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## Oral History Interview #1

David R. Bowen

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David Bowen Interview  
Oral History Program  
Congressional and Political Research Center at Mississippi State University

This is an interview with former Congressman David Bowen on July 10, 2001 at his home in Jackson, Mississippi at 75 Eastbrook. I am Mike Ballard, coordinator of Congressional and Political Research Center at Mississippi State University.

DR. BALLARD: I know you were born in Chickasaw County and grew up

MR. BOWEN: Well, I got into politics by accident. As it were, I happened to be born in Chickasaw County because my mother was from Monroe County and my father was an appraiser for the Federal Land Bank. And which was one of those agencies created to do something about the great agricultural depressions, off and on, of the twentieth century starting in the twenties and into the thirties. He was training there and so I happened to be born there but I was only there for a few months before my family moved to Cleveland, Mississippi, in the Delta, which was a place appropriately located for farm appraisers. My father bought a farm there and he also owned a farm where he was raised, up between Holly Springs and Senatobia, Tate and Marshall Counties in North Mississippi. So he was a farmer by background. He went to Mississippi State and had an agricultural degree from there but rather than farm he ended up in farm appraising so he farmed on the side, owned two farms, one we bought in Boliver County and the one we owned up in North Mississippi in Tate and Marshall Counties. I think my parents decided to move to Cleveland because they said there was a college there and if they couldn't afford to

send me off anywhere to school then I could always go to Delta State.

Well, it turned out that Cleveland was a very nice town. I did not show any signs of being a politician growing up in Cleveland, Mississippi and I was not one of those people in school who was elected class president or student body president and I was not the football captain or whatever. I studied and played the piano and played a little sports but I was not somebody identified as being the student leader type. In fact, I do remember that between my junior and senior years, every year is held one of those great Mississippi institutions, "Boys State" and "Girls State" of course. And so I remember that when the time came to nominate candidates for Boys State, as I recall two people went from every high school to Boys State and student democracy being what it is you nominate everybody you can think of who would possibly be remotely interested or remotely likely for that sort of thing. And I am sure as I remember that ten or twelve or fifteen guys were nominated and two were elected. Of course, naturally in my case I was not one of those nominated (Laughter) so, nobody thought of me as a politician, I will put it that way. And that was true in college I went up to the University of Missouri to go to college my first two years of college, I wanted to sort of get away from home and to travel to see a bit more of the country and I wanted to be a journalist and the University of Missouri had a very distinguished journalism school. I went up there and I pledged Kappa Alpha Order, it is a Southern oriented fraternity. I enjoyed my work there, I think that at the end of the

first two years I ranked fourth out of something like 600 students in my class. The only reason I know that is because I had to have these forms filled out every year to send back to the draft board to keep from being drafted and you had to stay in the top half of your class or you would be drafted. After a year or so I decided that I did not really want a technical degree like journalism, although, I still was very keenly interested in journalism and in writing. But, I thought I wanted a liberal arts degree in history or in English, something of a more traditionally substantive [sic] type and some of my professors suggested that I might want to consider exploring the Ivy League if my parents could afford to send me there or if I could get a scholarship and so I did and I applied to several Ivy League schools and I ended up transferring to Harvard and majoring in History and I enjoyed that experience a great deal having been in a large state university and going to a fairly large but also rather associative Ivy League Institution. The oldest college in the country and majored in history and had some very distinguished professors that I worked with during that time. But that time that I was in Missouri and when I was in high school in Mississippi I still was not a political type. I did not show a great deal of aptitude for politics, or a great deal of interest in it. I was involved in a lot of student activities and things that had political overtones, mainly more liberal political organizations that I was probably somewhat to the left of the center at that time in terms of my concern about the need to give fairness and opportunity to all of our citizens

including blacks and that usually got you stamped as a liberal in that era.

DR. BALLARD: One interesting thing about that of course, is you grew up in the Mississippi Delta where that was not necessarily the attitude of most white people. How do you think you came to that attitude?

MR. BOWEN: Well, that's a good point. I've asked myself that question sometime and I'm not altogether sure. Sometimes these things just occur to you. I remember once, for example, my mother who was very active in the Baptist church. I happen to be a Methodist now but I was raised as a Baptist and my mother was a state Baptist officer and my father was a deacon in the Baptist church and she was very dedicated to helping everybody according to her Christian duty and she would go out and meet with black leaders and sort of work with them to help them organizationally. She did not mind in anyway doing that kind of thing but there were little Mississippi characteristic things...well, they were really southern, not really just Mississippi, but I remember once having an argument with her because one of the black church women that she was working with came to our house to visit our mother to exchange some church materials and mother required her to come in the back to rather than the front door, and I thought that was very demeaning and I asked her

why she had to do that. She said that the neighbors just wouldn't understand if a black woman dressed appropriately came walking through the front door, they just wouldn't understand that. She had no grudge against the lady that she was entertaining but it just wasn't appropriate for a black person to walk through the front door. So, I guess little small things like that come along and for some reason I developed a feeling that Mississippi and the south, and the nation, needed to make some changes in that area. Of course, in college, I had some black students that were friends. When I was at Harvard I knew some of the black Neiman fellas [sic] who were professional journalists sent there to study. I had black student friends who lived at Lowell House where I did at Harvard and I got to know those people quite well and respected them and several of them went on to high places in government and business and law and medicine and one thing and another. In any event, after my studies there I had very much a keen interest in International matters and foreign politics and was actively involved in things of that area as an undergraduate. So I ended up applying to New College at Oxford University and I knew one of the famous professors of Oxford, a man named Isaiah Berlin...Sir Isaiah Berlin who was of All Soul College and who lived at Lowell House like I did and he was helpful in getting me admitted into New College and then he was my philosophy tutor for part of the time. He had died in recent years and was a very famous philosopher and scholar throughout Britain and throughout the world. At Oxford I studied a program called

philosophy, politics, and economics and I enjoyed those two years and traveled a good deal on the continent and into the Middle East...continued my interests in world politics and in politics in general. But, there again, I never thought about an involvement that would have me running for public office and my interest was scholarly and at that time I thought I would end up getting my Ph.D somewhere and being a professor of history or government but I still had a keen interest. After two years at Oxford I went to London and spent a year in London at some place called the American School in London. I wanted to spend another year there. I liked London and I thought that as long as I was over there and could find a job...some way to support myself then I would be happy to do that. This was a school which only went through the eighth grade and it was adding a grade every year. It was located in Groden Square at that time, run by some Americans who had been there during the war. Now this is...I graduated in 1954 and so I was the next two years in Oxford, so that next year from '56 to '57 I was in London. I taught the fifth grade. That was an interesting subject for me to teach. The first job I ever had was teaching the fifth grade. Why did they have me teaching the fifth grade? Because they had a vacancy, they had a teacher who had resigned, I was looking for a job, I had never had an education course in my life but the headmaster spent about three hours interviewing me, decided that I could do the job so I was happy to do that. It gave me an opportunity to be in London and it was very educational for me, let's put it that way. I learned

a lot about children and I did a good deal of traveling all over Europe in three years that I lived in Britain. Then I came back and did some Army time...this was between wars, after the Korean War was over and before the Vietnam War began. So, I spent six months over in Fort Jackson, South Carolina as a private and did my military time there and then the rest of it kicked off into the reserves. Then the occasion came to deciding which way I might go and I thought well, I am not sure whether I want to apply to graduate schools and go somewhere work on a Ph.D. or whether I want to try to get the job with the federal government somewhere. There again, I still wasn't thinking about running for public office. I was just thinking about following my interest in politics from a scholarly or an administrative side. I thought that one of the things that I might do would be to teach college for a few years because I had a Master's degree from Oxford University and a Bachelor's degree from Harvard. I applied to a number of colleges around the Southeastern part of the United States and was offered several in Louisiana, Florida...different places, but the two in Mississippi that I applied to were Mississippi College and Millsaps. I had many family members that had gone to Mississippi College and Millsaps had only a one man political science department and did not have the money to expand that to two at that particular time but they needed somebody to teach summer school that year when I got out of the Army in 1958. So, I ended up teaching at Millsaps the summer of '58...taught at Mississippi College in the Fall and Spring of '58 and '59 and summer.

Then, I came back to Millsaps and spent the next five years there after they did expand that department. Now, I think that experience of teaching college government and history...I taught some history as well, and making speeches to civic clubs and getting out into the public and sort of getting involved in some local politics, I was involved in some Hinds County and some Mississippi Democratic politics. I remember going to a county Democratic convention that was held in Raymond in 1960, the year that Jack Kennedy was elected President, and I think probably that's when I began to think seriously about the possibility of getting personally involved in politics. You know, people, when you make speeches people come up and say "You know, you're pretty good at that, why don't you think about politics sometime." It never occurred to me to think about politics. But, I thought about it but still there in all jumping into politics when you have no base, no connections, no background, my father and mother were not involved in politics, my father never got involved in campaigns. I had no particular connections with anybody in politics and it was a thought I had but I really had no particular avenue for doing it at that point. People sometimes ask me the question about whether being a lawyer is an asset to going into politics and I am of course, not a lawyer so I usually advise them that being a lawyer has only one advantage if you are in a law firm that allows you to be away for a few months every year then you can sometimes find somebody to cover your cases for you while you go off to the State Legislature or you attend to some other city duties

that you might be elected to. So, it sometimes gives a little flexibility which is often not present to many other callings. That's one of the advantages I think of being a lawyer, though, there are a fewer and fewer lawyers now in politics. Every year the number goes down, there's a little bit of a negative reaction nationally to lawyers and people are a little less trustful of lawyers and therefore they are...the numbers [of lawyers] in U.S. Congress and the numbers in State Legislatures of lawyers have been falling in recent years. I don't know whether it all began with Watergate and the era there. That might have been a good start. But, after five years at Millsaps I decided I would...actually, kind of an unusual situation. I had applied to the U.S. Foreign Service and had been admitted except they had to take the written exams, oral exams. I remember chatting with my review board at the State Department in Washington which would have been about '63 or '64 and the chairman of that board asked me how I thought I did on the oral examination. Of course, the exam peppered me with all kinds of question about American Literature and history and government and international affairs and so on...and, I responded that I thought I did extremely well. He said "Well, you did." So, I was admitted to the State Department but through some peculiar quirk of internal bureaucracy...a medical exam, which I had on a fairly regular basis prompted them to decide that I was not qualified to come in. I had my...my mother had, back twenty years earlier, suffered from colon cancer and recovered, lived to be 90 years old but, because of that incident in the

family I had regular exams. Now, that's very common place nowadays.

That's the normal thing.

DR. BALLARD: (Laughter) I do that to.

MR. BOWEN: But back in the 1960's that was not common and the doctors at the State Department thought that the fact that I had an incident of that in my family and that I had examinations on a regular basis showed some undue concern about that sort of problem. It might create complications in some tropical post somewhere and so they decided that I might be too risky a candidate. Well, that was kind of bizarre and then later...many years later when I was on the Foreign Affairs committee and I was interviewing the Deputy Secretary of State in charge of Administration, he was before us testifying and I didn't mention my name at all. I said "You know, Mr. Secretary, I have a constituent who had this unfortunate experience with the State Department," ...I recounted my own situation of having passed the exams, written and oral and being ready to pack my bags and move to Washington and being bounced out because I had colon exams and he said "Well, of course, that could not happen." I said, "Well, it did happen, I happen to know the person involved and it did happen." He said "Well, it's astounding, it doesn't happen now." Of course, that is what you

expect a bureaucrat to say. Well, that was somebody before me. We don't allow that kind of thing to go on now." So anyway, I said, I needed to get back to graduate school and do some work, so I picked up the phone and called some friends of mine at the University of Missouri where I had...this is past the normal application time for graduate schools and I said "well, that is where I started college and I have good friends there," and indeed, I was very much interested in writing and I thought that I might just give it a shot doing some graduate work in English. So, I called the chairman of the English department, I knew the man, he gave me a student assistantship. I came up there and did some graduate work in English, I enjoyed it, but I did decide that I did not feel comfortable with that subject for getting a Ph.D. and you know, it's funny, some subjects are wonderful in and of themselves but when you, that is the subject matter, the material, but when you put it into an academic context it can be very stultifying and frustrating. But I happen to feel that way about a lot of graduate work in English. I find history fascinating all the way through top to bottom, and government can be as well. But, sometimes the kind of work people do in graduate programs in English, while you like the subject matter, you like the books and the poems and the plays, but the way that graduate courses are organized to address those subjects can be quite frustrating sometimes and not very satisfying to those who really like the literature itself. In any event, I moved on to the University of Chicago and moved into a combination program, sort of an American

