating from Roosevelt High that year. He had stayed with his coach while I was gone. All my other kids went to Garfield. He didn't want to do that because by the time he got into high school all the others were gone. And he didn't want to be there by himself with the madness that was circulating at Garfield. So he elected John Marshall for middle school and Roosevelt for high school. And I let him make the decision. He went off to college in the fall of 1974. He first went to Wilberforce and stayed there about a year and a quarter. And then he transferred to Western Michigan.

Having this grownup family felt good. I knew that I was past the point where I could be accused of slanting them the wrong way. And so they were on their own. They've all come back to Seattle. I was hoping they would stay in the East because I thought it would be a good experience for them. But they headed home.

When I got re-elected to the city council in 1971, it was a step against corruption. But even after that there was a little corruption taint going on with Mayor Uhlman. He was sort of sliding into it when somebody came to the mayor's office and left a white envelope with $1,500 in it. A grand jury called us all in and questioned us. Uhlman proved that he didn't receive the money, but I didn't like that.

And so in 1973, when Uhlman was up for re-election, and I was urged by numerous little people, young folks, and senior citizens to seek the office of mayor, I felt that I had to give their request serious consideration. I sized up the other candidates—City Council President Liem Tuai and Councilman Tim Hill—and I came to the conclusion that they didn't have the experience or the leadership for the job. And just about a month before the September primary, I announced my candidacy.

I talked about what I'd done for the city in my fifteen years of public service as a city councilman and state legislator. I talked about affordable transit that I'd pushed for the working man and the elderly. I talked about my efforts to keep campaign spending down through my contributions and expenditure limitations ordinance. I reminded people that I had my hand in lowering the crime rate through my neighborhood crime councils and my support of increased police salaries. I talked about my efforts to get jobs for youth, and how I kept the lid on racial tensions. And I remember, in a campaign brochure, I reminded the voters that I'd never failed to deliver on a single major campaign promise in fifteen years. And that was true. I only promised what I could deliver.

I thought Seattle had a rare opportunity to lead the nation in many aspects of urban living. In one statement I described my outlook on living in Seattle: "The American city is much like a big family. Thousands of people must live together, remembering the rights and needs of their fellow man. The city must be safe, clean, beautiful, and free of major congestion. The city must have a government that is dedicated to service to all."

I had a lot of ideas to make Seattle that kind of city. My plan included more cooperation between the mayor and the city council through monthly public meetings. And I wanted to get the average citizen participating in these meetings by broadcasting them on television and radio, allowing people to call in and express their views without leaving their home. One of my top proposals was eliminating the city B&O tax and replacing it with a citywide lottery. I proposed free transit within the city, to be paid for with an auto tax and a tax on suburban commuters that worked in Seattle. I wanted to cut government waste by merging many city and county functions, especially the corrections system. And to help implement my proposals, I used the experience of my Boeing years to suggest creating expediter positions in city government to cut bureaucratic

red tape and reduce time lag in city undertakings. My focus was not about more government studies. I was talking about action—getting the job done.

Although Tuai and Hill were contenders in the primary, Uhlman was the one I was after. I'd deal with Tuai or Hill after I got through the primary. I told the papers that we had great hopes for Wes back in 1969, but they weren't fulfilled. I remember telling Shelby Scates that in 1969 Wes was a "good-looking guy with a smooth-sounding line. It was a good year for that kind of guy. This year is not." And I got on the offensive and charged Uhlman with making appointments to his city hall staff to further his political ambitions. Everyone knew he had his eye on the governor's mansion and the U.S. Senate. And I knew I had to be tough. You have to be tough in politics to win, and if you're going to help people, you have to win.

I had no money for the campaign, only about $6,000, but I felt the lessons of Watergate taught us that the fellow with the most money is not necessarily the best man for the job. I urged the people not to mortgage their vote in support of local Watergates. And I said, "So when the man comes to you to tell you how good he has been to you or to offer you some special favor, just tell him that your soul nor your vote is for sale."

Russ Gideon was in charge of my finances as chairman of the Friends of Sam Smith Committee. I don't remember who my biggest contributors were in that campaign. But I remember I contributed one hundred dollars to Michael Ross' campaign for the city council that year through the Friends of Sam Smith fund. And I did that because Michael had contributed to one of my campaigns for city council. And I always felt that I returned the favor. This was the same Michael Ross that ran against my wife in 1970. And they say that politics makes strange bedfellows!

In those days, I was holding my annual fundraising party at the Westin Hotel. And the secret of my success is that I opened it up to everybody. I made it public so that anybody could come and wouldn't have to pay. I collected the money from other sources before the party ever got started. And the people who didn't have to pay really thought that was something. Even some of the doubters who were Mount Baker people came to my parties and it softened them up. But I always accepted anything anybody wanted to give. One time I collected $1,200 at the door, and another time I collected $4,000. And I could raise $9,000 or $10,000 at every one of those fundraisers.

And it felt great! We always had a grand time. I remember the menu: we had baron of beef, and we had ham, and we had chicken wings. There was always a long line when they started to dish out the food. But if you wanted a drink, you had to buy your own. I didn't want to be the cause of anybody drinking, but it was there, and if you wanted to buy a drink, fine. I let them set up two or three bars so that everybody would have free access, and there wouldn't be a long line. And I didn't get any return from the drinking.

But I didn't make speeches at my annual fundraiser. I started the habit of not making speeches, because everybody that was there was for me. So, don't preach to the choir! But Marion and I would stand at the door where she took in the money, and I would greet and hug the ladies. I was greeting everybody at the door, and they all returned my greetings. So it felt great! There was no negative!

In the 1973 mayoral race, I had my usual core of supporters in the Central Area and West Seattle, and in the Democratic Party and in Labor. But again, like in 1971, Republican groups such as the United Republican Club and the Puget Sound Young Republicans thought I was good for the city. And the Republican Women were fond of me too. These groups supported my stand on fiscal and law-and-order matters. They saw that I was a stability factor for minorities in the city. In fact, sometimes they supported me more than the Democrats. When I gave speeches, they never asked me any questions. They just let me say whatever I wanted to say. And what I said must have pleased them, because they didn't have any criticisms. And they came to the conclusion without my telling them that I was good for the city.

But Tuai won the primary. I finished fourth behind Tuai, Uhlman and Tim Hill. So Uhlman qualified for the general election, but he came out of the primary as the underdog. After all I said against Uhlman in the primary, many people expected me to support Tuai. And I thought that I'd be willing to go for Tuai for mayor. But Tuai and I were never close, even when he was president of the council and his office was across the hall from mine. I didn't end up supporting him against Uhlman. I did not like Tuai so much. He didn't try to get me to support him, because in the primary he came out way ahead of Uhlman, and he was so sure that he didn't need me, so when Uhlman came to me, I cast my vote to him.

You don't support anybody who doesn't ask you to support them. Uhlman did, and Tuai didn't. The mayor came down to my office after the primary to ask for my support. So I offered Uhlman my support. And when I announced my endorsement of Uhlman, I said he was the better of two candidates, but I wasn't taking anything back that I'd said before, and would continue to speak my mind and fight for things the way I saw them. In fact, I told Uhlman that he would be a better mayor because of my criticism. The reporters were guessing that I had made a political bargain of some sort in coming out for Uhlman, but I just replied that when the council was trying to elect a president in 1972 when Tuai was elected, I received some political offers. That's all I said, and I choose for you to draw your own conclusions. But my support helped Uhlman get the majority. That was a close shave for Uhlman.

I knew I wasn't going to win the mayoral campaign. But I felt it was my duty to keep knocking on the door. Seattle was not a hard-hearted city, and eventually they would give in. I knew they wouldn't elect me, because I was too hard a learner, but they would select somebody else who was black, like they did. So my strategy worked. I didn't get the man that I really wanted in the office, but somebody made it. Who was it I really wanted? Me! But I realized it wasn't going to happen.

After this election I was voted in for my first term as president of the city council. I don't know if my actions during the mayoral race had something to do with it. If they did, I didn't know it. I didn't ask for any influence from Uhlman, and I didn't knowingly receive any.

I wanted to be president of the city council—just more hang up. In fact, I told the *Times* reporter Sam Sperry that I had wanted to be president "more than I wanted to be mayor." I thought I could guide the city council in a more correct manner. And I knew I was the best, strongest person available. I still hadn't given up any plans of going to Congress, but I didn't want to run against an incumbent Democrat, and I was disappointed with what I found when I visited Washington, D.C. And so I was moving away from my desire.

When I was nominated for president of the city council that year, I was prepared for defeat. I wrote both acceptance and defeat speeches. But whenever I ran for a position, I knew whether I was going to win—I had the votes or I didn't have them. The year before, when I was competing for city council president with Tuai and Hill, I was the only council member that voted for me. Tuai and Hill were deadlocked with three council members supporting each of them. And I could have cast my vote to break the tie. But I said to myself, "I am the most qualified." And I had a commitment to vote for myself. If somebody wanted to make a deal, let them find other members of the council, because I wasn't going to deal. And that impressed people. But finally, Tim agreed to vote for Tuai and that ended the deadlock.

In a speech I wrote in case I lost my bid for the presidency that second time, I said, "I suppose I lost because some people just could not stand to see me be president." That is a reference to prejudice. I was always aware of who I was. And that was in the years when prejudice had not lowered its head so much. I didn't become knowledgeable of members of the council who were prejudiced against me, but I was always aware that there was some sort of rejection out

there. And so I was prepared to go either way. I didn't ever believe that I was going to simply win, until I did.

I knew that John Miller, Bruce Chapman and Tim Hill were with me and later on I needed one more, and I finally got him—Randy Revelle. And when the votes came, everybody knew I had it. It was nine to nothing. Phyllis was in contention at that time and I was a friend of Phyllis. It was too bad that we had to want the same thing. But I was never dirty to her. I gave her the committee she wanted.

I loved being president. I followed my own mind to be the best president I could. I was challenged at first, and I was determined to set a new course, and I did. I was determined to establish the fairness that I thought the president should have.

There was a lot of change in the period between 1970 and 1976. It was more difficult to reach consensus in 1976 because people were more individualistic. Councilmen had a tendency to go off on their own. And what I did was moderate between them.

When I was president, I made sure that people got along. If somebody had a gripe, I got them together and tried to settle it. I generally knew their reasons for disagreeing and would just call them into my office. I would postulate a compromise and persuade them. That was just a common duty of the president. But there were times when I was not president that there were problems with members not getting along. I made it my business to get along with everybody. I didn't have any problems. Other members recognized that if I voted against them that I had a good reason. We just accepted that when someone was going against the majority, that's their privilege.

The president had a lot of power and he had to be careful using it. He could subpoena any files on people that he wanted to appear before the council. He could subpoena twelve men and make them talk under oath. But a good president didn't use that power very much.

I used it once with the Public Market problem. I conducted an investigation of the Pike Street Market because things were not going right. The Preservation and Development Authority was being accused of financial deals connected to the Market and I wanted to get to the bottom of it, so I investigated. I called people into my office and took ninety-eight pages of testimony. Later on, we had the key people involved with the Market appear at a public meeting. And I wrote a report to the council based on my investigation.

The way the Market was financed became an issue, and I remember the financiers from New York came to town trying to get their money. But the council couldn't appropriate the money. We didn't have enough. So the state Legislature bailed out the Public Market by giving the council three million dollars. I don't know how the Legislature was persuaded. I didn't ask them, but somebody did.

As president, I made the committee chairman a stronger position. At first they weren't strong at all. During my presidency, I had a meeting and told the chairmen, "Look, from this day forward we are going to accept your guidance, and when a bill comes up, we expect you to be able to explain it and answer all of the questions." That wasn't after the legislative model, it was just after what I believed they should do. And so we started making the committee chairman more powerful beginning then in 1974. And it is still this way.

The president of the council theoretically made appointments and it was up to the council to ratify them. If he appointed somebody to a committee they didn't like, they were free to lobby other members of the council to vote against the appointment. But a good council president knew when he had the votes. So I never had anybody buck my appointments.

I found out who desired each appointment because I talked to each member. I talked to the four who supported me first. If it was possible, I gave them what they wanted first and the other four took the leftovers. It's a business. I remember John Miller and Tim Hill both wanted to be Finance chairman during my first term as

president. The only way I could get Tim Hill's vote was to promise him the Finance chairman position. And I finally got John Miller to agree. I gave him Planning.

My favorite position was president. But when I wasn't president I wanted to be Public Safety chairman. The Public Safety and Finance chairmanships were highly sought after. I was Public Safety chairman twelve years. I didn't want to be Finance chairman, but I always wanted to be on the committee so I could have a vote on what expenditures were accepted or rejected. I was sort of a watchdog on the Finance Committee, and they usually took my advice.

Nobody wanted Planning. And only once did they get me to accept a position on the Planning Committee, which I didn't want. I told them never again. We handled routine zoning and zoning changes. I didn't like to turn down the property owner who wanted to build something. If you turned him down, you were substituting your opinion for his and I didn't like that. So I was only on it one time.

The Utilities Committee was sort of sought after. I didn't want it at first, but later on I got it and was a good chairman. I was vice-chairman a couple of times, in 1984 and 1986, and I was chairman of it later on. Utilities was a name change from Energy. Every president made his mark by changing the name of committees. I didn't mind if somebody wanted to change a committee name because I didn't care what they called it so long as the function didn't change.

The Utilities Committee's function was setting water, City Light, and garbage rates. And all of those were going one way—up. I felt that City Light was allowed to have its way too easily, and not enough check was put on them by the council. When they'd say that they had to have it, they got it. They would run right over the city council. I remember once they raised the City Light rates forty-one percent because the council didn't check to ensure they didn't become too powerful.

I remember when Randy Revelle was chairman of the Energy Committee from 1978 to 1981, and he'd always go along with City Light. And even though I disagreed with him for pushing to raise City Light rates forty-one percent, I think he was courageous for taking on such a distasteful subject. But I must admit, for the life of me I couldn't see what his point was. And I voted against the forty-one percent raise and all the other raises. But the biggest client—which was Boeing—said that they would accept the raise, but they weren't going to go along with other raises.

