

California State Archives  
State Government Oral History Program

Oral History Interview

with

**TOM BANE**

---

December 3, 17, 1994, June 3, 17, 24, July 8, 29,  
August 26, September 2, 1995  
Tarzana, California

By Steven L. Isoardi  
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None.

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## PREFACE

On September 25, 1985, Governor George Deukmejian signed into law A.B. 2104 (Chapter 965 of the Statutes of 1985). This legislation established, under the administration of the California State Archives, a State Government Oral History Program "to provide through the use of oral history a continuing documentation of state policy development as reflected in California's legislative and executive history."

The following interview is one of a series of oral histories undertaken for inclusion in the state program. These interviews offer insights into the actual workings of both the legislative and executive processes and policy mechanisms. They also offer an increased understanding of the men and women who create legislation and implement state policy. Further, they provide an overview of issue development in California state government and of how both the legislative and executive branches of government deal with issues and problems facing the state.

Interviewees are chosen primarily on the basis of their contributions to and influence on the policy process of the state of California. They include members of the legislative and executive branches of the state government as well as legislative staff, advocates, members of the media, and other people who played significant roles in specific issue areas of major and continuing importance to California.

By authorizing the California State Archives to work cooperatively with oral history units at California colleges and universities to conduct interviews, this program is structured to take advantage of the resources and expertise in oral history available through California's several institutionally based programs.

Participating as cooperating institutions in the State Government Oral History Program are:

Oral History Program  
History Department  
California State University, Fullerton

Oral History Program  
Center for California Studies  
California State University, Sacramento

Oral History Program  
Claremont Graduate School  
Regional Oral History Office  
The Bancroft Library  
University of California, Berkeley

Oral History Program  
University of California, Los Angeles

The establishment of the California State Archives State Government Oral History Program marks one of the most significant commitments made by any state toward the preservation and documentation of its governmental history. It supplements the often fragmentary historical written record by adding an organized primary source, enriching the historical information available on given topics and allowing for more thorough historical analysis. As such, the program, through the preservation and publication of interviews such as the one which follows, will be of lasting value to current and future generations of scholars, citizens, and leaders.

John F. Burns  
State Archivist

July 27, 1988

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## INTERVIEW HISTORY

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### Interview Time and Place:

December 3, 1994  
Bane's home in Tarzana, California  
Session of one and one-quarter hours

December 17, 1994  
Bane's home in Tarzana, California  
Session of one hour

June 3, 1995  
Bane's home in Tarzana, California  
Session of one and one-quarter hours

June 17, 1995  
Bane's home in Tarzana, California  
Session of one hour

June 24, 1995  
Bane's home in Tarzana, California  
Session of one and one-quarter hours

July 8, 1995  
Bane's home in Tarzana, California  
Session of one and one-quarter hours

July 29, 1995  
Bane's home in Tarzana, California  
Session of one and one-quarter hours

August 26, 1995  
Bane's home in Tarzana, California  
Session of one and one-half hours

September 2, 1995  
Bane's home in Tarzana, California  
Session of one and three-quarters hours

### Editing

Sandy Moats, editorial assistant, UCLA Oral History Program, checked the verbatim manuscript of the interview against the original tape recordings, edited for punctuation, paragraphing, and spellings, and with the interviewer verified proper names. Insertions by the editor are bracketed. Susan Douglass Yates, editor, prepared the table of contents, biographical summary, and interview history.

Bane reviewed the edited transcript and returned it with only minor corrections.

### Papers

There exist no private papers which the interviewer was able to consult for this interview.

### Tapes and Interview Records

The original tape recordings of the interview are in the university archives at UCLA along with the records relating to the interview. Master tapes are preserved at the California State Archives.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

Tom Bane was born in Los Angeles, California, on December 28, 1913. During his early childhood, Bane attended numerous elementary schools throughout California because the family moved frequently while his father, Howard Kelly Bane, was a state highway inspector. Eventually the family returned to Los Angeles and then settled in Burbank. Bane graduated from Burbank High School in 1932.

After completing high school, Bane attended Los Angeles City College. He then obtained a position in the mail department at Bullocks-Wilshire department store, continuing his education by attending classes at night. He met his first wife, Claire Louise Brown, while working at Bullocks-Wilshire. They married in 1939, made their home in Burbank, and had a son, Bruce William Bane. In 1980, Bane married Marlene L. Rothstein.

Prior to becoming active in state politics, Mr. Bane obtained a position as a United States postal carrier and then as an insurance agent for Fireman's Fund Insurance Companies. Meanwhile, he became involved in the Los Angeles County Democratic Committee. He was first elected to the California State Assembly as a representative for the Forty-second District in 1958, a position he served in until 1964. In 1964 he also participated as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention and served on the convention's Credentials Committee. After making an unsuccessful bid for Congress in 1964, Bane worked in the savings and loan industry for the next decade. He returned to the assembly in 1974 after being elected to represent the Fortieth District. He retired from the assembly in 1989.

During his assembly tenure, Bane chaired the Committee on Industrial Relations, the Committee on Rules, and the Joint Committee on Rules. He also chaired the Select Committee on Genetic Diseases and the Governmental Organization Subcommittee on General Services Contracting Policies. In addition, Bane was a founder of the California Constitution Revision Commission and played a major role in drafting the revision of Article IV of the state constitution. In 1966 the electorate approved the revision, which provided for a full-time legislature and allowed both houses to set legislators' salaries. From 1978 until 1985 he was assistant speaker pro tempore. In addition to his political career, Bane was active in the National Lupus Foundation and the City of Hope.

[Session 1, December 3, 1994]

[Begin Tape 1, Side A]

ISOARDI: Mr. Bane, shall we begin this interview with your roots, as far back as you can remember?

BANE: I'm a native son.

ISOARDI: Born in California.

BANE: Born in California. Never lived any place else besides California.

ISOARDI: Really?

BANE: And my father [Howard Kelly Bane] was a state highway inspector.

ISOARDI: Where were you born?

BANE: In Los Angeles.

ISOARDI: Very, very native then. [Laughter] And when were you born?

BANE: Nineteen thirteen. The same year income tax came in.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Did you draw any conclusions from that coincidence?

BANE: I guess they figured it was going to be expensive

to raise me. [Laughter] My father was the state highway inspector, and we moved around four times a year.

ISOARDI: That often?

BANE: And, going through the country, I was a new kid in school. I was just a little kid too. I was very small. A nervous little kid, you know. And in the little country schools, a newcomer is really a newcomer. So the first recess, why--and it happened every time--the kids would gang around me, and of course, I was scared.

ISOARDI: So they were testing you out?

BANE: I don't know what they were doing, but they weren't welcoming me. Pretty soon the bully of the class came forward, so we ended up with a fight. Of course, as far as the principal was concerned, it was all my fault.

ISOARDI: It's a tough way to grow up.

BANE: I guess the first recollection I had, which I've never forgotten, was in one place the principal apparently viewed what was going on out the window, and she called me in. She had a great big whip, black whip, a great big thing--it probably isn't as big as I remember [Laughter]--

hanging on the wall. She took that down and she just wanted me to know. I took a look at that thing, and I went out the door, ran across the yard, jumped the fence, and went home.

[Laughter]

ISOARDI: A very reasonable thing to do.

BANE: And I wouldn't go back to school. My poor father had to drive me out to another school in the country a little ways, to go to another school. I'd say I've never forgotten that. I can still see that big whip.

ISOARDI: Jeez.

BANE: But that went on at every school. It was always a gang of kids at first recess, and I learned what discrimination was. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: Truly. Just based on newness.

BANE: Yeah. And I was different. I was a new kid, and so it was a very difficult life in that respect.

ISOARDI: And you were moving around quite a bit then. You were a new kid on a pretty regular basis.

BANE: I guess one reason I've never moved much since is that I still have those fears when I go into new circumstances, a new meeting, you know. And it took me a long time to get over most of that.

ISOARDI: Yeah.

BANE: I'm not sure why I ran for assembly. How I got into politics was rather strange because...

ISOARDI: Can I ask you, before you mention that, what your family background was, how far back you can trace your family?

BANE: Well, my mother [Mary Murray Bane], I think, was in Washington, D.C., which was where they lived. My mother was well educated. She, I think, was full-blooded Irish and my father was a Scotch-Irish-English mixture.

ISOARDI: And their families had been here for some time, or did they come over in the nineteenth century?

BANE: I don't know when they came over, you know. I guess my father came from Scotland. Rumor has it [Laughter] that they kicked him out of Scotland.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Do you know why? What does the rumor say?

BANE: He was one of those guys who was fighting the government, you know.

ISOARDI: He was a rebel.

BANE: Yeah, he was a rebel.

ISOARDI: Was he a Scotch nationalist or was he a revolutionary, or do you know?

BANE: Well, as close as I can remember and figure, he didn't much like the king and queen business. Oh, I think kicking him out of Scotland was maybe an exaggeration. I don't think he liked Scotland. But then, he seemed to be very active. I traced the family back and there was a family that kidnapped a dead queen... [Laughter]

ISOARDI: You're kidding. [Laughter]

BANE: ...out of the castle. And I would not be surprised if he was one of them. He was a very rigid man, a very honest person, highly principled. I guess the thing that he impressed upon me was that your word is your bond. Once you make a commitment, you keep it, no matter what, which had a rather strong impact on my life.

ISOARDI: Did he come to California from Scotland?

BANE: No. He was born in Quincy, Illinois. So my grandfather was the one who was kicked out of Scotland, it wasn't my father. He was born in Quincy, Illinois. My mother was born in Washington, D.C., and I think they met in Washington, D.C. His health got bad, and the doctor suggested [they] move out West. They moved to Oklahoma, and were married at the time.

He ended up in the Spanish-American War. He was a lieutenant. I don't know how that fits in with the marriage, but they settled on a homestead on an eighty-acre plot of land in Mint Canyon, which is halfway between here and Palmdale.

ISOARDI: That's a pretty substantial spread.

BANE: A spread of nothing. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Yeah, the land is like that. What did he try and do there?

BANE: He built a little, I guess, two-room shack. It was a wood floor. I was born in a hospital down in Los Angeles, and we moved out there to the shack. It really was a shack. I visited it, and it was a shack. He built it himself. It was a plaster and wood shack.

ISOARDI: Did his education take him beyond high school?

BANE: I don't think so. That was a lot of years ago, you know. I'm eighty-one and I was the youngest of three brothers. A high school education at that time was fairly well regarded.

ISOARDI: Yeah, definitely. He must have had a lot of leadership capabilities as well, I'd assume, if he was an officer in the military.

BANE: Oh, he was an intelligent man. Well, my mother, I don't know what education she had, but she came

from a family that was well educated. So they both were well educated. And I think they spoke very well. [Laughter] I would say they were good parents. No question my mother loved her children.

ISOARDI: How many of them were there?

BANE: Well, during our lives they had six children. I think accidents occurred in the moving around, and three of them, in the first year, were lost. One fell out of a buggy and was run over by a wheel.

But somewhere in my father's line of work, before he came to California, he repaired typewriters. He was a typewriter repairman. I still have his lieutenant's sword.

ISOARDI: Really? Wonderful keepsake. Was he in the service very long?

BANE: I don't know. During the Spanish-American War.

ISOARDI: Did he fight in Cuba?

BANE: Oh yes. He picked up malaria over there.

ISOARDI: Really?

BANE: Eventually, he had surgery on his stomach. He

lived for years on grape juice and liquids and stuff like that, and worked during that time.

ISOARDI: Did he ever show any interest in politics?

BANE: Yes he did. He was a socialist.

ISOARDI: Was he, while he was here? Was he a member of the Socialist party?

BANE: Well, now you're getting technical. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Well, as much as you remember.

BANE: Well, he supported Upton Sinclair...

ISOARDI: Out here in California?

BANE: In California. They had an organization called Utopia, and he was active in that. Well, he got so many points moving up the scale as to how many new members they brought in, so I became a new member for some reason or other. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: [Laughter] He wanted some more points maybe.

BANE: He wanted more points. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: How old were you when that was happening?

BANE: Oh, I was a teenager, gosh. He decided he'd open up a grocery store and buy groceries and sell them to the members of their group at wholesale prices. He went to a lumberyard to get lumber, and there was no one to work it out. I got the job of working it out. They had a lot of weeds

they wanted to cut down, so I got my hoe and I cut them down. They liked my work so they gave me a job. So I worked for the lumberyard for some time. Those were the Depression years, you know.

ISOARDI: So you were a teenager at this point.

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Was everybody in the family, then, working?

BANE: Well, in those years there really wasn't much work.

ISOARDI: So you felt pretty lucky to have the job?

BANE: Oh yeah. But the family was trained to work hard. So my father and my oldest brother [Murray Bane] were the plasterers, and somebody had to mix the plaster. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: [Laughter] So the young one.

BANE: So I got elected.

ISOARDI: Or drafted.

BANE: I can't remember any vote, but I got elected.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] More like a draft.

BANE: My brother wouldn't teach me to plaster, because they made more money, you know. He didn't want me to be a plasterer. He wanted me to go to school and do something better.

ISOARDI: Really?

BANE: Oh, I remember jobs. One job, I got ten cents an hour.

ISOARDI: Big money.

BANE: I got big muscles, though. [Laughter] Although I was a little kid most of the time in school, between my freshman year and my junior year, I grew from a class D basketball player to a class A basketball player.

ISOARDI: Really?

BANE: I was very thin.

ISOARDI: You mentioned your father was a highway inspector when you were very young. How did he hook into that kind of work, which seems a bit different from some of the other things that he was doing? Or was your earliest memory that job?

BANE: I can't answer how he hooked into it, but I would say he was an intelligent man [who] worked hard. He was the best-looking member of the family. [As a] war veteran, I presume that had some bearing on his getting a job with the state. In those days I don't know how they selected them.

ISOARDI: Maybe after military service?

BANE: [Inaudible] military service.

ISOARDI: Was the job pretty much as it sounds, he would inspect construction work?

BANE: When they were working on a highway, he would inspect the work on the highway: the amount of cement they were putting in the concrete and doing that sort of thing. He was an inspector during the construction of the highways. So we spent quite a bit of time up in the northern part of California. This always brings back lots of memories. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: I'll bet. Those must have been California's first highways, in a lot of cases.

BANE: Well, it was the first highway for the towns we were in, I knew that. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: Well, I guess when a project was finished, you guys would have to pack up and move on to the next project.

BANE: That's right.

ISOARDI: That's pretty much how it went?

BANE: That's right. Furthest north, there was a town called Trinidad.

ISOARDI: Northern coast?

BANE: Yeah, above Eureka. Trinidad had a very narrow neck of land out to a big island. I won't say a

big island. It was an island. And it had a lighthouse on it, and a few people lived there. But in the bay, between the neck of land and the island, they had a whaling station.

ISOARDI: Really?

BANE: Yeah. They'd catch the whales and bring them in, cut them up and boil them down. We sort of nicknamed the place Stinkadad.

ISOARDI: I'll bet. [Laughter] So did you watch a lot of that activity?

BANE: Oh yeah. I remember seeing a baby whale that hadn't been born yet, which was about seven feet long.

ISOARDI: And they just sort of cut it out.

BANE: I don't know how it got there. Anyway, it was beautiful country up there. It had lions and bears.

ISOARDI: So this was pretty different for you, then.

BANE: Oh, a wonderful place. I was always going to go back there when I grew up.

Then we moved down into Los Angeles, again. I went to school there for a while. My father bought an acre of land in Burbank.

ISOARDI: So you were living out here then? You were no

longer out beyond Palmdale.

BANE: That's right. Well, Palmdale was before my recollection, except when we went out and saw the shack. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: And we're glad that [Laughter]....

BANE: Well, it was a joke of my wife. I worked and progressed, and made enough so I could afford carpeting. So we covered this house top to bottom. Then my wife wanted to take up the carpeting and put me back on wood floors again. [Laughter] I still prefer the carpeting.

ISOARDI: Yes. [Laughter] That's understandable. So by the time your family settles into this area, then, and by the time your father is no longer traveling around the state, you're a teenager by then, or are you still a little bit younger than that?

BANE: I think I moved into Burbank when I was nine years old.

ISOARDI: So really, your earliest years were on the road seeing a lot of different places?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Are you sort of happy to be settling down or that you're no longer moving?

BANE: Well, I was sort of raised that whatever came up came up. So I don't think I was happy or unhappy. I just know that that's what I did. I had a pet goat. My father was quite ill during that time. We raised rabbits and chickens, and we sold eggs and rabbits. He bought an acre in a peach orchard, which was really abandoned. So we went door-to-door selling rabbits and meat and eggs and peaches. It was a [s]crimp and save kind of life.

ISOARDI: With your father's illnesses then, he wasn't working as steadily?

BANE: Well, he specialized in plastering patchwork. He kept working. He would be on his fruit juice diet. He still kept working. He never quit working. I was kind of raised in the atmosphere that the most important thing in life was working and taking care of your family. That was the main philosophy. I started work when I was fourteen, like mixing plaster and carrying it in buckets. I used to have a hod. Do you know what a hod is? Oh, you wouldn't know what a hod is.

ISOARDI: No. [Laughter]

BANE: Well, a hod was on a stand, and [there was] a

pole on top which was a V-shaped holder, which was tilted toward the back part of the V. You'd mix the plaster and shovel it in the hod, and then you carry the hod to wherever the plasterers were working on the building. Sometimes you went up ladders. There weren't any employment laws in those days. I know one person I worked for used to build sides on the hod so it would hold more. It weighed, I guess, about 180 pounds when I got two on the side, so I'd carry that around all day.

ISOARDI: You're kidding. Pretty serious work for a fourteen-year-old.

BANE: Well, I was older than fourteen when I did that. I'd graduated from high school when I started working for other contractors. But I always worked hard. And during the Depression I was getting work when others weren't because I worked hard and worked wherever there was work.

ISOARDI: Sounds like you were pretty steadily employed.

BANE: Not during the Depression, you're not steadily employed. I had one [where I] put on a service porch for a man who lived up in Sunset Canyon. He [David Sakuth] asked me if I was willing to

come and work for him up there. He wanted to build some walls and things when he had his vacation. So "Sure." [Laughter] So I worked for him. He was a personnel manager down at Bullocks-Wilshire [department store]. He asked me what I planned to do with my life. I said, "Well, I'd like to go back to school someday." I'd been out for a couple of years. He was telling me about a job down there--he didn't offer it to me--they had for kids in college. When I had my twenty-first birthday, I went down to see him, and he gave me a job working at Bullocks-Wilshire...

ISOARDI: Great.

BANE: ...in the [mailing] department. I'd go to school every morning and work there every afternoon. Sometimes I worked thirty-five to sixty hours a week, depending on what work was available.

ISOARDI: Where were you going to school then?

BANE: L.A. City College. I went there two years, then I got a day job at Bullocks-Wilshire and went to school at night.

ISOARDI: You finished high school in Burbank, then, at

Burbank High School?

BANE: Yeah. Yeah. Actually, I took courses at night until I was thirty years old, going to night school.

ISOARDI: Really?

BANE: Yeah. Somewhere along I picked up the phrase that "Learning requires no excuse," something like that. There was also a phrase that I carried on my notebook. "Anything worth doing is worth doing well." So then I went to work at Bullocks-Wilshire.

ISOARDI: So you're working full-time at Bullocks, then?

BANE: Well, I was working for fifty cents an hour, I think. So I put in thirty, thirty-five hours minimum a week. Sometimes during the Christmas rush and other rush jobs, I worked as high as sixty hours a week.

ISOARDI: Well, that must have been pretty decent money that you were making in the middle of the Depression.

BANE: Yeah, I think of all our kids and friends, I was maybe the only one of us working. But then, I'd do anything.

ISOARDI: So this was maybe eighteen, thirty dollars a

week, something like that, somewhere in there, probably, at fifty cents an hour.

BANE: Yeah, fifteen, eighteen. I was working when Social Security was first instituted, so I was a member of that Social Security system from the very beginning. I get a Social Security check now--because of the number of years I was in--for a little over two thousand [dollars] a month.

ISOARDI: Really?

BANE: Yeah. I ended up in rather good-paying jobs, and with the number of years involved I ended up with the maximum. I enjoy it more now than I did then. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Yeah. Let me ask you, just to go back to high school, did you show any political interest then? What were the things you were doing in high school, aside from your studies?