Studies program involving American Literature, History, Government, enjoyed that work, Daniel Bushton was one of my professors who later became the Librarian of Congress. Chicago is a fascinating city, and I did quite well there, I simply, a couple of years away from getting a Ph.D. I would have had to take my comprehensive exams and write a dissertation and the longer I sat there and was buried back in the carrels somewhere doing research, the more I thought about the wonder's and joy's of the free world (laughter), that is , outside of the real world, the less I like being cooped up in a University, though I have great respect for the academic world and I spend many years of my life teaching, I think probably I got a little bit spoiled by my years of teaching at Mississippi College and Millsaps and being out into the community and making speeches and doing things; and my advice to student's is if you want to get a Ph.D. go right on through and get it done. Because, if you go out and teach, and I was an assistant professor at Millsaps and at Mississippi College, I had tenure at Millsaps so I could have stayed there, that's not that easy to do today for an assistant professor, there was a greater shortage of academic talent then than there is now. But, my advice to students is to go ahead and go right straight on through because if you take four or five or six or seven years and you go out there and get in some very enjoyable position in a community in which you are teaching and you are actively involved in society, that life is going to be so enjoyable that you are going to find it very frustrating going back into the restrictions of

the academic world, especially graduate study. So in any event, I decided that I had always wanted to be involved in government so, I took a few trips to Washington, interviewed people that I knew, and fairly powerful and highly visible agency called the Office of Economic Opportunity. Sergeant Shriver was the director of that who married John Kennedy's sister and they very much wanted someone from my background who might come in and oversee the Southern part of the United States for them in the Community Action program. I said "Well, I got to spend another two or more years, two or three years possibly even more than that working on a Ph.D., I think that I'll just go to Washington." So, I went to Washington to work for the Office of Economic Opportunity. I was the Southeast Regional Coordinator of the Community Action Program, spent a lot of time in all the Southeastern states, a lot of time in Mississippi, made a lot of friends in Mississippi. Later it turned out to be a political asset. Of course, I got to know most of the Head Start people, most of the Community Action people, a lot of the black leadership especially and a good bit of what we might call the progressive white leadership too, that is what we might call the whites who were involved in these poverty programs in Mississippi. I was able to...I remember Aaron Henry one time, called me desperately wanting to get some money released for a program in Coahoma County and he said that it was the dead of Winter and they had to cut the heat off and the children were freezing and you know, they couldn't operate without some money to turn the heat on and

to at least pay some salaries and do something, and they had been late getting their application in and could I help. I ended up going over to the Treasury Department and walking this voucher through and getting everything signed off for them and got their money released in about a day's time. So, I made a few friends like that, even though I was a long way off in Washington DC, I was maintaining ties here in Mississippi and I must admit, at that stage, I was thinking very actively about politics. One of the reasons I left academia and went to Washington is that I was thinking about the possibility of getting into politics but I was looking for the right opportunity. So I was thinking most of that year or so that I worked for the Office of Economic Opportunity, and that has definite advantages in what we will call the left of center voting population of the state and the leadership there, especially the black leadership. I realized, as the saying goes, that I needed to touch up my image a little bit to the right of center. So, I ended up taking a job with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and I lobbied on Capitol Hill, I was a registered lobbyist under the Federal Registration Lobbying Act. I worked on educational legislation, so I got to know all the people on the Education Committees in the House and Senate and worked up speeches for chamber leaders on educational matters and got to know the Hill. I really had a bit of an apprenticeship on Capitol Hill. Now, the question is sometimes asked to me, "If you like Capital Hill so much, why didn't you get a job as a staffer on Capitol Hill?" The answer is that I couldn't get one. I tried. I applied

to everybody. I applied to Stennis, and Eastland, and Whitten, and Sonny Montgomery and everybody who was there and for one reason or another I, well there was a great many other people who were not from Mississippi but I think that one of the complicating problems of that particular era, back in the 1960's, the late or mid to late '60, it was the height of tension over civil rights problems. Black/white relations were somewhat hostile and there was great suspicion of people who maybe had been identified with what one might call more progressive causes. I think the fact that I had not gone to college in Mississippi that I had gone to Harvard and Oxford and had been a college professor, I probably had been identified as somewhat liberal based on the position that I took on race relations at that time. I think probably, although I am sure that my friends and former..later colleagues, people like Stennis, Eastland, and Jamie Whitten, probably thought I was a mighty good fellow but I had no political connections, my parents had never been involved in politics and I just think they didn't want to take the plunge to hire somebody.

DR. BALLARD: You know, that's interesting because the ones you mentioned had so much power and had been in office so long, you would think that somebody as qualified as you were, particularly at that time, to be a staff member, that wouldn't have been an issue. But, I guess it tells you how strong the position was.

MR. BOWEN: Oh yeah, and there were other people running around there. William Winter was a staffer for Stennis and various other folks who have gone up

and done that but, in my situation, for some reason, they just didn't do it. It just didn't happen. I have always enjoyed kidding my own staff when I became a Congressman, telling them that they achieved something that I never could do. They got a job on Capitol Hill, I told them that the only way I could ever get a job on Capitol Hill was to go back to Mississippi and get elected to Congress. That was the only way I could work on the Hill. Of course when I was working for the U.S. Chamber I was working on Capitol Hill and I really did get to know the in's and out's of Capitol Hill quite well. But, the big move that really propelled me into politics was when John Bell Williams was elected to Governor, I was in Washington and he was elected in '67. I was not actively involved in his campaign or anybody's campaign. I was up there working for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and as I indicated, was looking for an opportunity to get into a position from which I might run for public office. But there I was perched in Washington, and I have seen that situation for many people, many congressmen I've met who were torn between the desire to stay in Washington and enjoy what they were doing up there or to leave and go back to their home states and get into politics. Many of them have stayed and others have packed up and gone back to home states and run for office and gotten elected. Not uncommon at all. So, what happened was that I was invited to come down and interviewed by Governor Williams and Brad Dye and some of those others involved in his administration. And they were looking for someone who could help bring

all the federal money to Mississippi that we had been missing.

(END OF SIDE ONE OF TAPE ONE)

DR. BALLARD: We were discussing that you had been interviewed by John Bell Williams, or working with him or something.

MR. BOWEN: Yea, right, what had happened was that during the campaign of '67, a lot of talk was going around the campaign trail suggesting that Mississippi was not adequately taking advantage of the federal money that was available. We were right in the midst of the great society era and a lot of federal money was available for a lot of different things, it was just the full impact of the Vietnam War had not been quite felt on the budget and the thought was that is was money for everybody and everything and Mississippi was missing out. Of course a lot of these people that wanted the money were bankers and people that had understandable economic motives to get the money circulating in our state and in their banks and so on. But, a number of these people went to Governor Williams and said,

“We need a Federal State Coordinator like the other states have.”

Someone who, to use the humorous term, is the federal bagman, someone who goes and gets the federal money and brings it back. I think his remark was probably that was not his thing. He had been fighting the Federal Government for many years as a U.S. Congressman and the man he defeated for Governor, William Winter, was more likely to be the kind of fella [sic] to know more about federal money and be more eager to get it and spend it and most of the money was, a lot of the money, in any event, in his point of view was intended to be channeled into various black oriented programs and he was not too sure that was an altogether good idea and so he probably did not warm to the idea originally, but, as I was told later a number of his financial backers, banker friends, people who understood what was good for the economic growth of the state and what would be needed to make his administration as Governor a success was a good deal more money being brought into the state than we had been getting before. So, he was persuaded to do that and I was interviewed for it because of course, being a native Mississippian and somebody who had worked in Washington on federal money, federal programs both for the U.S. Chamber and the Office of Economic Opportunity. I seemed to be one that was appropriate for that. I think the person that was instrumental in placing my name before him was Charlie Griffin, who had been, John Bell Williams administrative assistant and then was elected to succeed him in Congress and Charlie and I were good friends and I think that

Charlie felt I had about the right background needed and the right sort of political sensitivity needed to handle that kind of job and so, I was hired and I spent four years doing that, I brought a good many hundreds of millions of dollars into the state, and set up programs like law enforcement assistants and highway safety and State Counsel on Aging and State Economic Development Office and State OEO office and a whole batch of related programs, the Appalachian program for example which was a major asset to the Northeastern part of the state, I represented Mississippi on the Appalachian Regional Commission, represented the Governor. Just whatever came along that looked like it was available to us. Much of this money had been sitting there for a number of years and they had never sought to attain it. In some cases we had to pass legislation to authorize it, in other cases we had to make appropriations for matching money, it might be an 80/20 program or a 90/10 program but we still had to come up with the 10% or 20% to match it, so, I spent a lot of time going back and forth to Washington, going to Atlanta, which is the regional office for this part of the country and which administered a lot of these programs, and a lot of time working with the state legislature. Among the many other things that I did during that period was to set up a statewide Planning and Development District System which is still in place and still thriving and prospering. Re-substate multi-county districts which were created to help coordinate federal money and state and local money to do the best job possible, so that you didn't have various funding agencies simply

throwing money down without coordinating it very effectively with any kind of a state planning effort or a regional planning effort. My job as coordinator for the state was to make sure this worked from a state point of view, then, these districts that I created, drafted the legislative language for it with the help of say, Herman Glacier who was the Governor's legal counsel, and [who was the legal counsel] for many other governors. We were able to get that authorizing resolution signed and got the monies we needed appropriated. One of the other programs I set up was Comprehensive Health Planning and we used Comprehensive Health Planning then to create a program which has had a huge impact on the state and on the nation...Medicaid. We had not participated in the Medicaid program in Mississippi. I hired a man by the name of Dr. Alfred Cobb who was in the State Health Department to head up this effort and we got the legislation drafted, got it passed, we actually had to persuade the Governor that it was a good idea and I actually followed a plan which was somewhat like selling a highway program. We had a series of regional meetings set up to discuss this. It was my personal feeling that if the Governor could listen to doctors, nurses, and healthcare providers and patients and beneficiaries, and all of those involved in the Medicaid program that he would like the idea, but, he did not initially like the idea. It was another of those give away programs that was a waste of money. Of course, I might say at this point that there were a lot of people in the state of Mississippi making the point to the Governor and making the

point to many others around the state that just because the program might be wasteful and, it was in a sense, it was a give away program didn't mean that money couldn't do some good in our state, and, as long as the federal money was going to throw the money away, why not throw it our way. So, that was the attitude that a lot of people had, of course, my point of view as the administrator of this operation was that I wanted to get the money in Mississippi but I also wanted it to be spent well, and I thought that as long as we were going to get the money, which was my principal responsibility, at least we could make sure that it was well invested and administered honestly and fairly and tried to do some good. After all, you can take some money and walk down the sidewalk and sprinkle it along and still accomplish some good but, not as much good as you could in other way. [Phone Rings] Back to the subject of the kinds of ways that you could spend money, I certainly did not deny that there was a certain amount of waste involved in some of these programs but it was my job to make sure that there was as little waste as possible took place. Now some of these programs were structured in such a way that you might well argue with the ultimate mission and value of it, but at that time when someone was in the business of giving away money, and you live in the poorest state in the country, turning it down was not, in my judgment, the right approach. So, I tried to do the best I could with the money, of course, after all, these programs were being administered by state and local government officials, and of course the so-called poverty program money

was being administered by community action agency boards and Head Start boards and they had a philosophy which was structured in law, but was different from what we had before. In the past, public monies being spent in our state and indeed much of the nation were being spent by elected or appointed public officials. In this case there were tripart-typed boards set up in which you had elected officials and community leaders and you also had poverty program beneficiaries, or recipients, so you had poor people, many of whom were black who were actually sitting on those boards. Of course, this didn't go over so well with some political leaders who felt that the main purpose of this program was not to spend the money wisely and well in the black community or in the poverty community but instead to empower, as the favorite term goes, to empower these people to give them political clout in their communities and that was not a desirable goal and so, that was a somewhat delicate subject. Some of the grants that came along for some of the poverty programs, the Governor did not want to sign and he would flip through and I would try to open the grants to pages that he would like to see and read and sometimes he would flip over and he would see somebody who's name he knew, somebody who he thought of as a wild-eyed agitator of some kind on one of these boards and he would say, "I'm just going to have to sit on that one for a while," and he would put it in his desk drawer and wait for a while and usually I would have to contact people in that community who knew the benefits of that program, or who felt that it would be a value to a

given city, county or multi-county area and find political friends of the governor who would go see him or speak to him and let him understand that the program would do some good in their community, they needed the money and they would stay on top of it and they would make sure that the program did not get out of control politically. So, it took a lot of work sometimes to get the money released for these programs but I can think of very few that didn't ultimately get expended. There were some instances in which certain aspects of the Economic Opportunity Act allowed the administrator of OEO to expend the funds without the governor's signature. Some of the grants were made for example to colleges and universities which were exempt from gubernatorial signature and sometimes they would take these programs and administer them through colleges. Mary Holmes Junior College, for example, in West Point is one of those and there are a number of others that are administered in that way. This was a fascinating and controversial era, into the high water mark of the great society programming. Today, as we look back on that era of the sixties, we can see that a lot of mistakes were made, a lot of money got wasted, a lot of the money was regarded by the beneficiaries of the program, the recipients. The people who actually ran these programs, many of them, I must confess, believed that the money was simply a kind of payback as an attempt to put money in the poverty community and particularly in the black community. And many of them were not really serious about administering good programs and didn't think that anybody

cared about that, they thought that the whole idea was just to give them some money. So, that is not certainly true of all of them, there were many dedicated and hard working people in these programs, in this case, I am speaking specifically of those who came out of the Economic Opportunity Act, with a lot of work and a lot of supervision, a lot of help from the federal government and the state government. Most of these programs ran pretty decent operations and actually accomplished some good. In the case of Head Start, did some good for children, certainly provided some nutrition for children. The social scientists of today disagree on whether there is a decided measurable benefit to providing the type of educational operation there but they certainly know that there is a nutritional benefit for children, and in most cases they do believe that there is an educational benefit if the program is administered well, if you have people who take that responsibility. Others felt that these programs were merely babysitting services, gave them some food, hired some teachers, put some money in the community as they say, and that was all to the good economically. Even if you took the point of view that these programs were not well administered, nonetheless, almost everybody would agree that the money was useful in our state. It paid taxes, it created jobs, and that if we did not choose to help administer these programs, someone else would administer them without our consent, and that easily could be done. Now, when you move away from this small group of so-called poverty programs, then you go into the conventional, traditional programming

where you have elected public officials, city, county, state officials running programs who are appointed, then they become less controversial. One of the ones for example, which I think has done a great deal of good, now I must confess, did a lot of good for me politically, was the Law Enforcement Assistance Program. We made grants to cities, counties, to Sheriff's offices, to Chief's of Police, for police radio's and police equipment and a wide range of services, training programs, we had also for example, through the Highway Safety Program we had emergency ambulance services that we provided. You could take all of these things that are working with county and city governments and you know you're doing a lot of good and I must say too that I probably got a certain amount of credit personally from the fact that these programs were successful, people were happy to get the money, as it turned out later, when I ran for Congress, I had a lot of Sheriff's and Chief's of Police, and Mayors, and City Councilmen, and Board of Supervisor's, people on my side who knew me because I had helped them get federal grants and I had put a lot of money into their communities and that was probably of some real value to me so I don't think that there's necessarily any conflict in doing good for others while you happen by chance to do a little good for yourself. That was an interesting period, that four year federal/state program era.