But when I was chairman of the committee, I didn't go along with City Light. I made them trim. I smelled out the tendency for City Light to try to raise rates in accordance to what eastern cities were doing. The main person who was the head of that movement at City Light at the time was Allen. He wasn't the head of City Light, but he succeeded in being a major influence. And I didn't take trips back East to New York to sell city bonds like the other chairmen did, although one year I let City Light pay my way to the National Conference of City Light Users. I don't know why other chairmen were nice to City Light, but they didn't have the guts to oppose them. Councilmen were influenced by lobbyists representing City Light, city water, and garbage very much, but not by other kinds of lobbyists.

I was on Recreation and Community Services—that's the Parks Committee. Later on it was called the Parks and Community Service Committee. It was all right. I remember I used that committee to get lights at Meany Play Field. They didn't have lights, and they were saying that they couldn't buy them because they cost $80,000. But I bulldogged it and put it on through.

I served on various committees that handled personnel issues throughout the eighties. In 1980, I was on Personnel and Property Management. One job of that committee was to deal with every piece of property that the city was going to sell or dispose of. City Operations, which began in 1984, was another name for the Personnel Committee. Jeanette Williams was the chairman of that committee. In 1986, Personnel joined Finance. And I was always on that.

Although I objected, I served on Streets and Sewers for a long time. Streets and Sewers was just a dead subject. I was chairman of Housing and Human Services in 1984. That took care of block grants and as you remember we had to vote publicly on low-income housing. The committee parceled out who was going to get what. Housing and Human Services was later called Recreation and Community Services.

There were also special committees formed to deal with issues that arose outside the jurisdiction of the standing committees. I was in the position of sponsoring the special committee for Campaign Financing in 1979. And I thought that the whole council needed some input, so we formed a special committee and let all the council participate in the decision. And finally John Miller and I worked out a compromise that worked.

A special Labor Committee was established in 1975 and from then on there was a permanent Labor Committee. That handled deliberations on what the council was going to give the city workers, how much they were going to get and how much they weren't going to get. The committee always met in closed session. Other committee meetings were open. In fact, you had to have permission to have a Personnel Committee meeting in private because it affected people.

Committee meetings lasted anywhere from fifteen minutes to two hours. It all depended on what the subject was. I had a lot of fifteen-minute committee meetings because there wasn't any opposition to the subject matter. The committee chair was the sole decision-maker. He could put something on the committee calendar, or he could keep it off. That was called a vest-pocket veto. But there was a provision that allowed other committee chairmen to make a motion to bring a bill out of committee to the full council. I did this in the Legislature during my last term. You remember I took the open housing bill from the judiciary committee that wasn't going to hear it. But it wasn't a common practice. It didn't happen on the council. We were respectful of the committee chairmen. We would question them and ask, "Did you plan to put it on the calendar?" If he said yes, we turned down the vote to bring the bill out of committee. As chairman, you didn't have to recommend passage of the bill. It was acceptable to recommend that it not pass. But if the chairman wouldn't put the bill on the calendar, that was a slap in the face because everything was deserving of consideration.

Council meetings were held every Monday at two o'clock. They usually lasted about two hours. The agenda varied; sometimes we had a small amount, sometimes we had a large amount. And sometimes it didn't matter what amount we had, we would spend a long time discussing one thing.

But in 1976, I requested that the council meet every two weeks instead of every week. They didn't go for that, but they finally accepted two weeks off in the summer. And it took me two years to get that two weeks off in July. They just didn't want to agree with me. But I kept trying, and the second year I got it through.

My day-to-day life on the city council was different from the other council members because I felt that the people in my community needed my help more than the others. And so if I described my day-to-day work, it wouldn't be like any other members. Anybody could call my office and I would pick up the phone and say, "This is Sam." None of the other council members answered the phone. But I didn't start off answering the phone like that. I started that habit after I had been in a while. I stopped the girls from answering the phone because sometimes they would be cold and indifferent. And I started answering my own phone because I wanted the people to feel that they could have free access to me. If people called my office and I answered the phone it was a surprise, and seemingly a blessing.

I got a hell a lot of calls. It changed over the years by more people calling. I got calls whenever anybody had a problem that they couldn't solve. It was the most unpredictable thing—meetings, appointments, speeches, jobs. But everybody who had a problem, whether it was a job, or whether it was somebody's wife suing them, they would call

me about it. And if I could, I would tell them where to go and whom to see.

I got calls from everybody—Magnolia, West Seattle and so on. It wasn't one-sided. I remember the West Seattle leader that I helped get a job. He was out of a job, and he and his wife were having problems, but I steered him to a point where he got a job, and he got back on good terms and was all right.

But not many of the calls were about political matters. When there was opposition to a hot subject I would get plenty of calls. But most of them were about personal dilemmas that constituents didn't know how to deal with or whom to turn to. I referred a lot of callers to other people. That's what my principal action was, to refer them to a place where I thought that they could find help. A lot of them needed to talk to somebody who was sympathetic and understanding. And I had repeat callers—people who got so they just needed me. When they called and I knew what they were about, I listened to them a reasonable length of time and then told them I had another call waiting or I had to go somewhere.

And I got a good number of letters. About fifty percent of my mail had to do with politics, giving me advice on what to do on certain subjects. And you remember, I had constituents all over the city, so I got letters from Magnolia, from West Seattle, and a whole bunch from my own district. But I'd say twenty-five percent of my mail consisted of requests for help. And I helped a lot of college students. Sometimes when they were going to college for the first time and they had to have a little money but they couldn't find a job, I would let them work for me in the summer. And then I got a lot of letters from grade school students and high school students. I would go out to certain grade schools and speak to students and everybody in the class would write me a letter thanking me for coming. And high school students would also write when I went out to speak to them.

I had classes that would come in to see me and I let them question me. That began during my second term and lasted until I got out of the council. Dan Harris' social studies class from Whitman College would come over about once a year. They were concerned about me, what my outlook was and what I hoped to do, and how I would deal with a problem or two. It was a challenge for me to have young people ask me these questions and I always gave them a truthful answer.

And you know, every now and then I would talk to classes at the University of Washington. And sometimes I would speak at a Seattle University conference. I got a kick out of getting on the religious theology of the priest who was in charge of the group at Seattle University. I would tell him, "Now I'm fixing to wade into your territory." But I didn't go into my speeches without understanding the students. And usually I knew from a feeling whether the students would respond.

I generally talked about myself and what we ought to do to make our city the best city in the world. I didn't recommend exactly what to do, but I made general recommendations. My general message was to accept everybody for what they are. And that didn't lend itself to discrimination. Sometimes the question would come out, "How do you like busing?" And I would respond, "I don't like busing any better than you do, but until somebody comes up with a better solution, I'll accept it." And I reminded them that my youngest son was going across town to Roosevelt High School, and I let him make that decision. But I was his transportation. I drove him out there myself every morning before work.

And so I naturally had a good audience at the high schools. I spoke to students at Garfield, Holy Rosary, and West Seattle high schools. I remember I spoke to West Seattle High School when there were 1,900 students, and they responded very well. I kept their attention and the teachers wondered how I did it, but I couldn't tell them.

I remember once I was asked to speak at the commencement of Ingraham High School. At the beginning of the program I was called upon to say the prayer, and was reminded that it had to be a nondenominational prayer. And that was

interesting. But Don Covey asked me for a copy of the prayer, and I gave it to him, and several other businessmen asked for a copy of it. And later in my speech to the graduates, I said, "You people really should think about your life and get on to college, women too. If you marry early there are serious consequences." That was a fatherly speech, and I was speaking from the heart.

But I was frequently called upon to speak at the universities, the high schools, and the grade schools. I can't estimate how many speeches I made compared to other council members because I didn't keep up with how many I made. Sometimes it was more than one a week, it all depended on what the occasion was. I just did it because I wanted to. And I considered the other council members did what they wanted to do.

Most of the speeches I just sat down and typed them out. I could type as fast as I could think, but I couldn't write as fast as I could think. I just managed to have most of the facts in my mind. I didn't ever ask for help or use a computer. I sometimes gave my assistant my rough draft and had them write it on the computer because the computer print was larger, and my eyesight was getting worse and worse. In fact, I was blind in my left eye for almost four years, but I didn't let anybody know. I didn't get my cataract removed until the December 17 of my last year on the council, in 1991. I didn't let them know. I'm sure they thought that there was "something wrong with this guy."

As a councilman, I talked to reporters often. I think the press had quite an effect on my career. During the first part of my career on the city council I was a favorite of the press, and they were awfully helpful. They covered the marches and the efforts on housing well. And their coverage affected council opinion. At the end of my career, the press had the opposite kind of effect. During my last terms I ceased being a favorite, and I ceased to be newsworthy. I was a source of refreshing news to them at first, but after all, I couldn't hope to be completely newsworthy my entire career.

I had an open door to the press. I mostly responded to their desires. Brian Johnson was the most effective questioner. When he wanted to discuss a subject with me, I would let him in. If he got on something touchy, I would turn my recorder on so I could record what I said. I knew that I was going to have to defend it, so why let him have the upper hand to put it down the way he thought, and not be able to defend myself? That was my self-protection. But the newsmen didn't like it. I started that after things got hot down at the city council in the seventies.

And actually, not too often did the press get things wrong, but when they were wrong, they were bad wrong. Most of the editorials I accepted as their right to criticize. And as much as I could, I accepted them. But when they got down to what I thought was unfair, I would answer them.

And in the early seventies, I had a radio program once a week. I kept it up for just one term, and I ended it before election time. I would start it off with the Sound Crafters singing, "Lift Every Voice and Sing." And I got a good response. Most of the other public officials at that time didn't go on those sort of programs. They lived high and mighty above the people, and so the people were excited about the fact that I was reachable, out there and ready to accept their questions. And I invited several notable people to go on the radio program with me, including Maynard Jackson before he was mayor of Atlanta, and the people liked that.

Whenever something explosive happened, I would get the parties involved on the program and I would accept questions and answers from callers over the phone. I remember when a policeman shot and killed a fellow who ran a stop sign. And every week before the policeman agreed to come on my radio program, I would make an appeal to the police to have somebody represent him. I finally got the policeman on the phone and he appeared on the radio program, and I let him answer questions. And that sort of took the tension out of the situation. But there was always a crisis of one degree or another. If it wasn't a police action, it was something else. In those days, there never was a time that there wasn't some sort of

crisis. That's why I went on radio.

In 1976, I got the distinguished service award from Seattle University at the graduation ceremony. I was elected the Most Distinguished Alumnus. And I recall they gave me that award at Campion Tower. I was pleased. It felt good because it was twenty-five years to the date from when I graduated. And I was planning to run for mayor at the time, and that was no small deal. So I was sort of uplifted by it.

In September of that year, the Seattle magazine *View Northwest* gave me a front page. They called me "Smiling Sam," and they wanted to know, "What makes Sammy run?" They wrote about my career and that I might be Seattle's next mayor. That gave me quite a lift. The magazine was headquartered in Bellevue, but the people in Seattle sopped it up. They bought out all of the copies of the magazine.

The article talked a lot about my style. I had always had a flare, a natural flare, and people took me seriously. And the press read it as that. For example, when I was in the Legislature, Jack Ryan from the *Daily Olympian* wrote that I could "flare up, and speak clearly and forcibly." One time I told the Republican majority, "You told me I must vote for this bill or else. But you are going to get the else." When I first came to the city council, I still had a flare, but that changed after my second term. After my second term, I found that my flaring style had a negative effect among some city councilmen. And I started pulling up on that. I just made myself pull up and halt. Because of my style, some of my colleagues on the city council and in the Legislature would not vote for anything I wanted. I would have to quiet down for a couple of weeks and then it'd be all right.

I remember the *Seattle Times* wrote about one of those times in 1970: "The eight other councilmen are at odds with Sam Smith. He has a way of giving the impression that he favors something and then will vote against it and take a righteous minority stand at the last minute." I was against a project at that time and was the only one who voted against it. And there were other times when I didn't think the majority were right, and I would vote against them. So it angered them, but those were the times that you can get to when your colleagues won't vote for anything you want. Those are the periods that you went through in a legislative body.

And in that feature article in *View Northwest*, Wayne Larkin was quoted as saying that I was "the most unique and capable fence sitter [he'd] ever known." That's because when there was a controversial subject on which I didn't want to tip my hand, I had a saying: "I will take my licks one time." And I would never let them know which way I was going, so I didn't get but one set of licks—one set of scoldings—because I hadn't identified my position. I deliberately didn't let them know; like Wayne Larkin said, "a fence sitter." And that meant he couldn't program me! That was self-protection. If my mind told me to go one way, I'd go. I flew by the seat of my pants. But I knew that you could make some votes that would haunt you. I made one, one time, against fluoridation of water and they never let me forget it. But I tried to shy away from the things that had a lasting effect.

Right after that article was written, Wayne Larkin and I both ran for mayor. That was in 1977. He wanted to be mayor very much. But he was friendly to me, and I had been a friend to him. And I wanted to be mayor too, but the people in Seattle hadn't progressed enough to elect me mayor. And I knew it, but I was hammering on the door, so that somebody would be able to break through. That was my tactic.

Wes Uhlman wasn't running for re-election in 1977. He had a rough time in his last term. He had a blowup with fire chief Jack Richards that led to a mutiny in the department when Uhlman fired him, and a citywide recall vote in 1975. But Uhlman survived the recall vote. And after that he wanted to be governor, and he ran against Dixy in 1976. His mayoral staff continued to be more interested in campaigning for his political future than in running the city, but he was a popular guy and he was close to making it. And I think the

only reason why he didn't make it was because the firemen and the policemen statewide didn't support him. After that Uhlman was finished with politics.

I never thought of running for mayor too far in advance of elections. I made up my mind when the time came. And that year was the same. I made up my mind early that year, and I felt my chances were never better since there was no incumbent and I had a lot of experience and recognition as council president. I had the money, the organization, and the volunteers to run an effective campaign. Shelby Scates summed up my strengths in an article on the race that year: "Smith, savvy, humorous, and politically experienced, played his role as the avuncular peace-maker between feuding factions of the city. He's typecast from his seat as president and mediator of the city council." And that's what I emphasized—my leadership as the mediator on the council.