BANE: I guess as far as politics are concerned, my father's activity.... Which was rather strange, because he started me when I was very young. I wouldn't listen to him, you know. It got so I couldn't stand him, [Laughter] rather his politics. I had nothing to do with politics as long as he was alive.

ISOARDI: Not at all?

BANE: Not at all, no.

ISOARDI: Interesting. When did he die?

BANE: When he was seventy-four. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: So you were past your teenage years.

BANE: Oh yes. Oh yes. I was married when he passed away. He was a good man.

ISOARDI: He sounds it.

BANE: When I was out campaigning for state assembly the first time, I went to Burbank City Hall. I remember there were people, and I went and met them. I remember the city clerk there--it was an elective office in Burbank--saying to me, "Tom, I don't know anything about you, but I knew your father. And if you're anything like him, I'm voting for you."

ISOARDI: Very nice, very nice.

BANE: That was the first time I appreciated his principles because he was very influential in electing the judge in the city of Burbank--the campaign manager may be the most influential person--and the judge called him up and said, "I only have one job to give." He had a clerk job up there, and he wanted my father to fill it. So

I wanted the job, and my father wouldn't let me have it because he felt that he didn't want anybody to think that he was in politics for self-gain.

ISOARDI: Very principled man.

BANE: Highly principled man.

ISOARDI: So in high school, then, your activities were elsewhere. Did you play basketball?

BANE: Oh yeah, I played basketball, track, and tennis mainly. Boy, you take me back a long way.

[Laughter]

ISOARDI: Yes. [Laughter] The makings of an assemblyman.

BANE: Well, I've had a very active, full life.

ISOARDI: You mentioned at the very beginning that you'd never really traveled outside of the state, but, in a sense, you traveled a great deal...

BANE: Oh yes.

ISOARDI: Very early on, exactly. And since California is so varied, you saw a lot of very different things.

BANE: Well, it is a different country up in northern California than it is down south here. But I took an examination at the post office in Burbank. Two hundred and fifty applied for the

job.

ISOARDI: What kind of a job was it?

BANE: Working in the post office as a clerk. I placed third out of the 250. Burbank was growing very fast as a bedroom [community] for Los Angeles and Hollywood. I went to see the postmaster and to ask him when the job would open up. He said, "If you want to transfer to a letter carrier instead of a clerk, I'll put you to work immediately. Then you can transfer back into the post office as a clerk later." So I went to work immediately with the post office and carried mail.

ISOARDI: About how old were you then? This was clearly after you had finished high school.

BANE: Well, it was after I went to work at Bullocks-Wilshire, too, so I'm...

ISOARDI: Oh, so it's after your Bullocks-Wilshire?

BANE: I'm going to have to think about that. Yes, it was after Bullocks-Wilshire. And at Bullocks-Wilshire I met a girl that I married [Claire Louise Brown], and we built a home in Burbank. I was living in Burbank when I applied for the post office, so I got a steady job.

ISOARDI: What was her name?

BANE: Her name? Her last name was Brown. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: [Laughter] But no relation.

BANE: No relation, as far as I know, no relation.  
Thank God. [Laughter] I'm not too fond of the  
[Edmund G. "Pat"] Brown [Sr.] family. I knew  
them very well.

ISOARDI: Too well? [Laughter]

BANE: Well enough.

ISOARDI: Well enough. So when you moved back out to  
Burbank, would you still go to L.A. City College  
to take classes? Or was that something you were  
just doing when you had the opportunity to do it?

BANE: When I was working at Bullocks-Wilshire, [that  
was] the time I got married and also built my  
house. In fact, I was taking off the forms of  
the foundation that I poured.

ISOARDI: Really? You literally built it.

BANE: Yeah. I was getting married that afternoon, so I  
had to finish the job before [Laughter] I could  
get married. Anyway, I got the forms off in the  
morning and got married in the afternoon.

ISOARDI: Oh, good story. Is the house still around?

BANE: Oh yes. Down on Elm Street in Burbank. I drive  
by occasionally and take a look at it.

ISOARDI: Yeah. So you poured a solid foundation.

BANE: Yeah. It's still there.

[End Tape 1, Side A]

[Begin Tape 1, Side B]

BANE: OK, I went to work for the post office and became a grievance chairman.

ISOARDI: Grievance chairman within the postal unit?

BANE: Yeah. So on my route I met a man who was in an insurance agency, and he talked me into leaving the post office and writing insurance. So I did that.

ISOARDI: How was he able to persuade you? Do you remember?

BANE: Oh, he told me how easy it was, and how much money he made. [Laughter] That was when [Harry S] Truman was president. I had a girl who would call up people on the phone and ask them if they would like to have their house appraised for value. She introduced herself as Marilyn Truman, or something like that. I'd go out and appraise their house in case there was a fire. Then I asked how much insurance they had. So from there...

ISOARDI: You made the sales.

BANE: Yeah. Also, every time there was a house on fire, or there was a fire in the city, I'd go solicit the neighbors for fire insurance.

ISOARDI: Do you remember what company you worked for?

BANE: Oh, Fireman's Fund [Insurance Companies].

ISOARDI: Fireman's Fund.

BANE: It isn't quite true. I worked for the insurance agent for a while, and then I got my own agency. It was when I went to work for Fireman's Fund, then I got my own insurance agency out of Fireman's Fund. Insurance agents had to be accurate in community fares, things like that. The fellow I went to work for to start with was a Democratic county committeeman. He wanted to know what I was. Well, I was a registered Republican. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: Were you really? Why a registered Republican, then?

BANE: I think it had something to do with my Scottish blood. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: Or your father?

BANE: No. But they were playing some games in the Burbank post office which were dishonest. The people who played the game with the postmaster

got the appointments. I didn't want any part of his party because his job was a political job. So no, I didn't even.... "I could get you elected to office in this Democratic club. So are you going to change your registration?" I said, "Sure." [Laughter]

ISOARDI: So that's when you changed?

BANE: Well, then I changed back to the Democratic party. I was never actually a Republican in any way, shape, or form.

ISOARDI: Yeah, it was just your registered preference.

BANE: Yeah. I had to make a statement. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: If you don't mind me asking, did that mean, then, that you voted for people like Wendell [L.] Willkie, as opposed to [Franklin D.] Roosevelt? Or perhaps [Thomas E.] Dewey?

BANE: No. If I voted, I would have voted for Roosevelt.

ISOARDI: Do you remember the man's name who got you into insurance, and then persuaded you to change your registration?

BANE: A man named [Cecil S.] Schilling. It wasn't a great sacrifice to change my registration from Republican to Democrat. Anyway, I joined the

Democratic club and was elected assistant secretary. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: How big was the club?

BANE: Oh, I'd say as many as fifty people in it.  
[Laughter]

ISOARDI: And all the new members were assistant treasurers or secretaries. [Laughter]

BANE: And then a spot on the [Los Angeles] County [Democratic] Committee opened up. The members of the Democratic county committee, at that time, had the vacancy, and they asked me to take it, and I did.

ISOARDI: At that time was your motivation mostly for your business, or were you getting more interested in politics now?

BANE: I think I was getting interested in politics, but it wasn't dominant in my life. Dominant in my life was to make a living. In the process, the [C. Estes] Kefauver [United States Senate] committee got interested in crime in the United States, if you remember the Kefauver committee [Special Committee to Investigate Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce]. You don't remember it.

ISOARDI: I know of it. I don't remember it personally,

no. I just know of it.

BANE: They came out to Burbank, and they reported that Burbank was controlled by organized crime.

ISOARDI: The entire city. The political structure was, really?

BANE: Yeah. And the Sica brothers [Joe and Frank] were in there. The Mafia was in there. They used to meet regularly at 210 East Angelino.

ISOARDI: Really? You remember the spot.

BANE: In a bar.

ISOARDI: Really?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: So they were pretty open.

BANE: Yeah. And my older brother--not the oldest brother but my older brother [Harry Bane]--was a barber in Burbank, and he was a very active fellow. He was the black sheep of the family.  
[Laughter]

ISOARDI: In what way?

BANE: He drank and smoked. [Laughter] And he led a men's club, and it was a group of guys. Without my family knowing it, he went up to the American Legion boxing business. Anyway, the American Legion of Burbank sponsored boxing in Burbank,

and so he became a boxer. He was boxing until my family found out about it. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: [That] was not approved.

BANE: No. Not approved.

ISOARDI: Actually, let me ask you, you're up to the Truman years now, did you have any war service?

BANE: No. I tried to get into the service, but my eyesight was 20/1200 or something like that. Oh, I was practically blind. I wear contact lenses now and the glasses. Contact lenses cover the distance, but the glasses cover the....

ISOARDI: You wear them simultaneously?

BANE: Yeah. And I struggled with my eyes quite a bit. I played basketball with a shield. I played basketball until I was forty years old in night leagues.

ISOARDI: That's very good.

BANE: Then the insurance business didn't give me any time to train and, you know, basketball is a very demanding, physical sport.

ISOARDI: I have a brother who's in his early forties and still plays.

BANE: But I was the tallest guy so I was center.

[Laughter] What a game, hey.

ISOARDI: Well, you didn't have to move as much.

[Laughter]

BANE: Well anyway, I organized the team. My brother was a [member of the Benevolent and Protective Order of] Elk[s] during those years. I joined the Junior Elks, and I became president of the Junior Elks. So there was some motivation, naturally, to go around selling insurance, being on the county committee and active in the club. That time was when Alan Cranston formed the California Democratic Council.

ISOARDI: So then you were a committeeman.

BANE: Yeah. County committeeman. I wrote the campaign literature for our club when we ran a slate of candidates. The climate was such that I don't think it was any conscious scholarly approach, except I had a sense of where the public was and what would sell. So I wrote the campaign literature, and our whole slate won.

ISOARDI: Was this for city offices?

BANE: No, this was for state assembly and county committee. The days of Glenn [M.] Anderson and Richard Richards. Did you ever know Richard Richards?

ISOARDI: No.

BANE: He was a lawyer. He was a state senator from Los Angeles County when Los Angeles County was a very big county and only had one state senator. Anyway, we ran a candidate for state assembly who was the editor of the [San Fernando] Valley Jewish News. Very bright man. I managed his campaign and he lost. And, of course, that didn't make me feel very good.

ISOARDI: That was your first foray?

BANE: Yeah. And so he came within a couple hundred votes, I think.

ISOARDI: Pretty close.

BANE: But he wouldn't get out and meet the public. He was a scholarly, sensitive person. I'd take him out to a store's grand opening, and as long as I'd stay with him, he'd stay there and hand out his literature. As soon as I left, he'd leave.

ISOARDI: Did he want the job? [Laughter]

BANE: Well, I had a talk with him, and two years later--he'd come so close the first time--he ran again. He just wasn't able to cope with what you have to do, unless you have a lot of money.

ISOARDI: Just didn't have the personality, it sounds like.

You remember his name?

BANE: Jess Nathan. You'd campaign certain places during the daytime and certain places at night. Well, the place you campaign at nights are the bars, you know, beer joints. And he just...

ISOARDI: Not his style.

BANE: Not his style. So he'd drive me around, and I'd go into the bars and hand out his literature.

ISOARDI: Maybe he should have been managing your campaign.  
[Laughter]

BANE: He gave me problems, though. He was a scholar, but he didn't understand. I think he found it difficult being managed. And people work up positions on issues taken: what to do and why. Second time he ran, I got him into a senior citizens club in Tujunga. He decided that he was smarter than I was [Laughter], so he pops up with a new idea for seniors.

ISOARDI: God, what did he say?

BANE: I think he said something about having people's pensions become a lien against their house. After they died, that would be the resource for recouping the money. I want to tell you, I think he lost his election on that one.

ISOARDI: Don't doubt it. [Laughter]

BANE: He didn't say a word to me about his new idea, you know. Of course, that was in the days when there was a well-known lobbyist for the seniors-- George McClain--who built a senior organization in the state of California. He had a senior newspaper. He became a political power in California, and the big issue at that time was this very issue. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: So I take it he lost by more than a few hundred votes the second time around?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: That was your first experience in a campaign?

BANE: Yeah. That hurt my ego, because I knew it could be won, you know. So next time I ran.  
[Laughter]

ISOARDI: Really?

BANE: Yeah. Mainly to prove that it could be won.  
[Laughter] And lo and behold, I got elected.

ISOARDI: So that was the '58 campaign? That takes you up to that?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: So you started, then, in '54, which must have been the first assembly campaign. Interesting.

How well did you go over in the bars when you worked them? Were you able to work them effectively for this guy?

BANE: Well, I had a technique in working the bars. You go into the back of the bar, turn around and hand out your literature as you work toward the door. And if somebody grabbed you and wanted to talk to you, you'd say, "Just a minute, I'll be right back after I finish." You keep working the bar until the front door and [you] could exit. You never knew Everett [G.] Burkhalter, either. He was a Democrat when Burbank, this area, was all voting Republican. He worked the bars. He worked wherever there were people. Around the Democratic club, everybody hated him.

ISOARDI: For what reason? I mean, aside from being the opposition.

BANE: He was a farmerish kind of guy; he wasn't a smooth, scholarly type. People who went to Democratic clubs were looking for somebody like.... I can't remember the man's name, he came after Roosevelt, a very scholarly, brilliant man.

ISOARDI: Who ran for president?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: [Adlai E.] Stevenson?

BANE: Yeah, Stevenson. That's what they were looking for. And Everett Burkhalter's grammar was very bad. "There ain't any mistake that he didn't make." [Laughter]

ISOARDI: The Casey Stengel of southern California politics.

BANE: I used to look at him sometimes.... And everybody said, "How does he manage to get elected?" I got a new car about that time. I called up Burkhalter and said I was going to the Sacramento convention. "Would you like to drive up with me?" And he accepted.

ISOARDI: Why did you do that?

BANE: I wanted to know how he did it. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: So you wanted to find out what made.... I see. Very good. Very good. [Laughter]

BANE: Well, I remember the first thing he said to me, "I watch these people out of the corner of my eyes, and I can see on their faces: 'How does he do it?'"

ISOARDI: So he was no fool.

BANE: Like a fox, he was. So we talked politics

driving all the way to Sacramento and all the way back.

ISOARDI: Did you find out?

BANE: Yeah. He told me what he thought. He was a people-to-people guy.

ISOARDI: The secret.

BANE: People-to-people. I ran a campaign for a guy who was running against the incumbent congressional Republican, who was very famous and strong, and who I went to school with. His father was in the insurance and real estate businesses. He had won a national debating championship for the University of Redlands. He taught public speaking and economics in college, at Lake Forest [College].

He came out here and worked for his father for a while. But he was out looking for a job-- I can't remember the name of the insurance company--but the owner was getting old and he was looking for somebody to come in and run his shop for him. So he interviewed this young man, a good-looking man, who looked like he came out of an Arrow collar ad, very bright, very articulate, of course. So the old man hired him. The young

man went to work for him and found out that some of the things he was doing in his business were against the law. So he went down to the insurance commissioner and...

ISOARDI: Turned him in?

BANE: ...turned him in. He made a deal. He'd take over and run the agency. So they cracked down on the old man. The poor old man was totally shook. He was old. And the insurance commissioner was after him and going to pursue charges against him unless he got rid of his agency. Of course, this guy stepped in, gave the old man a contract, and took over the agency. It led up to a discussion later on when he was talking about me as a politician and himself as a politician. He said, "Tom, I'll make a better politician than you will," and I said, "Why?" He said, "You couldn't have done to the old man what I did." Well, I said, "You're right." I managed his campaign for Congress against a fellow named [John C.] Hinshaw.

ISOARDI: When was that, do you remember? Was that before you ran on your own?

BANE: Yeah. And, of course, it was a hopeless race

against Hinshaw. He was a famous, strong, incumbent Republican. Very Republican, but that's when the Republicans were in control. I'd always had my mind on the assembly, or did I? Two years later, when I decided to run for assembly, the guy I trained ran against me. This is the guy that did to the old person what I couldn't do.

ISOARDI: He ran against you for assembly?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: So he failed in his bid for Congress, and then he ran against you. This is somebody you would never want to turn your back on.

BANE: Well, he made a good politician. He was successful in business: built a big insurance agency and did very well. But he wanted to run for assembly. Well, I'd taught him all the things that Burkhalter had taught me. [Laughter] So we crossed paths in the district and--I'm a little ashamed of what I'm going to tell you--he handed out flower seeds. Now, this was a long time ago, and I gave books of matches. At that time that was acceptable, books of matches, you know. And on top of that inside cover, when you

opened it up, you'd have your campaign statement in there. There were twenty matches.

ISOARDI: Oh yeah. It's always being opened up then.

BANE: That's right. We're going around the stores. I'd run to a grocery store, and he would be there standing at the door and handing out his literature. So I'd say, "Hi, [William E.] Bill [Roskam Jr.]," and I'd go in the store. And I'd go around and hit everybody in the store personally who were in the market for something. First, I'd hit the people at the cash register, then go around and come out. I got kicked out of more than one store.

ISOARDI: You probably made some contacts before they got you?

BANE: That's right, you betcha. Well, I could see over the top of the counters, the store shelves of food, I could see where the manager was. I knew [where] the manager was, I knew where his office was in the store, so I'd go in the other end. So I was really being more effective, I think, than he was at the time. And every once in a while I'd run into a guy who would say, "Your opponent gave me flowers," and I'd say with a

drawn out, "I know." [Laughter] All I'd say is:

"I know." That wouldn't go over today.

[Laughter] I beat that man two to one.

ISOARDI: That must have felt good.

BANE: Well, I've never forgotten that remark of his: I couldn't have done to his friend what he did to him.

ISOARDI: Yeah, extraordinary thing to say.

BANE: The difference [was] I had the sensitivity for the issues and why. We kept an apparent friendship while we were campaigning, you know, because he wanted me to support him after he won.

ISOARDI: There wasn't a doubt in his head that he was going to win, probably.

BANE: And I wanted his support after I won. Anyway, we're on a tour one night. Of course, I was never the speaker he was, never was, except that I had both the understanding and the feeling for the issues. We never spoke against each other, except one night at the end of the campaign. We both ended up at the Burbank Democratic Club. Bill spoke first, and beautifully, you know, all proper speech and everything. And I remember I got up and said, "I want to tell you this. I

think Bill Roskam is one of the finest speakers I've ever heard. He's trained, and it certainly shows." That night I took an issue. I said, "He's for this, he's against that, but he didn't tell you why," and I leaned over the rostrum. I took my hands over here like this at the rostrum. I talked about the issue, and the point here and the point there and the point there.

ISOARDI: Substance.

BANE: He told me that night that I beat him. He said, "Take my cue leaning over the rostrum," [Laughter] which was also a great joy. One of the enjoyments I haven't forgotten. Well, I thought what he did to his friend was about as.... I mean, some of that comes out somewhere. I've always had the feeling the public senses beyond the speech. It may be that the public has a built-in sense about what's in the heart and in the stomach. What they hear, whether they like or dislike a candidate. But Jesse [M.] Unruh.... You know Jesse Unruh?

ISOARDI: Yes.

BANE: Jesse Unruh supported my opponent over me. Excuse my phrase: I think the son of a bitch

supported the Republican incumbent against me in the general [election].

ISOARDI: In your first campaign.

BANE: It was in the first campaign, yeah.

ISOARDI: What a beginning.

BANE: So I got elected, and labor was supporting [Augustus F.] Gus Hawkins for speaker. Gus Hawkins is the only politician who came into my district to talk to me.

ISOARDI: During your first campaign in '58. No one else did?

BANE: No.

ISOARDI: Certainly not Unruh, then.

BANE: No. And Hawkins gave me fifty dollars for my campaign. Fifty dollars at that time was a standard contribution. Now you sneer at it, but fifty dollars was fifty dollars. Labor was supporting him, and Burkhalter was supporting him, so I ended up supporting Hawkins for speaker. You understand all this time leading up, I was very strongly in favor of the Fair Employment Practices [Act]. I used to speak about discrimination, anti-discrimination, and the fault of discrimination. I spoke about the

issue around the district at certain clubs. I was sort of stricken by the unfairness of it. So I guess I was a zealot. I was very outspoken with the issue. Somebody said--I guess he was the manager of the chamber of commerce--"I think that Tom Bane is a communist."