DR. BALLARD: If you would for just a minute, of course, you mentioned John Bell Williams, to give a little context. You know that he came home and ran for Governor because he lost his seniority in Congress, or at least that was

the stated reason, because he supported Barry Goldwater and some other Republican things. So he came home regarded as a pretty hard nosed conservative and of course, you mentioned some of his attitudes, but since you were there to kind of observe him from a historical perspective, do you think that he changed any while he was in office or did he just do what he had to do to keep an acceptable support level.

MR. BOWEN: I think that he went through a process that most of the politicians in Mississippi of that era have gone through. If you take all the politicians today in Mississippi who were old enough to have been around in the '60's or the 50's, most of them were hard core conservative who were segregationists and who had a lot of very unkind things to say about black neighbors, and fellow Mississippians. But, they've changed. If you take Senator Stennis, Senator Eastland for example, could be regarded as very conservative in respects, but they made the change. I happened to have personally been the first member of the Mississippi Congressional Delegation ever to hire a black staff, you know since reconstruction, after the civil war. But, once I did it others followed suit and Stennis, and Eastland, did so and Thad Cochran and Trent Lott and Sonny Montgomery and Jamie Whitten, and you know, everybody else did as well, and that is true of John Bell Williams too. The fact, I've never been

one of those who questions good things that people do because of their motives. There are a lot of people who like to do this at what course, and of course, he helped many people but he did it for wicked reasons. He was a bad man at heart. You could say this about our whole economic system. People go into business to make a profit, not to provide a service to the world. But because a lot of people are trying to make a profit and go into business and they compete with each other and that provides a lot of jobs and a lot of income for a lot of people. So, I feel that way about politicians too. If a man, whatever his background may have been, whatever his orientation, if the circumstances of the situation lead him to do some things which are the right things to do then fine, pat him on the back. I happen to think that Governor Williams was an excellent Governor. He got an outstanding Highway Program passed, here he got the Medicaid program passed which is a difficult program to administer, it has had some problems. But, it provides health care for a lot of people in this state who wouldn't have it otherwise. That is a good example and I started to say it a moment ago. How did we persuade a man like Governor Williams who thought that this was not a good idea to do it. Well, I set up a series of statewide meetings, in some cases to be flown to, in some cases to be driven to by car, and I said "Governor, I know that you don't like this program, but we have an obligation at least to go through the motions and to explain it to people, hear from them and then if we don't want to do it then we don't have to do it." Well, he wanted to make sure that I fully

understood that there was no obligation to pursue this, and so we started off meeting and as I remember we had a meeting in Tupelo, then we had a meeting in Clarksdale then we ended up with Hattiesburg, the Gulf Coast and here in Jackson. After about the second meeting, after he heard these doctors and nurses and people describing the benefits to their communities and their hospitals, and their neighborhoods and their counties, from the program and how it would be administered, he warmed to the subject after he'd listened to it and after a couple of meetings he actually came around to the point of view that this was a good idea. Of course, I must confess, that was my calculation all along is that it was not so important to listen to what these health care providers around the state had to say, but it was very important for Governor Williams to hear what they had to say. And so, once we had structured it that way with the help of Alton Cobb, with the help of a man named Charlie Matthews who had run the state medical association and then went back to doing it later, we put this together and the governor was persuaded. Once the Governor was on board then we were able to sell it to the legislature and we got the program passed and off and going. So, it is just like those poverty programs that I mentioned, the fact that you had to pry them loose with a crowbar sometimes, still we got it done. You know, it took some explaining, it took a lot of communicating and a lot of politicking to make sure that those that wanted the money got the message to him. People that he cared about, people who he trusted so I regarded the Governor as an excellent governor and

the fact that his politics were well to the right of mine that he was a very conservative guy who was probably regarded as a hard core segregationist, that didn't matter too much to me. It's what got done, and he came around slowly, others came around slowly, some came around more rapidly. I had personally, for a number of years since my teaching days at Mississippi College and Millsaps, I had made speeches on black campuses, I had gone frequently to Tougaloo College and attended forums out there and made talks. So, I was kind of accustomed to being in a bi-racial or a ... to use the favorite term of today, "a diverse community", and I was probably regarded by Governor Williams as a fairly liberal sort of guy. In fact, one time somebody told me sort of a humorous remark he made about me. He said, somebody asked him about me and was I too liberal for his administration and he said "Well, you know about old David, he may be a little pink but he knows how to talk to those federal people up there in Washington to get that money for us." So, that's it, I might be a little liberal but I knew how to get the money out of Washington.

DR. BALLARD: The ends justified the means (Laughter)

MR. BOWEN: That's right. (Laughter) He never probably regarded me as exactly his style of politician but, of course as we look at all of this today, looking back on the sixties and all the problems of the sixties, we can see what has gone wrong in that period, we can see the excesses of the government

programming in that era and we can see the waste and frankly the fraud, and the duplication, the overlapping, and the confusion, and we can see that a lot of money was spent which did a little bit of good, but it did some good, and as I said simply circulating the money in a state like Mississippi, I mean after all, we were getting about three times as much money back from the federal government as we spent in taxes, just doing that; whether the program was a good one or a bad one, they had a lot of benefit for the citizens of this state. Anytime you can get a return on an investment three to one it like a foreign aid program coming into Mississippi from Washington and our benefits are not that strong today but that was a very important item at that time, in the sixties. The sixties are an era in which today we look back on as being sort of the beginning of chaos in America, destruction of moral values, wasteful government programs, a period in which this so called empowerment process, trying to give power to groups of people who previously had been seen as not having much of that. All of that kind of got out of control and we have ended up with a society today which is in very bad shape in many ways, culturally, and socially, because of the excesses of that 1960's period. For example, today people frequently read columns that I write in newspapers or hear speeches that I make and they will say to me that I have become, it looks like I have become a good deal more conservative than I used to be and I like to remind them that back in the days when I was teaching college at Millsaps and Mississippi College, back in the '60's, the early

'60's, I was in state government in that same era of the late '60's that I said that everyone ought to be treated the same and they all ought to get equal opportunity and people should not be discriminated against or given special benefits because of their skin color. Now, when I said that in that era, I was regarded as a liberal. When I say the same thing today I am regarded as a conservative because as we know the whole style has changed, the leadership in the black community, which at that time wanted equal opportunity and equal access and simply wanted not to be discriminated against, that leadership in the black community has shifted in recent years and would like more than simply equality but rather they would rather have special preferences, race preferences, in competition with others, if the training and the opportunity and the access did not work out then they should be given the benefits none the less, whether that be admission to academic institutions or jobs or whatever. Most programs generally go under the name of affirmative action these days but that's just one of those shifts that's taking place in American Politics. So, I don't think that my politics has changed, my position hasn't changed any. But, the political spectrum has changed and that's why I am regarded probably as something of a cultural conservative today.

DR. BALLARD: Do you think maybe the Achilles heel of the great society program was that it created attitudes of dependence on government rather than providing incentives to take aid and move up on your own and get out there and become a working taxpayer

MR. BOWEN: Well, that is a good point. I think that's true. I happened personally often to make a distinction between the Democratic Party of the New Deal and the Fair Deal, the policies of the '30's and '40's and into the '50's and what happened in the Great Society Era of the '60's. I happen to believe that the policies which were called liberal in the '30's, '40's, and '50's, were generally characterized by a society remove barriers to give people an opportunity to give them an education, to let them have access to jobs and housing and to have a fair chance to compete out in the world. And if they had this discrimination removed the barriers that held them down and stopped them from getting that equal access, then they would succeed, and if they did not succeed then that was unfortunate but that was nobody's responsibility but theirs. Now, that whole philosophy changed in the 1960's as you pointed out. In the '60's what happened is that the attitude was more that this is yours, this is your entitlement, we're going to give you this and we are going to give you opportunity, but if you don't get there we're going to give it to you anyway. It is more or less you are going to be guaranteed the things that you want in life, and this created a set of expectations which I think has been very damaging in our nation. There were a lot of social changes that were very damaging that were taking place too. The growth of broken marriages, illegitimacy far, far greater than we have had in our history before in either the black or the white communities and all this social revolution was taking place in the

'60's and you had a change, I would regard it as a major philosophical shift to go from trying to eliminate any quality of opportunity to try to give people fair training and fair access to jobs, and fair opportunity to make the best of themselves in this life. To jump from that into saying that we are going to guarantee it to you, we are going to give it to you and if you don't succeed then somebody is discriminating against you. It doesn't matter how much opportunity you had or whatever, you don't have to worry about it, we are going to guarantee you jobs, income, education, it's all going to be guaranteed to you and if you don't make it in life, if you don't get what you want then it is because of racial discrimination or somebody is holding you down. In the case that you happen to be black then it is whitey's fault for holding you down, or it's because you have been penalized by centuries of slavery and something. You know, there are a variety of ways to explain it but that is all a part of the '60's revolution. The cures to those problems are very difficult to find once we have made those changes in this country, but, I am glad to have been a part of that '60's social combat and I happened then to make the next move in my career from being federal state coordinator to running for congress in 1972.

END OF TAPE 1

DR. BALLARD: We were just getting into the decision to run for congress

MR. BOWEN: Well, I had probably created a little bit of friction with the incumbent congressman from the second district Tom Abernathy, who turned out to be my predecessor. Tom, from Ackerman, and Okolona, had served there for 30 years and probably, I was always told by his friends, thinking about retiring but had not quite brought himself to that point, so, he was a little uncomfortable I was informed by his friends and on one occasion by him directly. The fact that I was spending a good deal of time circulating around what was then the second congressional district and while I was doing my job, I believe honestly and fairly, in allocating the funds available across the 82 counties in Mississippi, I certainly did spend more personal time making speeches and showing up and shaking hands and giving people checks personally in the second congressional district (laughter). As it turned out, that happened to serve my interests and was possible frankly because Governor Williams was not that interested in this kind of programming and he was very happy to have me do it. So, I did it, I wrote a lot of press releases about grants that were being made and I certainly did mention my name prominently in those press releases. I used to jokingly point out that when I first came into that position as federal state coordinator, I called myself "Third Paragraph Bowen," I would mention myself down in the third paragraph, (laughter) then I moved up after about a year to the second paragraph, and then after a while, after a couple of years I had myself announcing some of these grants in the first paragraph. Well, obviously that did me some good politically.

DR. BALLARD: Sure.