In 1977, it was like going to a big dinner. There were so many good choices, you couldn't get them all on your plate. Phyllis Lamphere, Wayne Larkin and John Miller ran with me from the council. Then there were Charlie Royer and Paul Schell, "the outsiders". And you know, there weren't any favorites that year. But in those years just after Watergate, people didn't trust experience in government. Outsiders like Jimmy Carter and Dixy Lee Ray were winning some big offices. And my experience was beginning to work against me. Reporters were still mostly favorable toward me, but their descriptions of me didn't help with the voters. I was called "the old pro of local politics, the insider of insiders," "part showman, all politician," and "the smoothest politician in the state." So I was passed over by the voters in favor of outsiders Royer and Schell.

Paul Schell was a member of the arts group, and he made it through the primary because of his association with the arts group, and their money. He was president of Allied Arts when they got the "one percent for arts" ordinance passed. That provided money for the arts in Seattle. And the arts group, with people like Bagley and Virginia Wright, was one of the controlling groups in the city. They had influence and money. He had also been the director of the city's Department of Community Development, and was a leader behind the Westlake Mall downtown development project. So he had business support, and he started off with a pile of money, but didn't win, because he was associated with the more conservative side.

Charlie Royer was the man who came out and finally made it. He owed his success in the primary and general elections to name familiarity from his years as a KING-5 television news reporter, support from the King County Democratic Party, and an enthusiastic volunteer organization. And having Mrs. A. Scott Bullitt, who owned KING-5, behind him was a feather in his cap. He didn't actually get money from the Bullitts, but that perception of television support was a big help. But there was nothing about his background that suggested that he should be mayor. He wasn't a favorite in the minds of the people.

I remember my efforts in that campaign. Volunteers helped me raise over $100,000. It was a good effort. But I fail to remember who my biggest supporters were. They were the same kinds of organizations that I had all along: attorneys, businessmen, garbage-collection companies and construction companies—not the unions, but companies who engaged in construction. I got support from the Republican Party through individuals and firms. And I never got more than ten percent of my contributions from the Democratic Party. But I had some pretty good supporters, in order to raise $100,000.

Dixy Lee Ray was governor and in charge of state government at that time, and they had a meeting down at her office and selected people to join different campaigns. They selected Blair Butterworth to join my campaign. He had run Dixy's campaign for governor the year before. And before Blair came up to help out, I'd had Jack Richards running it. You remember Jack had been the fire chief before Uhlman fired him. I never did find out whether Blair was a help or a hindrance, but he really had the makings of all of the day-to-day planning of things.

I thought Blair was more closely connected

with the Seattle leadership than Russ Gideon, and I was trying to make sure they didn't get the impression that it was an all-black effort. I was really trying to appeal to people all across the city. So Russ Gideon played a part in the campaign, but he didn't play the prominent part that he usually did. But Mr. Gideon was always in my corner.

I didn't do anything new or different to reach those whites who eventually voted for Charlie Royer. I was taught in my early campaigning, where you're strong you get out all the people you can, and where you're weak, don't go there, you'll run the other people's supporters out. The Central Area was still the heart and soul of my campaign, so I did everything I could to get them to the polls. They knew I had a hard way to go.

But there were a lot of people that thought I could do it. Shelby Scates wrote that if the Central Area voted, I would "slip into the finals," because "there is more support for Smith than meets the eye or the pollster's ear." Shelby Scates was partial to me. He was in a partnership with Slade Gorton at that time. But Shelby detected that some blacks weren't going to vote for me, and he was saying if they voted for me, the heart and soul in the Central Area, I had a good chance to survive. That's all I wanted to do—if I survived the primary, I had a good chance to be elected. But so be it, I didn't survive. And I don't know why some blacks were not going to vote for me. But I didn't ask the black people to vote for me because I was black. I stayed on the issues.

Some people told me, "Hey, I'll support you for city council, but I won't support you for mayor." They had another choice. And I didn't ask them why, but they did. Other people requested me to give up my council seat in order to run for mayor. I'm not sure why they asked me to give up my council seat, because my running for mayor never did interfere with my duties as a city councilman. It was easy enough to campaign and hold office at the same time. I just went to my campaign appointments when they were due. And they were mostly due at lunch time and evening time. And I did my city council work in the daylight. But I didn't give up my council seat because I knew that I had a slim chance to win, and if I gave it up, I would be out. And I wasn't ready to end my career.

I felt I had a good reason to feel optimistic before the primary. The *P-I* endorsed me along with Phyllis, John Miller, and Paul Schell. And Wayne Larkin was hanging in there, and the people supporting him wanted to support me. And they came to me and said if I survived, I could count on their support. Even Charlie Royer's people were not sure he was going to survive, and he had been questioned, and said he would support me. And one of the pollsters, two days before the election, came to me and said he had checked it out, and that I would win. But so be it, I didn't win.

Chapter 15

Riding the Crest

In the late seventies and early eighties, there wasn't a lot going on to disturb the people. People were interested in just letting things slide. Even college students and young people exhibited a kind of lackadaisicalness. All over the country Democrats were off-key. I dare say that by 1980 the national Democratic Party had gotten off-track in extremism. They were off the beaten path, even though they managed to hold on to Congress. And the country reflected it. In fact, at that time, I couldn't really be proud of calling myself a Democrat. Jimmy Carter was the start of it—he really couldn't govern the country. He even failed pulling off the rescue mission in Iran. He was a good man, but he didn't have the ability to pull the Democrats in line. And they were sabotaging him.

But they paid for their sins. The Democrats were punished with the elections of Reagan and Bush. When Reagan came into office, I waited to see what he was going to do, and it wasn't anything that helped us, so I just stayed quiet. But I remember that Robert Thompson from the *P-I* wrote me a letter when a picture of me and Reagan at the Conference of Black Elected Officials was on the front page of newspapers across the country. He jabbed me about that. And I told him that I was a Kennedy supporter, but Kennedy wasn't at the conference. Seattle was a part, but not a central part, of the Democratic disarray. You recall back in the early seventies we had the scam going on with the police and some city councilmen, and that was working the people up. But we didn't have anything going on in 1980—a few people out of work, but there was nothing disturbing going on.

I was unhappy with the performance of the new mayor. I didn't think much of Royer. I thought Seattle scraped the barrel when they elected him. He didn't have any—what I call—qualifications, or indications that he was a good mayor. And when nobody I favored was against him in the mayoral race in 1981, I felt that at least there should be a choice. I decided to enter the race, although I knew my chances were slim. I didn't mind it if they didn't make me their choice, but I felt that they ought to have a choice out there.

But the people at that time were hunting for a fresh face. They were looking for somebody not in the establishment. I had been contacting people trying to sell myself as a fresh new face, but they said no, that I was an insider. That's what hurt me, that they didn't feel that I was an outsider, after all those years of knocking on the door. And I didn't get the people roused in this election. It's difficult to get the people aroused just because you are a good guy. You have to have an issue that's burning, that you disagree with the man on. And if you don't have any burning issues, you don't find it easy to reach the people. But this isn't a defect in the system—you just have to encourage participation. You can't just sit idly by and expect the people to rouse themselves.

For me, the big issue in the 1981 mayoral campaign was economics. There was no other issue that was going to get the public excited or outraged. Boeing and PACCAR were laying off workers, the Legislature wanted to cut ten percent from the state budget, and Reagan was withdrawing federal matching funds. Royer's solution to these hard times was to increase business and utility taxes, cut police and fire department staff, and charge fees to use city sports fields.

But as soon as Royer's city budget came out, I released my proposals to take care of the city's economic problems. I said it was time for a change and I urged Royer to come out from behind his budget to defend all his new taxes and fees and

cuts in services. My plan included a reduced thirty-five hour workweek for city employees, a reduction of city employees by attrition, and a salary freeze for the mayor and the city council. And I proposed raising Ross Dam—we had to do something to slow the rising electrical utility rates. I also called for a tax on suburban commuters who worked in the city but didn't pay for its services.

And I wanted to collect overdue fines, forfeitures and late taxes as well. There were millions of dollars in parking fines that were going uncollected, with no effort to collect them. And that was not good business. I knew this wasn't a popular thing to do, but I went to a collection agency when the city wouldn't collect. I felt it was the efficient thing to do, but the bureaucracy was not happy about that. As hard-strapped as the city was for money, I thought they would be jumping at the chance. But it didn't go over. And even now, there are millions of dollars that are uncollected that they still haven't caught up with yet!

But most of all, I was against Royer's proposed fifty percent increase in the Business and Occupation tax. I had always been against that tax—you remember that in 1973 I proposed getting rid of it. I thought that the B&O tax was too hard on the businessmen. But the thing that I couldn't understand—Royer was proposing a whopping tax on business, and they were supporting him! I couldn't understand that!

I was against the state tax on food, and they did take it off. And I was against an income tax. You recall I had been for an income tax as a legislator, but I knew it wasn't going to pass, so I could get away with it. I knew that the people would never vote for an income tax. Dan Evans had whistled Dixie on that one, and Mike Lowry, but Booth Gardner didn't even try. But I had never been a lover of taxes—no matter what the structure was. Every time I could, I opposed them. I voted against them, and against them, and against them. I didn't believe in taxing people unnecessarily. I didn't believe you just put on a tax because you had the authority. I was always sympathetic with the people, particularly the older people and the pension people—any tax you put on them, and every time you raise the price of utilities, it hits them hardest. And I wasn't a believer in that. So that tells you what I think about Washington's tax structure.

There were a few other issues in the campaign, but none as pronounced as the economic issues. I announced that I was going to appoint a woman deputy mayor, but that was a vote-getting thing. I would have done it too, because it was a good political move! And I criticized Royer for wanting to outlaw begging in Pioneer Square, because I thought people ought to have the right to beg. I remember saying to a group of Pioneer Square merchants about the beggars, "There but for the grace of God, go I." But none of that took. Royer was from the press model, and they were trying to help him.

The press treated me all right until I got too critical of Royer. Then I held a press conference and nobody came. They knew about it but they didn't come. That made me start to look at them in a different light. Earlier, they had been sort of covering their tracks, but this was a blatant statement—this was an indication that they were negative. And sure enough, both the *P-I* and the *Seattle Times* endorsed Royer, the *P-I* before the primary, but the *Times* waited until November when the polls showed that he was going to get elected.

But the press wasn't the only group helping Royer. A new power group had come on the scene and had control of things. They didn't want me around. I don't know what this new liberal group wanted, but they had different ideas. The old group—the one I called the shadow group—that had brought me to the council in 1967 had virtually all retired by 1981. The liberals had brought me to the city council and supported me my first three terms, and had things under control. But then the municipal activists of the sixties and seventies went on to other things. They developed sort of a funny strain, and they began to drift away, and finally they drifted too far. They were giving up their influence. And I can't account for it, other than basically the people who were responsible

for bringing me to power died off, ceased to be active, or were retiring. That was a strange turn. The changing of the guard was constantly happening in Seattle, but when it got down to this younger group, it changed radically. The new people who were replacing the old group were unaccustomed to power, and I couldn't get a handle on them.

And the Municipal League was responding to the new liberal group that was infiltrating them. The new group promoted their own philosophy, which was not favorable to me, and the Municipal League just reflected this development. I didn't do anything that the League disapproved of, but that was their method. The Municipal League used to be like the Bible for who was worthy of election. But they had drifted away from that by the late seventies. The League had started off rating me "superior," but then every time I ran for mayor, they rated me less than "superior." I didn't understand that. And by 1981, they were trying to give the incumbent the edge over me by rating me "good" and Royer "very good." Take your choice!

But I did have some endorsements that year. The King County Republican Central Committee endorsed me. And I was endorsed by the Filipino-American Political Action Group of Washington every time I ran for office, even when I ran for state representative. I had an affinity for the Filipinos, because when I served in the Philippine Islands in World War II, I made many friends there and most of them wanted to follow me home. And I continued to build that up when I got to Seattle. I don't think JACL (Japanese-American Citizens League) endorsed me outright that year, but they were friendly to me. I always got invited to their annual dinners. I didn't seek the black groups' endorsements, but I figured I would take most of them, anyhow. You know, I never tried to be endorsed by a whole list of minority groups because I figured after deciding who I was, it would be hard for a minority group to come out against me.

But even though I counted on minority support, I made the point that that didn't mean I was going to fill City Hall with minorities. I knew this fear existed because during my years on the council, I had worked at getting minorities city jobs. You recall when I was first elected, minorities weren't getting selected—they didn't have city jobs. And so I got at the root of the problem with the cooperation of some people in key places, and I got them appointed. In other words, I would know where there was a job, and I'd tell the person and he'd go there and sell himself. But I wouldn't call up and say, "Give him a job."

I ran the 1981 campaign all by myself until I got Russ Gideon pulled off the Royer campaign where he was treasurer. But when I entered the race, he told Royer that he could no longer support him. My campaign was low budget and I just ran it out of my house. I typed my press releases and hand-delivered them. I don't remember now who helped me, but there was a group that enabled me to make the primary. They even had a move on foot to bring world champion boxer Muhammed Ali here and put me in the ring with him as a crowd-pleaser since I had been a boxer in my earlier years in the Army and high school. But that movement died. My supporters were not really showing their hand that year—you show your hand by putting money into the campaign. But I still had friends, including the biggies—Howard S. Wright, Martin Selig and Ivar Hagland. They supported me then, and always had.

Royer, on the other hand, had his headquarters down in the Denny Regrade, and he had a press secretary just for his campaign. And he had access to lots of money—Bullitt money. If you got that kind of money, you can control what is written about you. Mrs. A. Scott Bullitt was never fond of me, but I don't know why—I didn't give her any reason not to be. But she was fond of Royer because he worked for them.

That year I survived the primary, and that was a victory for me. Even though Royer got sixty-six percent to my twenty-four percent of the vote, it was a victory because I'd never got past the primary before. I always got choked off. So that felt good, and I was intending to sneak up on

Royer and prove to the city that I was worthy, capable, and the one who could do the job. But Royer had his army out, and he worked awfully hard—he used the telephone and computerized messages.