ISOARDI: Because of your support for that?

BANE: Yeah. I said, "No. I don't think Tom Bane's a communist. He may be a zealot, but he...."  
[Laughter] So the primary issue involved for me was the area of discrimination.

ISOARDI: During that first campaign.

BANE: Always. I have a 100 percent voting record in Sacramento. I wrote the hate crimes bill that you hear about now.

ISOARDI: Right, right. To what do you attribute this? Does a lot of it go back to the very early experiences you remember as a kid?

BANE: As I felt discrimination, yeah. I knew what it was like. I always felt like an outsider.

ISOARDI: So very sensitive to those issues.

BANE: However, my dad was a liberal in that respect. My mother was a bigot, you know. A lovely lady, but she was a bigot. And I could never

BANE: understand what she was talking about as a kid. I know that her brother had married a Jewish lady, and my mother hated her. Oh, she hated her. I went down to visit my uncle in Los Angeles once, and met her and spent some time with her. I couldn't see anything wrong. She was a very nice lady. [Laughter] So I never understood that, until later, when I started to understand the issue. It wasn't just Jews. I can remember she was complaining about the guy across the street, who had married a Chinese girl. They moved across the street, and she had the audacity to come out front, you know. I guess it was fortunate my mother was so extreme because she had no influence on me whatsoever. But I did have some personal experience with my father who wasn't, and my mother who was.

[End Tape 1, Side B]

[Session 2, December 17, 1994]

[Begin Tape 2, Side A]

ISOARDI: OK, Mr. Bane, let's, before we get into...

BANE: I can't remember where we left off.

ISOARDI: Yeah. We were talking last time about your first campaign, and we had sort of made a note last time that we would go back a bit, because you wanted to talk a little bit about the California Democratic Council and Alan Cranston. So maybe you could begin with that, and then we'll get back to your first campaign.

BANE: I want to get something for you.

ISOARDI: Oh, OK.

BANE: My favorite camp...

[Interruption]

...And he was a...

ISOARDI: This is Alan Cranston.

BANE: Yeah. He headed up the California Democratic Council movement. It became known for short as CDC, California Democratic Council. And they

were a formation of Democratic clubs in California. It was a movement. It lasted a certain length of time.

ISOARDI: Why did it start?

BANE: Oh, well, it just did.

ISOARDI: Was there a growing sense of activism within the party?

BANE: Yeah, there was a...

ISOARDI: Did you feel that when you got involved?

BANE: Of course, the county committees were always in existence in California. That's the official part of the California government. It was set up in the [legal] codes. You run for county committee just like you run for state assembly and other things. So the basis of it, of course, was there. I think the Republican party had been controlling California, pretty much. But Cranston was the one who started getting the clubs together in the different councils, county committees, forming the California [Democratic] Council, the CDC. The beginning of it in my area was.... Well, there was another part of that, too. There was the fact that the Communist party had come in to take over the Democratic party in

California. So we had this very left-wing movement, which the Communist party was. They were taking over the county committees and...

ISOARDI: Where was that happening? You said they were taking over some county committees?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Where at? Here in southern California?

BANE: Yeah. Particularly in southern California. I can remember a strong division in the Democratic county committee. I'm going to have to phrase it.... In a way it was lying underneath the movement of the communists, which were very active. In the district that I lived in I guess, about two or three people who became well-known.... The documentation is they were communists. I was propositioned to join the Communist party on the dance floor. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: When was this, and what was it about? How did it happen?

BANE: Just plain I was asked if I wanted to join the Communist...

ISOARDI: While you were dancing with someone.

BANE: Yes. Do I want to join the Communist party. I knew her ties. I said, "Well, I'm not a

communist." She says, "Well, I know that because I asked you to become one."

ISOARDI: Was this someone you knew very well?

BANE: Yeah. It wasn't a cold contact. My strong position on some of the issues, particularly discrimination, qualified me. [Laughter] But they became very active in the Democratic party, and then they broke off on the Henry [A.] Wallace party, you know, the third party candidate.

ISOARDI: The progressives.

BANE: And they pulled a lot of the liberal Democrats with them. A lot of people who enjoy anything that was democratic, you know. The Henry Wallace party was composed of a lot of liberal Democrats [who were] in leadership positions in the Independent Progressive party. It had been the Progressive party first, it then became Democrats for Wallace. There was another adjunct, which was tied in very closely with the Independent Progressive party, [which] was an insurance program. And [what] wrapped up that whole area was the activity of the Independent Workers of the World.

ISOARDI: You're referring to an organization?

BANE: [Industrial] Workers of the World. Well, that's a long way before your time.

ISOARDI: You don't mean the Wobblies, IWW?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: One big union.

BANE: I'm trying to figure out how all of this fits together.

ISOARDI: Yeah. Do the people who are a part of that, then, eventually become part of the California Democratic Council? Is that partly what the California Democratic Council comes out of?

BANE: Well, the way the Communist party worked was that it got people together, not under the name of the Communist party, you know, but under other groups. They were part of the stimulus that was very active in the formation of Democratic clubs. But it doesn't mean that all the Democratic clubs were pro-communist, or even that they had communists working in them. From there, when Henry Wallace came on the scene, their movement was to move their cohorts and the people that had been influenced into a third party called the Independent Progressive party. So the communists pulled out of the Democratic party into the

Independent Progressive party for a while. You don't want all the rest of the stuff, do you?

ISOARDI: If this is background for the California Democratic Council. I mean, you were going to talk about its origins and its importance in the fifties.

BANE: When it was evident that Henry Wallace was being considered to run for president, the communists at that time felt the need to consolidate the gains they had made in influencing people. They formed the Independent Progressive party within the Democratic Council and with the Democratic party. It was supposed to be just a branch of the Democratic party, but what it really was was a movement of.... Oh, some of the stuff comes back. There started to be investigations. The McCarthy era came into being, which was feeding on the development and the activity of the Communist party in the United States. But he went overboard. So when the campaign came along, it was Democrats for Wallace. It was stimulated by the Communist party, the activity in the council, and the activity in every place in the Democratic party they could get into. Their idea

was to take over the Democratic party. Boy, that's taking me way back.

ISOARDI: Does Cranston's California Democratic Council come out of that subsequently?

BANE: No, you've got to get it in order.

ISOARDI: Oh, OK.

BANE: The official Democratic county committees existed in the state, all of the chartered Democratic clubs underneath them. And there was a movement of people forming Democratic clubs and becoming active in the Democratic party. Amongst those were some very active communists. They were the ones that were very active in meetings and did all the speaking. They were very active and organized. So they had an influence on the Democratic clubs. I have to presume--now I'm presuming this--they favored the formation of the Democratic Council citywide, because they were making a major move in politics, [to place] the control of the Democratic party under communist control. So the council developed, which was composed of official Democratic elected people on the county committee who had been Democrats all their life. Labor became part of the movement.

And for the Communist party, all this fit in with their plans, which were going on at the same time. But then the split came, and Wallace became a candidate for president of the United States. And out of that group was formed the Democrats for Wallace. This became made up of labor, Democrats who were really American citizens in America and then really Democrats, and liberal Democrats, which were probably at that time socialists. The Upton Sinclair thing came before that. But there were the socialists who were so way up to Sinclair. [He] had a slogan of End Poverty in California, the EPIC program.

ISOARDI: The EPIC program, yeah.

BANE: During all those stages, my father had pressured me so much in politics that I had nothing to do with it in the early stages of the EPIC program. [It was] not until after my father died that I joined the Democratic club. My resentment of him was intense, but he left his mark on me.  
[Laughter]

ISOARDI: Certainly did.

BANE: But I was a Democrat now. So was he. But he'd

be classified as a conservative today, probably.

I don't seem to be developing any trend.

ISOARDI: Maybe you can get up to.... When does the council really come together as an organization?

BANE: I can't tell you the year.

ISOARDI: Roughly, is it the early fifties? Are you active when this happens, are you in politics?

BANE: When it came together?

ISOARDI: Are you following this development?

BANE: Yeah, I was active in the development of the council. In the process I wrote campaign literature for select candidates that the council pulled together. They elected their slate of candidates, and you saw the slate cards. Those were where the slate cards came from.

ISOARDI: Really? It was your idea?

BANE: Yeah. The whole computer campaign thing was developed from me. [Laughter] I can vouch for that.

ISOARDI: So you pretty much found yourself in agreement with the council, the California Democratic Council, as it was emerging now?

BANE: You have to understand that in the Democratic Council, there was a line between Democrats and

the communists.

ISOARDI: What were some of the things that you liked about the council?

BANE: It was organizing people in labor unions and in politics, people who wanted to become active in the Democratic party and support candidates against the Republican candidates. So it was an official Democratic party working for a reason. Just because it had a sprinkling of communists around, who were very vocal and very informed, trying to steer them where they wanted to go.... I presume that the communists made a move on me because I was incensed when I became aware of the unfairness in discrimination, the unfairness of it. It just wasn't fair. And I think they took that as an indication that I could be had. It became apparent in the Democratic county committee when they asked me to fill a vacancy. But my district clubs were very heavily influenced by communists, and the Democrats pretty well knew the Forty-second [Assembly] District was a really left-wing group.

ISOARDI: Well, maybe as a way of getting up to your first campaign, then, maybe you can talk about what the

district was like and the type of people who were there and the type of issues that concerned the Forty-second District then.

BANE: Well, the Forty-second District was composed of organized labor...

ISOARDI: Geographically, what area did it cover?

BANE: The Lockheed [Aircraft Corporation] union [International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, Lodge 727]. Lockheed union could elect anybody they wanted to political office. The district was composed of labor. It was composed of a heavily Jewish population. It was composed of people in civic organizations: the Lions Club, etc.; the [American] Heart Association; the PTA [Parent-Teacher Association]; all those organizations. So it was composed of an active citizenry.

ISOARDI: And heavily working-class, ethnic?

BANE: Not necessarily.

ISOARDI: No?

BANE: I'd say, what we refer to now as the middle-class majority. There are lots of clubs around for various things, support groups. You know, my wife [Marlene Rothstein Bane] is very active in

the Jewish Home for the Aging. She was one of the instigators of the Valley Jewish Business Leaders Association. Of course, I was always very active with the Jewish Home for the Aging. You don't know anything about it, do you?

ISOARDI: No, I don't.

BANE: Fantastic home for the aged. And when I was in the legislature, I helped with some of their programs. I always attended their functions and always honored their leaders. And if they had problems, my office was always willing to help. So you have the ADL, the Anti-Defamation League. I'm still on the board of the Anti-Defamation League. I was on the board of the National Jewish Fund. So there are lots of groups, you know, church groups.

ISOARDI: Was this a heavily Democratic area then?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Even in the fifties?

BANE: No one had been able to put it together. There was a young labor leader. I don't know whether it was César [E.] Chávez or not. He was a highly intelligent man.

[End Tape 2, Side A]

[Begin Tape 2, Side B]

BANE: I remember a conversation I had with him. Because the district was represented by a Republican all the time, he said, "If the right person came along and could put the district together, they could take the district." And we discussed the districts, in which I saw very clearly the organizational structure. So there had been several moves on people's part to get me to run for office, which I thought was ridiculous. I was just Tom Bane. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: Really? The idea didn't appeal to you initially. You didn't see yourself as a politician.

BANE: I didn't see myself as well-known or important enough, something like that. My son [Bruce William Bane] was asthmatic, so we moved out of Burbank and into Sunland, in the Tujunga area, because it's good for asthmatics. I became active there.... They tried to convince me to have a base in Sunland-Tujunga so I could win, you know. Well, I didn't know enough about that business of running for office, raising money.

ISOARDI: But hadn't you run someone else's campaign?

BANE: Well, in the process [that's] why I formed a

council. Our CDC club ran Jess Nathan. I wrote the CDC's campaign literature. I don't know whether those were originals or not.

ISOARDI: So when your own first campaign came up, you felt initially you didn't have quite enough background. You figured you're still a novice?

BANE: Well, the thing I didn't understand and don't today really is.... Of course, my wife, she looks upon me as a very important person. [Laughter] You know, I was able to do a lot of good things.

ISOARDI: What were some of the issues, then, in your first campaign? Since you were so successful, you must have tapped into something in your district.

BANE: Well, the president of the Lockheed union was a personal friend [John Snyder].

ISOARDI: Oh, the machinists union?

BANE: Yeah. That was really the key to it. In fact, they had the big debate between Roskam and me as a way to see who they were going to support. Finally it came to a showdown [that] labor was getting together. They were inviting to get together--[Lodge] 727, that's a machinists union--who they were going to support and who

they weren't. The Sica brothers and the Mafia were in this picture about the same time in Burbank. Floyd Jolly was their candidate. Let me take that back. I shouldn't have said that. [I] take it back. [Laughter] Let me rephrase it. The Kefauver committee labeled Floyd Jolly as the ringleader of the Burbank city councilmen and the Burbank City Council. Floyd Jolly had been a very prominent football player at Burbank High School. When Kefauver came on, my brother organized two people out of each civic organization in Burbank and brought them together. [They] decided they would clean up Burbank, and I wrote the campaign literature for them.

ISOARDI: They were supporting a candidate?

BANE: No.

ISOARDI: They were just sort of exerting pressure on the city council to clean up the city?

BANE: No, they selected candidates that ran. I didn't know which candidates they were supporting or not supporting.

ISOARDI: Yeah.

BANE: My brother was active in that. I may have

painted a wrong view of my father to you. He was a very good man. Highly principled. Just because I was a teenager, I didn't want to be involved in politics. I had basketball and other things on my mind, school.

ISOARDI: I think last time you gave an impressive portrait of him.

BANE: Well, I was talking about my intense resentment of his always wanting to talk politics with me, not to mean that I didn't respect him.

ISOARDI: During the first campaign, what were sort of the issues that separated you and Roskam? Was there anything very substantial.

BANE: Flower seeds versus book matches. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: That was it? [Laughter] So you guys were pretty alike in your thinking?

BANE: Yeah, our position on issues was the same.

ISOARDI: Was the same.

BANE: But it came down to that he didn't have any feeling in the gut about the issues. He didn't understand the guts.

ISOARDI: Exactly. But also it sounded like you were a much more effective communicator as well because of that, having that gut feeling for the issues.

BANE: Well, you understand, after I talked about my experience of going throughout the state of California in different areas and being always attacked as soon as I went into a new town, that had an effect on me. I don't know [if] that was all of it. I know my father was a very fair, just man. And as I described him last time, I remember we talked some about a judge he elected to office. But he wouldn't let me take the job because he did not want to [give] the feeling that his family would receive any benefit from his political activity. He wasn't going to share in what we would call patronage. It was principle, and he wanted to keep it that way. I'm having a hard time today, I think, putting all this together.

ISOARDI: Can I just sort of wind it up with maybe a last question on your campaign?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: You were talking about how the Forty-second District, when you looked at the demographics of it, should have been a Democratic area, but it wasn't. Different components were never really being pulled together. Obviously, when you come

along in your campaign, you really succeed in pulling it together. You win. Is it primarily because....

BANE: Did you read the back of the card, the elephant card?

ISOARDI: Is this card your campaign handout from that first campaign?

BANE: Well, if you want to get into the campaign, I can pull that together pretty easily.

ISOARDI: This is a piece of campaign literature with your present positions on the back, the various organizations you were a member of...

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: ...where you had served, your education, and a long list of various activities.

BANE: I was active in the community.

ISOARDI: So that's how. That's what gave you the edge that previous candidates didn't have: that you were really involved.

BANE: Well, I had supported all the various candidates for city council and the mayor of Burbank and stuff like that, so when I ran they became my campaign committee.

ISOARDI: So you had worked hard for people.

BANE: Yeah, I had worked hard for people. So they still had the active elements of communist leaders in the valley, which understood me very well. They could not get me, you know. They ended up supporting Roskam. So the CDC, then, went for Roskam.

ISOARDI: The CDC did? They didn't back you?

BANE: No. Which is understandable, though.

ISOARDI: But you had been working in that organization. You had been part of the CDC.

BANE: Oh yeah. There was an issue, yes, and that was the loyalty oath. That was a hot issue.

ISOARDI: Oh. You and Roskam differed on that.

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: You opposed it?

BANE: No, you got me wrong. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: You supported it, and he opposed it?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Really? Why did you support it?

BANE: Well, the communists really gave me a rough time within the party. I'm really sorry this issue came up between me and an educator. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: So that is probably why the CDC didn't support you, because of your position on that?

BANE: That's right, yeah. That's why I got elected.

ISOARDI: Well, it sounds like you also had union support. That must have carried substantial weight.

BANE: Oh yes.

ISOARDI: It sounds like you had the California Democratic Council against you. You had people like Jesse Unruh, then, also against you. You had a lot of heavyweights against you, but on the other hand you had...

BANE: Jesse Unruh was not with the council. Jesse Unruh had his total agenda of control of the state assembly.

ISOARDI: And he was working through the local council?

BANE: And I was not a very controllable man.

[Laughter]

ISOARDI: So I mean, in a sense, you owe your victory to going a little bit outside the powers that be, the formal structures, to an extent.

BANE: Yeah. We had people from New York and Chicago come in here, take over, and teach us how to do it. They never understood all the other groups besides the political group. Their minds stopped there. My father was a community activist. My brother used to coach the high school basketball

team during the summers, and he had to quit because they wanted him to coach during the school year, too.

ISOARDI: I know somebody who recently ran for Congress east of here, in the Twenty-seventh Congressional [District], and he's somebody who sort of ran outside as well. The local Democratic committees endorsed somebody else in the Democratic primary. He hadn't been around very long, and they didn't know him well. But he spent all of his time in the community, knocking on doors, mailing things out, talking to people. He ended up winning, like 51 to 49 percent in the primary.

BANE: Uh-huh.

ISOARDI: Do an end run. [Laughter]

BANE: Well, I went up the center. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: OK. Shall we...

BANE: OK. I'm sorry I'm not very good for you today.

[End Tape 2, Side B]

[Session 3, June 3, 1995]

[Begin Tape 3, Side A]

ISOARDI: OK, Tom.

BANE: OK.

ISOARDI: We finished up with your first successful campaign for assembly last time. You're on your way to Sacramento for the first time. What are your thoughts?

BANE: Well, of course, all the things that happened in my life before that as a kid, and my fears of going someplace new, were all...

ISOARDI: Were those thoughts in your mind as you went back there, as you went to Sacramento for the first time? "Here I am, going to another new place again."

BANE: Yeah. And I developed that feeling because I went to schools--four and five and six different schools a year--following my father around, who was a state highway inspector. The experiences that I had with the reception I got at the L.A.

city schools, which were bad, all revisited me. So I didn't want to walk up there. Everybody was really suspect, an enemy.

ISOARDI: So you went up kind of defensive, then.

BANE: Yeah, very defensively. I feared everybody there was against me. They probably were. [Laughter] The leadership had to be, because Jesse Unruh was the most active leader at that time. He had supported my opponent in the Democratic primary.

ISOARDI: That's right. So this is another reason for thinking they'd probably be against you.

BANE: I had suspicion to believe that he made a deal with the Republican in my district, an incumbent, to vote for his candidate, Ralph [M.] Brown, as speaker. I used the word "suspicions."

ISOARDI: But as far as you know, Unruh didn't support the Republican candidate against you, did he? Or did they just sort of back off, and not give you the support they could have?

BANE: Oh, I didn't get any support because I'd run against the party-endorsed candidate.

ISOARDI: But after that, when you had the nomination, they didn't...

BANE: No. There were indications that Jesse was

inclined to my Republican opponent, because the speakership battle was his main thing, and [it] becomes the main thing in the legislature. Who the speaker is is very key, very important. And the enemies that are made in the battle for speakership stay forever, mostly. And I supported Gus Hawkins, who the people who were supporting me [supported]. The local city councilman, who had been in the legislature, was a friend of Gus's and he sort of steered me in that direction. Jesse sent word to the president of the Lockheed union, [Lodge] 727 machinist union, which at that time had thousands of employees in the valley.

ISOARDI: And you've got a pretty close relationship with them, right? You were part of the machinists.

BANE: I was a machinist, and the president of the machinists was a friend of mine. I'd say that he was very responsible for getting labor behind me in the primary. Somehow I survived the primary, won the primary and survived the general election against an incumbent Republican, which I think some people were surprised I was able to do. But I worked awfully hard, and I had some good

support.