MR. BOWEN: Now it did obviously irritate Tom Abernathy, it irritated some of the Governor's associates who thought that maybe I was taking a little more credit for these than I deserved. But, I never, I always wanted to make sure that the Governor got full credit for it but I certainly wanted to make sure that people understood that I was instrumental in getting these things done and so I felt that what I had done was fair in the realm of politics and that I had served him well as a federal state coordinator. Tom Abernathy became upset because he thought that I was going to run against him and I must confess, I did leak a few words along those lines. My reason for doing that was that I thought that Tom was far more likely to step down and retire if he thought he was going to have a serious opponent. His wife wanted him to retire but he had not quite brought himself to that point and so I did that, my personal opinion at that time and indeed my personal decision at that time was that I was not going to run for Congress against him because he was too tough. He was old enough that he was going to retire in due course and I could, if I wanted to run for Congress, do so later. But, I wanted to lean on him enough to give him some motivation to retire. Now that accomplished two things, one of them good, and one of them bad. The good thing was that he decided to retire, indeed he did, and opened the door for me to run. The bad thing was that he fought me and

tried to do all that he could to defeat me as his successor. Now, that was a battle which had begun somewhat earlier than 1972 when the race took place. That battle began in 1970 after the census, and after we had to do some redistricting in the state of Mississippi, we had to reshape the congressional districts as we do every ten years. In some cases you lose a congressman, in that case we didn't lose a congressman; we simply had to reshape the district to equalize the population. Congressman Abernathy had worked pretty diligently with some of his friends in the legislature, such as Senator Bill Burgin in Columbus and others who were regarded as his close allies to try to create a new second congressional district, it would be called second, he at one time was serving in the first district but the numbers had been shifted from one to another. One that would ensure that they would be able to have somebody from the eastern side of the district, the hills, as we say, to have somebody to succeed him and not somebody from the delta. Of course, my personal background is that I was born in hills and my mother and father were from that side of the state and I didn't have any relatives in the Delta, I had just grown up there so, I felt pretty close to people across the state, I didn't personally feel any closer kinship to Delta people than I did people on the Eastern side of the state. But, nonetheless, they wanted to be able to name Tom Abernathy's successor or to keep him there if they decided to do that, so their principal goal was to remove Bolivar County, my home county, from the second congressional district. He had an opponent from there before, Bill

Alexanders, a State Senator and the son of a State Senator, had run against him once. It was a big and powerful county and he wanted to get it out, and give it to Jamie Whitten, to move it out of that district so a number of clandestine meetings were held among the friends of Tom Abernathy to redesign the district in a way that would serve his political interests. Bill Bergin was the leader, legislatively, of that process, and he designed a bill, he was chairman of the Rules Committee as well as being chairman of the Appropriations Committee, and, one of the responsibilities of the state senate the Rules Committee was to reshape the congressional redistricting. He came up with a plan to achieve that goal, now, what happened is that I had a spy inside those meetings that took place, someone who was very close to my grandfather in Monroe County and my grandparents, who, knew me well, knew my mother well, knew my family well, knew my mother's family were, Pennix's, from a little village of Hamilton, MS. And, this friend, who was a close friend and ally of Tom Abernathy, was also a close friend of my family's and liked me personally, and I'd worked with him in the State Legislature on a number of matters. He confidentially told me what was happening in these meetings, and that they were doing all in their power to get Boliver County moved out, and that Bill Bergin was designing a redistricting plan for the state that would ensure that those supporters of Tom Abernathy that was on the eastern side of the District would either be able to control it for Tom, or, if he retired, then name a successor.

DR. BALLARD: Now were they doing this just...I mean...the political rivalry between the Hills and the Delta is long standing. Were they doing it just for that reason or did they have you in mind?

MR. BOWEN: They had me in mind as the specific target. They would the others, I mean, there had been others before me, but, they realized that I was the most likely candidate to run that time against Tom. Even though Tom Abernathy had not fully decided whether he was going to retire, the purpose was to ensure that nobody from one of the four delta counties of Bolivar, Washington, Sunflower, and Leflore, ... nobody from those counties could topple it in that direction, there were twelve other counties in the east, in the hills, and partly hill counties, but, the fact is that they wanted to ensure that they could name Abernathy's successor. I then went to work and designed an alternative plan and it was a plan which actually came closer to the numbers and was more likely to be approved by the federal courts, than the plan that Bill Bergin had designed and I met secretly with a number of state legislators, House and Senate alike, who didn't like Bergin's plan for other reasons. When you go around making political allies, you don't always look for someone who supports your point of view for your reasons. You find somebody who happens to be on your side by chance, for other reasons, and there were people in south

Mississippi like Stone Bearfield and others who didn't get along with Bergin particularly well and didn't like what his redistricting was doing to their areas. So, I designed a plan that pleased them but, most of all, kept Bolivar, Washington, Sunflower, and Leflore (Counties) in the second congressional district. And, I orchestrated a campaign among state legislators to get this done, and I did all of this under the nose of Bill Bergin without his being aware of it, apparently. He was so confident that he had things locked up and he did become aware of this at the end and when the legislation was being debated. Bill, of course, is a friend of mine and I have had some difficulties with him time and again but we get along quite well now and he did support the programming that Governor Williams wanted, the programming that I needed appropriations for and so I appreciate his support. I expect that we had that little difficult period there and then we got back on good terms again, later, but, as it turned out, when Bill Bergin was trying to get his little redistricting bill passed, he was being defeated and he realized that he was facing an organized opposition and he realized very soon that I was the agent of that organized opposition. That I had put this together. I was sitting up in the gallery in the Senate Chamber and Bill, actually, I think really had kind of lost control, he was screaming at the top of his voice and shaking his finger at people on the floor and in the galleries, telling his colleagues in the Senate that they were being taken advantage of and manipulated by this federal state coordinator who's sitting up there in the gallery laughing at you right

now. So, he realized that I had orchestrated this stunning defeat that was being inflicted upon him and he did get bushwhacked. He lost, we had friends on the House side who made our task a little easier over there. We did keep the district virtually in tact, which meant that Tom Abernathy was going to face a tough battle if he ran and so, one thing led to another and Tom then decided later not to run, and they then began the job of trying to find a candidate. They did find one candidate from West Point, a man named Harvey Buck, he initially was going to run and I think he then decided, they just couldn't guarantee him the money that would be raised, necessarily to make a congressional race like that. So, he dropped out. They then looked around for another candidate and they found Tom Cook who had previously been the Sheriff of Oktibbeha county and who was the prison warden, the Parchman Superintendent at that time, and he then became the anointed candidate of the Abernathy faction and now, how I happened to end up in that race is another interesting story because I was still federal state coordinator and after the election Bill Waller was elected Governor. I said I would never run for anything, I had never been elected to anything in my life, I had never been elected to student body office or public office of any kind. I was, I guess 39 at the time, so I jokingly told people that I had to start at the top because I didn't have time to start anywhere else and work my way up. So, but I actually had to be pushed into it, I have sometimes told people when they ask me why I ran for public office, I said "I was out of work, I needed a job." What happened

was when Governor Waller took office, I thought it was quite possible that he might ask me to stay on and continue to serve in that post since I had not been involved in anyone's campaign, I was not appointed for partisan reasons, I had not campaigned for John Bell Williams, nor did I campaign as a public appointed official for Bill Waller, I just did my job. So, I thought that it was quite possible I might well have made a career in state government, in administrative work of that kind, and about a month after Bill Waller took office his secretary asked me if I could drop by over to the Capitol to have a little visit with him. So, I came over and walked in and the Governor gets up and walks over and puts his arm around me and says "David, I am telling you, I want to say one thing to you, you have done one hell of a great job as federal state coordinator," he says, "everywhere I went last year on the campaign trail people told me what a terrific fellow you are and what a great job you had done," he said, "and you brought in hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars in this state that we never would have had without you and you did it without any taint of corruption or any hint of impropriety of any kind. He said, "David, I want you to stay on with me and my new administration just as long as it takes me to find a good replacement for you." So, I said "Well Governor, I sure do appreciate that strong vote of confidence, but, I am just thinking about doing something a little different, I am thinking about running for congress." Well, I think that he had a good laugh over that and thought that was an interesting idea that a kind of pointy head, intellectual liberal

college professor like me might consider running for congress in Mississippi. But, in any event, I like Bill Waller, he's a good fella [sic], I see him from time to time, he didn't have any particular grudges against me, he just wanted to fire everybody that was there and put his own people in. That's what his main goal was, he didn't have any grudges against any of us, he just wanted somebody else, he thought that he was doing me a real favor, letting me stay on a few months until he could find somebody kind of like me that would be his man. So that made it pretty clear that I was going to make the race so I had to make the big move then. That certainly was the greatest ordeal of my life and it is the greatest ordeal of anybody's life the first time that you run for public office, especially if you run for a fairly big public office like Congress, and you don't have any money to do it with and you have got to get out there to try to raise money and raise support and do everything you can and I did not start out with any large base of support. Part of the contest had to do with who is in the race with you. You are in the race trying to make it to the second primary, the second day as they call it, in this case there were nine people running so if you were lucky and you happened to have some of the other candidates pair off, or match off against each other and draw off of each others strengths, then you may be in a better position. But, first of all, trying to raise money is not easy to do, you know you have just got to talk to all the friends you have and talk to people you have done favors for and try to get money up, try to...

DR. BALLARD: Did you set up any kind of committee to help you raise money?

MR. BOWEN: I tried to have individuals in specific counties and I had a committee district wide, but it is a tough job. I always envied somebody like William Winter, who had a specific individual, and I think that we all know who that is, a man named Warren Hood, a very prominent financial leader in Jackson, and whenever William was going to run for anything, whether it's Lieutenant Governor or Governor, or what or State Treasurer, all he had to do is go see Warren Hood and talk to him about it and if they agreed that it was a good thing to do then Warren Hood would put a finance committee together and get the money up. I didn't really have anybody like that, I just had to go to different individuals and get money where I could. Now, that was a tough year, '72, that was because Richard Nixon was running for re-election, he was very popular figure here in the state of Mississippi and I had a hard time finding an ad agency that I could afford. I first worked with, tried to talk Delois Walker in Memphis into doing it but I didn't have the money to hire him. He later ended up running a unity campaign in the general election in which he supported

Jim Eastland who was up for re-election that year. Jim Eastland did have the money obviously and I was able to tap into some of the support that he had, there were a number of people who were available around the state who were strong, long-time friends of Senator Eastland, and I lived in an adjacent county, him being from Sunflower and I'm from Bolivar, and he wanted me to make a commitment to get on the agricultural committee. Of course, he was looking after agricultural interests in the Senate and wanted somebody on the House that could do that since Tom Abernathy was retiring, and he had been on the Ag. Committee which did not seem like an unreasonable request. Now, Senator Eastland was being very careful about this in the primary process and I personally do not know to this day whether he voted for me in the first primary. There were nine people on the ballot. I do know several of his close friends who voted for me, people who are normally looked at to figure out what Big Jim is doing. So, it is possible that he may have voted for me in the first primary but I couldn't swear to that because he is very cautious about..., in fact, he once told me that he was so careful about letting people know how he voted that he would never absentee because he was so scared that someone in a circuit clerk's office in Sunflower County, in this case, would take his ballot, and after taking the envelope out and seeing that it came from him, you take the outer envelope away, and the inner one has got your name on it and that has got to be opened and put in the ballot box, somebody has got to take a pen and push it through that envelope and

then when that ballot was removed from the envelope and put in the ballot box, when ballots were later counted, they would find the ballot with the pen hole in it which obviously did not have his name on it at that point and they would know that it was his ballot and know exactly how he voted, so he was very, very, careful about not letting anybody know specifically how he voted. But, getting that campaign together was an ordeal, running across from one side of the state to the other, sixteen counties. What you do in politics, is you build upon small bases of support that you have. You can't hope to do well everywhere but you build on what you've got. Take your home county for example, Bolivar County, there was nobody else from Bolivar running, there were two people running in the primary from Greenville, so that helped, that divided Washington County, that gave me an advantage. My mother's family was from Monroe County and I had friends in Monroe County, I had relatives and aunts and uncles in Aberdeen and Amory and sprinkled around the county. So, I had a base to work on in Monroe County, I had been born in Chickasaw County, which helped some. I had a rather good organization going in Clay County, I had a former football player at Ole Miss who had never been in politics but was in insurance, just a clean cut guy that everyone thought would be the ideal County Chairman, his name is Kenny Dill, and he ended up later becoming mayor and staying mayor for many years. Then, I had the Bryan's, the Bryan packing company folks, they ended up on my side, but, at the same time, I had a bunch of the organized labor people so I had the

unusual situation going in many communities of having the people who ran a factory and the workers both on my side. Now, that happened rarely, and I happened also to have been the first candidate for Congress in the history of our state who got elected on the count of organized labor. I was endorsed by the AFL-CIO, but, at the same time, I had a lot of support of farmers, and businessmen and people who would not normally be regarded as friends of the AFL-CIO. I had to play this very, very carefully. I would go into a plant, a factory of some kind, and go in and visit with the president and the managers, and the manager side of that and talk to them, but when it came time to walk around the factory floor, I never wanted to do that with the management of the company, and they understood that too. I wanted to go around with a labor leader, or somebody who was responsible, a shop steward or foreman type...walk around and meet people and talk to people as they were working on their jobs, and the management had to allow me to do that of course, but, the main thing was that I wanted to be seen with the labor people and not the management people when I walked around the plant floor. That was part of the skill that I had to try to apply in this job of running in a very diverse district which was 43% black, which had a lot of farmers, and I wanted to stay on good terms with them, my father being a farmer and a Federal Land Bank appraiser and coming from a farm background and also stating publicly that I wanted to get on the house agricultural committee. I needed black support, I needed labor support, I needed and won a lot of