After the primary, I was invited to speak at the Washington Athletic Club in front of about fifty Seattle business leaders—Jim Ellis, John Ellis, people from Washington Natural Gas—all important people, all leaders in their field. No women though; that became popular to get women involved later on. In the primary race, they had had Charlie Royer speak to them, but I couldn't wrangle an invitation then. They had to give me a chance though, because it would have been blatantly wrong not to. So finally, in the finals, they let me go speak to them.

In my speech I said that I had the skill, knowledge, humility, and common sense to do a good job. I said that I was going to form a citizens advisory committee with downtown business people. That was designed to let them know I wouldn't rule tightfistedly. I would bring them in to govern. I was trying to reach them, but they weren't warming up to me. I made one of my best pleading efforts to get them to lighten up, but they didn't. They sat stoically silent, and got through it.

And I remember saying, "I know I am not one of you." I was pleading at that point that if they would give me a chance and accept me, they would like it. That was as near as I ever came to humbling myself. I was looking right at them. But I didn't see any flickers in any eyes, not a thing. They were letting me speak to them to clear their consciences. I don't think they had any idea of changing their minds and supporting me. But that was a hell of a speech, if I do say so. And they congratulated me on it. They knew it was good, but I just can't think of anybody saying, "Because of your speech, I'll support you." You've got to remember, Seattle had come a long ways, but I couldn't take them all of the way. They still had reluctance in their hearts. Try as I may, they were still afraid of me. So I didn't get any converts.

The people who controlled things couldn't bring themselves to letting somebody else be in control. None of them really wanted me at the top because I had given the indication that I would be my own man—and they couldn't stand that. I wasn't a stickler for controlling things, but in their minds it was going to happen. They had agreed to shut me out, and that was the deciding thing. Among them I had some supporters—there was some movement to let me be mayor and have a free hand—but it didn't get over the hump. But the majority of the controlling group shut me out, and when they agreed to something, they lived by it. And so Royer was re-elected.

But the 1981 campaign didn't end my career. Many of the people who were reluctant to support me for mayor supported me for re-election, and I had that going for me. I was looked upon as the tool that was desirable to have around. Most of the mayors needed my guidance because they had a drought for a thought pattern, so all the strong points that I put forth on the council were adopted by them. And I considered that was a way of influencing things. But I was not to have the dictating spot, and I knew that.

But when I tried to picture myself as mayor, I got back a mental picture of me changing just to be in office. And I didn't like that. I considered not talking about what I wanted Seattle to be, just to get elected. But I didn't do it. A man knows his own convictions. I knew then that I'd never be mayor, but I was still determined to make Seattle the kind of place it ought to be.

Ever since the 1969 campaign, I had practiced reining in my style—but I always kept the same style! And I remember in the 1977 campaign I tried to tune myself to the general public in Seattle, and that meant I had to go a little easier than I had been going. I became more moderate. You remember when I came to the city of Seattle, I was a flaming liberal. And I was willing to take the results of being a flaming liberal. But, over the years, I became more moderate, and that fit the city of Seattle. But I think I rubbed some people the wrong way by staying on the scene throughout the 1980s and continuing to be a strong force. Even though I was never elected mayor,

that was a time you couldn't beat me with a stick in Seattle. I was just unbeatable.

And I had been a favorite of the press ever since the Legislature and when I first came to the city council—the press always covered me for the story. But, as I got along in my terms, they had a change of heart. They gradually turned against me. They were looking real hard, but they couldn't find anything about me that was negative. I hadn't done anything that suggested I had any backside relationships, so they turned to writing what there was that wouldn't cast a good impression. They finally chose to write negative descriptions of my style because they couldn't find anything else to write about.

There were a lot of this new style of reporters against me in Seattle at this time. I wondered how any of them could be since they were finding it hard to be against me and still get any acceptability. But they worked at it. As I became more moderate, I noticed the press expressing this new outlook, with support for their own issues, more, and more, and more.

The *P-I* started the change, but the *Seattle Times* was dragging along behind them. In 1981 the *Times* even supported me in the primary, but finally they joined the *P-I* and endorsed Royer. And the press was becoming more powerful in the selection of officials, starting with Charlie Royer and Channel 5, and it got worse. It continued to get worse and worse, until it became almost all-powerful in more races than one. And I think it remains that way. The press could set the tone of acceptance, and that hurt me.

Laura Parker at the *P-I* and Susan Gilmore at the *Times* were two reporters who couldn't accept me running for mayor. So they attacked my style. In one of Laura Parker's articles, she wrote about my "Cheshire Cat smile," and how I snapped my suspenders and said there "wasn't the buffet of candidates there was last time." I had always had a ready smile, ever since I had been in public office, and I had expressed it all the time. But I wouldn't call it a "Cheshire Cat smile." And I don't remember flipping my suspenders, but I might have done it subconsciously. I always exuded a bit of confidence. But articles like these were sort of negative, not casting me in a favorable light. That's when I decided the press would not accept me as mayor.

And Laura Parker attacked me for having two campaign funds—the Friends of Sam Smith, and the Campaign Fund of Sam Smith. I had had the Friends of Sam Smith fund ever since I was in the Legislature. I used that fund to donate money and gifts to different causes between elections. Friends of Sam Smith money was used for many things: birthday gifts, wedding gifts, funeral flowers, tickets for political fundraisers, and those kinds of things. When elections came, I didn't raise money for the Friends of Sam Smith; I raised it for the Campaign Fund of Sam Smith. But I always had a little backlog there that I could tap. Laura Parker talked about it all in a negative sense, but I was just keeping goodwill. I didn't see anything wrong with it. That was the way we did things in my day. I don't know what kind of effect this article had, but Laura Parker reported it in a way so that it didn't look good.

The University of Washington Daily attacked me on that point, too. Their report about the two campaign funds made it look even more negative than Laura Parker. They made it look like I was wallowing in money. They really made it smell. They put my picture on the front page of the *University Daily*, and this I didn't understand. Why was the *University Daily* getting so interested in the city council? Because I'm from the state of Huey Long and he was one of my heroes, they thought I was manifesting what I learned from him, but that wasn't it at all. I was developing my own style. And I was being honest and I reported it all of the time. I didn't have any secrets.

But the *University Daily* was always against me. They tried to pan me and find things against me early on, but they gave up after they tried to pan me for having the two campaign funds—it didn't ever take. They tried to create a negative impression of me, but they failed and they never got back to it. They never attacked me again. And I didn't change anything because I knew I was up

and above board.

David Brewster was another reporter of this new type who sort of had it in for me. He was a member of Channel 5 at one time, and he started the *Weekly*. He was never favorable to me. He accused me of wanting to run Seattle out of my hip pocket. He established his viewpoint about me separate and apart from any contact with me. Later, he did come up and interview me, but he just continued to write his negativeness. I remember he wrote an article about the three divisions of blacks in Seattle. He wrote a little treatise on each group, and said who was the head of each. He called my group "the Sam Smith group." And the Walter Hundley group was known as "the city group" because of the city jobs that they had. And the third group included moderates and conservatives. He mentioned that my group had been stronger than the other groups, but he wasn't favorable.

And then there was Joni Balter, who was the principal writer at the *Times*. I don't know if she was one of the new style of reporters—I don't know what she was—but she always found a way to be against the things that I was doing. She was just negative to me. She never came out positively for any of my programs. But I liked her, and finally wore her down after she had a baby, by lots of references to how he was getting along. But then she finally moved out of the spot covering city council.

And Scott Maier of the *P-I* tried to attack me in the 1987 city council election. He was in favor of new leadership. That was the year Delores Sibonga, Paul Kraabel, and I were challenged by three candidates who formed a collective campaign and called themselves "Vision Seattle." I welcomed that kind of opposition, because it smacked of collectivism, and people ganging up on us, and it really turned off some of the people who were mildly opposed to us. But Scott Maier was negative about us—he was way out there. In fact, he was so negative that some people spoke to the *P-I* about it. And so he pulled in his rein and none of us got defeated.

But the people were still with me. Even Scott Maier admitted that I was stronger than ever. I had my supporters from all over Seattle. Maier saw my popularity even at a parade in Ballard when during the 1987 campaign—people ran out to my car to greet me. I had always managed to be in tune with Ballard. You recall that I made a speech in the early part of my career there before Ballard had turned around toward accepting me. I had opened it with a theme and statement that "It's great to be back home in Ballard." And that brought down the house. They had been against me, but that brought genuine laughter from all the people. After that Ballard called upon me to give speeches every year. And I always tempered my speeches so they would be acceptable in Ballard.

Yet as you remember, Ballard was one of the most prejudiced areas when I came on the council. But they developed and turned that around. It became one of my strongholds. I remember getting seventy-five percent of the vote in Ballard. I never could account for it, but nevertheless there it was. Even in Magnolia I got eighty percent of the vote.

And I developed strength in West Seattle. I couldn't account for it, but, in fact, I sometimes got eighty percent of their vote. I don't know if my success had anything to do with the fact that I used to live there, but I always reminded them that I was an escapee from Highpoint. But I was especially popular in West Seattle in the late eighties because we had just got the Duwamish Bridge, and I had been the main supporter of the bridge. I knew Brock Adams well, and I knew Maggie well, and both of them were key in getting federal funds for that bridge. But I was the main driver from the city. I just demanded it and the city people had to go with it. They couldn't hold back support.

Actually, I had so much to do with it that there was a movement to name the bridge the Smith-Magnuson Bridge, but it didn't take hold. It had become a meaningful drive, but they had lost sight of who started it and pushed it on. When they were dedicating the bridge, they had everybody on the rostrum except me. But I didn't lose any sleep over not being credited with it. It wasn't

important to me. The important thing was that they had the bridge. But the West Seattle people showed their appreciation. They invited me to speak at the Chamber of Commerce, and in 1987 I was selected as the grand marshal of the West Seattle parade. West Seattle was the only festival outside the Black Community Festival that I always visited.

I was always in the Black Community Festival. It involved a carnival, a couple of days of picnics at Judson Park, and there was always a parade through the black community. That's about all. The festival became a part of Seafair. But the community still responds to it.

In the Black Community Festival parade, I always rode in cars from the Northwest Chrysler/Plymouth dealer and just waved to the crowd. McIntyre, the owner, was always available and said nobody else should carry me. He always made it his business to drive me in a convertible and then bring me home. And for ten years all I had to do was to let him know when the parade was, and he was there. I rode in his cars in Ballard, West Seattle and the Central Area.

McIntyre tried to become a personal friend, but I didn't let him become very close. I had this habit of not letting people get too close to me. You could let people get friendly with you, but not accept them as your bosom buddy, not be indebted to them. I didn't have anybody close to me, and I didn't confide in anybody by choice. That saved me during part of my career.

But I had some friends who stood by me. There was Lonnie Williams. He was close, and he served for a time as a bodyguard. But I never knew how to take him, and I confided in Lonnie only a certain amount.

Oh, but I confided in Russ Gideon every time. Russ was in the hospital with me after my foot got infected and I had to have surgery. His wife said that when I went to the hospital she thought he was going to go off his rocker, because it disturbed him so. He took sick about nine days after I was in the hospital, but he got out of the hospital a little before me. He was never able to walk again, but I was able to discuss things with him. But Russ died on September 29th, 1985. And I have been getting along, but I never had a friend like Russ, before or since. He was like a brother. In fact, I would tell him things that I wouldn't tell my brother. Besides Marion, Russ was my closest friend.

The people I worked with had been concerned about me but they hadn't known what was wrong. And I didn't know it long before the surgery in 1985, but my foot was infected from diabetes. I told them after the surgery. You know, I had diabetes ever since 1967. I got it while I was in the Legislature, but it had not caused me a lot of trouble. It hadn't affected me at all, I just kept right on driving ahead. I didn't let the diabetes affect my thoughts, or restrain my action. I just kept on going.

I didn't want to go to the hospital, but I finally agreed to go. The doctor waited four days before operating, but I was mostly unconscious. They operated on me twice in three days. First they took off the leg at the knee. And three days later they came back and took it all the way off. I was mostly unconscious, so I didn't know what it was about. But if I had been conscious, I would have known that they didn't get all the infection out the first time.

It took me some time to get adequately back to normalcy. I was down pretty much because I had an extended hospital stay and had to adjust my living to the amputation. But my family didn't react differently after the amputation. All the boys were there to help me when I needed them. And my wife was there. She stayed in the hospital with me night and day.

And Slade Gorton made a trip to see me. I always suspected that he was secretly a friend of mine. I remember that elected officials from all over the county came up to the hospital and gave me a rally. I didn't want them to do it, but they did. Norm Rice, who was president of the city council then, and Paul Kraabel, another councilman, were part of the group who were pushing it. They had a crowd of public officials come up to the balcony at the hospital and they were bearing a sign that read, "Get Well, Sam." And they urged

me to come back. That was before I knew whether I was going to get well. I don't know whether they thought I wasn't coming back, but I did. I got in the wheelchair and came to the balcony and made a little speech and held onto the banner. Then I went back and proceeded to get well.

I did not have any difficulty or go through any emotional adjustments following my amputation. I just accepted it as, "Here's another limitation and I've got to prove that I'm up to the challenge." I knew I had to walk on crutches, and I just did it. I walked out of the hospital and into my car and my youngest son drove me home. I just decided to keep going, and I even got around to see all of my contributors for the next campaign.

So my leg was cut off in 1985, and I got along well until 1992. I didn't slow down my activities until I was out of office. I took insulin, sometimes by needle and sometimes by capsule. But in 1992, I got the other leg cut off after I lost feeling in two of my toes. The doctor wanted to cut it off up high, rather than down low. And I got a prosthesis that I can fit on my leg and I used it to balance getting in and out of the wheelchair. But that was rubbing, and I had a bruise that took some skin off, so I took off the prosthesis and have not put it back on since.