ISOARDI: Did Unruh tell the machinists to back off supporting you or working hard for you?

BANE: No. What Jesse did was, after I won the general election--when John Snyder was the president of the Lockheed union and a well-known political figure in California--Jesse told John, "You better tell Tom Bane who's boss up here in Sacramento. He better find out fast."

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Did he deliver the message to you?

BANE: Delivered the message to me. I said, "You tell him Jesse Unruh is not my boss and never will be." [Laughter] Well, tell him I was ready for a fight, you know. Just natural reactions, you know.

ISOARDI: Well, did you see Jesse Unruh as the latest in a long line of bullies?

BANE: Yes.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] So this is a pretty familiar scenario to you, then?

BANE: Oh yes. I was ready for the fight.

ISOARDI: Had you met him at this point?

BANE: Jesse? I may have seen him in some of the political battles that went on in California over

who the state chairman was.

ISOARDI: But you'd never been formally introduced and sat down and talked, or anything like that.

BANE: No. We'd been in meetings together, I saw him.

ISOARDI: So you've thrown down your gauntlet on your way up to Sacramento.

BANE: You're right.

ISOARDI: Right. So then you go to Sacramento. You've staked out your territory. [Laughter]

BANE: Well, labor had a big meeting every year--a luncheon--at which they introduced the new legislators to labor and to the crowd that came to the luncheon, and to each one of us. They, too, were supporting Gus Hawkins. I ran for office as a labor candidate. My billboards were endorsed by the IAM [International Association of Machinist and Aerospace Workers], AFL-CIO [American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations], you know. So I was obviously a labor candidate. Labor was kind of anti-Jesse.

ISOARDI: Why was that?

BANE: Well, you form your friends, and you're moving them around. Jesse was not really liked by

labor. He once said to me, "Damn you, Tom. You and I have the same voting record, yet labor likes you and they don't like me." [Laughter] So I explained to him that I go to labor to give them everything they want me to give. I'm their friend. They accept the things I can't give. And I feel badly when I can't vote the way they want me to vote, because we're friends. "You [Unruh] go to them as an enemy, and the votes you give them, you make concessions to give them." So the whole approach is different.

ISOARDI: With you, you're part of the family. With him, it's always horse trading.

BANE: Yeah. But it came out to the same thing because our voting records were the same. I was a friend of labor, a labor candidate. Well, I went down to this luncheon, then. I was invited to come down to a big labor luncheon. And sitting down right in front of the podium was this table with the Democratic leadership: Jesse Unruh and [William A.] Bill Munnell. So smart-ass Bane... [Laughter]

ISOARDI: What did you do?

BANE: Gus Hawkins was out of the race, not officially,

but quite apparently. He didn't have the votes. And Jesse Unruh and Ralph Brown were under Jesse's tutelage, support. Management really was coming away with the votes for speaker. So I looked down at that son of a bitch... [Laughter]

ISOARDI: Which, at the time, is how you thought of him, right?

BANE: That's just how I thought about him. I said, "Well, I'm not sure whether Gus Hawkins is still in the race for speaker, but I'm still supporting him." [Laughter] I looked right down at Jesse. You can see I was driven by the old fears, and working against the odds, which I did. I was strong enough to take my position, and work[ed] hard enough to support it. For instance, I can't give you any figures for the first time I ran, [when I] won that race, but I engaged in what I refer to as hand-to-hand combat. You know, meeting people in the streets and in the markets and places. Last time I ran, which was again against the party leadership, I set a goal and in the primary I met over a hundred thousand people personally.

ISOARDI: Personally and individually.

BANE: I kept count by the giveaways I gave, the book of matches, which was my stock-in-trade at that time. It was when matches were popular. And I met a hundred thousand. I set a hundred thousand as a goal. It's very effective. God, that's so effective.

ISOARDI: All of your campaigns.... Well, your approach in general, you're a tireless worker. It seems like you just pour this energy, whether it's campaigning.... But more than most people.

BANE: Yeah. In that race, I had a schedule. I'd get up at four-thirty in the morning, shave and shower and dress and get ready for the route during the day, which started at the General Motors [Corporation] plant at five-thirty in the morning, handing out my matches and saying "Hi" to the guys as they went to work. If they went to work at six o'clock, I'd be down there at five-thirty in the morning. Then the other shifts would start at six-thirty. As soon as the employment bell rang, I didn't bother anybody. I just left right then and went to the next location, which I had plotted out. So it would

take me maybe ten minutes to get to the other location in the Valley, or the workers' shop, and I'd be at another plant gate, handing out my stuff. You know, some places started work at seven. I'd be there. I worked labor--state employees, city employees--[which] would take me until nine-thirty. When I went to those offices, I'd walk up to the separated swing gates, [which are] out in front of all offices to keep people out that don't belong there. I would wave to somebody in the back--I don't know who I was waving to--I'd take the gate and go right on back, turn around, and hand out my matches. So I did that at bus stops. I'd stop at a bus stop and talk to everybody who was catching a bus. They were Democrats.

ISOARDI: Not many Republican bus riders.

BANE: Then I worked the stores in Van Nuys, or any other town I happened to be around. I'd talk to the clerks and see them. When I say talk to them, I really didn't mean do any good chatting. Really, my conversation was very intense. "Hi, I'm Tom Bane, and I'm running for state assembly. I'd appreciate your vote," and on my way to the

next person. I had a big button: "I'm Tom Bane." So they'd see my big button, "I'm Tom Bane." So they would see Tom Bane, and I am Tom Bane; they saw it, they heard it, and I left them a book of matches--or something--to help them remember me. It was a volume operation, really, you know. I don't know how many people you've ever met in a store or market.

ISOARDI: Well, I used to work as a clerk in one, so I met quite a few. [Laughter]

BANE: Where did you work?

ISOARDI: Oh, when I was a kid and I lived up in northern California, there was a chain called Lee Brothers. I was a retail clerk at Lee Brothers. That's how I paid for part of my education, pushing the cash register.

BANE: You see more candidates in that position...

ISOARDI: You do.

BANE: But most candidates would stand outside the door, because they weren't allowed in the store, and hand out their literature. Not me. I'd walk in that store...

ISOARDI: Until they threw you out?

BANE: Yeah, they always threw me out. [Laughter] The

guy who was my coach was Everett Burkhalter, who developed this technique. He says, "Tom, I've been thrown out of some of the best places in town." [Laughter]

ISOARDI: You know, if you had not got into politics, you would have been a great union organizer.

[Laughter]

BANE: I remember the time in Burbank at the Elks Club, they were having a dance. So I went in, worked the dance floor, and [met] the people there. They escorted me out. So I went out the front door on their arm. Around the back door, which I knew where it was...

ISOARDI: Went back in.

BANE: Went back in, and talked to people that were cooking. I had been taught that you always want to talk to people who'd been cooking. Most people don't bother with them. But you go in there, they'll remember you. So when they're serving dinners and stuff, I go down and see them. The guy that closely replicates my work is Gray Davis, by the way. I saw him the other day. He's going to make it for governor just because he's working so hard all the time, all the time.

Anyway, I had a chance to meet as many people as it was possible to meet.

ISOARDI: Where does your work ethic come from? I mean, your campaigning and your work as a legislator, you're just a tireless, absolutely tireless worker. Where does that kind of commitment and drive come from?

BANE: From my father, I guess. Our family was a work family. Times were kind of tough in those old days. We lived up in Mint Canyon. I don't know whether you know where that is or not. It's on the way toward Palmdale. It was a poor family, you know, the three of us boys. This was a shack, and I really mean shack.

ISOARDI: So from early on, everybody was working all the time.

BANE: Oh yeah. Or trying to. I had a terrible time dealing with retirement.

ISOARDI: Yes, I would think so.

BANE: Terrible time.

ISOARDI: That must have been a jolt.

BANE: Just a terrible time.

ISOARDI: Why did you finally retire? Why at that particular point?

BANE: I was in my seventies. I'd been on my back from a couple of back surgeries. The last years I spent two years in pain. It just became time for me to leave.

ISOARDI: Well, you probably couldn't have gone at your job with the kind of energy that you normally would. Was that part of your thinking, then?

BANE: Well, I knew that I was highly respected and had built a reputation, and I wanted to be remembered that way. I was on a downhill. So many old people stay there until they lose an election. I didn't want to go out a loser, you know. Besides, I was talking about whether I made a major accomplishment legislatively. I'd pretty well fulfilled the reason I went into politics. And term limitations came up, and on top of that, what's my goal, what else am I going to do, what's my chore. I guess the only thing that had my interest was education. And with term limits, nobody can do anything about education.

ISOARDI: Why's that?

BANE: Well, it takes forever to get a bill through.

ISOARDI: Especially with education, or just in general?

BANE: No. Anything that's controversial.

Discrimination, civil rights. One of my bills has been challenged constitutionally. I was the author of the hate crimes bill<sup>1</sup> or the civil rights bill, whatever you want to call it, which put major restrictions on people making a career of attacking minorities. I really accomplished a major goal, the major goal.

ISOARDI: So to a degree, you'd thought you'd achieved what you wanted in politics.

BANE: That's right.

ISOARDI: When you first went up to Sacramento, how much of an agenda did you have in mind? Were there certain things that you really wanted to accomplish? Did you sort of sit down one day and think of, "Okay. Now I've been elected: What are my goals?"

BANE: Well, the first one was to survive Jesse Unruh.  
[Laughter]

ISOARDI: So you were prepared for some big battles with him.

BANE: Yeah, and we had them. I was tougher than he was. Tougher and nastier than he was.

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<sup>1</sup> A.B. 2719, 1984 Reg. Sess., Cal. Stat., ch. 1449.

ISOARDI: When did you first encounter him directly? Do you remember that at all?

BANE: Well, the party in control, which was the Democrats, the speaker assigns the committee chairman and vice chairman. To strengthen their new members, they figured, "I'll give them the vice chairman of some committee." The title becomes something very important they can go home and brag about. Everybody got a vice chairmanship except Tom Bane.

ISOARDI: No kidding? Everyone.

BANE: Everyone.

ISOARDI: Did this surprise you?

BANE: No.

ISOARDI: How did you react?

BANE: Well, some things I'll tell you and some things I won't, unless you turn the mike off.

ISOARDI: Well, that's up to you. It's up to you what goes down on the record. [Laughter]

BANE: Our first verbal conflict with Jesse was he had a friend, [Jerome R.] Jerry Waldie, who was a very bright young man. We're standing, and being tall, I'm in the back row, and Jesse Unruh being shorter and Waldie being shorter, he ended up

right in front of me. So the first verbal encounter we had was smart-ass Jesse says to Jerry Waldie, "Watch it, Jerry. Tom Bane's behind us. We might get a knife." So smart-ass Bane says, "No, Jesse. When I give you the knife, I'll give it to you from the front. I want to see you wince." [Laughter]

ISOARDI: Oh jeez. Did he laugh?

BANE: He shrugged. [Laughter] I'm a little tough, you know.

ISOARDI: Probably not many people had told him something like that.

BANE: He was the man. He was the big shot. "No, Jesse. When I give you the knife, I'll give it to you from the front. I want to see you wince." [Laughter] So that didn't enhance our relationship. [Laughter] But it was part of my being ready to fight, because of all those years of going from school to school.

ISOARDI: You wanted to make very sure he understood you.

BANE: Well, the Bane family had a slogan: "Don't push the Bane wagon." [Laughter] I was raised in construction work. My father and brother were plastering contractors, and my brother was a

lather. The dirtiest job to do, then, was the hod carrier, to mix the mud and carry it on your shoulder and dump it on the mortar board.

ISOARDI: Backbreaking work.

BANE: One side of my body is developed much bigger [and] stronger than the other side. Because I started carrying mud with my hand in a bucket, because I couldn't lift the hod. That's okay. You go home and you're tired, and you feel good because you're tired. I don't know whether you can understand that or not.

ISOARDI: Yeah, I know that feeling.

BANE: But I know tougher words than Jesse Unruh ever.... [Laughter] I'd been out there, you know, with construction workers. So Jesse was a pushover.

ISOARDI: So you had a strong background, and you came to Sacramento also without his support. In fact, in almost opposition to him. So you didn't owe him anything, unlike probably other people who did.

BANE: Well, turn it off... [Laughter] [Interruption] ...Since I'd had many tough encounters in which I was just as nasty as I could be.

ISOARDI: How long did that last? How long were you in this kind of oppositional phase with Jesse Unruh? Did he try and win you over right away, or did it take awhile?

BANE: No. Although I was very much opposed to Jesse.... Ralph Brown came up to visit my office. I said, "Ralph, if you ever need a vote and you got to have it, let me know. But don't send Jesse Unruh to tell me, because you'll sure as hell lose a vote if you do. Would you do that?" He had a very good secretary, I can't remember her name now, but "Just have her stop by and tell me you need a vote."

ISOARDI: You got along well with Ralph Brown.

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: What was your opinion of him as a speaker?

BANE: Well, Jesse had picked him as a speaker, I think, because he was an agreeable guy, a nice guy. He wanted a judgeship, and speakership to him was a step to the judgeship.

ISOARDI: Oh, that was his real motivation.

BANE: Yeah. Ralph was a tall, gray-haired, courtly gentleman, which, believe it or not, is the reputation I eventually established. [Laughter]

BANE: That has nothing to do with my encounter with Jesse Unruh. But he started it, or did he? Yeah, he did. But I liked campaigns, you know, and they used to have special elections. They'd ask for workers. I was always there working. And, of course, Jesse was generally running the office for specials. I'd go down and work the precincts. And they didn't find many people to do that, you know. So I was a vigorous worker. I know the first time we worked together was down in Los Angeles. They ran out of literature at the headquarters. They had a bunch of people come the next day, "What the hell are we going to do?" They said, "We need some literature." It takes four days to get campaign literature printed. I said, "You want some literature." "Yeah, that's it." "I'll get you some." I took a copy of one of the brochures they had. I said, "I can't get it done in two colors, but I can get it done overnight." "You know how to do that? Okay." I don't think he thought I could do it. So I took a piece of literature, went to a print shop where there was a young kid about sixteen years old. His father ran a union shop out in

the valley. The union shop, you understand. I had been a union man, and we had worked together in the union politics. He shot it, and that night he ran twenty-five thousand pieces. And the next morning I showed up with twenty-five thousand pieces of literature, a little wet, [Laughter] but it was there.

ISOARDI: It was done, yeah.

BANE: I got involved a little bit in the strategy. So Jesse says, "Tom, I like the way you work." I said, "Gee, thanks." And he said, "I'd like you to join my team." "I would do that, Jesse, as long as you understand I don't sit on any bench for anybody's team." So he said, "Well, we've got a vice chairmanship coming up." I said, "Well, Jesse, you owed me that when I came up here. It's the chairmanship or nothing." [Laughter] Freshman Democrat, you know. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: That's what you told him?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Now, how long had you been up there when this happened? A few months? A year maybe?

BANE: Well, that was somewhere along that. Ten, twelve

months.

[End Tape 3, Side A]

[Begin Tape 3, Side B]

ISOARDI: So did this stop him in his tracks, when you told him you were demanding a chairmanship?

BANE: He gave me a chairmanship.

ISOARDI: He did, without any problem, without any fight?

BANE: That was the price.

ISOARDI: Non-negotiable.

BANE: He got to know me by that time. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: So I guess in that sense, it wouldn't have surprised him, then. [Laughter] So that's when he made you chairman of [the Committee on] Industrial Relations. Were you the only freshman with a chairmanship?

BANE: Yes. It was fair, don't you think? [Laughter]

ISOARDI: Well, you were the only one without anything, and you just leapfrog it.

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: What did that mean to you when he said, "I want you to be part of my team"?

BANE: Oh, you see, I knew I was successful up there. Through Ralph Brown I got appointed to a joint senate-assembly Committee on Water. Jesse

couldn't stop that. I was carrying some transportation legislation as a freshman--it was a resolution--and he was going to stop that, except I asked the chairman of the Transportation Committee to carry the bill. So that screwed him up again.

ISOARDI: So you got it through.

BANE: I got it through.

ISOARDI: What was the bill about, do you remember?

BANE: Oh, it was an early bill on smog control.

ISOARDI: Was Unruh opposing it just because it was yours?

BANE: Well, he just wanted to be sure that.... The guy that carried that resolution would go back to a national meeting. And he was going to see to it that I didn't.

ISOARDI: So as long as someone else carried it, it was OK.

BANE: Well, yeah. That makes sense that the chairman would go back. He saw me be effective on the floor. And you think of somebody who wants to be speaker, you can't afford to have somebody that's smart fighting you.

ISOARDI: So you were emerging as one of the most effective new members of the assembly, and he saw that.

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Plus I'm sure he admired your work ethic as well.

BANE: Oh yeah. You know, he ran across my work on the [California] Constitution. Every member is given so many constitutions every year to send out to lawyers and constituents. So I set up a system of sending out a constitution and keeping track of who I sent it to. And then when it was amended--any amendments that would fit into their books--I would send them copies of the amendments to the constitution. And he saw these and said, "My God." [Laughter] He and I became good friends.

ISOARDI: From this point on, you agree to join his inner circle, right, which is essentially the Democratic leadership, right, controlling the assembly.

BANE: Well, I don't think he made that full of an offer.

ISOARDI: So what did this involve, then, initially, being a part of this group? And who were you with, who else was there?

BANE: I was the chairman in my freshman year. How can you beat that? So that was enough. I wasn't hungry. I was a little burned over the vice

chairmanship, so I cured that.

ISOARDI: Nicely. [Laughter] So then you start working with Unruh. What form does that take? Or do you have regular meetings with him?

BANE: Well, the form it took was there was a vacancy on the Rules Committee, and I was put on the Rules Committee. And though there are signs of strength, I guess, in politics, you know, those are signs of power.

ISOARDI: The Rules Committee is very powerful.

BANE: In the next term I was up there, I was chairman of Rules.

ISOARDI: Are you meeting with Unruh on a regular basis at this point? I mean, when he says he wanted you to join his group, what did that mean? I mean, is it regular meetings? Is it just sort of casual get-togethers with people who think alike or people who want to exchange ideas?

BANE: He wanted me on his side.

ISOARDI: That was pretty much it, just in a general sense.

BANE: He wanted to get rid of me as an opponent. But you see, I'd been raised on union politics, so the mechanism of power in the assembly was nothing new to me.

ISOARDI: I guess now you're working more closely with Jesse Unruh.

BANE: Yeah. I was no longer fighting him, and he was no longer fighting me.

ISOARDI: So you're being pulled more into the leadership mechanism in the assembly?

BANE: Yeah. Your first glimpse of leadership power is when the chairmen get together in a meeting with the speaker. So I became part of that: the chairs meeting with the speaker. Jesse started out pretty much working with UC [University of California] and USC [University of Southern California]. Mainly UC, the University of California. And he developed a close relationship with some of the top people. Some were invited to meetings. I don't want you to be too impressed with my movement up.

ISOARDI: Why not?

BANE: Well, one day I was standing in the chamber and watched the people come through. The quality of membership at that time--making five hundred dollars a month--was very poor. He said, "What's the matter, Tom?" I said, "Why?" He says, "Kind of a funny look on your face." I said, "Well,

Jesse, I was just looking at the people in the chamber here. There's not a leader in the lot."

[Laughter] And he said, "Tom, did you ever think how tough on us it would be if they were all leaders?" He was a bright guy, you know. He was.

ISOARDI: Very savvy.

BANE: No leaders. Another quality out of this about Jesse. One time he did something very, very special, trying to make a friend out of an active enemy. Later on when his and my relationship was well established, I questioned him about it. He says, "You know, if I'd killed all my enemies, I wouldn't have any friends today."

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Very revealing comment. Very revealing.

BANE: So that his move to me was not out of character. However, my price was very high. He made friends out of his enemies. Very savvy man. Very strong, steady man. He couldn't handle bad press stories about him very well. That would throw him into a spin. He had two close friends: [Robert W.] Bobby Crown and Tom Bane. We always went out and wherever he was, we found him and

got him back to work.

ISOARDI: He had his passions, I guess. Or his appetites.

BANE: I won't enlarge upon that. [Laughter] His wife said, "I don't think Tom will make a good politician because he's not tough enough." He said "Not tough enough?" [Laughter] She was stunned when she understood how tough I was.