business support, so it was an unusual kind of combination in a district spread out as widely as that to try to put together sufficient support to be able to make the second primary. Now, if you take other counties, Attala County had two candidates, Kosciusko, that split that county, there were so many candidates sprinkled around the district that the job was who can you pull together to squeak by into the second day. One of the strong candidates was former Congressman Frank Smith; Frank had served 10 years in the U. S. Congress and had supported Jack Kennedy for President in 1960. The legislature didn't take too well to that. In fact, Frank Smith has a book out called Mississippi Liberal, and so the state legislature simply decided to throw, having to lose a congressman, Jamie Whitten's district in with Frank Smith's district and not make any changes in borders. You could not do that today. So, Jamie defeated Frank and Frank was then appointed to the TVA board and served there for 10 years and, after his term was up, well, Jack Kennedy appointed him for that board, and then when his term was up he came back and ran for Congress in '72. So, he was a formidable opponent. Anybody who had run for, and served in Congress had to be a formidable opponent. We had others in the race who were state legislators, who were mayors, who were press agents, people in various walks of life and that was indeed an ordeal to try to make that race. In some cases, I had to battle with my ad agency to try to stay out of court because I wasn't paying my bills very readily and one of the things that most ad agencies agree on is that you don't operate on

credit, you don't operate on promises, and you don't put people's commercials on television or radio or in newspapers without getting paid up front. Of course, I was writing all my own stuff, I didn't have a campaign manager, I didn't have a real finance chairman per se, I didn't have a press agent. I was it, all in one. I wrote all of my press releases, all of my own TV copy, all the radio copy, all the print ads, and I did have an agency to do all the layout work, obviously to do a TV spot you got to go to a television agency...to a TV company and use their equipment. But, I would give them the copy and they would type it into a teleprompter and run it on the machine and I would read it off the teleprompter, it was a long commercial, you know a spot could be like 10 minutes long, like an election night speech for example, well, the shorter ones I would write them on, I would write these spots as I would drive around in the car with the TV crew some of them. I remember for example, on the campus at Mississippi State and at the "W" having a camera man there and I would sit there and scribble down on a yellow pad what I wanted to say and get some idea of it and I was standing on a campus step and talking to a couple of students and talked about the subject and I got pretty good, I could time a thirty second spot pretty close to the mark or a one minute spot but I just didn't have anybody to do these things for me, I did them for myself, of course writing happens to be one of the things that I like and enjoy and so that was not a particular chore but it was certainly done under duress, under great hardship and as I say, the ad agency, whose

name I won't mention, was threatening to haul me into court and sue me for not paying my bills so I was always begging for money and trying to get up money wherever I could. Didn't get much of any help out of Washington, couldn't much in the primary because you had nine democrats running against each other, I got very, very minimal help in the general election. People always like to ask that question "Well, didn't you feel heavily obligated to the Democratic Party or to the Speaker of the House or to somebody?" And I always said "No, they didn't do much to get me elected, I just put the name 'Democrat' on the ballot and there it was." I ran as a democrat, well frankly, in my state, in my district at that time, it was an advantage to be a Democrat, I don't know if that could be said today but certainly at that time, given the black population and given the composition of the second congressional district, that northern part of the state, particularly Jamie Whitten's district and what was Tom Abernathy's that became mine was a more Democratic part of the state. You take a combination of the black population which wanted to vote Democratic and the white population which was working class, working mills, plants and farming, and doing... you know, that population has traditionally voted more Democratic and so it was a major ordeal to try to raise the money, to try to travel from day to day, one stop to another, making speeches on courthouse steps, making talks anywhere you could, writing my own copies, and fighting just to stay alive, and staying alive meant making the second day, making the second primary.

END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE TWO

DR. BALLARD: Before we get back into the particulars when you ran for congress I guess I was about 26 years old and had lived through the civil rights revolution in the state and had seen the damage that the people like Ross Barnett did to our state, nationally, image wise, and I know in my own household, living in Ackerman, we voted second district, we lived in the second district, and I know my parents and I, and I guess my brother was voting age too, we all supported you because you were the one candidate that, well, for years the only candidates we heard sounded like their middle name was Bubba or something and here we had a candidate who could make an eloquent speech and not sound like he had just come in from Bubba's Bar and Grill, and I just wonder if you encountered that kind of sentiment across the district, if people were ready for a change?

MR. BOWEN: I'll tell you what I did, I had a lot of people who voted for me who didn't know who I was and who liked the background. They were so accustomed to traditional politicians, people who were old country boy, good ole boy politicians, of course, Tom Cook would be a classic example of that. Tom would have been a good, well, Tom was a good politician anyway but people thought that the thought of sending Tom off to Washington to represent them just didn't seem like what they wanted to do. And, even though many of them didn't know me, they would tell me that whenever they read it in the paper, that anybody that went off to college at Harvard like I had, and Oxford, and went off to be a college

professor... that maybe they could use somebody like that, they had never sent anybody like that to Washington, why not try it. So, that ...and of course, I did well I think with the people I met. Politics, of course personal campaigning is the most important thing to do. You know, meeting people and winning them over. Some people, it can be negative for them, some people don't have good campaigning personalities, they are better off staying home and doing television spots. Just like Ray Mabus. Ray probably ran pretty good TV spots but he is not a good one on one sort of person, wouldn't you say that is true?

DR. BALLARD: Oh, I think that is definitely true.

MR. BOWEN: I always felt that people liked me personally and if I had the chance to meet them and see them and talk to them then they would be for me personally, but, then again, I got a lot of votes from people who were just tired of the same old redneck politicians. They thought lets try something a little different.

DR. BALLARD: Of course, we knew a lot more about you because my dad's brother, his wife and family live in Cleveland.

MR. BOWEN: Oh, now who is that?

DR. BALLARD: Homer Ballard

MR. BOWEN: Oh yes

DR. BALLARD: Homer and Erma Ballard

MR. BOWEN: Now that's your father's brother. What did he do?

DR. BALLARD: He was, he worked at the John Deere place there for years as a welder, and

repairing and they were both in the First Baptist Church over there, still are.

MR. BOWEN: Well that's right, my mother and daddy were big, my daddy was a deacon and such...

DR. BALLARD: So, we had a little extra insight since you were

MR. BOWEN: You know, one of the things that I discovered, that I never realized until I ran, that there is a huge horizontal connection across Mississippi. People who used to live in Choctaw and Attala and Winston counties would end up migrating westward into the Delta and they would be in those portions, wherever they went across, whether it was Hwy. 8, or whichever, they would be in Greenwood, Greenville, Cleveland, Ruleville, Drew, places like that and people further up, well, sometimes in Calhoun County and Chickasaw County, some of them would be in that part, but they also might be in Coahoma County or somewhere else that I wasn't campaigning, but that was a huge migration movement, the Delta was converging territory and the last settled part of the state, as we know. A lot of people in about the first three or four decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century decided to take advantage of this new wilderness over there with a lot of land available. If they could afford to clear it, you know, a lot of people migrated over there.

DR. BALLARD: Oh yeah, my grandparents lived in Drew for many years, but he ran a cotton gin so he moved around a lot. We have a lot of connections over there; still do over in the Delta.

MR. BOWEN: And what I always, see what I would always find was that if you talk to somebody in Cleveland, could be talking to somebody like your uncle, they'll say "Oh yeah, let me tell you, is Choctaw County in your district," and you'll say "Oh Yeah," and they'll say "I've got relatives over there and I'll talk to them." Or, I'd get over there in Choctaw and they'd say, "Well, my gosh, is Sunflower County in your district, well I got my nephew, my cousin over there," and people would make these little family communications back and forth. The migration was not north-south, the migration was east-west, because the Delta opened up as this fertile virgin territory, unconquered over there, and people migrated across and it is something that I got on to and discovered after a while and it served...of course, I am sure that for other people running did the same thing

Is this machine on?

DR. BALLARD: Yes, go ahead. You can continue where we left off, I just wanted to get that taped because it struck me a lot of people were ready for a change, they were tired of the old-timey politics that made the state look so bad.

MR. BOWEN: The race itself in '72, the primary, I mentioned that there were two people from Greenville, Hanan Miller, a state legislator and Pat Dunn, the mayor. That divided that county and two people from Attala County, Hugh Potts, a banker, his father was a banker, and Clant Seig, a lawyer, and that divided that county, and then there was a state legislator: a state senator

from Leflore County, Corbett Lee Patridge, and Frank Smith, a former U.S. Congressman, sort of a combination of Leflore and Carroll counties and I think to some extent that maybe Corbett Lee Patridge may have cut into some of Frank Smith's support, and in Frank Smith's book, the biographer, Dennis Mitchell makes it clear that the people who had liked Frank Smith before, a lot of the black population who had voted for him before, or those who could vote, and a lot of the others who could vote had kind of forgotten him and they didn't really vote for him that much. Indeed one of the reasons I think is because I got such a big chunk of black support and the more conservative whites thought that he was too liberal and they didn't trust him for that reason so he had a hard time, plus, he had a lot of new territory he had not represented before, so he had a lot of hill territory and everything to the east of Carroll County, which he had not had before so he had a tough job. He ran third in the race and I passed him narrowly to make it to the second primary but he had a hard time pulling together a new district for some of those reasons. Wally Dabbs, who was originally from Lowndes County, was the Governor John Bell Williams' press agent, so he ran and then the man who ended up in the second primary with me, Tom Cook from Oktibbeha County, had formally been a County Sheriff and was the Parchman Superintendent; people would say to me sometimes during the primary thinking that I had a chance of making the second primary that "wouldn't like to end up in a run-off against that liberal Frank Smith", and I'd say "No, I would rather

run against that Conservative Tom Cook, because there is no way the black population is going to vote to send the prison warden to congress.”

And I said I would have a hammerlock on the black vote which was probably in terms of voting strength was about a third of the districts population, whereas, if I was running against Frank Smith, he would split that black vote with me and I would have a much harder time. And, that is the way that it worked out, I ended up with Tom Cook as my opponent which was, of course, Tom Abernathy’s choice. Now, the campaign itself, I think probably it was in the second primary when I was running against Tom Cook that they began circulating whatever, in politics you know, there is an old saying that you can accuse anybody of anything you want and let them explain it. It is like saying, did you know, well, I used to have an old political friend here and he would travel around and go from one county to the other and spread rumors. He would say something like “Well, did you know that the District Attorney’s drinking problem is much better,” (laughter), or he would say, “Yeah, the mayor is a very courageous man, the fact that his wife has been running around on him and he has stayed faithful to his family, you know, he has got a lot of personal problems, but we are with him, we are with him all the way and we want to help him in any way that we can.” You know, all kinds of little things that people would say, that they would accuse you of, the idea is, I’ve had people say “well, let’s accuse so and so...” and I will say “Is that true?”, and they will say “Well, I don’t know, let him explain it”.

(Laughter). So, the idea is sometimes in politics that if you just accuse somebody of anything you can think of and let the other guy explain it. So, I don't think that I ever accused anybody of anything that...I didn't feel that it was in my interest to spend a lot of time talking about my opponents anyway. Especially not in a nine man primary. What you want to do is project your own personality and your own ability, persuade people that you are a person of integrity and that you could make a confident congressman but, knocking your opponents is not a very successful tactic in a primary mainly because all but two of you are not going to be there the second day, the second race, and you want all of those friends you can get who supported those losing candidates so you want to be as nice as you can. You just like...you regard each other as colleagues and friends who happen by chance to be running in the same business...the Democratic primary for Congress in the second district. But, once it narrows down to two people, politics gets a little nastier, for instance I think it probably began in the second primary against Tom Cook but it was much heavier and stronger in the general election in which ...if there is anything that they think might attract or anybody's attention, they will talk about it, for example, Sonny Montgomery pointed out that because he was a bachelor people would often, some of his opponents would try to say that he was a gay man, a homosexual, they started that same thing against me because I happened to be single. They'd put out little sheets and things like that, they were called night

riders sometimes, people would print out these little mimeograph sheets that said so and so is a member of the Communist Party, so and so is a queer, and so and so is this and that....You know, anything you can get to say about somebody. Well, I never did pay attention to any stuff like that because I never did think that people thought that it was true, which, obviously it wasn't. But,

DR. BALLARD: And don't you think at the time you ran that thing had become counterproductive? There was a time when it would have worked maybe...