In addition to insulin, I had taken different kinds of medication, but nothing striking or effective. And around the time of my second amputation in 1992, the doctor took me off insulin and got me onto dialysis. But the one thing I didn't want to get on was dialysis because it tears up your day. If I wanted to do something, I had to schedule it so I could. And that slowed me down. I felt trapped on dialysis. But I wasn't engaged in anything like I had been. And you know, I felt better after I got on dialysis. But I'm almost sorry that I felt so much better!

But in 1985 I didn't need any help. One leg was all right, and I could still drive and go wherever I needed to go. I had the wheelchair when I got through driving. So I would get out of the car and into my wheelchair and go up to the eleventh floor in City Hall. I had an electric cart to go in and out of city council, and they prepared me a walkway so I could drive up, and get out of my cart and into the chair.

They prepared a welcome for me the first time I came back to the council from the hospital. Jeanette Williams helped arrange the "Welcome Back, Sam" rally with a sign saying: "Welcome Back, Sam!" when I came up the elevator. And, at one of my first meetings back, Bruce Chapman read a personal letter written by President Reagan to me when I got out of the hospital. He gave me a copy of the letter and I still have it somewhere in my files. I kept it, realizing few people get letters from a president.

And I received some honors that year. I knew it was part of a sympathy movement, and I knew the game they played, but I was flattered by the honors—I was riding the crest. That was the year the Municipal League made me Outstanding Public Official based on my record. And the Central Area made me a central figure. They hadn't done that willingly before. I was Grand Marshal of the Pacific Northwest Black Community Festival. And the state, the county and the city made July 27th Sam Smith Day. So I was riding the crest. I knew that it was all in sympathy for me losing my leg, but I appreciated it.

When they felt they were going to lose me, they sympathized and were ready to acknowledge me. It was balled up into one. The black papers had people who were formerly against me writing articles praising me, and insinuating that I was fighting for my life, and the life of the community was at stake. And this didn't sound right coming from those people. But I knew what it was. When people think they are going to lose somebody, they realize how important they are. I understand that. And I accepted it as gracefully as I could.

And Jeanette maneuvered around the first meeting so that I was president pro tem. That persisted, and I enjoyed it. In fact, she headed the movement to bring me back as city council president. So that's where my comeback started, and Jeanette was part of that. Jeanette Williams was always my friend, even when she didn't agree

with me. I didn't favor her when I could have made her president of the council, but she didn't hold that against me and later she became president. She was a good person.

Jeanette and other groups had a movement toward me for president, and I really didn't have to solicit their support. They trusted me because, in spite of my drive, I had a fairness about me. And I recognized that if you're going to be president, you've got to know how to get and keep five votes. You can't run off after you're president and push things without having those votes. They recognized that, and they stuck with me.

I was elected council president again at the end of 1985. It was a sort of tribute to my ability, and particularly my ability to utilize the power of the fifth vote. You remember, I used the power of the fifth vote pretty well to decide a number of issues such as Ross Dam and zoning and a whole lot of others. And later on, when we were discussing whether to invest more money in WPPSS, I was the deciding vote not to do it. I still liked to use it, because I used it as the deciding vote when there were four liberals and four conservatives. But I hadn't changed. I still didn't ever let anybody know how I was going to vote. But I was very deliberate when I used it. I had this philosophy: "No need of my taking the heat more than once." So I would pass up the vote in committee and only vote in the full council. That way I took the heat only once. And so I kept using it and I think it catapulted me into the presidency.

Norm Rice had been the council president, but I don't think he tried to retain his position when he saw the movement developing toward me. Norm came out of the radio and television group and was closely allied with them. Every man has his group that pulls his coattails, and that was Norm's group. He always kept them in his corner. He had a strange affinity with some businessmen who were bankers. John D. Mangels from the Downtown Association was the main banker who supported Norm Rice from the get-go, and those old bankers had an act for hanging together. That was a good combination: with bankers you get the money, and with the media connection you get the turn on the advice and publicity. You can't beat a combination like that.

When I came back both Norm Rice and Charlie Royer asked what I thought they should do. They were both running for mayor at that time. I felt Charlie was in a position to ask me more than Norm was. I don't remember what kinds of things they specifically asked about, but they both asked me for advice on things that were happening, and things that were going to happen.

But you know, most of the council members were dependable if they gave their word, except Norm Rice. I couldn't depend on Norm Rice to go against his liberal friends. If he gave you his word on a controversial subject, you couldn't tell which way he'd go until he actually voted. One time I could depend on him, one time I couldn't. He never established a relationship with me that I felt he wouldn't vary. But I considered him acceptable to the majority of people in the city of Seattle, so I supported him. I just accepted him for what he was.

Delores Sibonga was another council member who wanted to be president, but somehow or another the council never trusted Delores as a person in power. Now and then she got mad and said things that people didn't like. But she was a fine person.

And George Benson was a man who had a dying desire to be president of the council. He wanted to be president before he left, and then he would have been happy to leave. He was a Christian and a very fine man, and he and I had a lot of Christian conversations. In all of my efforts, even when I ran for mayor, he supported me. And I always gave him what he wanted as head of the Transportation Committee. That was the next thing he wanted, besides the presidency. And I would have supported him for president, had I not been re-elected in 1988. He eventually got elected president in 1992 after I left the council, but he didn't have the power to persuade the council to go the way he wanted it to.

Chapter 16

"Well Done, Good and Faithful Servant"

In 1988, I was re-elected council president against Paul Kraabel. That was my fourth term. The council members were virtually satisfied with my conduct and they didn't have any gripes against me. I wanted a fifth term because that would have been the term that set me apart. Only one person had five terms. That was David Levine, who was on the council in the 1950s. But they didn't want to give me a fifth term, and that's all right. I established history by getting to be president four times and not upsetting the apple cart.

But Paul Kraabel succeeded in being president after me. He was something else. He carried the trademark of a Republican, but he was a liberal Republican. I supplied the fifth vote that brought Paul Kraabel to the council when he was appointed. But he didn't want to owe anybody—particularly me—anything. Paul wanted it well known that he didn't owe me anything for bringing him onto the council. In fact, he made arrangements for Jeanette Williams to switch her support over to him when she couldn't get the person she wanted appointed. But I was aware of that, and I said, "If he's going to come to the council, I should bring him." So I did.

Paul was always aloof. You never could tell when he was with you—he was sort of up and away. I remember he broke his word about Westlake Mall. He promised the merchants he would take a certain position on the Mall, and he broke his word. He promised them that if they put up half a million dollars, he would go for certain conditions, like Pine Street wouldn't be closed. He got the half million dollars, but he broke his word. That I didn't like. I felt that once you give your word, you stick by it. But he was basically a good man, although tragedy was stalking him—his son died on Mount Rainier. And when his term expired in 1991, he volunteered and rung the bell on himself—he resigned. I remember he came out one day to see me after I was off the council. Later he worked as a lobbyist for Metro in the Legislature. But while he was on the council, Paul was mostly part of the change to take the city out of the hands of a few powerful people. And it worked so well I don't know who's in charge! For example, he and Virginia Galle led the effort to reduce the amount individuals could contribute to municipal campaigns. And he supported the movement to limit the height of skyscrapers downtown, and to award a height bonus for firms that housed the disadvantaged.

But Jim Street was even stronger for those issues than Paul Kraabel was. Jim was a lawyer and an economist. He came out of a good firm, I think it was Jim Ellis' firm, but he was not representing them. The liberals were his supporters, and he headed the effort to make the council liberal. But in spite of his influence on the council, it was never willing to make him president. And he wanted that.

I felt that Jim Street didn't like me, and I knew it when he finally supported my opponent in 1991. Everything about him I read as simple dislike, so I was never fond of him. And I was not for the things he pushed. I could never bring myself to really like him, even though I supported him when he was running against Jack Richards. You remember Jack Richards had been fire chief and helped me when I ran for mayor. He was a personal friend of mine, and continued to be so, but I detected that after he got mixed up with another woman besides his wife that was going to sink him. So I supported Jim Street on the surface, even though I didn't like him. I just couldn't cotton up to Jim Street.

As you remember, I started the movement to

appoint blacks and people of color to positions within city government. But Jim was going to take it to the extremes, and I didn't like that. I was confident that we had gone as far as we could go. We were the leading city in the country. New York had gone as far as they could go. And Minneapolis and some cities in Wisconsin had progressed, but we were the leader. I was content to keep us the leader, not to push us over the cliff. And I was right, and I never changed my position.

But I reluctantly supported him when he started his effort to gain support for education. The city wasn't obligated to help our schools, and knowing that we didn't have the money, I was reluctant at first. We could have thrown up our hands and said, "That's not our concern." But I finally came around to the fact that supporting the city's schools was a desirable thing. We still didn't have the money though, and we had to sneak little batches of money from different programs to help the schools indirectly. But that was a desirable thing.

And, I remember, in the late 1980s during his last term as mayor, Royer was trying to get along better with the council. You know, Mayor Royer was never considered lord and master over the council. Some mayors had that amount of deity, but Royer did not. At first, out of the blue, he would make requests. But the council didn't like that, so whatever he requested, we didn't feel bad opposing it. Finally he came around to sounding out the council before he presented things. That helped him. Actually, although there were various articles written about the difficulties between the council and the mayor, I don't remember Mayor Royer being so difficult. If he was right, I was with him; if he was wrong, I wasn't. I developed an affinity for him in that he developed a faith in my ability to get people together.

For example, I remember when Royer cosponsored my measure to legalize pull-tabs and punch cards for non-profit groups. He wasn't for it the first time I proposed it. But the second time I proposed it, Royer came aboard. It was a great way for these groups to generate revenue. Groups like the Central Area Youth Association needed the money to buy sports equipment. I knew there was a chance for corruption, but I was willing to risk that chance. Besides the city would regulate the machines through a slight tax, and the tax would raise a little money for the city, and the city needed the money.

But I could only get four votes in the council. The city council had become a little too liberal. Paul Kraabel, Jim Street, Jane Noland, George Benson, and Norm Rice voted against it. For one thing, they probably felt I was pushing the council too hard. And they all felt it was an act of gambling, and they didn't want to be a party to the introduction of gambling to the city. That was the main thing. Even though we had the state lottery and bingo, they didn't call those gambling. I don't know how they couldn't, but they didn't.

But I still had my disagreements with Royer—mostly over raising taxes and utilities. In his 1988 budget he called for raising the B&O tax again, although this time he only wanted to raise it two percent. City Light and water rate increases were also proposed for the 1988 budget. I was against the water rate increases just like I was against City Light rate increases. They took something that we had to have, and were raising it almost to the point that we couldn't afford it, but yet we had to have it. I felt positive that if Seattle City Light had looked, they could have found some fat in their budget that they could have cut out. For example, I couldn't understand why City Light had more employees at one time than the rest of the city had. But there was nobody else on the council who was willing to challenge the people who were asking for the raise.

Oh, I was still very active in 1988. That year I was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in Atlanta. It was another moment in history for me. I had listened to the radio as a boy in Louisiana when they nominated FDR, and I had attended the 1960 convention when they nominated John Kennedy. And there I was in 1988, a delegate for a black candidate running for president of the United States—Jesse Jackson. As you remember, I'd been active in bringing him

to Seattle when he was in the civil rights movement, before he turned political. I had more enthusiasm for him then because I hadn't accepted the idea that he would turn political. And I took quite awhile to come around to Jesse Jackson, the politician.

But I didn't approve of all his conduct. At that time, Jackson had a bunch of insurance companies financing his organization, PUSH. I knew he received so much money from those big firms that I was reluctant to believe he could continue to go against them to the point of no return. And some of the firms that were supporting him called me to ask what I thought of him after his first trip out here. And I told them he was a man who deserved to be supported. And they did support him. But I could not forget that he received large chunks of money from those firms.

But I like him. I've had pictures taken with him, and once he spoke at a dinner honoring me. Jesse was like me. He's good to have out there as a threat. He was knocking on the door for president, but when he was running, people in the South were saying, "Anybody but Jesse." And he evidently found out there was no way they were going to elect him, and he quit running.

I knew his chances of being elected were nil, but it was like when I ran for mayor—Seattle needed to get used to the idea of a black person running for mayor. And when Jackson relinquished his delegates to Dukakis, I believed that while allegiance would be to the party, nobody else could generate the fervent enthusiasm that Jackson had among his followers. And that's my summation of Jesse Jackson.

But I didn't feel anything for Dukakis. I was disappointed and disillusioned with the Democratic Party after the 1988 convention. I attended Dukakis' speeches when he came to Seattle, but I never warmed up to him. No, even though he was Charlie Royer's friend and stood a chance to appoint Charlie to a position in his administration if he won—and then I would have been appointed mayor because I was city council president at that time. Actually, I thought if the Democratic Party was going to lose, they would have been better off losing under Jesse Jackson at that time. I had been slow coming around to Jesse Jackson, but I had finally gotten to the point that I figured they ought to give him a chance. He had got in the primaries and made it all the way through, and he was such a fiery person speaking on the rostrum.

But when Bush was elected, I felt that I was out of touch with the federal government. Actually, I had felt much closer to Nixon. You recall the Nixon people exhibited sensitivity toward me in the state of Washington that I didn't understand. The Bush people never even acknowledged that I was here. But how do you compare a man with his son? Bush was a continuation of the Reagan philosophy. He did not have the desire to help the masses. He just didn't.

Though I was slow to warm up to Jesse Jackson as a politician, Norm Rice was active every time Jesse came to Seattle. He would get up at seven o'clock in the morning and be there to greet him. He cultivated Jesse Jackson. And I think that helped him a lot when he ran for mayor the next year.

In 1989, I endorsed Norm Rice in *The Facts* and wrote about his administrative ability, leadership, energy, and service on the Finance Committee, and how he was a good manager and could get people to work together. I wrote all that! Well, I had been serving on the council with Norm and my community would have taken it pretty hard if I had endorsed somebody else, or even if I failed to endorse Norm. They would have thought that I didn't endorse him because I wasn't running. My community would have gone with me had I been running, even against Norm. But I was showing faith, and I knew we could beat Doug Jewett.