ISOARDI: So your evaluation when you got to the assembly, then, was that the assembly was very poor in terms of political leadership.

BANE: Oh, terrible. That's why I said, "I better not try to impress you."

ISOARDI: Why do you think that was the case? Was it just the pay? The pay was so low?

BANE: Well, it was a small state then, comparatively speaking, and the position of assemblyman wasn't much. Now they have all leaders up there. It's a mess.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Well, it's partly, maybe, because of what you and Jesse Unruh did.

BANE: No.

ISOARDI: I mean, in a sense you guys transformed the legislature very much.

BANE: Oh yeah. Yep.

ISOARDI: Was this something that, then, you were trying to change, trying to make the assembly, then, a stronger body, a body that would attract people who were leaders to it?

BANE: Well, the only plan on my part was the plan that developed to increase the caliber by increasing pay. For instance, five hundred dollars a month was not going to attract anybody, and so we tried various things that failed. I went to Jesse, and I said, "Jesse, the constitution needs revision. [It's] got a lot of old language in there and stuff like that. It really needs some revision. I'd like to form a Constitution Revision Commission, and while we're revising it, we can get rid of that restriction of five hundred dollars a month." "Well, we've tried everything else. You might as well try that." So I formed the California Constitution Revision Commission, and we asked for appointments from the press, major newspapers, from labor, from the [California] State Chamber of Commerce. We brought everybody into it. It became a very wholesome operation. Although I didn't hold any title in it, I really ran it and hired the staff.

BANE: I had a Republican staff member and a Republican chairman who had run for state treasurer as a Republican nominee. He and I had lots of ideas, you know, the same ideas. He is what I would call a liberal Republican, but he was a well-known Republican. So I chose him as a chairman rather than the top staff position. I put the elements together to make it a strong, desirable, and worthwhile project. And we did. [We] went through all the various sections of the constitution. We started out with [Article] IV, which was the legislative section. [We] had lots of meetings and studies. So we did do a really first-class, thorough general revision. We ran into one problem. That was an issue that affected the separation of church and state. We couldn't come to a consensus so we transferred that section to [Article] XIII. Separation of church and state drives the public wild. I didn't plan to move on that until we were just about finished with our work.

There was a young fellow who was a very, very bright young man, who'd been interested in politics ever since he was a little kid. Very

bright, a genius. High IQ: 180, something like that. I'd seen him come to the Democratic headquarters when he was a kid. He'd get a fistful of literature to go out door-to-door. I asked the office manager, "What did you give him that for? All he's going to do with that is to trash it." "Well, not Alan," said the office manager. So I followed Alan out the door, ten paces behind, got in my car and went out in the area that he was supposed to be walking and watched him. Sure enough, he was going door-to-door. As the years went by, he became part of the office where he used to work, and campaign and stuff like that. He did a great job. A registration drive. He had what you'd call bird-doggers. They'd go out and find people who would become registered Democrats. They stopped at a house that was a Republican house. They said, "Forget that." They didn't turn those names in, whether they're registered or not. They told them where to go to get registered.

ISOARDI: That was Alan who?

BANE: Robbins.

ISOARDI: Was that Alan Robbins? Really?

BANE: One of the years I came down, and they quit bird-dogging. And I said, "Alan, why did you quit?" "We've got more names than we can register." "Let me teach you, Alan. I want you to remember this principle: if you have a link in the organization campaign that's weak, don't weaken all the links to that one link, if you're going to have maximum strength, that is." He says, "Well, how can I do that?" So I go to my secretary and ask her if she had a copy of the newspaper that listed all the registrars over in neighboring Glendale. They had lots of registrars, but no Democrats to register.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Some things never change.

BANE: So I had him get in touch with them. And he arranged for people over there to come over to my district and register Democrats. He kept all the book work and did all the organization. An effective job. Very smart kid.

One day I had him draft the constitutional by-laws for a new club that was forming. So he wrote it, and when he got finished with it, he said, "I want to show you what I did with this. You take a person on the board of directors with

BANE: this by-law and this constitutional revision. Any time it got together, you can control that club just by a couple of people." I said, "Alan, can't you do anything simple?" The answer to that question is "No." He was so bright, you know. His mind was so quick. He really made a great state legislator because he was ahead of everybody else. And he would figure out solutions to problems that nobody could figure out. He really did a lot of good work in the senate.

I hired him to work for the commission. I said, "Alan, why don't you take all this stuff and do a treatise on the Constitution Revision Commission's work. First, I want you to reprint the present constitution. Second, beside it print what our amendments do, and, number three, what the public's reaction to it will be." He did the most beautiful job you ever saw in your life: very detailed, very thorough. And he was smart. He understood the issues. Then the issue came up that one of those was the separation of church and state. If that got on the ballot, that would be all the people would be fighting

over, separation of church and state. So we moved that in the final draft of the revision commission's work so that particular issue was put into a later consideration along with a couple of other key issues that would have caused a lot of trouble on the ballot.

So his detailed work provided a good, sound revision--not everything was done on a good, sound revision basis--which we knew the public would buy easily, including the establishment of a commission to set legislative salaries.

[Laughter] But that was a small part of it. Small part. But that Constitution Revision Commission resulted in increasing our salaries, and we started being able to attract a better class of members. But it was a lot of work. A lot of work.

ISOARDI: Wasn't also your concern, then, building up the resources that assemblymen had, enabling assemblymen to increase their staffs?

BANE: Well, that became part of the general overhaul of the legislature. We established a class of consultants to the legislature, where a chairman was able to hire a consultant, a high-quality

person. I put on restrictions so none of the present staff could be hired in that position, which we had some battles over. If we did not keep the restriction, friendly secretaries would get the jobs. I won the battle over some strong opposition, which was just.

ISOARDI: What were the oppositional arguments, do you remember that? Why were they opposed?

BANE: Well, they have a present person there who is qualified, why can't they have...

ISOARDI: Go ahead and use him.

BANE: Yeah, in that position. And I knew what would happen. I understood the arguments. I still understand them, you know. But I kept the restrictions on over our position until we hired a number of consultants of a higher quality. Otherwise, we'd just be giving everybody else a raise, you know. I've never been particularly proud of that position I took. It had some bad principle to it, but it did the practical job of hiring a whole new level of personnel for the legislature. California became, as a result of those moves, one of the best legislatures in the nation. Well, we got off the track there some

place.

ISOARDI: Well, yes and no. Not really.

BANE: We got through my relationship with Jesse Unruh.

ISOARDI: Well, I think we got to the point where you sort of agreed to work with him. He gave you the chairmanship.

BANE: Well, I liked Jesse.

ISOARDI: When did that start happening, or did you always have a mixed attitude about him? Was there always part of him that appealed to you? Or now that you were working in Sacramento in the same body with him, did your opinion change of him?

BANE: Well, I was tough, and he was tough.

ISOARDI: So you respected him, then.

BANE: I respected his brain power. You get to know him. He could sit in a room with a couple of conversations going on, and he can listen and hear what's going on with this group, what's going on with that group, and make up his mind. Brilliant mind. He was a bright fellow, a very sensitive man. I once was called to introduce him to a session down in Los Angeles. I described him as a man who spends his life taking care of those we refer to as the forgotten man.

"So as long as we have Jesse Unruh as Speaker of the Assembly, those people won't be forgotten."

I made some rather great speeches during the time. I got so I couldn't do that in my later years. I think it has something to do with memory. Willie [L.] Brown [Jr.] has a tremendous memory and he knows what elements he has to hit. So he just starts speaking, no notes.

ISOARDI: It's just all right there.

BANE: All right there, and he clicks them out just like that. Fantastic. My relationship with Willie Brown started somewhat like my relationship with Jesse Unruh.

ISOARDI: Really? Oppositional as well. You felt kind of an opposition to him also?

BANE: No. It just says that I wasn't one of those who voted for him for speaker. I made my commitment to Howard [L.] Berman. And the year that battle took place.... No, no. No, that took place after I'd been out ten years and came back. There was a friend of mine, Leon Ralph, who was a black legislator from Watts. He and I were good friends. The leadership up in Sacramento were opposing me when I ran in 1974, after I'd been

BANE: out for ten years. I had a good job. It paid well. The salary in Sacramento was very low, you know. I didn't feel the pain of the cut in salary until I went to the bank. [Laughter] I'd hit sixty. I looked back at my life and said, "Well, what am I going to do now?" I decided that the most pleasure I had had was in the legislature, and I wanted to spend the rest of my life doing that.

[Interruption]

[End Tape 3, Side B]

[Session 4, June 17, 1995]

[Begin Tape 4, Side A]

BANE: He had style. I guess it was a very determined style.

ISOARDI: It certainly sounds it.

BANE: And it wasn't anything I planned. I just wanted people to know exactly where I stood, you know, what they were dealing with. I leveled with them, and I expected them to level with me. So on the Democratic clubs endorsed candidates, they wouldn't interview me unless I agreed to not run if they didn't endorse me. You know, I just didn't buy that. I said, no, I was running. They didn't have a right to tell me. So it was the same way with Pat Brown.

ISOARDI: Tell me about your first encounter with Pat Brown, and how your relationship was in those early years.

BANE: When I first met Pat Brown, I checked his record and I was much impressed with him. I met him

down at the Hotel California when he was running for governor. [I] worked his first campaign...

ISOARDI: You did.

BANE: Yeah. Great deal of respect for him.

ISOARDI: What did you like about him?

BANE: Charming fellow. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: Really?

BANE: Very charming.

ISOARDI: And you liked his politics?

BANE: Yeah. I remember once when we came out in Van Nuys one morning. It was a publicized meeting. We came down, and the press was there. So when he came out of the meeting, there were some kids there too. He kneeled down and talked and chatted with the kids.

ISOARDI: Photo op[portunity], I guess they call it now, right?

BANE: Yeah. Well, he made a great impression, both on the public and on me. So we were on a good first start. But when I went to Sacramento, everybody was an enemy.

ISOARDI: You mean that was your attitude.

BANE: That's the best way I can describe it. I was afraid of everybody. That's because of my early

experience going from...

ISOARDI: All the different schools.

BANE: Four or five, six schools in the country a year.

ISOARDI: Did you also feel that way about Brown, that you would be somewhat adversarial, or you were somewhat suspicious of him when you...

BANE: I felt that way almost all my life, those reactions, but I knew I had them. Just like I know that I'm inclined to be an introvert and a recluse. I married Marlene [Rothstein Bane], and of course Marlene is an extrovert if there ever was one.

ISOARDI: Extrovert par excellence. Well, let's see, for an introvert and a recluse, you get involved in politics most of your life, and you marry an extrovert.

BANE: Well, she is great.

ISOARDI: Well, you certainly didn't let it get in the way.

BANE: Well, it tries occasionally, but it doesn't survive.

ISOARDI: Did you have much to do with Pat Brown up there?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Did he, at one point early on, call you into his office or anything?

BANE: Well, you know, Jesse was a power. And Jesse made a place for me there. I became chairman of Rules, and I became a power. Actually, I think I did most of the work of building the California legislature.

ISOARDI: How so?

BANE: Jesse got all the credit for the things that came out of my head, you know. No question, Jesse had ideas in his head, too. I remember he once said to me, "Damn you, Tom. We come to the conclusion that we're going to do a certain thing, and before I have a chance to change my mind, you've got it done." [Laughter] So I was a doer. So I became a power. But before that, very early, the mayor of Burbank--a lawyer--wanted an appointment to the Alcohol and Beverage [Control] Appeals Board. Well, that's a top-paying job, and one of the most prestigious as far as status is concerned. It's a high-paying commission with a lot of power. I got Pat to give that appointment, and he did. Of course, preceding that, I guess, mine was the final vote Pat needed for his California water project. So when it got down to the chips, I cast my vote for it. One of

Pat's staff came to me and said, "Thanks, the governor appreciates that very much." I said, "I didn't do it for the governor. I did it for the people of California." [Laughter] So anyway, looking back on it I'm surprised, but the governor did appoint [Edward] Ed Olson from Burbank to the Alcohol and Beverage Appeals Board.

ISOARDI: Did you work at all carefully with the governor over anything, or did he see you as an ally of Unruh and just kind of ostracize you, then?

BANE: Well, he certainly, at the beginning, couldn't think I was a friend of Unruh's. But in my old age, I look back and say that Jesse and I, for a period of time, ran that place. A piece of legislation that I carried was to require the county registrar of voters--or any counties that had computerized records--to give a copy of the registered voters precinct sheets to each party, Democrats and Republicans.

ISOARDI: Why did you think that was important?

BANE: Well, let's see if I can give it a noble purpose. [Laughter] Well, one thing was a beginning of the steps to try to cut down the costs of

campaigning. The party would take it and could disseminate it to its various candidates, its various party members. It became part of the electoral process. Pat Brown had a guy who ran his campaign who was in that business. He figured that what I was doing was cutting into his business and would be harmful to it. So he convinced Pat to veto the bill, and I got worried he was really going to veto my bill. So I went to see a fellow named [Paul] Ward, who was his chief of staff. Pat Brown was on his way to Europe. It wasn't too long after we ran a campaign for Pat, [Charles] Hale Champion and [Eugene] Gene Wyman, and I was county chairman. They called me down to explain the problems. Actually, they'd done an in-depth survey, and they found out that Richard [M.] Nixon was running against Pat Brown for governor during that election.

ISOARDI: Uh-huh. 'Sixty-two election.

BANE: And the public didn't like Pat Brown, and the public didn't like Richard Nixon. But if they did vote, they'd vote for Pat Brown. They didn't like either one of them. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: Why not Pat Brown?

BANE: Why they didn't like him?

ISOARDI: Why the change?

BANE: Well, I can't answer that because I didn't have answers to the questions they asked, but I'd say the press worked him over. He was doing lots of new things in the fields of education and water, and that always stirs up people when he steps in and disturbs the way things were. So the incumbents of the public trust were endangered by him and what he was doing. So I said, "Well, you've got to turn Pat Brown's vote out with late notification, probably a postal card Monday morning before the election. It should have the polling place on it and a little slogan about 'The duty of people in a democracy is to participate.'" That's easy to say, but it's tough to do. I don't know how you do it. They agreed that Monday morning, a postal card, first-class, with a notification of the polling place to remind people where it was. You know what happens in a case when they have that kind of attitude toward both Republican and Democratic candidates--they didn't like them--they throw all

BANE: the information away. So this was to counteract that. So they agreed with the philosophy and the purpose.

They asked if I could do it. I said, "I don't know." "Well, how long will it take you to make up your mind?" Of course, we didn't have computers in those days. So I said it would take me two weeks. One week went by, and Gene Wyman called me. I said, "I told you it would take me two weeks. It's only been a week." [Laughter]

The Democratic county committee staff person, around Democratic headquarters, said it couldn't be done. Jesse wanted a get-out-the-vote drive, and I did think about what the cost would be, you know. When I talked with him on the phone, he said, "When they get enough money, we can finish the get-out-the-vote drive." I said, "I can find that for you." He said, "Yeah? Where?" I said, "The money set aside for the mailing program. I can just tell them I can't do it. Then you've got that pot of money to work with." "No," he said, "I don't want you to do that. The chief of the county committee says, 'You can't do it!' I want you to prove him wrong." [Laughter] Jesse

BANE: and I were very close about that time, you know.

Anyway, I had to work through the problem of getting duplicating material and to duplicate addresses. Of course, I needed a duplicating machine. That means duplication of 125 labels for a precinct, 125 households. I worked with a young man [Michael Shulen] in the printing business. I made arrangements to rent a couple of commercial ditto machines. The mimeograph was totally out of the picture because you'd take a whole mimeograph sheet for one name, so it gets pretty expensive. But the dittos' sides are duplicable so that you could stick the little tab in the machine, and it made your master copy.

So we got it down to where the job could be done. At the end of two weeks, I was able to tell them we could do it. And he brought up the fact that "Bob Jeans says you can't do it." I said, "Well, it would be a lot easier on me if you'd take his word for it." [Laughter] He said, "What can you do?" "I just got through telling you I can do it." I got a little agitated, you know. How many times did he want me to tell him that?

BANE:

We embarked on the program, and the CORO Foundation had offered the Democratic party a batch of interns--co-interns to the party--to help with campaigns, because that's part of their program. Within that group was Bruce Corwin, [James] Jim Lane, and I think Jack Lewis--I think that's his name. He's a judge now.

Anyway, I got the interns and assigned them to this project. I figured on running the operation around twenty-four hours a day, with machines working. I rented some meters, which printed the postage on. Beyond the mechanical stuff we could put together, we had the labels typed, the precincts marked, the families together, and counted how many labels we needed for that. We rented a big warehouse. It's not quite the term for it, [rather] a big auditorium, a big, spacious place someplace. I used to sit in my office, with the staff, going over mentally and verbally what the job we had to do [was] and uncovering every aspect of what could go wrong and what we needed to do. We had nineteen days from the time we could get the sheets from the registrar of voters to the time we had to do the

mailing. I built all the machinery, and I built all the staff and the whole operation to do it in half that time. I overestimated the number of staff I needed and the time I needed to do it in, nineteen days. I got it done. I had enough storage space around the walls so I could stack in cartons the stuff for each precinct. The districts were separated. The county committee was all for it. You know, they have, I think, about three hundred members, so I broke them into two groups: some were working odd nights, others were working even nights. Over three hundred members, I think, and only five or six turned up.

ISOARDI: Par for the course.

BANE: Yes. They're good at talking, though. So we worked around the clock. We got permits in Burbank, permits in Glendale, meters for Burbank, Glendale, and one of the other big towns in Los Angeles County, and we did it all by our machinery. We got done so early that we did some for a couple of other counties that were interested in the project. Anyway, we did over two million pieces of mail. Governor Brown won the election, and I had a pretty heavy part in

his campaign.

ISOARDI: I guess about that time that Pat Brown is running against Richard Nixon, Jesse Unruh was also fighting to become the speaker.

BANE: He was the speaker.

ISOARDI: Yeah, he wins for the first time and he becomes speaker. How involved were you in that?

BANE: I'm not sure what your question is.

ISOARDI: It's about Unruh's campaign to become speaker. How did it happen, and what role did you play?

BANE: Well, we'll go off the tape for some of this. Not yet, though. [Laughter] Well, all he had to do was get forty-one votes. Jesse had raised money for a lot of the candidates that were there, and I had raised money for some of the candidates that were there. Jesse was chairman of [the Committee on] Ways and Means. He wasn't any newcomer, so he was supposedly "the guy," but you can never count on that. I was up to my neck in his campaign for speaker. Toward the end I asked that we put the finishing touches on this. I would say that Jesse was very nervous, very insecure facing this kind of election, and he had fears. Jesse had quite a few fears. I

couldn't get him to meet with me.

ISOARDI: Why not?

BANE: He didn't want to face the finish of the campaign. So I arranged a meeting, sort of to his surprise. [Laughter] And if you turn it off, I'll tell you how I did that...

[Interruption]

...During this meeting that I had set up with Jesse, he didn't expect me there. But he was very cooperative, as long as I faced him with it, a very simple thing of having to set a luncheon meeting up with the Democratic caucus. Just prior to the time that the vote was taking place on the floor.... Well, I forgot a whole section of this thing, but we'll go back and cover it.

We'd built up a program in advance by some legislation that either I carried or had somebody carry it for me. We set up in the statutes the election process. Now, we'd run across a situation where Carlos Bee was a very popular Speaker pro tempore. It was very obvious he could handle that job and did handle it, as far as the speaking part was concerned on the floor.

BANE: That's what most people saw. Ralph Brown worked for a judgeship, and Jesse was being very cooperative helping Ralph get the judgeship. So with a bill I wrote, I dealt with the subject of the election of the speaker and the sequence in case anything happened to the speaker.

So we set up for the chief clerk to call a meeting of the legislature together so they could get together and elect a new speaker. Well, the fear that Jesse had was that Carlos Bee, if he took over as speaker during the vacation between the legislatures, he'd be able to put the thing together so Jesse wouldn't be able to crack it. So what he had to do is see to it that that didn't happen. So I set up in the codes this procedure of electing a speaker by having the chief clerk call an official meeting of the legislature. I sent them the statute as something that had to be done. I was supposed to take up a short period between the time the vacancy occurred and the time we had the election. So I got all these commitments for Jesse, which people don't always keep their commitments.