MR. BOWEN: I think each year that passed it became more counterproductive because people don't like dirty politics today; especially they don't like dirty politics if they believe the charges are false. They may if they think it is true, they might listen to it a little bit but today I don't think they even like to hear it whether it is true or false. But, some of my friends and supporters would say "You know, they are putting these sheets out saying that you are gay," and I would say "Well, what can we say." You know, you don't stand up and fight Richard Nixon and say "I am not a crook," (laughter). There is no point to it. But what I did, it just happened by chance to serve my interests both politically and personally, is I just happened during the course of the campaign trail, is I just happened to

bump into a traveling saleswoman. Now you have heard about the traveling salesman stories, well, here is my traveling saleswoman story. A big, tall, beautiful blonde who drove a big white Lincoln Continental and sold sportswear, women's clothing, and she was so good looking she sold...I could see her walking into these little Lebanese and Jewish shops in the Delta and knocking the eyes out of the owners and they are buying everything that she had. But, in any event she had about sold out of everything she needed to sell and we happened to meet by chance in a bar in Greenwood, as I recall and she developed an interest in my campaign, I might say to put it politely. We developed a personal friendship and then it occurred to me like the cartoon with the balloon that has the light bulb in it, I said "You know, this might be more than just a nice friendship, this might actually be beneficial politically," so she thought that was a great idea and we spend the next couple of weeks campaigning together which I would come riding up to some rally in this big white Lincoln Continental with this glamorous girl, it looked like she came off a Las Vegas Showgirl line. Of course, the first half of the campaign and the general election the Republicans accused me of being a homosexual, and then after that it completely scrambled their campaign tactics and they spent the next half of the campaign saying that I was the biggest lover in the state and that I had a girlfriend in every town. By the time the campaign was over, it had all averaged out and I was a pretty regular fellow. Anyhow, that is one unorthodox campaign tactic that I resorted to, to respond to charges like

that. There was always just this constant daily pressure of being on camera, being alert, you have to be on top of every moment, you cannot fail to shake hands with somebody and....for example, if I walked into a restaurant, it was my duty, I had to eat a meal, but it was my duty, my political duty to go back into the kitchen and speak to every cook and busboy, speak to every waitress, speak to every customer sitting down in that restaurant and then to take a seat so that I could look at the door and while I was eating my meal I had to make sure that nobody walked into that restaurant and ate and got up and left without my speaking to them. And if anybody got into that restaurant and escaped before I could speak to them, I knew that they would go out of there bad mouthing me saying “That SOB David Bowen is so arrogant, he was sitting in there stuffing his face and he wouldn’t even speak to me and I’ll never vote for him.” Well, that is the kind of thing in politics, if you don’t see them, then you don’t have to speak to them, but if you do see them, they know who you are, they have been seeing you on television and reading about you and they want to speak to you. So, you have to constantly work to see everybody wagging hands. Now, retail politics, as it is often called like that, can work. It works best in city and county elections and district elections, it can very marginally work in a congressional election. In an election in this case where you had about half a million people in a district, it’s very marginal even there but still, if you can shake hands with enough people and meet enough people, you can, you have a pretty... I don’t want to say

easy time winning an election, but you have a heck of a lot easier time than by not doing it. So, while you are using the wholesale approach, you are putting out television commercial spots, you're doing radio spots, you are doing newspaper ads, use a few billboards, not many, you do letter writing campaigns for the organizations who support you. I had teacher support for example, so, I had teacher union support, I had labor support. Anybody that you can get that is willing to spend their money to send letters out to their members of their organizations, maybe by the thousands you hope. All that is good but still, you are the candidate and everybody wants to meet you and if you feel that you have a pleasant personality and you feel that people like you and that you make a good impression, then you want to see all the people you can. Nothing sells like the person, like the candidate himself or herself. So, that is what I try to do is cover as much territory as possible, that's also the cheapest way to campaign if you don't have a lot of money and I didn't have much money (laugh). Yeah, you get out there and wag all the hands you can. Now, today, we are probably as a nation moving a bit away from that. We are moving more toward high-cost campaigns, big-money campaigns, especially campaigns for the House and the Senate in Washington where you are constantly raising money, and I kind of regret the fact that we are doing this because we are getting away from the kind of campaigns where the candidate has the obligation to go out and see people, press the flesh, talk to them. Now, sometimes there are people who are critical of this approach. They say

“That’s not a respectable way to get votes, just having somebody that likes you personally, what does that mean, what do they know about you, just because they like you personally. What does that mean? Just because they like the way that you smile and shake hands with them.” Well, I happen to have a great deal of faith in human nature and believe that people are pretty good judges of each other. I believe that they can judge those things rather well. Sometimes just meeting somebody and looking at them, talking to them, hear the way they speak, the way they relate to you, you can come away from that with the conclusion that this is a person that you would like to have representing you, that this is the kind of person that would care about you and your family and your needs and your ambitions and...

DR. BALLARD: You don’t have to be well educated to be a good judge of people

MR. BOWEN: That’s right, and in fact people of all ages. In fact, I had, amazingly enough, I had parents tell me that they had small children, sometimes two and three years old who would sit in front of television sets and watch the candidates speak and when I came on television they would say “You ought to vote for him.” (Laughter) So I had a lot of people who said they that voted for me because their children told them to. Now, why in the world would children like one candidate against another...I have no idea, two years old what difference is it, three years old

DR. BALLARD: Well, you know, I think that even little kids can spot sincerity, you know and it came across that way and they picked up on it.

MR. BOWEN: Well, a lot of little problems on the campaign, of course I pointed out the little clandestine operation that I had to go through to make sure that the congressional district stayed in tact and to defeat the legislative efforts to alter it. There's another good example of that sort of thing that you have to do. I had been told by a friend who happened to work at the television station in Columbus, I believe that it was WSLI...

DR. BALLARD: WCBI

MR. BOWEN: WCBI, excuse me, ok. That Bill Bergin, my dear friend Bill Bergin who I had the confrontation with earlier, a year or two earlier, that Bill was going to do a half hour program attacking me on that station on a given night and I then called the station manager and made it very clear that I expected to have equal time and indeed that I wanted to be treated precisely the same. He was going to tape his program in advance and I said that I would be happy to tape mine too. Well what I did was I got my friend that was over the tv station to get me a copy of the tape that Bergin had taped before I made my tape. So, I knew exactly what he was going to say.

DR. BALLARD: (Laughter) Right.

MR. BOWEN: And, he didn't even know that I was going to be on the air and so I ended up cutting a tape to run immediately after his, so, his tape ran and then I ran my tape later, the station did, didn't charge either one of us because it was a public affair sort of program, and I'm sure that Bergin and Tom

Abernathy and many of their friends were shocked when he was on the air and I came on rebutting all of his points. I don't know whether one might consider that unethical or not but I just thought that it was just pretty shrewd politics. If I had the access to what he was going to say I don't consider that dirty tricks, I didn't accuse my opponents of anything or spread false rumors. I just found out what he was going to say and I gave him good answers to it. I had a number of people who, and this was during the first primary, who said that they did not know who to vote for until they saw that program. That particular individual, and I have a high regard for him as a public servant and a personal friend but he had a lot of enemies and when they saw Bergin attacking me personally, they decided to vote for me, and then of course, they had to like my answers to what he had to say. So, sometimes the politics of personal attack are not very successful. In fact, I don't think that they are very frequently when you have a bunch of people in a race and today I think that people would like to see candidates who can talk about their own merits, what they believe in, what they think about, rather than attacking their opponent. The campaign, of course, narrows down when you get into a run-off and it is just one man to man and that does get to be pretty tough, but I still spared not time, zero time, talking about my opponent in the primary or my opponent in the general election. When I ended up in this run-off with Tom Cook, I didn't think that I had a whole lot of chance of making the second primary, and nobody else did, but, when I did, I felt that I had an

excellent chance of defeating Tom Cook in the second primary, the run-off. I carried only four counties, led only four counties, in the first primary, I led my home county, Bolivar, I led Monroe County where my mother was from, I led in Clay County over there I had a very fine organization going, and I led Lowndes County, got a good organization going there. I led the ticket, I did not hold the majority of the votes in those counties, but I led the ticket and those four counties along with some votes scattered throughout enabled me to squeeze past Frank Smith and be in the run-off with Tom Cook. I then defeated Tom and then I had a Republican opponent named Carl Butler who had been a Political Science professor at Mississippi State.

DR. BALLARD: Getting back, before you move on to the General, I know you probably don't have the exact figures, we could certainly look them up, but what was the victory margin over Tom Cook?

MR. BOWEN: I think, I do remember just looking in the primary just looking at the numbers in the biography of Frank Smith, I think I only had 1500 more votes than Frank Smith just to make it into the second primary. As I remember I had about 54% of the votes, as I recall. I am trying to think, is it 54, 55? Somewhere in there. But, in any event it is what we want to call a fairly comfortable win. You tend to forget these numbers when the shooting is over. The best I ever did in reelection was 66% of the votes. But, in fact, as I think about it now, it may have been closer to 52% over

Tom Cook. But, the main thing is when you see yourself carrying these counties you know you are going to win and you don't worry about it if you win comfortably, but it was a comfortable win. I think that one of the reasons I might have made it is there are, as you said earlier, a lot of people who thought they wanted a different type of candidate. They didn't want the same old "good ole boy" sort of types going to Washington. They didn't know me but they thought that it was somebody that's got a good educational background and speaks well and maybe it wouldn't hurt to have somebody who can communicate with people in Washington in that way, so, times were changing very dramatically, very dramatically. We were kind of leaving an old era and moving into a new one. Of course, Tom Abernathy made no effort to get black votes, he made it very clear that he didn't want that vote and I did. I wanted every vote that I could get and I had so many handicaps, I didn't have a whole lot of money to put into campaigning, I didn't have a whole lot of money of my own and I just had to raise it from people as best I could. And, I had to get blocks of votes, if I could get labor fine, if I could get blacks, fine, if I could get farmers, fine. You know, whoever I could get. If I could get schoolteachers, fine, if I, the main thing is that I did not focus on blocks so much as I did trying to contact as many people as I could. Make television spots, radio spots that were appealing. I did a campaign brochure which I designed and it was a tabloid campaign, a tabloid like a full size newspaper. I think that it won an award that year for being the

best campaign publication of the year and I put pictures of everybody you could think on there. I even pulled over to Montgomery, Alabama and had Governor Wallace's picture with me I went to Washington and had pictures with Jim Eastland and John Stennis and John Albert and you know, I had Governor Waller in there. All kind of people in there. You know, you just do anything you can to reach out to people and it's just a fight for survival. It's the kind of thing truthfully, that when you get in the middle of it, you wish you weren't there. It's like your walking a tightrope across Niagara Falls and you get about halfway out and you say "What the hell am I doing here? I've got to be crazy!" But then you realize that it is about as easy to keep going and reach the other side as it is to turn around to go back. You wish you had not done it when you get into it because it is so painful. It is such an uncomfortable experience being cussed, politically shot at, so to speak, people are telling lies about you or calling you names or mainly just...and you are trying to raise money and you wonder how much money you are going to owe and are you going to go broke, when the campaign is over, how are you going to pay your bills. You begin to think that there has got to be an easier way to make a living than this. I don't want to discourage people from running for public office, it is just that you have to be able to be realistic enough and it is a tough thing to do.

DR. BALLARD: All of a sudden your business is everybody's business.

MR. BOWEN: They want to know everything about you and I don't mind telling them

everything that is just part of the job. But, you mainly have to find a way to make people like you personally. Now, there are a lot of people who like to make it into this big argument about style versus content and say that politicians should not be elected on their personality or on their charm or anything else, but they should be elected on the specific ideas. I never personally bought that idea.

DR. BALLARD: (Laughter)

MR. BOWEN: My idea is to get votes anyway I can and that more people are likely to vote for you because they like you personally than because they agree with the set of ....every time you start listening along a set of ideas, I will do this or that or I believe in this or that, you are often times making about as many enemies as you are winning. Now, sometimes you have to do that and I was very happy to point out that I was committed to agriculture and I campaigned for example, for some things that we are close to getting into public law now and that is covering prescription medicine under Medicare. We uh...it is taking a long time but we might get that. I wasn't losing many votes doing that but, you know, talking about integrity and I have talked about experience. You see I have had a fair bit of experience both as federal state coordinator and having worked in Washington. I used that argument that I won't take an apprenticeship in Washington and I won't need any on the job training to learn how to be a U.S. Congressman because I have got that kind of experience.

END OF TAPE 2

BEGIN TAPE 3

MR. BOWEN: The election (?) of 1972 was a fascinating one because it was an easier one for me, having become the Democratic nominee; I felt the odds were pretty good that I would win the election. My opponent was a man named Carl Butler from Columbus who taught at State and Carl's politics were not to the right of mine to my knowledge, he might disagree with that. I had friends tell me that he was politically to the left of me, though running on the Republican ticket. But, in any event, he was a good man, but the odds were not in his favor given the demographic composition of the second congressional district. In addition to Carl Butler, who was a very worthy opponent, there were two black independents in the race. I think my good and dear Republican friends who subsidized their presence in the race to try to split the black vote. That is a fairly common practice. My good friend Thad Cochran I think, was elected initially because of a black independent in his senate race, his first senate race had Charles Evers in the race: as an independent of course. Having black independents to diminish the vote for white democrats is a fairly common practice that still continues to this day.

DR. BALLARD: Right.

MR. BOWEN: Though the two black independents, they did not do very well, they did

not succeed; I think that it was very clear that they were out there as stalking horses for the Republican candidate. Of course their race that year had very interesting complexities to it. Thad Cochran, Trent Lott, and I, the three of us were elected newly to the house that year. Sonny Montgomery had been there, was reelected, I don't remember whether or not Sonny had an opponent that year, '72. Jamie Whitten of course had been there since 1940.

DR. BALLARD: Right, 1940.

MR. BOWEN: Sonny, I think was there first in '66.

DR. BALLARD: Yeah.

MR. BOWEN: And Jamie since 1940...I don't think that he had an opponent, and if he did I don't think that it would have really made any difference. So, those two didn't really have a hassle. Of those there were three open seats that year. Judge Palmer, on the Coast, had retired that year. Trent was running as a Republican and Charlie Griffin had retired after I think two terms.