I had created an attitude in the city of Seattle that they were ready for a minority mayor. Maybe not as a long-term, but as a try-out. And I recognized that from just keeping my old ears open. But I also recognized that they weren't going to elect me. I had the opportunity to block Norm. I was down at Ocean Shores when I got the call again from friends who asked, "Are you going to run?" But I said, "No, let him go ahead.

Maybe he's the one that they will elect, rather than Doug Jewett. But I know they won't elect me. No." And I pulled myself out of the way for Norm. And I'm not sure they were happy about it, but they went with Norm. I had decided that the city would accept somebody else who was black, to prove that they weren't prejudiced. And Norm Rice had been to school with the people in control and had been with them as a newsman. He was a member of the press and he fit into the controlling group. I had decided that they would accept Norm Rice.

I don't know what kind of mayor I expected him to be. I thought he would be different from what he is, but that's life. I hoped that he would pick up some of the fire I had for the success of the black community. But I don't know if he has a real understanding of the seriousness of minority issues. He may have an understanding and he may not, but he doesn't identify strongly enough with them to satisfy them. He is preoccupied with the greater community. For example, Norm Rice is not strong in appointing black people. He appoints those who are gay, and who are more liberal, and who go along with his viewpoint, but in general he is not strong for black people holding positions. And if he appoints them, he picks those who fit his model.

Basically, Norm Rice was not that determined. He was willing to go easy on things where I was harsh on things. I was determined, where he was less determined. But it would be unfair to Norm Rice if I measured him by me, because they are my standards. After Norm was elected, the two main contenders for his seat on the council were George Fleming and Larry Gossett. But Sue Donaldson was appointed to fill Norm's position. She had the power people behind her and she was a woman. Sue Donaldson came from Jim Ellis' firm. But George Fleming was super-qualified, and even Jesse Wineberry was qualified. But they chose a lady about whom they didn't know anything. I thought George Fleming was going to run in 1990—he'd given me that impression—and I contend he would have beaten Sue Donaldson. But Rice and Revelle weren't supporting him, I don't know why. He decided not to run, and it was news to me.

I was up for re-election in 1991, and entered the race for my seventh council term in April. Paul Kraabel and Delores Sibonga decided not to run for re-election that year, but I wanted to be on the council one more term. I had not made a record yet and I would have been closer to the record at twenty-eight years rather than twenty-four. I felt I was helping the people, and I couldn't voluntarily stop helping. I just couldn't say I wouldn't serve. I couldn't resign off the council. In my book, if I was going to leave the council, I had to let the people reject me. I couldn't explain it, so I went in and let them defeat me. "As you move along in public life, you gather a certain amount of opposition, and there are other people brewin' up who want you out of the way so they can come in. And when those add up to 50.001 percent of the votes, you're out," is how I once explained it.

If you're a goner, you know it when you start your campaign. My wife had just passed at the start of my campaign, and that took the heart out of me. It took my mentor away from me. And that took all my feelings about the campaign away. I started the campaign with a manner of resignation that it was over. I just couldn't focus anymore. I was ready to quit, but I couldn't voluntarily quit.

Marion died the last day of July, 1991. But it was probably after twelve o'clock, so it was August First. I was asleep. Her wheelchair was at the side of the bathroom and I heard a thud. That woke me up, and I ran in—I didn't run, I got in my wheelchair—and saw her on the floor. I had Amelia call my oldest son, and then I had to call 911. They got here, and they worked over her, but they didn't bring her back to life. It was written up as heart failure. She had been having trouble with her heart for some years. And she had cancer and had been taking chemotherapy for about a year or more before the time she died. But she didn't get down. She had a wig, and when she put it on, the people couldn't tell whether it was her hair or not.

I often wondered whether I could have done anything to save her. I wondered if I had called

911 sooner. But I put that out of my mind—she was gone, she never peeped. She went quickly. She didn't suffer. She didn't have a lot of pain. And in looking back I'm thankful that we had so many years. I was trying to reach fifty, but we didn't get there.

I didn't really prepare for her death, but I should have. About two or three weeks before she died, the doctors had told her there wasn't anything they could do for her, and they didn't give her much longer to live. But I just couldn't believe it. I didn't take it seriously. She was trying to tell me to quit, and spend some time with her, but I said I wanted one more term. I was listening, but I didn't really hear her. But it happened, and I was caught unprepared.

My family rallied round me. They were unprepared too, but they had been more prepared than I. She told them all what the doctor said, but I couldn't fathom it: life without her just didn't ring a bell. I had been so comfortable with her by my side. At first after she passed I was wanting to pass myself. I got over that, but nothing could comfort me. After forty-four years of marriage—and to be shut off abruptly—there was no comfort for me. I tried to accept it, but there was no comfort for me.

They had one of the biggest funerals ever at Mount Zion. It was just like regular church. I invited the mayor to be one of the pallbearers, and he was. And my five sons were the other pallbearers. I couldn't do it, obviously, otherwise I would have. But I had one leg, so that was that. I had Mrs. Hatter, a soloist at Mount Zion, sing "Precious Lord" and the Lord's Prayer. The Lord's Prayer was first and "Precious Lord" was closing. It was a beautiful service. The pastor was out on vacation, on a trip on a boat, so I got Reverend Jones of Martin Luther King Baptist Church to preach the sermon. He did it very well—moving. And we went to the graveyard at Queen Anne Hill and laid her to rest. Reverend Jones was somewhat of a singer, and he led off a song at the gravesite—"Swing Low, Sweet Chariot." And he was moving. Moving.

It's natural, life and death. We all know we're going to die. That's why it's so easy now for me to sit here and look at the TV and go to bed and sleep. But none of us is prepared to lose a loved one. Sometimes I have trouble sleeping, but I don't worry about it. I have accepted it as the truth. But I haven't gotten myself together enough to go out to her gravesite. My kids have been out there, but I haven't done that yet. But such is life.

The next year I lost one of my brothers, the only existing brother, through something like cancer. Stephen had died years earlier. And Arthur D.—the one at Grambling—he passed the next year. Yes, it was a difficult year, so many things were happening. But the Lord knows best.

I really had misgivings about continuing with my campaign for city council. I couldn't really do anything to help myself. It reminded me of a time when a state senator, Michael Gallagher, was running for re-election to the Senate. The time came for him to lose, and I was asking him what I could do to help him. He said, "Confidentially, I'm lost. I can't do anything to help myself, and you can't. I'm a goner." And when the time came for me, I knew I was a goner, but I couldn't quit. I said if the people will deny me the privilege of serving, I'll accept it. If that's what they want to do, that's fine.

Before the primary, I wrote an article describing my career, "Well Done, Good and Faithful Servant." I considered that it said I had done a good job, even if they didn't want me anymore. It summed up my efforts and my successes. But it was interpreted differently by some people. Some, including one of my sons, say that it was a sign-off. The theme "well done" suggests that you're through. That took hold, and the people considered I was through. I guess inside of me I knew I was, but I didn't intend it to give that impression. I was leaving the door open.

But you remember during most elections, I wasn't challenged seriously. I was in so many campaigns that none of them stuck out except the 1960 state representative campaign, and the first time I was elected to the city council. The others, I floated right through them except the last one. I had a thing about making promises. I didn't make

a lot of promises to which I'd be obligated. I said, "See what I did." And I ran on my record all of the time.

This time I had some serious challengers. Sherry Harris was an engineer for US West who had been a community activist in North Seattle. She was a friend of Jim Street. And James Kelly was the executive director of the state African-American Affairs Commission. They were both making a lot of promises about what they would do if they were on the council. Sherry Harris campaigned on issues like transportation and better coordination of land use, and James Kelly talked about increased programs for youth and better schools. But I knew that their proposals would cost the city millions of dollars, and they would never get them through the council. In fact, at one candidate forum, I said since Sherry Harris was an expert engineer, "she should be in charge of fixin' the streets." And since Kelly was an expert with children's issues, he should be in charge of the juvenile justice system. And then I added, "I'm the expert in legislation." And I let the crowd draw their own conclusion about what my job should be.

I always had my constituency supporting me. Some of them said, "You can be on the council for life, as far as we are concerned." And there were never any leaders, except those who wanted to replace me with themselves, that were asking me whether I was going to run. Kelly was the only one. He was the arrogant one who asked me not to run, to my face. And I told him I was going to run. But the leaders from the black community never had anybody tell me not to run, even though the press repeated wrong information in various articles that they tried to persuade me not to run. The leaders from the black community said, "Well, if he chooses to run, we're going to support him."

And, as always, I had the endorsement of the police—both the Seattle Police Officers Guild and the Police Management Association. But this time the Republican groups who had formerly endorsed me didn't endorse me—but they didn't endorse anybody else. The King County Labor Council didn't endorse anybody either. They had always endorsed me, but didn't this last time. I had an enemy on the labor committee. He had been trying to get them not to endorse me for some time, but I had ninety-two percent and higher ratings in labor, from the Legislature on, and they didn't have any gripe. But finally he was persuasive.

But what I didn't understand and what really upset me was the Municipal League's rating. The Municipal League had rated me all the way from "superior" down to just "adequate." They had ceased to be my supporters, but they couldn't say I was "inadequate," and they couldn't criticize my performance. In fact, they said they had "great respect for my record of service." But they said I was just "adequate." And I didn't figure I was deserving of that. To people on the outside that meant my opponents were better than me. This was an expression of the new trend of the people who were running Seattle at that time, who also ran the Municipal League. Radicalism is what it really was.

I felt that is was a conspiracy against me that the League rated me lower than my opponent. At the time, I told the papers that the gay community was trying to do a hatchet job on me through the Municipal League. They were really out to get me. They wanted to control things, and they have succeeded.

The thing that really sunk me with the gay community was my vote against their effort to make domestic partners of city employees eligible for city insurance benefits. I was the lone vote against that. My vote was mostly based on my background in law. Nowhere in the state had common law marriage, male or female, been accepted, and it wasn't anywhere in the State Constitution. And I was solid on my ground, but they used it to kill me off. That vote really got the gay people consolidated against me.

That was it—if they were looking for something, they had it. And they held it against me. All the time I was on the council I had managed to maintain the gay leadership, but for them that vote was unforgivable. That was really my sinking point. Yes, that was the nail in the

coffin. I didn't understand that, but even Cal Anderson, who had known me for years and had been George Benson's assistant, accused me of homophobia. And I wasn't anywhere close to that. But if you repeat one person's claim, that makes it sink in a little more.

The opinion of the gay community was about ten percent of the vote, and that could go either way. They had a big influence on the election. You take ten percent of the vote and shift it away, and that just tips the scales in an election. And my opponent Sherry Harris was a member of their group. I don't think the majority of the people realized that she was gay, because I didn't harp on it. I didn't run against her gayness. If she wanted to be gay, that was all right with me.

So, they succeeded in controlling things. Sherry Harris won the primary with forty-five percent of the vote, and I had thirty-eight percent. But after the primary, there was a group organized to support me, which included downtown business, Don Stark, Wally Toner, and Bud Coffey from Boeing. The group was organized by Norm Rice's aide, Charles Rolland, and Wally Toner. I don't know whether they did it out of feeling from the heart, or for cover. I don't know why my support was so little, so late. I knew that the people who were the downtown leadership were not as strongly for me as they had been. But I suspect when they realized I might actually lose, they realized that I had done a lot for them over the years, and they didn't know what they'd get with Sherry Harris. So, those people supported me.

And I was eventually endorsed by the Democrats in the Thirty-seventh District. Old allegiances never die. The Democrat who is heading the district now is a man who places similar emphasis on minority and black Democrats—Jesse Wineberry. And I was endorsed by the Alki Foundation, a part of the downtown Chamber of Commerce. Fellow council members like Delores Sibonga, Cheryl Chow, and George Benson made an effort to support me when I was going to lose, but I knew it was time for me to move on. They volunteered to endorse me, but I don't think they had much effect. And Jane Noland supported me when I was going to win, but she didn't support me as much when I was going to lose, although she made an effort.

Charles Rolland and Jesse Wineberry supported me. I think they may have been looking for my blessing if my spot on the council opened up. But Rolland had elements of Rice's organization trying to get him not to do anything for me. The gays threatened to go to Rice and get his job, and Rice was afraid to help me, because he had befriended them and I had not. They were death on him not to support me, and he didn't. And I had gone out of my way to support him when he was getting started, and he just didn't do it—he didn't help me at all.

And the press, which had been after me for years, continued to be negative. They were out to get me. I remember Sam Sperry wrote a particularly critical article. I felt that he was a friend, but the problem with Sam Sperry is that he only pretended to be my friend. I had talked to him freely, as if he were a friend, when he was with the *Times*. When he was thinking about running for the council, I even gave him $250. But when he got to the *P-I* he adopted the anti-Sam Smith mode. I don't know why. I never could figure it out. And during the last campaign he wrote that my smile was gone, my spirit diminished, and that I was the "candidate of yesterday, a tragic figure fighting for my last hurrah." Then he quoted somebody saying, "Sam doesn't produce any more," and went on to say, "No one at city hall can look you in the eyes and say 'Sam can carry his share.'" I don't know what he was talking about. Like I told you, he was a turncoat.

And there were other factors against me. I recognized that the voters were in an anti-incumbent mood. The *P-I* and the *Times* sold that. Incumbents either didn't run or they lost. The 1992 presidential election showed they were out to dump George Bush, and it carried over to Clinton.

My age was another factor. The push from the next generation was having its influence on forcing people to retire early. They wanted power and they got it. And while their sheer numbers

are important, I also lost some of my senior citizen support. And I didn't understand that. But some senior citizens said to me, "You should retire." The reason they gave was my age. George Benson was seventy-two and he's still there. And Jeanette Williams was seventy-five when she retired. I was sixty-nine. But they just weren't willing to give me the time.

My health was an issue, but they used it unfairly against me. I've never seen the health issue used against any candidate in the state, but they used it against me. People were harping on the health issue all the time. I thought it was unfair, and not really nice that they should harp on that. But they did. In October, I was hospitalized for the second time during my campaign. What happened was I gave myself an insulin shot, and that made me have an insulin reaction, and the fireman who came out to revive me insisted on taking me to the hospital. And I couldn't resist. But I fixed it so that word wouldn't get out. The *P-I* kept trying to dog and find me, but they couldn't find me at the hospital. But they did enough to create suspicion. If I had that race to run over again, I wouldn't get sick! But my health was an issue that I couldn't debate.