ISOARDI: So he was concerned that there were some people that were wavering, maybe.

BANE: That's right. Well, that's happened. You know, like [Chester B.] Chet Wray committed to vote for Howard Berman for speaker. When he's got down his chips, he says, "Yeah, I committed to him, but that didn't mean I was going to vote for him." [Laughter] Only Chet Wray could say that. A lot of pressure gets put on people concerning the speakership. So I fixed this breakfast meeting, or brunch meeting, really. It was set at twelve noon on such and such a day. So we get everybody invited to brunch. Well, that got them all in a room together, [Laughter] and they all committed. I remember [Ronald B.] Ron Cameron came into the door and chuckled. He walked in the door and starts counting: one, two, three, how many were there. [Laughter] He was joking, but more or less. We were all counting. So we got there, put everybody together, and reconfirmed. When brunch was over at twelve o'clock, we walked across the street together and took the vote. But that was what really had to be done.

ISOARDI: That was the full Democratic caucus?

BANE: No, that was the full legislature meeting.

ISOARDI: Oh, the entire body.

BANE: But the Democratic caucus was the one that was the kingpin, because it was by far the biggest caucus. We walked across the street, cast the votes, and elected the speaker on his birthday.

ISOARDI: Nice touch.

BANE: Had a birthday picture. I have a copy of that. A big birthday cake with a confectionery gavel, you know. I liked the way I always walked in. That was the speakership battle.

[End Tape 4, Side A]

[Begin Tape 4, Side B]

ISOARDI: Let me ask you: you mentioned last time we got together, Tom, you talked a great deal about the Constitution Revision Commission. Why did you do it? Why did you get involved in establishing it?

BANE: The League of Women Voters and everybody else were talking about revising the constitution. The constant pressure was to get a lot of garbage out of there, that [it] was an antique, obsolete. So there was a push to revise the constitution. [During] the same time we had run constitutional

amendments on the ballot three or four times to raise the salary of legislators, which was set in the constitution as five hundred dollars a month.

ISOARDI: Right. But you never had any luck with that.

BANE: Well, the people would always vote against it, which didn't make any sense, you know. The constitution was set up so that corporations and big businesses could run one of their people for state assembly. He'd get five hundred dollars a month there, and they'd make up the difference in his salary as an employee of some business enterprise. We were trying to clean that part of it up, and we couldn't do it at five hundred dollars a month.

ISOARDI: No. Did you have sort of a very broad vision, then, of trying to bring the whole system into the present, to try and update things across the board?

BANE: Yeah. Both Jesse and I did, you know. I, of course, think I had a bigger part in it than I probably did. But I did the work that went with it. I had imagination. This is a selfish, self-enhancing viewpoint, but I think most of the mechanics of building the legislature came from

me. Most would say that probably is incorrect, but I'm very conscious of what my ideas did as far as moving along the wake. Because I would think about how to do [it], how to bring [it] about. An introvert is more inclined to do that. [Laughter]

So I went to Jesse and said, "I've got an idea. Let's go ahead and work with these groups that want to revise the constitution. In the revision we can take out or change the limitation of five hundred dollars." Well, Jesse said, "Yeah, go ahead. You might as well try that. We've tried everything else." So then I formed the Constitution Revision Commission, and we got the state Chamber of Commerce involved. The major newspapers were invited to send delegates. We got the whole state of California, labor also, to appoint delegates.

ISOARDI: So you're really building a consensus before it has to be approved.

BANE: Yeah. So it was no use carrying through with something if you couldn't get it passed after you did it. The Chamber of Commerce realized that five hundred dollars wasn't sufficient. So it

BANE: got its start in the Constitution Revision Commission when we felt that the five hundred dollar limitation on salaries in the state of California would never give us a legislature that we could be proud of, or was satisfactory. But the revision of the constitution was something that most of the groups in California supported.

Then there was a Republican who ran for state treasurer, John [A.] Busterud, and he lost the election. He was a decent guy with the same feeling toward government. We weren't plagued with the extreme partisanship that the legislature is plagued with today. It was more of a homogenous body. At the same time, being a Republican, we hired him to come in and be chief of staff. The election had just been finished, and he was well-known and well liked on both sides of the aisle, as far as Sacramento was concerned. An ideal choice because the Chamber of Commerce and the Republican party and the Republican forces felt comfortable with him.

Then we went through the chore of committee meetings and did a thorough job of working over a section at a time. We started out with Article

IV, which involved the salary. Bruce Sumner eventually became chairman of it, so we always kept it at a high caliber, a high level of good work.

ISOARDI: Let me ask you also: About this time you mentioned your relationship with Unruh and the two of you working closely together on many things. Who else are you guys working with? Who else was part of your circle? Who were you working closely with other than Jesse Unruh?

BANE: There was Jerry Waldie, a very bright young legislator and attorney.

ISOARDI: He was fairly new at the time, also, wasn't he?

BANE: Yeah. And Bobby Crown.

ISOARDI: Oh, the Alameda assemblyman.

BANE: The chairman of the Ways and Means. We picked up [James R.] Jimmy Mills, so we could work with San Diego County, down that part of the state. So Jimmy Mills became a part of it.

ISOARDI: Can you tell me something about Bob Crown, what he was like, how effective was he, what some of his strengths were?

BANE: Well, he was very bright. He worked hard. He was one of those [who] had inherited some money,

so he was not relying only on his salary of five hundred dollars a month.

ISOARDI: So for him it was OK. [Laughter]

BANE: For him it was OK. Very nice person, very clean person, highly principled. He was single. He was one of the guys who played around, as well as worked around.

ISOARDI: He worked seriously at playing. What were his strengths as a legislator? What was he especially good at?

BANE: Well, as I said, he was chairman of Ways and Means, which is a big job.

ISOARDI: Powerful.

BANE: Well, it's a very powerful job, and it's also a big job. You've got to know everybody else's legislation and what it costs. Whether the state can afford it or not. What burden you're putting on the piece of legislation. You and your staff have to know everybody's piece of legislation, if you're going to have any effect whatsoever on the budget of the state of California.

ISOARDI: And he was effective as chairman?

BANE: Yeah, he was smart enough to be able to do that and work hard enough. So he had intelligence.

His motivations were honest and good. So he did his job and understood his job. Everybody liked Bobby Crown. Very loyal to Jesse. He was a high-caliber guy.

ISOARDI: How about Jerry Waldie?

BANE: Bob Crown was an extrovert. Jerry Waldie was a straight, stable guy. Moved on to Congress. Ran for governor at one point. I would say that of all the people, he was the most stable of any of us.

ISOARDI: How about Jim Mills?

BANE: Well, I have mixed emotions about Jimmy Mills. He was the scholarly type. He wrote the Mills book,<sup>1</sup> which you're very familiar with. But if you understand Jimmy Mills, he wanted to be a senator from San Diego. When a vacancy occurred, the governor appointed somebody else. His book is flavored with animosity to the governor.

ISOARDI: He protests frequently that he doesn't understand where it comes from.

BANE: Well, it's coincidental.

ISOARDI: Actually, in a way, his first months in

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<sup>1</sup> James R. Mills, A Disorderly House: The Brown-Unruh Years in Sacramento (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1987).

Sacramento remind me a bit of yours in the sense that he went up there supported by all the anti-Unruh Democrats, expecting to thoroughly hate Jesse Unruh and be at loggerheads with him the whole time. But in no time at all, he found himself not only supporting most of his politics, but finding that he liked him as well.

[Laughter]

BANE: Well, Jimmy sat right in front of me because we were freshmen about the same time, you know. He was never, I don't think, pretty close friends with us. But Jesse and I became close friends. But he was a person we needed to rely on to take charge of San Diego County. So we gave him additional staff to help him keep control of all the various situations that were going on in San Diego. I'm not sure that answers your question.

ISOARDI: Well, partly.

BANE: His book is about 75 percent accurate.

ISOARDI: Well, that was going to be my next question was how accurate you felt the book was?

BANE: About 75 percent.

ISOARDI: Seventy-five percent. Are there any particular things you'd like to correct now?

BANE: Well, did you understand my motivation of getting into politics was strictly on racial aspects, the unfairness of treatment being dealt to blacks, which was really very outrageous? It's changed a great deal now, you know. But he uses phrases like "Some of my best friends are," you know. I used to speak on the subject matter before I was in office. When I wrote my hate crimes bill, which has become a model bill for many of the states, I felt pretty strongly on the issue.

ISOARDI: I don't mean to sidetrack you, Tom, but since you brought it up, did you have in mind doing something like that hate crimes bill from your first day up in Sacramento? Was it something that you had been thinking of?

BANE: Yes, but not writing the bill. You know, I put in twenty years in the legislature before I finally wrote the bill. But my whole voting record was flavored along that line.

ISOARDI: Were you going to contrast this with maybe some of Jim Mills's motivations, which were different? Were you going to contrast your motivation for getting into politics with...

BANE: I don't know what his motivations were. But

BANE: there was a term that I had never heard that refers to blacks as "fuzzies." I'd never heard the term and would find it objectionable. But he writes in his book some comment I made about the "fuzzies." In his book was the first time I ever heard the term. But saying it is something that's totally opposite to my whole being because I found those racial terms very objectionable, and it wasn't like me. I felt very strongly about it. But he had to tag that comment on somebody. He had to get it in his book someplace, so he graciously gave it to me. But it's something I objected to very strongly.

Although he says that there wasn't any antagonism toward the governor, we all thought it was. Things that he wrote about the governor because he was furious with the governor. [He was] just furious when the governor appointed Hugo Fisher to be state senator, because he wanted to be the state senator. He was a Democrat from San Diego County, and he was a Democrat because we had helped him build himself as a Democrat in San Diego County. So does that

take care of Jim Mills, then?

ISOARDI: Yeah, I think so.

[End Tape 4, Side B]

[Session 5, June 24, 1995]

[Begin Tape 5, Side A]

ISOARDI: OK, Tom, I think last time we were talking about the Constitution Revision Commission, and you talked quite a bit about initiating that process, and especially your work on Article IV. But maybe we could follow that up today with its general significance. But first, let me ask you, in general, once you get the machinery going, how closely were you involved in the work of that commission?

BANE: I ran it.

ISOARDI: So you were intimately involved then.

BANE: That's to start with. After our first round.... I left the legislature right after I'd done Article IV.

ISOARDI: So while you were there, until you left. You left to run for Congress, right?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] That's another topic we'll get to

soon. In looking back on it, are you satisfied with the achievements of that commission? How would you evaluate its accomplishments?

BANE: Well, it did a good job. One of the things [that] was polished down very well [was] Article IV. I hired Alan Robbins. [He] did an analysis of its effect, politically, and the issues. He did a wonderful, analytical job. He had a big document that must have been fourteen inches wide, and I think four columns, maybe five, where he put down the present constitution. He put down the amendments we were putting to it, then the effect the amendments had on present operations, and what political issues they brought up, because we were trying to make it nonpolitical, mostly. So that's a reconstruction of the constitution itself, which has a lot of antique and obsolete language. [John A.] FitzRandolph was also secretary of the commission, and he was a smart guy. He did a good job. Busterud was a person I picked that was a Republican member of the legislature, who had run for treasurer and lost. A very fine man, highly principled. I picked him to be the chief

consultant.

ISOARDI: So this was a broadly nonpartisan effort.

BANE: Yeah. It was designed that [way], to be broadly based. I didn't have anything great politically I wanted to accomplish, except clean up that one article, and it did that. So the legislators ended up--as a result of the commission's work, by our passing it on the ballot--with a fairly decent salary.

ISOARDI: Did you encounter much opposition to your revisions?

BANE: No. We were very careful not to raise any hot issues. We came across one that we couldn't resolve concerning the separation of church and state. There was an article there dealing with funds and giving funds to private organizations, and things like that. If we had put that on the public ballot and in the revised article, it would have blown everything out of the water, because the issue would have gotten so hot on the separation of church and state. Instead of dealing with that, we transferred that to Article XIII. The section of the constitution which we couldn't handle, we put in Article XIII. But it

was a good commission, it worked. It got lots of people throughout the state of California involved in the process. So all the various groups: Republican, Democrat, labor, business, all were involved so that it was a great process.

ISOARDI: Sounds like a fine one for you.

BANE: It was a great process. It really required conscious overseeing of the whole thing, including the hiring of somebody to do an analysis of what issues it raised. With an analysis of the issues it raised, [it] gave us an opportunity to clean up the constitution, to keep it really nonpolitical or nonpartisan and nonexciting. [Laughter] The purpose of the constitution was to limit antique or obsolete language and make a few corrections in it. It was done in acceptance with the large, broad-based general commission. So I think that was probably one of my greatest accomplishments, that particular day, [Laughter] in Sacramento. The effect it had on the legislature and the things it did set the pace for future revisions which have taken place since.

Bruce Sumner eventually became chairman of

the commission. He was a Republican legislator, but I would say pretty much in the liberal vein, for a Republican. He was generally a good force in between the various factors as far as making changes in the constitution. I didn't keep in tight touch with what they did after that, because I ran for Congress. Lost that race. People made a very bad judgment. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: Well, that raises the question: Why did you run? You had been in an enviable position as an assemblyman. You were a force in the assembly. What made you want to run for Congress?

BANE: I didn't.

ISOARDI: What do you mean?

BANE: I didn't want to run for Congress.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Well, what turned you?

BANE: Well, the congressman in my area, a fellow named Burkhalter, was very much pro-labor. A very active congressman, a pro-labor congressman. The labor leaders came to me and wanted me to run for Congress. Because in those days defense contracts were very critical, and they needed somebody back in Washington who would be able to help in getting contracts for California. And my

record as a winner in those days was.... So I yielded to their call and other people's call to fill.... I was the only one who could replace Burkhalter.

ISOARDI: And this is 1966, right?

BANE: 'Sixty-four. And I lost that race. I learned a lot about hard politics. Proposition 14<sup>1</sup> was on the ballot in '64, and that was the proposition that we passed in the legislature. I don't know whether I was a coauthor of the bill or not, but I was very active in the debate because it dealt with discrimination in selling houses.

ISOARDI: [William B.] Rumford Fair Housing Act.<sup>2</sup>

BANE: It was called the Rumford Housing Act, I think.

ISOARDI: So you were instrumental in getting that passed in '63?

BANE: Very instrumental, yes. So my main interest in the political arena was discrimination. I don't know if I was a zealot. Really, why I picked the field of discrimination.... I know that the Chamber of Commerce.... We're talking to their

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<sup>1</sup> Proposition 14 (November 1964), sales and rentals of residential real property.

<sup>2</sup> A.B. 1240, 1964 Reg. Sess., Cal. Stat., ch. 1853.

administrator. Somebody had said, "Isn't Tom Bane a communist?" [Laughter] That was the day of red-baiting. He says, "No, he may be a zealot, but he's not a communist." And that might have been a good description. I had very strong feelings and spoke on them. I think that's one of the reasons that helped me decide when I quit: I could no longer speak that well. I had a little more difficulty expressing the depth of my feelings. I had been a good legislator, and I felt it was past my time. I didn't want to bring disgrace to my record.

ISOARDI: Oh, you mean when you finally retired.

BANE: Yeah. I didn't want to bring disgrace to my name.

ISOARDI: So you wanted to go out on top, as they say in sports.

BANE: Well, not really that either. I also felt the lessening of the ability to get done what I wanted to get done. I didn't enjoy politics.

ISOARDI: Is that an observation on your own abilities or just on the political climate at the time?

BANE: No, it didn't have anything to do with the political climate, because I'd fought the

political climate from the very beginning. It was such a struggle for me to present my views and my case properly. I did it, but it was a struggle to do it. You know, good speakers on the floor, they speak extemporaneously. You get up, and you've got five minutes in some circumstances and ten minutes in another to present your case. If you were the author, you got ten minutes. Otherwise, if you wanted to speak, you had five minutes. Take Willie Brown: one of the reasons Willie Brown is such an excellent speaker is he's got an ungodly memory. Ungodly memory, you know. We'll talk about him, maybe, sometime. But an ungodly memory. I don't know anybody.... That's a whole subject in itself: Willie Brown speaking. But your memory has to be quick and ready. You have to remember what your outline is of your speech and not leave it. Well, sometimes I'd forget some key points, and I just knew I was past my prime.

ISOARDI: In looking back to your race for Congress, you think your support of the Rumford Act cost you?

BANE: Oh yeah.

ISOARDI: That was probably the single most important

thing, you think?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Were you aware of that, at the time, that this was a problem?

BANE: Oh yeah.

ISOARDI: How did you try and counteract it? How did you try and undercut that opposition?

BANE: Well, I tried to explain my point of view at meetings. I was invited to go to various meetings throughout the district. Antelope Valley was one of them, which is a very conservative area. I'll explain my positions and such. You had to make a decision on whether it was right. Which was most important: people's rights or property rights, both of them being very important. When you come down to your decision, which I did, people's rights were most important. And I'll explain that basically. You say people's rights are the important one over property rights. As you get into it more and more, they're further and further apart. So I always valued people's rights prior to property rights.

So I had to support, which meant oppose the

BANE: initiative on the ballot that realtors had put on, because we made a mistake... [Interruption] ...A basic principle of passing legislation is never get involved in anger or do something to get even. You stay tuned to the law and let it stop there. Those of us who were supporting the Rumford Fair Housing Act went through lots of hearings, meetings and stuff. The realtors opposed it very strongly. Not all the realtors, but the leadership of the realtors in the state were really vicious in opposition to any restrictions on who they sold their houses to or on what terms they sold them. There were very heated debates, and the public was really worked up over this bill and on this initiative. Great hate was overshadowing everything.

The opposition was really so nasty and so vile, you know, that we modified the bill. It used to outlaw all the acts of discrimination and stuff, prior to residential housing. It started out that it didn't do that. We added that because the realtors were so vile in their opposition. We applied it to residential housing

BANE: and residential property because we wanted to get even with them. The residential market to realtors is their meat and potatoes. As a result, they decided to appeal that proposition to the voters. So they took it to the voters, and that's how it got on [the ballot].

If we hadn't gone so far, we would have made great progress in property rights without getting involved in eliminating a realtor's source of business. I was easy to persuade we should do that because I was such an opponent of discrimination in housing and everything else. Originally, I wasn't going to do that. I didn't go that far. But I was so sickened by the type of charge that the opposition made. I was ready to give them another whack. Yeah. By bringing the residential market into the picture, they had no choice but to say their business was to oppose it, go to the ballot, and go to the extreme. But to beat it, they were extreme, and their arguments against it were vile. But they did.... I can't remember the term they use for it, when you take a piece of legislation and run an issue against it. Anyway, the word is not

recall, but a very similar term.

ISOARDI: You mean referendum?

BANE: Yeah, referendum, yeah.

ISOARDI: So they didn't waste any time in trying to get a proposition on the ballot to overturn the housing act. What were some of the arguments that they were using that were so vile? Do you remember any in particular?

BANE: Well, I don't remember because none of them were right. [Laughter] I have a hard time remembering arguments that were not right. But they were vicious, and the rumors about what the bill did were also very vicious and inaccurate. That was a very difficult time in my political career. You know, I could speak to an audience, and they would break down into three groups. One against the referendum, or liberals, who generally sat in the front rows. So the liberals are there and they applauded me when I made my speech. Then the other part of the audience would sit quiet, no expression. The third, some of them were mulling over the thoughts of right and wrong, you know. The other third were the people who were violently in opposition to my

view.

[Interruption]

ISOARDI: ...What was Jesse Unruh's reaction to your running for Congress and leaving the assembly? Did he try and dissuade you, do you remember?

BANE: Oh, I was not a dissuadable type of person.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] So you simply told him this is what was happening, and that was the end of the story?

BANE: I think we had come to the parting of the ways about that time, really.

ISOARDI: Oh really.

BANE: Yeah, and it was accidental, too. I had a conversation with him. The state chairman was Gene Wyman, and he had approached me. He wanted to support the governor in his selection of a national committeewoman and national committeeman for California. As a governor, why, he wanted to have some voice on that. We had Carmen Warschaw who wanted to be national [Democratic party] committeewoman. Also, during that time, we only had two people, one man and one woman, who represented California on the national committee. Carmen Warschaw was a very vigorous and powerful person. I've always admired her, really. But

the governor was taking a delegation back to the convention and wanted me to go on it. There were reasons for that, you know. At that time I was very quick and very verbal and well schooled in the fundamentals of government and politics. I was kind of fearless. [Laughter] That's dangerous. [Laughter] It was, I think, in 1964 when two delegations came from the South.