DR. BALLARD: Two terms.

MR. BOWEN: Thad was running for his seat, of course, as a Republican, and I was running for Tom Abernathy's seat as a Democrat. And Thad and Trent became good friends, in fact, I had known Thad for a long time in Jackson previously. But, trying to put the campaign together had some problems in the general election because what we tried to do was to organize a so-called "Unity Campaign" of Democrats and Jim Eastland and some of those supporting him were active in doing this. Of course, he could have

won comfortably by himself without doing anything

DR. BALLARD: Sure.

MR. BOWEN: But, the idea was to bring the Democrats together in Mississippi and he hired Delois Walker, a fairly famous campaign operative from Memphis to head this up and to support the candidates for Congress, the three candidates for the house. I was the only survivor, as it turned out, among the Democrats. Of course, Jim Eastland obviously won. But, the fact that was the big Nixon year and Nixon was so popular in Mississippi. I don't know that we will ever have a year quite like that because for example. And here's a good example. Old Jim Eastland was very closeted about his personal preferences in the primaries, obviously, whether he voted for me or not, I have some reason to think that he may have done so based on what friends said but I am not sure of that. But, in the general election, of course, he worked very hard to help me. Now, there were many, many differences between Jim Eastland and John Stennis. John Stennis is often thought of as the statesman, the more eloquent speaker...Mr. Outside. Jim Eastland was Mr. Inside.

DR. BALLARD: Right. (Laughter).

MR. BOWEN: He liked to work the back rooms and talking to people personally and was not a big speech maker and in terms of political campaigns you would obviously always rather have Jim Eastland on your side if you could get him because John Stennis generally stayed out of people's races. He didn't go around messing in peoples races.

DR. BALLARD: That's right.

MR. BOWEN: He...I'm sure John Stennis thought highly of me and we became good friends when I got there but he was not about to intervene to try to elect somebody in the second congressional district.

DR. BALLARD: As I recall, he would make generic statements like "I've always supported Democrats, I'm a Democrat." But he wouldn't name names (laughter).

MR. BOWEN: Probably if he would have been able to vote in the second district, which he did not, I'm sure he would have voted for me as an alternative to a republican. But, the fact was that was not his style.

DR. BALLARD: Right.

MR. BOWEN: Not his political style, and Jim Eastland on the other hand, he wanted to intervene in every race. He wanted to have a voice in every county and he did. He had a real political organization.

DR. BALLARD: Oh yeah.

MR. BOWEN: Which was powerful in getting people elected Supervisor, and Mayor, and Circuit Clerk and Chancery Clerk and all the rest. DA, he wanted to have a hand in all that. I don't think that John Stennis could be said to have a real political organization that intervened in other races very much. It was there to get him reelected but, Jim Eastland very much wanted to get into other races and he wanted me elected, he wanted as a neighbor, he wanted me on the agricultural committee. But, you know, I think we got to know each other pretty well. And here is the kind of thing that happened in that

fateful year of '72. Jim Eastland's finance chairman was the greatest leader of the towboat industry in Greenville. A man named Jessie Brent. And Jessie Brent was also a strong political and financial supporter of mine and his whole family was. And Jessie Brent was like a lot of businessmen in Mississippi, he was not concerned about party label. He wanted to stay on good terms with politicians, people who have power. He liked certain people, wanted make sure that he could be on the right side of people in public office and wanted to help people get there. He was a public spirited man who believed in electing good people for office and in this case Jim Eastland used his influence with President Nixon to make sure that Jessie Brent became the chairman of the Committee to Reelect the President in the State of Mississippi. So, here is a man, a business leader and a civic leader who was working diligently in a top campaign leadership position and financial fundraising position for the Democratic candidate for Congress in the second district namely David Bowen and the Democratic candidate and the incumbent Senator, Jim Eastland. But, also running the campaign to reelect President Nixon in the State of Mississippi. Now what was the reason for that? Very simple. Nixon was obviously going to carry the state of Mississippi overwhelmingly. I've forgotten what the percentage was ....85% or so...

DR. BALLARD: Something like that.

MR. BOWEN: But, he carried the state comfortably and the purpose of having Jessie Brent run the campaign to reelect the President...CREEP As it is going to

be referred to in the State of Mississippi was to make sure that none of the money raised for President Nixon's reelection went into campaigns against Jim Eastland or David Bowen. And, he succeeded in doing that and so a large number of votes that I got for Congress were also people who voted for Nixon for President. Very common, very common.

DR. BALLARD: Yeah.

MR. BOWEN: And I did not, I never took a public position on the presidential race, it was not my duty to do so and I made it very clear to people that they could split the ballot...tried to explain to a lot of people who were confused and thought that whoever they voted for president, they had to vote the same party for the others too. I explained that they didn't have to do that and so, I simply stayed out of the presidential race and had many allies, friends, supporters, who were strong Republican backers. Many of them were active members in the Republican Party who just happened to like me personally. After all, I mean let's look at it this way too. We got a US Congress in that era which was Democratic in both houses. It looked like it would be Democratic in perpetuity

DR. BALLARD: Yeah.

MR. BOWEN: Nobody could really foresee a time when there would not be a Democratic majority in the house or senate and the thought was if you are a Republican, hey that's fine, elect yourself a Republican President. But, we have got to have some influence in Congress so we need somebody

who can be a majority, somebody who will help Mississippi agriculture, get on the Ag. Committee, get on other committees that can be of help. So, that caused a natural split inside the Republican Party. Many of the Republicans supporting me actively and many other conservative Democrats who had been and continued to vote for republicans for President were happy to vote for Democrats for other offices. So, that was part of the intriguing aspect of that campaign. Of course, Jim Eastland's opponent was a man from Meridian named Gil Carmichael who actually was a fairly liberal Republican who later went on to positions in the federal government under Republican administrations. But, he did not make a very big dent in Jim Eastland. As it turned out, when the campaign was over, Delois Walker never did get paid what he thought he ought to get paid so we had another one of those situations in which Delois was threatening to sue us if we didn't get him paid and I think particularly through Jim Eastland's help we managed to raise the money to pay him off and get it done. But, I was the only and Senator Eastland of course, won comfortably, I was the only survivor of the three vacancies for the US House and so Thad and Trent and I went off to Washington to join the 93<sup>rd</sup> Congress and be sworn-in in January of 1973. And, we became good friends and continue to be good friends, but, no matter what you do in public office and no matter how many other elections you might have to be involved in, there is nothing quite so traumatic as the first race when you have to run for your life, nobody knows who you are, you don't

know where you are going to get the money to pay for the next ad. You don't know where the next vote is coming from. You are desperately driving from one place to another, when you have a few minutes you stop, get on the telephone, start making phone calls to people. You call people up trying to raise money day by day. You have help, I had people who put money in but still, it was not easy. It was not as though I had a real full scale finance committee who simply sat around. Of course, I had some good people who were willing to go on notes from banks and in effect, borrow money to enable me to have the money to make it. I had good friends in my home county like Gerald Jacks who looked after a large part of the financial operation for me and record keeping and going on notes and that sort of thing. And I had an attorney there and people I mentioned like the Bryan's who had a good deal of money but, after all, you are limited as to how much you can put into a campaign. You know, you can put a thousand dollars into each primary and a thousand into the general election and you got a lot of other things that can be done. You got various ways that soft money, so called, can be extended indirectly to benefit you but I never saw that I had a whole bunch of that. I simply had to try to find people who would do a lot of retail politicking for me. People who would speak to their friends, write letters to their friends, make phone calls. And, I had to make the most of my television, and radio, and newspaper ads. I didn't have a real campaign....I did not have a single paid staffer. I had nobody on the payroll. My Republican opponent

in the general election had a fairly substantial staff, I think, and every two years there was somebody running against me on the Republican ticket who would bring people down from Washington or somewhere. But, I never thought that I wanted to waste my money on staff people sitting around and shuffling papers. I wanted to put it in television and radio where it would get the biggest impact. So, that's what I tried to do.

DR. BALLARD: It was interesting, one of the unique situation that you faced as a Democrat was the National Democratic Party situation in 1972 when they had this...probably, maybe the most liberal candidate of the century in George McGovern. So, you really couldn't have turned to the National Democratic Party for help even if you had wanted to, I mean, it would've hurt you. I mean, whether it would have caused your defeat is questionable, but, it would have hurt.

MR. BOWEN: Yeah, well, I stayed away from, I think maybe in the general election I might have gotten a \$500 contribution from Speaker Carl Alberts' fund or something like that. I don't remember getting any money from any other source. Now, I had national political organizations making contributions, unions, and farm organizations, and people like that who liked you. I had those contributions coming in and I had those interest groups who cared about government and wanted to participate in the electoral process and have a voice in government who made contributions, but, I had very limited ties with the National Democratic Party.

DR. BALLARD: That's what I'm saying. You really couldn't afford to invite George

McGovern down to Mississippi to campaign for you. (Laughter)

MR. BOWEN: Yeah, and the most that I would ever say if somebody asked me what I was doing, I'd just say that I had always voted the Democratic ticket and just leave it at that. Sort of like John Stennis. I never said a word on behalf of George McGovern. Why would I do that? He had no remote possibility of carrying the state of Mississippi and obviously not much chance at the nation. What did he carry...Massachusetts?

DR. BALLARD: That may have been it.

MR. BOWEN: And the District of Columbia I expect.

DR. BALLARD: And one of the Dakota's, whichever one he was from.

MR. BOWEN: Yeah, but I did not see any reason to get in it, nor did any of my constituents think that there was any reason to do that. So, I remember later on, I would have people like Tip O'Neill come up to me on the House floor and sort of beg me for a vote and say "David, can you give us a vote on this one?" and I would sort of say "Tip, I wish I could but I can't do it. I couldn't get reelected if I did that." So, I never felt any personal obligation, to any party leadership, I just still came from the tradition in Mississippi of one-party politics where you put the name Democrat on the ballot but you run for yourself, what you believe in and stand for and your ability to communicate with people and your ability to project your personality. Speaking of that subject that I was talking about

earlier...content versus style. People sometimes like to criticize women voters in particular by saying that they don't care enough about the issues, that all they care about is style...if somebody that looks nice or whatever. But I have always been a defender, as I mentioned already, of people who vote based on their intuitive reaction to someone. A lot of people, and I don't see this as necessarily male voters, but a lot of people think that they can read a bunch of issues and how somebody is going to vote on this or that or the other and they decide whether or not that person ought to be elected. But, it has been my experience that those issues are changing so rapidly that two or three or four years later, that is no longer an issue and something else is an issue and if you elect somebody just because of that one point or two or three...you may not have the right person or the one that you want to represent you in public office. Whereas those people who actually try to judge character, and personality, and ability, based upon the way that they feel about somebody or if you use that illusive word, their intuition, about someone, that I think is probably about as sound a way to judge someone as you can find. If you watch two candidates debating on television, sometimes you just like the person's style, you just like the way that he speaks and handles himself and you feel that's the kind of person that can do a good job. Or, if somebody actually projects a kind of sympathy with you and you feel that person is sympathetic...then he probably is. I don't know too many really good con artists in politics who can act like they are friendly and act like they like

people and don't. Most people reveal their personalities in campaigns. They honestly do reveal their personalities and very few people dramatically change after they get in public office so I felt that the best that I could do was to try to communicate my style, my personality, what knowledge that I had of government. I didn't spend as much time talking about issues in fine degree. I wanted to talk about my qualifications. I could talk about foreign policy issues and military strength and I could talk about improving agriculture and talking about job opportunities for people and talk about bringing industry to Mississippi, which, a US Congressman has relatively little to do with but still, you know, you have to support those things, you have to support those government programs that train people, be for education, be for improving job opportunities, be for equal opportunity. All of those things are, I think, part of what I talked about but I tried to avoid the issues that would alienate a lot of people. I thought that I could make the kind of speech in which I could go to a ....without dissembling, without lying or telling a falsehood of any kind. I could go to a Chamber of Commerce gathering and speak to them and say things that they liked. I could go to a labor union meeting and say things that they liked. I could go to a black church and say things that they liked and I never said something that was false or untrue.

PHONE RINGS

MR. BOWEN: Just to conclude those observations, there is nothing wrong with campaigning on issues and if they are burning issues of the day and if you want to know what somebody thinks about it, you want to know what they think about health care programming, or you want to know what they are going to do about some weapon system or some military security issue or you want to know, perhaps today, their position on some of the burning social issues of the day whether it be abortion or whether it be gay rights...you know, there are a lot of issues that if you are asked questions about, you talk about. But, you don't necessarily volunteer those if you don't have to. If you take a position on....let's take the abortion question, if you take a position on that you are going to make half the people happy and outrage half the people. So, that is not normally regarded as good politics. If you don't have to do it...don't do it. If you have to do it...do it, you discuss those issues. If you can talk about economic development and creating jobs and using those government programs that are available and you have an actual track record on that subject as I did...to bring money into the state, that pleases the business community, the bankers, that pleases the labor unions, that pleases everybody.

DR. BALLARD: Yeah.