I declined to debate Sherry Harris after the primary because you don't debate somebody who promises everything and has no intention of fulfilling it. When you debate them, you pull them up to your level, and you don't want to do that. For example, LBJ did not debate Goldwater. I was taking a page out of that book, that you don't do that. And I had been on programs with her, and she was promising all sorts of things. I reminded the people that if they got what she was promising, it would cause the taxes to go sky-high. But they weren't in the mood to listen. And so they voted me out.

Nobody makes a "Hallelujah" about a loss. I was mentally prepared for it, but I guess I was a little down in spirit. I felt the people had spoken, and if they wanted somebody else, they were entitled to them. They were almost saying "Hallelujah! We're rid of him!" And I said, "The people's will be done." But the strange thing is, after I lost, the press wrote articles praising my accomplishments and virtues. You recall they had been out to get me that year, and I knew it. I didn't expect them to go about it in fair play, and they didn't. They wanted me out, they had accomplished what they wanted, and now they could give me a little saving praise. And they did it with a straight face.

I'm not concerned with a lot the city council does now. I'm just concerned with my rates! Because every time they want to raise rates, it digs into my pocketbook, and as a retired citizen, my pocketbook doesn't have the same depth as it had. I follow state politics closer than I do city, because my first love was the Legislature, and I haven't given up on that. But I don't avidly follow the city council, I just read the headlines and see when they're about to do something stupid. And I say, "Well, so what? The people wanted them."

Those who have come after me are trying to fit the mold of "acceptableness." They are trying to do something that you really can't do. You can say, "Here I am, accept me the way I am." Or you can try to wiggle-wobble every time you feel the pressure, but this doesn't make for good progress. For example, Norm Rice was more for accepting Seattle the way it was, instead of pushing for change. He was pushing for whatever would make and keep him mayor. And he still is! I had a reckless abandon about my own elections. I didn't feel that there was a bar I had to counter. I didn't feel that my election was key. I felt that the ideals I was preaching were key, and if I got elected, okay, but if I didn't, okay!

You know, Norm Rice comes out and visits me, he and George Benson, every three months. We discuss city business, but nothing changes. They don't ask my advice. They kind of talk with me about what's happening. And I never see any evidence afterwards that anything I've said has affected their action.

After the group of people like Norm have passed from the scene, Seattle will feel no urgency to continue the trend of electing blacks. They will feel, "We've done it, we've proved it," and move on. So I don't believe there will be automatic

acceptance of blacks seeking political office in the future.

Efforts to achieve equality for minorities in Seattle have been insufficient because you have to go all the way when you start. The blacks were the primary pushers, and that started the unrest that led to more reforms. And the Asians took an example from the blacks and just sort of got accepted, as not white but not black either. And you know they are accepting Asian people in politics as evidence of being fair to other minorities. In fact, they are talking about Gary Locke running for governor some day. And he's going to make a hell of a run for it if he stays in it.

But I still see jobs as fundamental to achieve equality for minorities, and to cure all manner of ills in society. Jobs are the first line of defense. If you've got jobs, you don't need nearly as much welfare. But if people are getting out of work and can't find jobs, the ticket goes up. And so balancing the budget by reducing the welfare package when jobs are tough to come by speaks loudly to me, in that there's going to be less help for those who are unfortunate.

I don't find hope for progress. We were just about at the breaking point in the 1960s and the early seventies, and the people in power recognized that, and they gave just enough ground. I think that the people in power who were backing up to give us some progress said, "This is far enough." Basically their lines have stiffened, and we've stopped moving forward. In fact, we're beginning to slip back.

We've slipped back because they killed all of the main leadership. And when you wipe out a leader, you don't wipe out his spirit, but you wipe out his effectiveness for pushing the movement on. It's as simple as that. We haven't had a resurgence of leaders, and people need leadership. People take hold of what's out front and preached before them. But there is not a magnetic leader who is still alive who can ignite the public. Martin Luther King was the last one.

All along in the history of our country there have been leaders who were interested in the common good. They were the outstanding ones and they were the people who had the most impact on political situations. For example, the people who wrote the Constitution were of that type—Patrick Henry, Daniel Webster, and George Washington. They founded this country based on their idea of the common good, which came from their deep religious beliefs. And in every century, and every decade, there was always a score of leaders that were the outstanding ones who had a profound effect. John Kennedy had real effect. Lyndon Johnson had real effect. Even Huey Long had an effect. They developed head and shoulders above the crowd.

It was the same with the great leaders of the civil rights movement. The common good—brotherhood and equality—was their driving force. And of course, the freedom and equality movement they led was ultimately based upon the Bible. The drawing force of the movement was religion. Religion was the deeper force. For example, when Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks came on the scene, they had the religious belief that would sustain them as they were going into difficulty.

But the young leaders now don't have that depth of religion. Somehow or another, they didn't get steeped in religion. They are not the Bible-totin' people of the civil rights movement who were restrained by the teachings of the Bible. Most of the young people haven't had any training in the Bible. So they don't have the restraint that will hold them back. They're always on the verge of violence. And if they broke loose, it would be terrible.

That's what makes this society a dangerous place to live. And that's why you saw the Los Angeles explosion and riots in 1992 after the police beating of Rodney King, because they didn't have the religion that said, "No, don't do that. It's wrong." You could tell the Los Angeles riots didn't have any spark of religion. It was people just venting their frustration out of control. Fortunately the jury produced a decision that sort of appeased everybody—it was a little help for both sides. They had of the wisdom of Solomon in that case. I don't know what I would have done if I

had been in that situation, but knowing me, I would have been pleading for more tolerance. But this case shows why the times are more dangerous—it could have been a slaughter.

I see the future generations being more radical, more reckless than the present time, and as such, they will make less progress. I don't hold out any hope for them to mature beyond believing in violence. The young in cities like Los Angeles are a problem.

And they take it out in radical action. They drive by and they shoot, and they don't know who they are shooting at. And they burn, and so on, their own areas. And they don't have any reluctance. I can't realize what's in them. I don't know if there is anything we can do, except to make everything as equal as possible—equality they can see. But I don't know if there is anything we can do, and I don't know what the future holds. I'm sorry I can't give any more encouragement.

I would like to say I foresee the next generation coming out of the violent attitude, but I can't. I would like to say that they will feel restrained, and we won't have another Los Angeles, but I can't. We can't remedy this violence. The remedy has to be born of the young people. And if they don't have it within them, we can't remedy it. If we run up against another problem like Los Angeles, the young people will not be controllable. We won't be able to control them until they have done a lot of damage, and had a lot of damage wreaked upon themselves.

But as long as the society is evolving, there will be moments of friction. And our society is evolving—into something better. But the pace of change in society slows down with the acceptance of the status quo by the masses. I don't say the pace slows down to a stop, but it slows down according to the intentions of those who wish to make change—it slows down according to the demand. There is less demand now because many things have already changed, even though we can still testify that there is some injustice. And people don't demand change when there is less of a problem. But change will go on until society looks at itself and feels that it's through. And once society purifies itself, there will be no need for further development. I don't know what that point will be, and I don't know how long it's going to take, but it'll be a while yet.

I made the decision to have a career in public service when I was a teenager at home in Louisiana. When I told my sister that I was going to go into the field of politics, I don't know why I was convinced of that. FDR was my hero. And even though I remembered many of his speeches, that alone wasn't enough. But I followed my dream that I had sitting in the back of the house in cowhide chairs. And I took the ideas that came to me in the night, and I followed them, and basically they worked out. Everything I sought to do, except be a congressman, I did. I followed my dream, and basically it came true.

I felt the inspiration from my boyhood dreams back home carried over throughout my life in politics. And I grew up with the idea that you had to get a civic record and a college education before you entered politics. So I was going about getting myself prepared. And when I felt I was ready, I tried at first on McAdoo's campaign, and then I started campaigning for myself. And I found it was easy, and finally got elected.

I have determined that my political abilities are inborn. I didn't allow myself to be carried away by emotion, and I certainly believed that my intellect would not lead me astray. I don't know how I gathered this political knowledge, because somewhere within me it was hidden, and it just coughed up when I needed it. I didn't learn it anywhere. I didn't learn it in any books. But when I needed it, it was there.

My political efforts were directed toward being a moderate. When I was in the Legislature, my district was about fifty-five percent black, and all I had to do was appeal to the blacks. I was called ultra-liberal at that time, because I wanted open housing. But when I came to the city council, with both black and white constituents, it was a little problem for me at first. I knew that my minority constituency was more liberal, but I felt I could carry the moderates only so far. So I took

my moderate stance due to the fact that I had a constituency that was moderate. And in appealing to the blacks, I must have spread thin enough to affect the white people, because they had a favorable opinion of me before I got to campaigning for city council. As I mellowed in my position as city councilman, they called me conservative. But I don't think that I changed that much. The times changed, but I was always for equality.

I have tried to keep myself in tune with God's will. Oh, like anybody else I've strayed off from time to time, but I have tried to form my philosophy and my actions in the manner that I believed would please God. I measured my participation and acts by right and wrong. And I felt protected as long as I was acting within those realms. I managed to not be after self-aggrandizement. I denied myself that, willingly. And I believe that was God's will. I helped everybody I could, and I believe that was God's will.

I didn't ever think of myself as more or better than others. And I think there was a temptation for that. After I retired, I finally called a halt to the political dinners honoring me when the Thirty-seventh District wanted to have one more. I said no. They couldn't understand why I didn't want to be honored. But I figured I had gone through enough of that, and there was no need for any more. I figured I had had enough honor for the rest of my life.

My biggest disappointment is that I didn't become a congressman. I don't know if I would have helped more people if I'd been a congressman, but I know I wouldn't have had as close a connection with as many people. I think I wanted to be a congressman for selfish reasons. I was needed here at home, and the people convinced me I was needed at home, and I accepted it. But I think I would have been a good—a great—congressman.

In summing it up, I think I was strong and lasting. I look back on certain times and wonder how I survived when I wasn't supposed to survive. I wonder how I did, and I don't have the answer. I just have to think it was the good Lord who stood by me. You remember how I told you when Ed Pratt was murdered I had gotten to the crossroads where I was ready to quit. And my mother was not aware of my travails, but she called me when I was thinking about quitting, and said, "Whatever you're doing, you just have to do it, and trust God." And I was revived after that. I survived.

I was lucky to be on the scene at the right time when things were happening. I could feel a part of it. And I could lend my influence to it. I couldn't imagine myself coming from Louisiana in a depressed area, and having the ideals that led me to participate the way I did. And therefore, I can quote Martin Luther King, and say the same thing, "If I had to do it over again, and live at a time, choosing a time, it would be the time I live now."

What I want to be remembered for is that I tried to make equality a real fact of life. I was fighting for that. And every step of the way, every time I put a little chip in place, I sighed and counted that. But I couldn't live forever, and always be doing that, so every man has his day, and during my day I tried to make equality a fact of life. In fact, in the state of Washington, in the city of Seattle, I did make a difference. I put up a good fight. And I want to be remembered by that. People could come to me and not feel reluctant. And I tried to help people.

Epilogue

Sam Smith died November 16, 1995.

Service was held November 25, at Mount Zion Baptist Church. Reverend Samuel B. McKinney presided. Two thousand people attended, including Governor Mike Lowry, Secretary of State Ralph Munro, Mayor Norm Rice, former Governor John Spellman, and numerous other dignitaries. Present and former city officials filled one section of the church. Particularly noticeable were row upon row of somber, uniformed police and firefighters.

Among the mourners, a few remembered young Sam's vow at his father's funeral. He had placed his hand on his father's chest, and pledged to try to be as good a man as his father.

Appendix A

Illustrations

Sam Smith was known as a passionate and persuasive public speaker.

"My Task"
By Sam Smith

It was in the early part of May many years ago as I sat with a cap and gown in the little segregated high school in the deep Southland of Louisiana. Our graduation class consisted of twenty-one students, which were mostly girls. The silence and attentiveness that was ever present at this time was because it was Baccalaureate Sunday, which to us meant that we were going to get a sermon on the prospects of life after high school, or at least the general purpose.

I don't remember a word of the sermon, or hardly anything else that took place that day, but one thing I do remember is the trembling slender youth with the thin pale face which brought out his mulatto features, whose voice pierced the quietness with his best rendition of the song, "My Task." My mind is hazy even now as to just what those words were, but as he sang, I wondered just what was my own individual task. I never came to a real conclusion, not then, nor have I come to a realization as to what it is today, but I can imagine and hope based on the things that have happened to me this far along the way.

I imagine, and I believe, that part of my task is to plant the seed of hope, fertilize it with the growth of inspiration, cultivate it with the development of determination, and to prepare a harvest of achievement.

These are mighty big, high-sounding words, but in a way they never had a more serious meaning than in our highly urbanized society of today. In our own immediate families, we can plant the seed of hope in our children by teaching them to understand that success for no one is instant nor handed down on a silver platter. It is only achieved by long and tedious planning, years of preparation, overcoming of frustration and disappointment, and the refusal to accept defeat as the final answer. We can teach them that, if by some stroke of luck combined with effort, that we are able to succeed, we can only thank God for his mercy and not boast of our own genius. It bugs me, but somehow I feel that the furtherance of these thoughts is part of My Task.

A speech delivered by Sam Smith at Mount Zion Baptist Church. Smith considered this one of his most memorable speeches.

Sam Smith at his desk in the House in 1959 .

Sam Smith among members of the King County Metro Council.

Martin Luther King Jr. with Sam Smith.

President Harry S. Truman with Sam Smith.

Sam Smith with President Ronald Reagan.

State Representative David Sprague, state Senator Fred Dore, U.S. Senator Robert Kennedy, and state Representative Sam Smith (left to right).

Sam Smith in the Black Front store, the first black-owned supermarket in Seattle.