ISOARDI: Yes. The Freedom Democratic party from Mississippi.

BANE: Yeah. So Pat Brown was working with the president of the United States, Lyndon [B.] Johnson. Lyndon Johnson had called Pat Brown and told him he wanted the Credentials Committee to not allow the Freedom delegation in. So I got the chore of working that problem through for the governor. He appointed me to the Credentials Committee, and we worked out a fairly good deal. [We] didn't totally ignore the Freedom delegation, but...

ISOARDI: But you didn't seat them.

BANE: No. But we allowed them in to participate to a degree and to fill any vacancy that occurred. I did a fantastic job for the governor. The

majority of Californians, of course, were with the Freedom delegation, the rank-and-file Democratic party members. The delegation wanted to meet on the issue.

ISOARDI: The entire California delegation, to discuss that issue?

BANE: Yeah, and to take a position. So I stalled that meeting to the last minute, which was just before the convention met. I guess six o'clock in the evening, or seven, something like that. The convention started at seven or eight. So I set the meeting of the delegation to discuss the issue we'll say at six-thirty, the night of the convention.

ISOARDI: Why the delay until then?

BANE: Well, left-wing liberals are very verbal and talkative. So I had a woman who was a....  
[There is] one man, one woman on the Credentials Committee. So I asked her to lead off and give a report as to where the Credentials Committee was, "And take your time because I think you can do a better job than I can." So she went through the routine. I was telling her, "Because you're starting out, don't worry about bypassing me. I

want to be bypassed." So she worked the convention over all the issues. [She] explained and answered all their questions one by one. When she got through, I went over completely in gory detail after that.

ISOARDI: So you're using up all the time.

BANE: Yeah. So then, "I think everybody in our delegation ought to have the right to voice their opinion. There's a microphone in the back of the auditorium: line up and speak your piece." God, those speeches went on and on and on. The convention met, and the first thing was the Credentials Committee report on the agenda. By the time we got there, that issue had been long passed by.

ISOARDI: So your plan didn't work. [Laughter]

BANE: No, my plan worked.

ISOARDI: Oh. I thought you said the California delegates just kept talking and talking.

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Oh, at the convention.

BANE: No, at the meeting before.

ISOARDI: At the meeting before.

BANE: So they never got to participate. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: Oh, I see. Oh.

BANE: They never got to participate in the convention.

ISOARDI: I see. So the strategy was to keep them meeting as a group and have them late to the convention. I see. So it worked very well. [Laughter] Was the feeling that the delegation would split, and they would force an important split at the convention over this issue?

BANE: Well, you understand the president had personally asked Pat Brown to see to it that the California delegation did not vote because everybody knew the California delegation would support the dissident group. So the issue was not to have California disrupt the convention. You know, Pat Brown came to me several times, and I told him what my plan was. He says, "Suppose they give you different instructions," or something. I said, "I represent you, governor; I don't represent them. You appointed me. What you want me to do, I'll do." He said, "God, it's good working with you." But, you understand, it was...

ISOARDI: Was that a shock for him? For so many years he had seen you as an ally of Unruh? Was this the

first time you'd been in that kind of relationship with Pat Brown?

BANE: Yeah. It was a terrible time, particularly between me and Jesse.

ISOARDI: What was underlying that? Why was it so hard?

BANE: Carmen Warschaw was a power and had been a friend of Jesse's for years. So I'm not sure he understood what I asked him, but I took his answer very seriously. I met with him to ask him, because Brown was after me and Gene Wyman was after me. There was a judgeship at stake. I put the judgeship at stake, one up in Antelope Valley. Judge William Wright was my candidate and he got appointed. Pat Brown agreed to appoint him because that was my price for the work, you know.

Well, Jesse said that he was going to vote for Carmen Warschaw, but he wasn't going to work for her. [He was] going to stay out of it. So as far as I'm concerned, that had left me free to go down my own path. So I went down the path of supporting Libby somebody [Elizabeth Gator], a woman candidate supported by Governor Brown. And so we met on that at the convention. Well, the

governor had the votes at the convention, and we had the votes together in the committee. The technique that Jesse used was a standard, good technique to divide the delegation. He would take some issues to divide them on, some heated social issues. Well, he got up and moved, take such and such position, such and such an action. So I'd warned our side that that's a technique they would use to try to get the delegation fighting over some other issues.

[End Tape 5, Side A]

[Begin Tape 5, Side B]

BANE: So that he and Carmen Warschaw would be on the side of where the delegation was on all these separate issues. He was going to build up their loyalty so that when it got around to selecting a national committeewoman, they would select Carmen Warschaw. So I explained that that's the technique they would use and to be aware of it. And then, for our purposes, we should defeat every motion anybody made on the floor of the delegation. Just call for a vote right away and get rid of it, whatever the motion was that Jesse Unruh and Carmen Warschaw made. Lo and behold,

[there was] this fight among the state members over who was going to represent California.

I'd caused some earlier problems when I wouldn't come out and support Warschaw. But the members of the party were not aware of the conflict between me and Jesse. But I was sitting with Gene Wyman, and Jesse made the motion. For years when Jesse made a motion, I'd second it. [Laughter] We worked together. Here I'm on the outside, and I'd advised every member of our delegation, "Whatever the motion is, vote against it." We got rid of the motion immediately. Then we proceeded to choose a national committeewoman, as soon as we can get to it. I accepted the fact that I was going to be on the hot spot. I was the one that advised the delegation what to do. I remember it was Jesse who made the motion. I turned toward Gene Wyman, who was sitting next to me. I said, "God, do I have to vote against Jesse?" Of course, he didn't have any loyalties to Jesse. He says, "How can you tell the delegation to do one thing, and you do another? And you're at the head of the alphabet."

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Oh, that's right.

BANE: But that was a political move at the time.

ISOARDI: Was Jesse surprised by this?

BANE: Well, later we had a discussion. He said, "And I'd forgotten that you were on the other side telling them what to do." But it was little moves like that in a political setting that make a lot of difference, you know.

ISOARDI: So maybe if you had come back as an assemblyman in '65, your relationship with Unruh might have been different.

BANE: Yes, it would have been different. But he got even.

ISOARDI: How did he get even?

BANE: Well, lack of support and personal opposition to me had a bearing on who won the congressional race.

ISOARDI: So you didn't get any support from him.

BANE: No. I remember [seeing] in the paper that Jesse wrote checks for the Democratic party in California to various candidates.

ISOARDI: And not one to you?

BANE: No, he didn't write one to me. I wrote him a note, "I've been reading in the press that you have been sending out messages in connection with

party funds. I'm very conscious that I haven't got any check for my campaign, and I just wanted you to know that I did get the message."

[Laughter] Those times are difficult to recall, because, as you probably know, I have a lot of warmth in my feeling for Jesse.

ISOARDI: Well, maybe we can go back to one of those incidents a year earlier, when you were comrades in arms in a way. I guess some people consider it infamous, some people consider it audacious, and that was the July '63 episode when Jesse locked up the Republicans. I believe you were debating the budget.

BANE: Well, it was a difficult time. It was one of Jesse's tough times. I hate to report exactly what happened.

ISOARDI: Oh, please do. [Laughter]

BANE: Jesse locked up the house until everybody voted.

ISOARDI: Wouldn't let anyone go home. That was a vote over the budget, and the Republicans would not vote.

BANE: Would not vote. The sergeants were to resist anyone who attempted to leave, who hadn't voted. So there we were, sitting in our chairs, and the

press got into the act.

ISOARDI: The press were there, I take it.

BANE: Yeah. You understand the Rules chair was never affected by any of Jesse's general rules to the membership. I could leave. I could take anybody I wanted to take with me, you know. I had free reign. So everybody was trying to talk to Jesse to put this thing together. It was going to blow up. He wouldn't talk to anybody. So they finally came to me because I was the one guy that could get to Jesse.

ISOARDI: You mean, people were feeling that this wasn't going quite...

BANE: It wasn't going well and...

ISOARDI: And they wanted him to put an end to it.

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Whose idea was it in the first place?

BANE: I think it was Jesse's. He's a very strong, powerful guy.

ISOARDI: So people came to see you to try and get him to...

BANE: Well, the leadership parts. Bobby Crown, Jimmy Mills, and Jerry Waldie came to see me and said, "He won't talk to any of us." He had never

refused to talk to me until that night.

ISOARDI: He wouldn't talk to you either. Nobody.

BANE: He'd been drinking quite a bit. I was deeply offended. So we got together: Tom Bane, Bobby Crown, Jimmy Mills, and maybe one other...

ISOARDI: Jerry Waldie.

BANE: Yeah, Jerry Waldie, to decide what we were going to do. We were going to strike a compromise with the Republicans and get the house out. I think the whole thing they wanted was eighteen million dollars, or something like that. So we called a meeting of the Democratic caucus. Bobby Crown spoke and I spoke. I was going to be the key guy that made the motion. I won't say in the middle of the meeting, but in the latter part of the meeting, Jesse Unruh comes in the room. We couldn't get him to agree to come, you know. We couldn't get him to meet with us or anything. He came in and sat down next to me. He put his hand on my lap and said, "Please, Tom, don't leave me on this one." In the process, I said, "Jesse, when you act like a speaker, I'll treat you like a speaker." All the other guys who were with me had agreed to do such and such and had spoken

their piece. And there I was with Jesse, who was pleading with me. I got up and said, "I think so-and-so. Jerry Waldie and Bobby Crown all have very good points to make. The speaker is here, and I'd like to hear from the speaker on what he wants us to do." So Jesse had had some sober thoughts. He got up and laid out a program, so I moved that we do that. [We] made some agreement with the Republicans, a little one. We got the budget out, and we got the house released so they could go home in time for breakfast. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: Some people say that that was the first real serious crack in Unruh's political armor. Do you think that's accurate? Did that episode do him a lot of damage?

BANE: Well, the facts of the case are that Jesse was the one who decided what we do. And his caucus didn't leave him, which was on the verge of leaving him. But it was portrayed in the press and by other people as a very harmful political move on his part. A show of power forcing our Republicans to do this and keeping them in session all night.

ISOARDI: How do you think it affected him, personally?

Did it just roll off his back, or do you think the outcome was a serious blow to him?

BANE: Well, it never had really much effect on him in the speakership. The press story...

[Interruption]

ISOARDI: ...One other thing I wanted to ask you about that episode. I think shortly after that you introduced Assembly Resolution 125<sup>11</sup> that some have portrayed as a counterattack against the Republican committee chairs, who didn't support Unruh on that.

BANE: I kind of forget what that did.

ISOARDI: I think you were going to align California with congressional policy, where the majority party picks the speakers and all the committee chairs, which essentially meant removing all the Republican chairs of the committees. [Laughter]

BANE: I remember it was a reorganization of the structure. It made very good sense, too.

[Laughter]

ISOARDI: Just coincidence that it came right after the lockup.

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<sup>1</sup> H.R. 125, 1963 First Ex. Sess., Assem. J. 55.

BANE: I rather think so.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] OK.

BANE: I know that I took a lot of heat.

ISOARDI: Oh, because of that.

BANE: While presenting it. Jerry Waldie congratulated me on the way I handled it. He didn't know I had taken something to quiet my nerves before I took it on. [Laughter] I had a little help from my friends. But I had all the arguments in line. I could have forgotten about that.

ISOARDI: I thought that was a good political touch following on that. [Laughter] Everything's got a price.

BANE: I've completely forgotten about that.

ISOARDI: Another thing I wanted to ask, and we haven't really covered at all yet, Tom, and that was the importance of lobbyists then in Sacramento. How active, how big, who were the important ones, what kind of impact did they have? What were your dealings with them?

BANE: [I had a policy. I would talk about any bill at anytime to anyone. Often people came to me and in detail discussed how and why I should vote for their bill and a lot of them would conclude

BANE: their conversation by presenting me with an envelope with a campaign contribution inside. I always thanked them graciously but handed their contribution back saying my policy is to never tie any contribution to any bill. They were stunned. I further said that if I took it, I would vote no on the bill.

I did not have a lot of dealings with lobbyists. I had a well-known philosophy and they knew where I stood and how inflexible I was.

I had one fund-raising dinner a year. Those who liked me supported it. I am not sure that everyone who came liked me, but they knew that I had only one a year. There are a lot of lobbyists in Sacramento, both good and bad. Most of them always leveled about their bill. I was misled by the banking lobbyist, but their opposition cleared it up.]\*

We had a lot of dealings with the lobbyists. Jesse was a pretty clean guy, really, and he led our attitude about it. We used to say, "If you can't take the lobbyists' money"--I'm going to

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\* Mr. Bane added the preceding bracketed material during his review of the draft transcript.

try to recall this--"vote against them, steal their wives from them, and tell them no, you don't belong in Sacramento." [Laughter] I cleaned that up as best as I can.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] I can imagine the original.

BANE: And he laid it on. He dealt with them, but his advice was all "If you can't take their money and vote against them, you don't belong here."

ISOARDI: Was your attempt to increase the stature of the legislature, increase the independence of it, the strength of it, part of a sense of giving it some strength against the lobbyists by generating your own sources of information, your own ability to investigate issues, and not rely as heavily on lobbyists? Was that part of your calculation at all, or did that not really enter into it?

BANE: One of the moves we made was really a strong move in improving the legislators' ability to get information. One of the rules we made was to create a consultant position, so every legislator could have a consultant. In order to keep it from being just putting another hack on the payroll, we required that they first had to be qualified and had to have approval of the Rules

Committee before they could be hired. [Laughter]

I don't know what you're laughing about....

[Laughter]

[Interruption]

ISOARDI: ...Well, certainly at this time you were chairman of the Rules Committee.

BANE: As I recall.

ISOARDI: As you recall, yes, right.

BANE: We had a lot of bouts.

ISOARDI: Why? What were the arguments?

BANE: Mainly one of the arguments was that [Lester A.] Les MacMillan wanted to appoint his secretary to the consultant's job. It made a lot of good points against it, you know. I think we had in the rules that it had to be somebody new, that it wasn't going to be a promotion for the present staff. We made it impossible for Les MacMillan and a few others to appoint their secretaries to consultants' jobs. It really moved power into somebody else's hands. I remember the debate was heavy. I recognized the arguments against it, but I also recognized the practical matter of the situation. The members would be under enormous pressure to give their secretaries a raise in

pay, and they were in a position to exert undue influence on a member. I recognized this took some authority away from the members. It was done for the proper purpose of improving the legislature. Of course, it was all a question of, was a member's staff person entitled to the job, if they're qualified? The leadership was meeting, and Jesse saw us on the issue. Jesse said something about the arguments against it, he recognized that it had a lot of merit, but for the time being he was going to back Tom.

ISOARDI: Actually, that sort of brings to my mind another issue that's been prominent over the last couple of decades, and that's this question of people who serve in legislators' offices, beginning as interns and moving up through the hierarchy, and then run for the office. Do you think there's a problem with that? People who might serve an assemblyman in various capacities within their office, and then after the assemblyman retires or moves on to another position, this administrative aide then runs for the position. Is that problematic at all?

BANE: Well, would you want to pass a rule or a statute

against that, which would restrict certain people from running for office?

ISOARDI: I guess that's pretty much what it would come down to, wouldn't it.

BANE: This fellow, Paul Krekorian, who worked in my office, wants to run still. He is as fine and bright a young man as you'll ever find. He was an intern and a staff person in my office. Just because he was a staff person shouldn't make him ineligible to run.

ISOARDI: So you don't think there are many valid arguments against it, then? For instance, one of the arguments that people raise sometimes is inbreeding, that, in a sense, legislators start reproducing themselves.

BANE: Well, if it comes to...

ISOARDI: But you don't think that's a problem.

BANE: I don't think you can even consider passing a law that says they can't, or they should give up the right to seek office. Because sometimes we find interns smarter than the members. Certainly in those days, at five hundred dollars a month, the membership was not always top quality. You had to have more than five hundred dollars a month to

live and lead a decent life. I remember when Alan Robbins came to me. He graduated from college and was about to hit twenty-one. He wanted to run, you know. I said, "Alan, do you want to get married?" "Yes." "You want a family?" "Yes." "How can you do that on five hundred dollars a month?" I said, "The first thing you should do is take your education and manage to get some investments so that you have some income coming in. This way you can give your family a halfway decent life, which you can't give them on five hundred dollars a month." "Okay," he says "as soon as I make my first million, can I run?" So I smiled to him and smiled to myself, "Yeah, when you make your first million." I think it was only three years later, he was worth three million dollars. [Laughter] And he ran.

ISOARDI: He followed your advice.

BANE: No, he waited until he had three million instead of one. [Laughter] Smart man he was. He worked awfully hard. He had worked with a contractor in building and developing. Alan was smart and he did the legal work. A guy put up the money to

build, so I think he [Alan] got some part of a partnership out of him. They had this earthquake in Granada Hills, and they had just finished their apartment house. The builder was scared to death [that] he wouldn't be able to rent to anybody. People were moving out of the Valley. So Alan took over the apartment house from the builder. I can't remember what kind of a deal he made him financially. Alan printed literature for the apartment house--the amenities involved at the apartment house--and went out door-to-door.

ISOARDI: Just like a campaign.

BANE: Just like a campaign. And he filled the place up. He had a lot of guts.

ISOARDI: Let me ask you one other question about the Unruh years: the Kennedy connection. Did that impact on your relationship with Unruh at all?

BANE: Oh yeah. Sure. He and I were two original delegates for [John F.] Kennedy for president of the United States. Jesse was Kennedy's kind of man.

ISOARDI: How did they first hook up, do you know?

BANE: Well, I can only give you my view. Jesse and I

were a very strong team, you know. We could totally rely on each other. So when I went down to see Mr. Ward, the governor was back in New York on his way to Europe. I said, "If you veto that bill, you think you've had your trouble with your budget, Paul? If you think you've had trouble now, wait until you veto that bill and see what we do to you." He called the governor, who was in New York, and the governor said, "Sign it." It was a different time in history. One of the reasons it was a different time in history was that we did make it a better legislature. So the strength of the organization.... Jesse was a very strong man. People liked him, people followed him. He didn't have any smart young men giving him any trouble. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: He brought them all into his circle. [Laughter]

BANE: It was often quoted that Jesse said, "If I had killed all my enemies, I wouldn't have any friends today." Any good leader follows that. Willie Brown did.

ISOARDI: Classic.

BANE: The first meeting we had of the Democratic caucus, after Willie Brown was elected speaker

regularly, there was some issue that I got involved in from top to bottom concerning the faults with the issue and what the speaker was recommending. You know what the speaker did?

ISOARDI: What?

BANE: I can't remember who he called upon. He said, "Look, I'll take grievance now with so-and-so. I want you to work with Tom Bane to see to it that we can straighten out the problems he thinks we're going to have." I served him well. So I became a very close friend of the speaker.

ISOARDI: Familiar pattern. [Laughter] Well, maybe next time, Tom, we can begin with your return to Sacramento, then, a number of years later.

[End Tape 5, Side B]

[Session 6, July 8, 1995]

[Begin Tape 6, Side A]

ISOARDI: Tom, let's finish up the subject that we touched upon last time...

BANE: How about the delegation? Would that...

ISOARDI: That was the '64...

BANE: Delegation.

ISOARDI: ...Democratic [National] Convention. You talked briefly...

BANE: No, the pre-convention meeting, in which we elected the national committeewoman. Didn't we cover that?

ISOARDI: No, I don't think we talked about that. We talked specifically about you and Pat Brown dealing with the California delegation on the Mississippi Freedom Democratic party question. That's all we talked about.

BANE: Yeah. The key issue as far as California was concerned--or rather, as far as Pat Brown was concerned--was whether he lost the California

delegation, and whether the California delegation would support the Freedom delegation, which Lyndon Johnson made quite clear that he didn't want to happen.

ISOARDI: How did he make that clear, do you know?

BANE: Verbally. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: To Governor Brown?