MR. BOWEN: I mean, it doesn't matter, left, right, or center if you are creating jobs and doing things for the economic growth of the state. That is worth talking

about. So, certainly, to some extent, you do avoid the issues that cut both ways if you can. And, if you have to discuss those issues, you do it. But, I am just saying that there is no obligation on the part of the candidate for public office to simply take every issue that you can think of and bare your soul and tell everybody what you have to think about that issue. Indeed, when you get to Washington, and you have more facts before you and you study things in detail, you may make some modifications of your positions once you find out how much it costs to do something or what the consequences are of something. So, but still, the one thing you have to sell is your intellect, your integrity, your character, your personality, your concern for the citizenry that you are asking to support you. And, if you can get that support behind you...you do it. Of course the issues on some of the hot potato subjects that have changed since that era to today are... I mentioned for example on race related issues how at that time, talking about equal opportunity had one meaning and today it may have a different meaning. For example, a year or two ago we had a major controversy that took place here in Jackson in which we had the discussion over the subject of what specific, well, we had Jesse Jackson here for example who spoke at the Methodist Church that I belong to, and Jesse Jackson made the statement at that church that he believed in equal opportunity, equal access, equal rights, and all three of those I agree with. Those are the ideas that I said are the traditional ideas, the liberal ideas of the '30's, '40's, and '50's, and for many people extended into today. Equal

rights, equal opportunity, and equal access and then he added the fourth one which is the innovation that has taken place since that time. The fourth one was fair shares. Fair shares: that meant that we want you to give our community an equal education, we want equal opportunity for jobs, we want equal rights. But, when all of those things are done and if we don't get what we want, we want fair shares. That meant to give us our share anyway. That's where I part company and that is why I say that my politics have not changed much over the last 30 years, but the political spectrum has changed and there are a good many friends of mine who were on my side of the issues back in that period and who feel that in order to maintain their relationship with a given political voting block, let's say the black community, feel that they have shift and buy into that package, that sort of special race preference package. That is not what I do, but that is not a change in my politics. And that is true of people of women's rights, gay rights, back in that period I had the deepest respect for individual privacy and personal preferences in terms of their associates. And, I did not want any discrimination against anybody, but, what we've got now is an era of politics in which...Instead of simply being happy to have your rights protected, you want to have your personal tastes and preferences and sexual matters or anything else glorified and glamorized and celebrated nationwide. When I, for example, go on college campuses and I see all...and that's almost a recruitment campaign for members of our gay and lesbian community and I wonder how

necessary that is and why shouldn't people be happy to simply be respected, given their right of privacy, and not discriminated against and be allowed to lead their lives. But without having community, assert publicly, that this is simply an equal choice with anything else. The whole business about gay marriage for example, it fits in again as I say, with the question of black rights. The fact that in that earlier period of time, giving people freedom, equality of opportunity, equality of choice, and giving them every possible benefit in terms of education and access was considered to be the ultimate goal, simply being treated... But at that time, the people in the black community, the people in the gay community, people in whatever community, Hispanic, anyone else, wanted to be treated simply like everyone else, they did not want to be discriminated against. Well, what we now moved where people do not simply want to be treated like all Americans, they want to be treated as a block. As a single isolated community, and to be given special benefits based upon their membership in that community. To be treated, not just as Americans, equally treated as other Americans and without discrimination, but, to be treated as a special category, Native Americans, nationality origins of one kind and another. We are moving in a certain sense back toward a Balkanization (?) of our society. We move from a segregated world in the south and an isolated world in the case of many ethnic groups and the gay communities, and this, that and the other, we moved from that to a world of equal opportunity and freedom for all and

now we have moved back toward a re-segregation of our society in which people want to be treated as members of a group rather than as individuals. I happen to regard myself as an old-style liberal who believes that people should be given rights as individuals and not as members of a group. I want to respect people and treat them fairly not because of their skin color or because of their sexual orientation or because of their national origin or because of their religion or anything else...or whether they are male or female. I want to evaluate them as individuals and treat them fairly as individuals and that is what I call old-style traditional new-deal/fair-deal liberalism. We have moved into another world now.

DR. BALLARD: I think that you are right. I heard the other day, you know, I am sure that you have heard of this group called the Man-Boy Love Society. They are thinking about trying the same strategy which the gay community has tried, to legitimize what they do and that's kind of frightening.

MR. BOWEN: Well, the Boy Scout controversy, I happen to think that the Boy Scouts have a certain set of...

END OF SIDE 1, TAPE 3

MR. BOWEN: Today, there are certain words that are glorified and glamorized, "diversity" being one of them, "non-discrimination", like for example, I noticed in the great controversy surrounding the boy scout matter that people in some of these cities, county governments, schools, etc.,

churches, that have said that they do not want the Boy Scouts to be holding their meetings their anymore. They have said that we can't discriminate. Well, why not? The Boy Scouts discriminate against women; they don't allow women to belong.

DR. BALLARD: (Laughter)

MR. BOWEN: They discriminate against boys who are too young or too old to join. They discriminate against people who are guilty of crimes and who have shown that they do not happen to fall into the category of people who would make good boy scouts. They happen to conclude that having young men as scout leaders whose sexual preferences for other young men or younger men, for boys. They happen to feel that that is not desirable. It is not desirable to have male troop leaders for Girl Scouts camping with them.

DR. BALLARD: No.

MR. BOWEN: And so the fact that these men, this is not to deny these men their right to be gay, if they want to be gay...boys want to be gay, grown men want to be gay, it is their privilege. But, it is also the privilege of other Americans to choose their companions and to decide what is the best way to raise children. You make an excellent point about this Man-Boy Love Society, this great movement underway in America now to justify and glorify adult males having sexual relationships with young boys, just as they have glamorized and glorified the whole gay rights-lesbian rights movement. It is a crusade and we are in the midst of a culture war in America and it deals with a number of these issues such as that, such as certain aspects

with race relations, such as the whole scale of moral values in our society, the general permissiveness sexually in our society, the vast increase of illegitimacy in our society, the illegitimacy among whites has climbed up I think to about 25, 22, 23, 24 % something like that. Among blacks it is up to over 80 % I think. It is rather shocking when you think about the ability to raise children in a stable environment and to have a civilized society when you have a homelessness of that kind. This is a part of this movement. There are a lot of people who I probably used to think of as friends and allies at one time in my life who say well you cannot criticize people. Well, it is a matter of personal choice, you know, some people like to work and some don't.

DR. BALLARD: (Laughter).

MR. BOWEN: And if some people don't like to work and they want to live off of welfare, well, hey, that is their privilege as Americans. Some people are non-conventional shoppers as they say, they do not believe in going into stores and paying cash, they believe in going through the store window and walking out with the merchandise that they want

DR. BALLARD: (Laughter).

MR. BOWEN: So they just have an unconventional shopping technique and we have to respect them for their different style and you know, we live in a society that is so permissive that

DR. BALLARD: You know, there is a time when that would have sounded absurd, but, people today, there are a lot of people that would buy exactly what you are

saying.

MR. BOWEN: (Laughter) You know, it's just like, you can't discriminate against homosexual behavior, you cannot discriminate against men who like, 40 year old men who wants to have a 8 year old boy and have a sexual relationship. That would be discriminatory. You cannot criticize people like that, you have to be tolerant. Some people .... All preferences are equal, there are no values that are permanent in our society. It is sad, it is tragic, but there is a large community of people who defend that and that is what the culture wars of today are about. There are many of us, I fall in that category who may well have some more liberal positions on economic issues. Let's take as a good example, I would be very happy to have a national healthcare system that worked effectively, or a single pair system. I happen to like Medicare, I've got it now and I like it. It works well, I just wish that everybody could have it. Everybody could have a system like Medicare and run as efficiently, that would be great. But we are politically not ready to do that yet. But, I just mentioned that as well as government support for agricultural programs as well government economic development programs, as well as public works projects to help maintain the levies on the Mississippi River or a variety of other nationwide communications channels that require public investment. Road building, you know, you name it, education, principally. I believe in government investment in all these things, now, does that make me a

liberal because I believe in government spending on these things, well perhaps so. These labels don't mean a whole lot now but it certainly does mean that, in some of the economic areas probably hold traditional liberal views but certainly on most of the cultural areas, so called social and cultural issues, I am more conservative and I guess you could call me a conservative. I jokingly said to somebody recently that I would certainly like to join the vast right wing conspiracy but I don't think that I am consistent enough to be a full fledged member.

DR. BALLARD: (Laughter).

MR. BOWEN: Only on some of these issues (laughter).

DR. BALLARD: I think I consider myself pretty much in the same boat that you are.

MR. BOWEN: I have often talked about this, I have written columns in the *Clarion-Ledger* and elsewhere on this subject. The fact that you do not have to be consistently liberal or conservative on every issue. You just take them as they come and if you happen to be more liberal on one issue and more conservative on another one, fine, more power to you that shows that you are thinking about the issues. But, what we've got today is a lot of alienated Americans and it is a problem for the Democratic Party. A lot of people who have left the Democratic Party, not because of economic issues so much as the cultural and social issues. They have been voting Republican. The Republican Party has been the beneficiary of that. The Republican Party has got its own problems. Another one if the important

issues that divides people today that you could call a bit of a cultural issue if you wanted to or a social issue, and that is the question of the environment. We have somewhat of a division in our society between those who believe that environmental protection to be paramount and those others who believe that economic development should be paramount. And there is a happy medium to be found, we just have to struggle for it as if on most questions. The same thing is true for the abortion question, there is probably a compromise position that can be reached on that subject but the two extremes are not willing to consider that, they don't want that because you get hardcore alliances and fund-raising capabilities structured around extreme positions and I'll admit its easier to take what they call a principal position on either extreme, no compromise. You know, no give, just demand all of one thing and I don't know that that is what the nation wants as a whole and I think that is probably not what is good for the nation as a whole but, it is what politics is often about. People fight wars over small points and those are the people who determine elections. Now, I will just say this, if you ask me to say would I rather have 95% of the people who agree with me on a given subject mildly and thought that was a good idea, or would I rather have 5% of the people on my side who passionately and uncompromisingly agreed with me on a point; which would I take? I would always take the 5% and I would always win. Why? Because a month after I did something to please the 95% on a issue which was one in 25 that they

cared about. They would want to know what I had done for them lately while the group which was a single issue group, violently, even passionately committed on a subject and that's the only issue that they care about. If I cross them on that issue, they would fight me every two years for the rest of my life. So, people say, "how do these small interest groups, these narrow single issues, how do they have so much power?" The answer is because they care a lot about single issues and they don't care about anything else but that. And, therefore, they threaten politicians. Politicians have to make reasonable compromises, they have to bring people together from all walks and try to find solutions to these problems whereas the single issue campaigners, the interest groups, the pressure groups that have one thing, it may be guns, it may be abortion, it may be gay rights, you know, it can be affirmative action, whatever, it can be a bunch of different things, but whenever you care about one issue exclusively, you can wield a pretty hefty cudgel to come after somebody and it frightens politicians. So, they end up running around frequently placating one or two or three or four percent of the votes who are on these groups because those groups put money into campaigns, based upon those commitments, they are heavily involved in politics and the great mass of good citizens of our nation who care about a lot of different things, they oftentimes don't care enough to make it clear that on certain issues, they believe deeply about something and they're happy to have a politician in an intermediate disposition who agrees with them partially, but that

doesn't always carry the clout in elections.

DR. BALLARD: Do you think the collegiality that I think existed when you were in Congress, has subsided quite a bit?

MR. BOWEN: It is almost gone totally.

DR. BALLARD: It seems to me that it has.

MR. BOWEN: When I was in congress you could very easily get friends as a Southern Democrat, and one who is more conservative than liberal generally. I think that my conservative record over about a 10 year period that I was there, I think that it had something like 19.6 or 19.8% liberal voting record and about a 60% conservative voting record, which made me a middle of the road or a little more conservative. I got along great with Republicans and Democrats, I voted for a number of issues which would be called liberal. I voted for a number that would be called conservative and I got along well with Republicans and Democrats both in the White House. That is hard to do today, very hard to do, it is a war, they do not want middle-of-the-roads, they don't want liberal Republicans nor do they want conservative Democrats, they want kind of a hostile combat of these two sides opposed to each other and I think that it has been a loss for the nation to have that.

DR. BALLARD: Some people refer to this as the Gingrich Syndrome and it does seem that it started with him which is unfortunate because he was a very eloquent person.

MR. BOWEN: Yes, Newt Gingrich could have been one of the forces but it is now being

perpetrated by both sides.

DR. BALLARD: Yeah, by others.

MR. BOWEN: There is a little tendency to want everybody to tow the mark and be orthodox, no descent, and there is intolerance toward people in the White House oftentimes, right currently the Democrats are cursing and belaboring George Bush and the Republicans did the same thing with Bill Clinton. You know, it goes on back and forth and it is harder for members of Congress to get along well and my colleagues tell me that when I go up there and go to former members of Congress meetings they make it clear to me that many of them say that they wish that they could figure out a way to get out of there, they haven't figured out quite how to do it. (Laughter) But, it is not a very happy place and I regret that.

DR. BALLARD: Yes, that is the impression that I get too.

MR. BOWEN: Well we should probably call it a day.