The Smith family: (standing, from left) Carl, Anthony, and Amelia; (seated, from left) Donald, Ronald, Marion, and Sam with Stephen in his lap.

INVICTUS

OUT of the night that covers me,
  Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
  For my unconquerable soul.

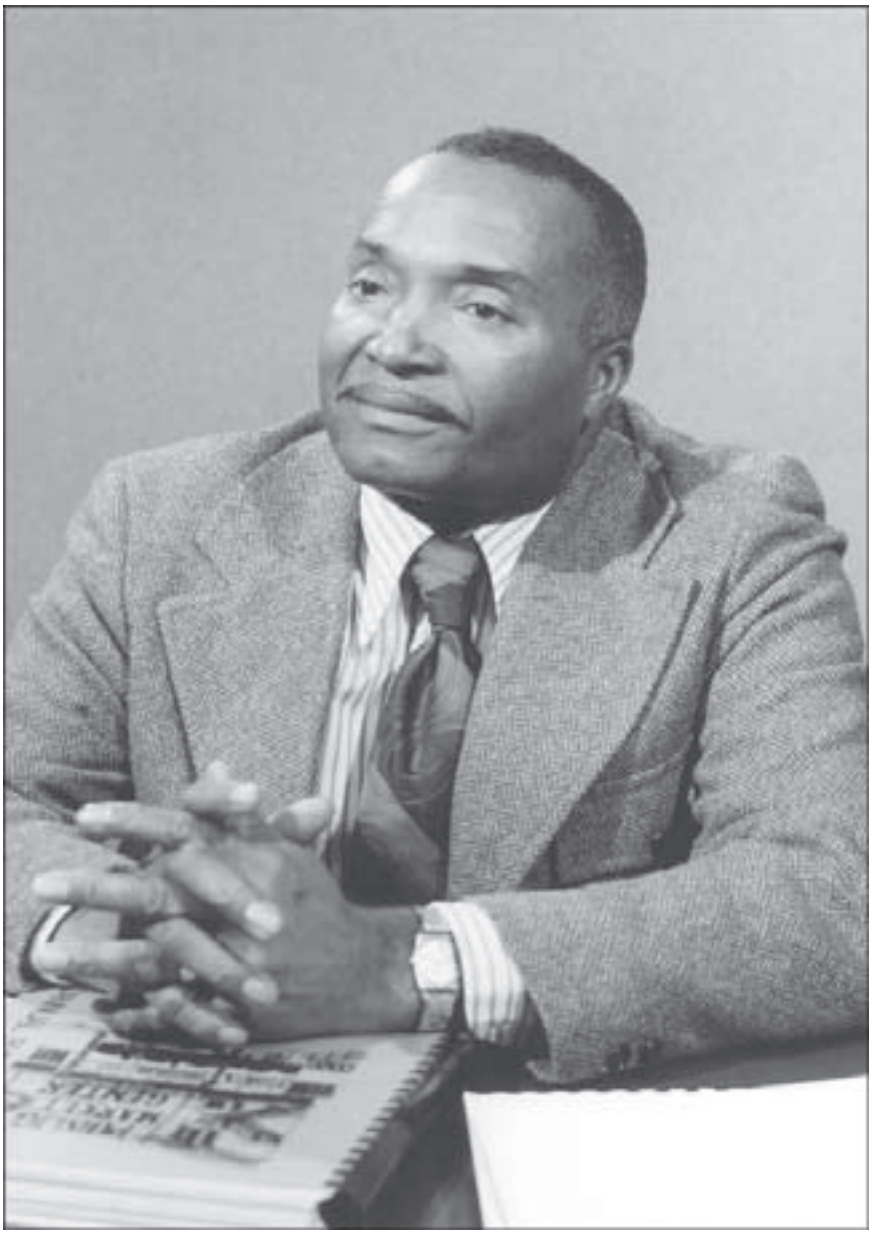
In the fell clutch of circumstance
  I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
  My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
  Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
  Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
  How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
  I am the captain of my soul.

— William Ernest Henley, 1875

Sam Smith's favorite poem.



Appendix B

Clippings

Seattle Times, March 11, 1967

Housing Bill Signed By Evans

OLYMPIA, March 11. — (AP)—The fair-housing bill, one of the last to squeak through in the closing minutes of the 40th Legislature's regular session, was signed yesterday by Gov. Dan Evans.

The bill, S. B. 378, began as a housekeeping measure regulating real-estate brokers and salesmen, but was amended by Representative Sam Smith, Seattle Democrat, the only Negro in the Legislature, to include a section prohibiting discrimination by real-estate salesmen or brokers.

The bill leaves property owners free to make their own decisions to rent or sell apartments or houses to whomever they wish.

Evans also signed a bill deleting certain territorial restrictions on the sale of intoxicating liquor near the University of Washington.

Seattle Post-Intelligencer, November 17, 1995

Smith known for political finesse

PI STAFF

Born and raised on a small Louisiana farm, Sam Smith liked to call himself a simple man. He frequently would answer the office phone himself, announcing over his speaker phone, "This is Sam."

But the longtime former Seattle city councilman and legislator who died yesterday was a consummate politician. He was highly regarded for his political finesse in the Legislature and was described as the big Democratic needle in the Republican majority's side. His ability to provide the decisive fifth vote on the nine-member City Council was remarkable. Time and time again, he maneuvered to the middle of a divided council and succeeded in extracting political gain from his pivotal position.

"That's my specialty," he once said. "To bring two diametrically opposing sides together and get them to agree."

However, his power-brokering waned in his final years on the City Council. He lost several major political battles and, in 1990, in a personal defeat, he was unable to retain the presidency of the City Council. In 1991, he lost his bid for a sixth term on the council to newcomer Sherry Harris.

Smith was born July 21, 1922, in the Louisiana woods about 13 miles from the town of Gibsland. Smith's father was a Baptist preacher, school teacher and farmer.

As a boy, Smith plowed the fields behind a mule. He was known for his compassion and once remarked about the homeless in Pioneer Square: "There but for the grace of God go I."

At his father's funeral, Smith put his hand on the casket and promised to get an education. World War II helped fulfill that promise, taking Smith off the farm and into the Army in 1942. Eight days after induction, he was assigned to a post in Seattle.

At the war's end, Smith returned to Louisiana, married his high school sweetheart, Marion, then the two packed for Seattle. He attended Seattle University at night and earned a degree in social science in 1951. Later, he received a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Washington.

He ran for the Legislature from Seattle's 37th District in 1956 with a $385 campaign fund. He lost, but won in another attempt two years later, and began the first of five terms in the House of Representatives.

As a legislator, he distinguished himself as a folksy orator and indefatigable advocate of open housing legislation. In 1967, he was honored as the Legislator of the Year by the Young Men's Democratic Club.

In the same year, Smith became the first black elected to the Seattle City Council.

Politics was Smith's life and passion. He rarely missed a council meeting, coming in to vote even when he was on vacation.

"If I were any happier, I wouldn't make any sense," the ever-ebullient politician said on the eve of being elected to the council presidency for the third time.

In all, Smith was elected four times to the presidency of the City Council.

Smith once said his old style of politics was born of necessity, because he was a poor black who entered the Legislature with neither friends nor funds. By the time he was elected to the City Council, he had both.

But eventually, ill health slowed him down. In 1985, his left leg was amputated above the knee to halt infection that spread from a sore on his foot.

He rebounded fast, returned to his City Council job in an electric wheelchair, and not long afterward was elected to his third term as City Council president in January 1986.

Though his political prowess ebbed, Smith remained one of Seattle's most popular politicians. He was swept into office six times with a large mandate. Ambitious, he ran for mayor unsuccessfully in 1969, 1973, 1977 and 1981. No other City Council member had greater name recognition.

He came closest to becoming mayor in 1981 when he survived the primary, but was defeated in the general election by Charles Royer.

In 1985, the Municipal League named Smith outstanding elected official and the governor declared a Sam Smith Day in honor of his leadership.

Seattle Times, May 18, 1997

Sam Smith's values live on in his children

JERRY LARGE
Times staff columnist

It's easy to get the impression that people in the public arena have two kinds of children, ones who are always getting into trouble and ones who follow in their parent's career footsteps.

Those are the ones we hear about — bad Kennedys are are a staple. Offspring of public parents who go their own way and succeed don't always make good copy, but they do have something to say about being your own person.

Take Sam Smith's children.

They've taken values such as personal integrity and community service and applied them to their own pursuits. Having a role model doesn't mean becoming a clone of that person, but rather applying the best of their values and actions when you navigate your own course.

Sam Smith was a Seattle city councilman noted for his personal touch and his connection to people. He represented Seattle's 37th District in the Legislature for 10 years and followed that with 24 years on the Seattle City Council.

When he died in 1995, he left behind a political legacy and five sons and a daughter.

Carl, the entrepreneur, owns a computer company; Anthony works for Boeing; Donald is a Paccar manager, and his twin, Ronald, is program manager for housing services at the University of Washington. Stephen has made a career of the Army.

Their older sister Amelia, though she is mentally challenged, is successfully living on her own with help from her brothers.

Large on Thursday

Watch for Jerry Large's column Thursdays in the Scene section of The Seattle Times.

Being Sam Smith's son is "very much a plus and very much a burden," Carl says. People know who they are and may trust them because of their father's reputation, but also "they have a definition of who you are without having spent the time to ascertain who you really are."

Carl says he never felt compelled to be involved in politics. He had other interests, but he had also gotten a good look at the life of a politician and didn't want that.

No one could be a clone of Sam Smith now anyway. He was known for always answering his own telephone, taking time to chat with ordinary people and for being bluntly honest about his positions.

"It was much easier to be a politician in the early part of his career than the later part," Carl Smith says. "You have the media taking a look at every thing you do, every little act and interpreting and sometimes misinterpreting everything." He says politics now is less about actions than about perceptions.

Anthony Smith tried to follow his father's career. He lost a race for the Legislature when he was 20 and still in school.

"Dad missed his first time when he ran for the Legislature," Anthony says. "He told us more than likely you will miss the first time. You have to get your name known." Anthony tried again and lost again.

"Dad was a semi-pro baseball player. He said it takes three strikes before you are out."

But Anthony says he wasn't eager to go through that a third

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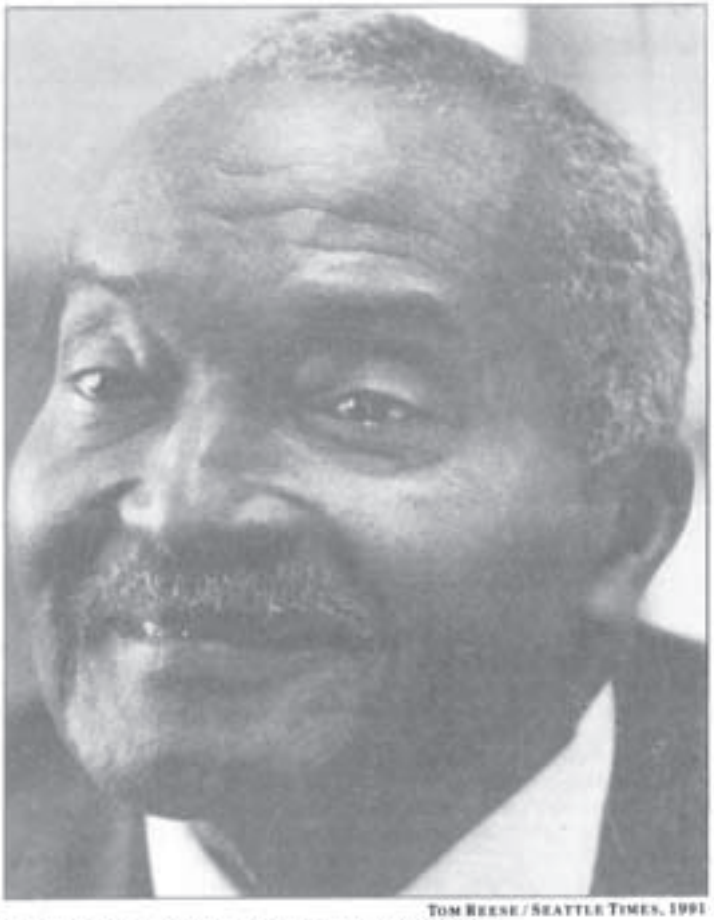

TOM REESE / SEATTLE TIMES, 1991

Sam Smith: *personal integrity, community service.*

time. Now he's putting his skills to use in other ways.

He is president of the Boeing Employees Good Neighbor Fund, the largest employee-owned charitable organization in the world.

And like his brothers, he spends time volunteering with young people.

Says Carl, "We've all participated as coaches, helping other kids that need a role model. My dad was my role model, but it wasn't until I was out of college that I grasped the value of that."

They were able to see him live his values. "Material things were never that important to him," Carl says. "Most of the families that have had problems have had notoriety for two reasons, economic and political," he says. The combined pressure is much greater than either one alone.

The Smiths lived in the same house for more than 30 years, and his father drove an old Chevy station wagon until he bought a used Buick.

The sons worked their way through college.

Anthony says that when he is coaching, his real job is to provide kids with basic values, "with regards to doing your best, following instructions, being consistent and watching the returns come in the long term."

Their dad taught them that.

Jerry Large's column appears Sundays and Thursdays in the Scene section of The Seattle Times. You can reach him c/o The Times, P.O. Box 70, Seattle, WA 98111. Phone: 206-464-3346. Fax: 206-464-2261.

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In 1967, we were the minority party. So I knew it was going to take some extra maneuvering to get an open housing bill passed. My tactic was to plead for them to see the light, the rightness of my cause. And I remember one time when I corrected Slade Gorton, the brilliant Republican majority leader. He was trying to make a point that the Republicans were used to being in the minority in the Legislature and he said, “Mr. Smith doesn’t know how it feels to be in the minority.” And I said, “Oh, yes I do!” My comment caught him off guard. And everyone laughed—Democrats and Republicans—they could see that I spoke the truth with humility and humor. And so they gradually came around to accept my position. And I taught Slade what he was saying. But Slade and I were friends, and I remember Shelby Scates wrote that Slade was a “not-so-secret Smith admirer.”

— From the text