BANE: Yes, but I wasn't really a part of the conversation, except that it was quite clear that Pat Brown didn't want the Freedom delegation. Who was the vice president at that time, ran for vice president, the good guy?

ISOARDI: Oh, Hubert [H.] Humphrey?

BANE: Hubert Humphrey. Hubert Humphrey also was siding with Lyndon Johnson. I'm not totally sure of that.

ISOARDI: Right.

BANE: But Gene Wyman, the state chairman, had asked me to serve on the delegation, because he was the one that has to steer it through, and he and I were very close friends. So I went to Jesse Unruh--I probably told you this before--to find out if he was going to support Carmen Warschaw for national committeewoman. Carmen was very

effective, strong, dominant, and a wealthy Californian. He said he was going to vote for her, but he wasn't going to support her, which left me open to do whatever I wanted to do.

ISOARDI: Do you know why he didn't want to support her?

BANE: Well, there was no heat on at the time, and he didn't have to make a hard choice.

ISOARDI: So why commit yourself.

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: I see.

BANE: Later on he backed her, and the battle waged. He was called into action by Carmen and [Louis] Lou Warschaw, who had been strong supporters of the party. [He was] friends with both of them. By that time I'd made my commitment to support Pat Brown's candidate for national committeewoman. So I guess the die was cast that Jesse and I were just going to come into conflict on the delegation. I was teaching and steering the Brown delegation as to what to do and how to handle things. He was running Carmen Warschaw's show. I knew what his technique was and what it would be, which is an important thing in politics. Know what your opponent's going to do.

But I don't think he put the same weight on my skills as he put on his own, which is often the case. But there are certain techniques that you use, no matter what side you're on, when the battle wages. If they're applied properly, they're generally successful. Well, he started applying his, and I'd already warned the delegation what his technique would be. The first vote, no matter what the issue was on their part, was "no" because starting out they had the numbers. His technique was to whittle away at the numbers because of a number of conflicts. Well, we settled that on the first conflict, [Laughter] and that broke or stalled the rest of his maneuvers. He made the motion, and I had to vote against it. I guess that's not the first time I'd ever opposed Jesse, but it was the first time I came into conflict during a top leadership contest.

ISOARDI: How did you feel about opposing Jesse at this point? Was this a hard thing to do? Did it give you pause to think?

BANE: Oh yeah, oh yeah. It was an awfully hard thing to do. Awfully hard thing to do. And I couldn't

give my reason, which was [that] he said he would vote for Carmen, but he wasn't going to support her. I couldn't be public with that information, because that would cause trouble between him and Carmen. I didn't want to do that. So I just took the heat that came with the opposition. But I still think that my choice, when I did end up having to do it, was right when it was the team I was working with. For me, at that time, to break ranks with him and destroy the majority delegation...

[Interruption]

...It was a very tough decision, [a tough] choice to make. It was very destructive, really, to me in the long run. Well, not in the long run. Once you take your position and stay with it, if that's your character, that's your character.

ISOARDI: How was it destructive?

BANE: Well, it may have made a difference whether I won the congressional election that year.

ISOARDI: You mean in terms of support?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Ah.

BANE: No one opposes Jesse Unruh without feeling the sting.

ISOARDI: Paying a bit of a price.

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: And the price was maybe not as much support as you could have gotten?

BANE: Well, you could use the word support, or the opposition I got. You know, Jesse is a very effective man; however, I've never accused him of supporting my opponent for Congress.

ISOARDI: Do you know that he did, or is it an educated guess on your part?

BANE: Oh, you put it together along with knowing that [Edwin] Reinecke, who was my opponent, developed a close lady friend in Democratic top circles. She was also a close friend of Jesse's. You put that together, and generally in politics, like anything else, you look for a reason for your loss. I really don't think it had any bearing on that.

My opponent's campaign was built around Proposition 14, the Rumford Fair Housing Act. Of course, my whole cause for getting into politics was the feeling I had about discrimination. I

was a strong supporter of the Rumford Fair Housing Act in the assembly. When it got on the ballot, it was a tough issue to get involved in because it was a killer. And I knew that. As I look back on the election, I really wasn't a seasoned campaigner. I worked hard, but I wasn't seasoned on how to deal with it.

ISOARDI: You mean how to deal with an issue like that, in the context of the campaign?

BANE: I don't know what you have in your mind when you ask the question, "the issue like that." It was a killer issue.

ISOARDI: Yeah.

BANE: I had to oppose Proposition 14 because it was an initiative that really ended up stating legally that it was OK to discriminate. In no way could I support that. So I had to oppose it. So it was just a question of whether I wanted to take a chance and lose the congressional race. But I came to the conclusion of having all the issues like that, saying it was correct in your heart is the one you can live with. You go back on your basic beliefs, and pretty soon you're nothing. I maintained all through my political career a

BANE: strong belief in anti-discrimination.

I faced that issue again when I wrote the Tom Bane civil rights act, which has become a model for some other states in the nation. I'm very proud of that, and I enjoy that today. When I wrote mine, it gave enhanced penalties for any violation of the act against a person. The person was guilty of violating a criminal act--the act of discrimination--when using racial or group tones. [You] use the word "group" when you're talking about racial groups and other groups, because the other groups we have in mind now are the gays in California. When I first wrote the act with my consultant, I was informed that if they were in there, it would probably kill my chances of getting the bill through. It wasn't very popular at that time to support the rights of people who were different in relation to sexual orientation. I wrote it. Before I introduced it, I took a look at it and realized I was dodging the issue. I really couldn't feel good about the bill if I did that. So before I sent it to the legislative counsel for drafting, I included gays as a group. Those who violated

it were guilty of enhanced penalties. I'm content with both decisions.

ISOARDI: Very principled.

BANE: Yeah, I'm content with both decisions. I lost the congressional race, which I rationalized I didn't want anyway.

ISOARDI: But on the other hand, you can be satisfied that you waged a good fight on principle. Would you have wanted the seat having compromised all of that?

BANE: Well, that was the decision I made. No. Of course, are you willing to lose the election over one issue, and it depends on the issue, I guess. A minor issue of no consequence, but that was a major issue in my life and beliefs. I could not compromise on it. So I lost the election. I lost it for some other reasons, too. I abandoned my regular tour of duty of going out and meeting thousands of people on a one-to-one basis.

ISOARDI: Why? Because you were busy with commitments?

BANE: Well, you ask a tough question, which a thinking person would ask. I felt that I was finding that the more speeches I made before groups in which I opposed Proposition 14, that it was destructive.

So I felt that I was adding people in the street. Anybody in the street would ask me my position on the issue. By meeting thousands of people, I'm just telling more people. So I didn't think that was healthy. Well, I think now that was a mistake. If I'd used my general style of campaigning, despite that one issue, I would probably have won, because it was a very close race. But anyway, I'm content. I lost the congressional race over an issue in which I believed, and that gives me a good feeling in my stomach. I always figured if I'd gone into Congress, I would never have ended up being married to Marlene. That's worth more than a congressional race.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] That's a good perspective.

BANE: I'm satisfied with my life and also satisfied with the gut feeling of sticking to the issues. It's a very important thing to feel...

[Interruption]

ISOARDI ...In connection with that, Tom, did dealing with the Mississippi Freedom Democratic party delegation pose problems in that sense? I mean, you're working within the Democratic delegation,

you're working with Governor Brown. Did LBJ's demands pose problems like that? I mean, how did you feel about the Mississippi Freedom Democratic party delegation?

BANE: Well, it's hard for me to know how I felt about it. I would not have treated the issue any other than.... If I had cast my own vote, I would have voted for the regular party delegation, I think.

But I guess the Freedom delegation strikes a chord that everybody responds to: freedom, you know. I'd have to review all the incidences, again, of what transpired, you know. We did treat them with respect and gave them seats on the convention floor.

ISOARDI: And you supported that?

BANE: Oh yeah. If somewhere on the regular delegation a vacancy occurred, why we'd seek one of theirs to fill it. So we treated them with respect. When you say the Mississippi Freedom delegation, the freedom you're talking about is freedom from the rules of the party. It depends on where you are in partisan politics as to what you do. I bucked the party and ran for office because I wasn't their endorsed candidate. But I didn't

have any hard feelings about party politics regardless. I could have waved the flag for the Freedom delegation if I'd had a reason for doing so. But I just didn't have any reason to do so. Anyway, I went into the delegation meeting and sat across from Gene Wyman. My role was to do what we could do to keep them in the fold, but not seat them as a delegation. That's the role I chose, and that's the role I engaged in. I'm satisfied with it.

ISOARDI: What about the relations between the California delegation and LBJ? I think you had some direct dealings with him, didn't you?

BANE: Yeah. I can't read the minds of everybody in the delegation, you know. I don't think anybody was anti-Lyndon Johnson. They loved the cause of freedom, a lot of them did, particularly the minority members of the delegation. Anyway, it was my role in the convention to sit on the Credentials Committee to protect the party structure and give it a loyal, healthy-sounding name in opposition to the Freedom delegation, while at the same time not be antagonistic to the Freedom delegation. I think that was the

atmosphere. If anybody was interested in what was going on, it was politically necessary to protect our president-to-be, Lyndon Johnson. The Freedom delegation, at least, felt very antagonistic towards him. That doesn't mean that California shared that view. But I think I told you in the primary, there were various candidates running for the Democratic nomination. Lyndon Johnson was not the only one.

He came out to California. At that time I was recognized. I think I was chairman of the Rules Committee, and those were, on the federal scene, very important committees. So the sense of power of the Rules chairman in California was enhanced by the situation where [Samuel T.] Rayburn--I guess it was Rayburn--was the power in Washington, D.C. So I wanted to have a conversation with Lyndon, and he quite obviously wanted to have a conversation with me, between the two of us. We sort of wandered to the fireplace and were leaning on the mantle.

ISOARDI: This is in a hotel?

BANE: In a hotel room. It was a suite of rooms is what it was.

ISOARDI: Where at?

BANE: It was not the Senator Hotel. It was at the other hotel on the other side of the Capitol grounds. Now it is a senior citizens housing project. He had a penthouse suite. We were there and got into a chat. I looked at Lyndon Johnson with a very determined eye and said, "I also have to warn you that Jesse is our leader. We will not support anybody that Jesse is not supporting. So right now we can't take a firm position." However, he was the candidate whom we had to take a firm position on, whether we liked it or not, eventually. But I tried to make it sound like it was a live or die issue with us. So he said, "I'll take care of Jesse." I think he put Jesse in charge of the campaign in California, or a major part of it. We dissolved, and we went anyway. We wanted to be part of the action, you know. It must have been after that that Jesse and I ended up opposing each other.

ISOARDI: Uh-huh. So this was just before that.

BANE: Jesse maintained the funds of the party. He didn't actually have total control of the funds. But when he had control of the money, he expended

it. Of course, because we had come to the parting of the ways, the newspaper carried the names of people he was sending out money to through the mail. So I dropped him a note that said, "Dear Jesse, I've been reading about you sending all those messages to your friends. No message has come for me, but I'm beginning to get the message."

ISOARDI: Did he respond?

BANE: No. But I guess he had a smile on his face.

[Laughter]

ISOARDI: Both of you knew what was happening.

BANE: Yeah, sure. So the state convention of the delegation and my part in it had long-range implications.

ISOARDI: Definitely, definitely.

BANE: It would take him more than that check to make the difference.

ISOARDI: It sounds it, yeah.

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: So you find yourself, then, in 1965 out of office for the first time in half a dozen years.

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: How did that strike you?

BANE: I remember that I went around carrying a happy face. It was a relief, too, because I did not want to go to Washington.

ISOARDI: Really.

BANE: Did not want to go.

ISOARDI: Why not?

BANE: I didn't want to live in that kind of a climate. I think that it probably would have been miserable back there. Terrible climate.

ISOARDI: God-awful, except for about two, three months of the year. [Laughter]

BANE: Yeah, it's terrible.

ISOARDI: So which direction do you take, then? You go for the private sector, into savings and loan?

BANE: Well, the savings and loans were looking for somebody to.... The ones who were private savings and loans. That's different from being chartered by the federal government. There were two kinds. There were the mutuals--supposed to be mutuals--where the depositors owned the savings and loan. They would meet annually and vote for the president. But somehow the same people put it together, then ended up collecting most of the votes. So it was a little kingdom, a

very handsome little kingdom, owning a savings and loan. And there were the conglomerates, which owned, somewhere in the structure, a savings and loan.

So the conglomerates had gotten together and had a couple of meetings. They were looking for somebody to run their organization. Because California was mainly--I don't know what term to use here--these were mainly stock companies, savings and loans that were owned by stockholders in California. The big ones with the most political power were the ones that came together looking for an answer to the mutuals. So they finally came looking for me because of my reputation in Sacramento politically.

At that time I was rather strong politically. I was working for five hundred dollars a month in the state. My insurance business had kind of faded away because that takes a lot of personal time. I was totally involved in the political arena. I couldn't see anything else.

ISOARDI: And you'd been away for at least half a dozen years, then, from any involvement in insurance.

BANE: Yeah. So to go back in the industry to start

building another agency from the ground up.... I know they offered me twenty-five thousand dollars a year. You know, the only guilt I had was that I didn't figure I was worth twenty-five thousand dollars a year. [Laughter] But I didn't refuse it. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: What was the position?

BANE: Well, the position was to organize the stock companies throughout the United States, particularly the holding companies--those are the conglomerates who own the savings and loan--into a trade association and represent them back in Washington.

ISOARDI: So this did involve, then, spending time in Washington?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Sacramento as well? Not so much.

BANE: Well, a couple of times it became apparent that we needed a voice in Sacramento. The mutuals were on one side of the fence, and I was on the other. One of the things you have to know about Sacramento is that you have to know Sacramento. You have to know the committees. You have to know everybody who makes up a committee that you

take one of your bills through. And you've got to know what their strengths are and what their weaknesses are. In the field of lobbying, you have to steer things in that direction. For instance, one of the guys [who] was working with the mutuals was well-known to like his liquor. So I got somebody to take him out to lunch.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] And buy him a few drinks.

BANE: And he never showed up to the committee in the afternoon. The California Savings and Loan League, which was generally controlled by the mutuals, was really upset when they lost their bill. Well, if you know your business, those chores are easy. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: Really. So did you spend most of this ten-year period, then, in intense lobbying activity?

BANE: One difference is I hired a lobbyist to do the lobbying. I never became a lobbyist.

ISOARDI: You just sort of provided overall guidance and strategy, that kind of thing.

BANE: They first elected me executive vice president of the group.

ISOARDI: What was the name of the group?

BANE: The Council of Savings and Loan Financial

Corporations. And I was the executive vice president. There was always some contest between the various leaders of the financial institutions. They finally elected me president of the group. But I appeared before Congress on legislation, as president of the group. We were fairly successful, you know.

ISOARDI: You really represented the political face of the group, then.

BANE: Yeah. One thing you have to know is if you're...

[Interruption]

[End Tape 6, Side A]

[Begin Tape 6, Side B]

BANE: So whether you're sitting in a committee in Sacramento, sitting in a committee in Congress, or sitting on the outside, you're dealing with a piece of legislation. You have to get to know every member of the committee: their strengths, their weaknesses, what their influences are, and who influences them. I remember the one meeting that I was in, we were talking about a senator from Ohio. We ran a tally of who knew him and where the votes were. We came to that guy, and

[Charles H.] Keating [Jr.] said, "Don't worry about him. We own him." Keating.

ISOARDI: The Keating.

BANE: The Keating.

ISOARDI: Jeez.

BANE: Which is very gross. You never say things like that.

ISOARDI: So when Keating's S and L [Lincoln Savings and Loan] blew up and all that, this didn't surprise you very much. [Laughter]

BANE: All my experiences with Keating were really interesting.

ISOARDI: What exactly was the connection with Keating?

BANE: Well, Keating was the attorney for a holding company in Ohio.

ISOARDI: So they were part of your group, then.

BANE: Oh, they were part of the group affected by me, a prominent proper part of the group. So [as] the president of the association, [they] saw the look on my face when Keating blurted that out, because that was an offensive thing to say. The president of the company said, "Tom, don't worry about so-and-so. He'll be with us." Which is different from saying, "We own him." But that

was Keating.

He eventually came down to California. I was back in the assembly about that time. He called me on the phone. I said, "Hi, Charlie," friendly. That's business, you know. I did not like him, the stories about his owning people were numerous. He started talking to me about if I was a friend of the commissioner. I said, "Yeah, I've known him for years." Finally I thought, "He may need some help with him." I said, "Well, give me a call." I had found the commissioner to be a reasonable man. If the case were presented to him properly, why he'd be receptive. "Well, anything I can do for you?" Keating said to me. I said, "Well, I'm having my regular dinner every year. Why don't you buy a table?" "Oh, I mean more than that," Charlie Keating said, and some more comments along that line. So I said, "Charlie, I am not your man." He never called again.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] You never forgot that earlier comment.

BANE: No. The first thing, he's anti-Semitic.

ISOARDI: Keating was, is?

BANE: Yeah, in my view.

ISOARDI: Really? Had he said things to you, or in your presence, that suggested that?

BANE: He didn't like the Wyman firm. And he caused some trouble in some dealings we had with Wyman. But he was also a very active Republican and had a presidential appointment to something.

ISOARDI: Oh really.

BANE: Yeah. He was a crude man. I think sometimes I just didn't like that man. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: So the Lincoln Savings and Loan scandal didn't surprise you especially?

BANE: That was no scandal really. Keating was a player, a gambler. He made a bad business decision. And the other side of that story is that the administration--the national administration in Washington--were under the influence of mainly the banks and other groups. They decided [that] savings and loans were really set up for small savers. They paid a little higher interest rate than the banks paid. So the banks wanted to get rid of them. So part of them wanted to get rid of them, and there was another group who wanted to get involved in money market

CDs [certificates of deposit]. So the administration approved money market CDs. At that time there was a shortage of money, and it was high interest rates. So the money market CDs could pay any rate of interest they wanted to. So 18 percent, you know.

ISOARDI: Yeah, it went really high.

BANE: And the law of Washington was that savings and loans at that time were maxed out at 5 or 6 percent. They couldn't pay any more by law. So the money was spilling out of savings and loans by the bucketful. And the savings and loan got into a lot of trouble. They went broke because they couldn't compete by law. They couldn't compete otherwise, either, because suppose they had a hundred thousand depositors in CDs in an institution. Instead of giving them 5 percent, which was the rate at that time, you gave them 18 percent. If you took in a new depositor and gave him 18 percent, you've got to give them all 18 percent. So the whole approach, which could have been avoided, was in that high interest era.

He'd expanded a small savings and loan into a little holding company. He eventually ended up

stock trading and dealing. He ended up being a national insurance company, a very large, powerful group. But he didn't have a capable person overlooking what he was doing with Lincoln Savings and Loan. So he went way out. He thought he could move into California and buy me and a few other people, which he may have done with some of the top Republican fund-raisers.

I don't think that many people understood that there was a California corporations commissioner that authorized Keating to sell those securities in the lobby of a savings and loan. By selling them in the lobby of a savings and loan, they carried a feeling of [being] insured. Some people bought them. [They] took their money out of Lincoln Savings and Loan and bought those securities.

ISOARDI: Which were 100 percent risk, no insurance.

BANE: That's right. I faced that in one of the years that I was running for reelection. My opposition thought they could nail me because I'd been strongly supported by savings and loans. They wanted to get me in debates on it. Big issue, savings and loans. I could debate, and I could

defend Lincoln Savings against the Republican administration in Washington for what they did, which is how they handled that whole conversion. The authorization of money market CDs without control. It really upset the financial markets in California.

ISOARDI: Why did something like that get passed? Was it because of the clout of some savings and loan people in Republican circles?

BANE: No.

ISOARDI: Was it the general attitude of the [Ronald W.] Reagan administration?

BANE: No. Remember the savings and loans--mutuals or stock companies--were institutions made up of small people, a lot of small deposits. And they were growing very fast. The banks were really the ones that opposed them. The banks had much more clout in Washington than the savings and loans ever had. Much more clout in the various states than the savings and loans ever had, because the banks were the big money people and the savings and loans were the little guys. The political clout went with the big guys. I could enlarge upon that, you know.

ISOARDI: By all means.

BANE: Well, then we're getting into my political philosophy, [which] was that the Republican party was owned [Laughter] by big business in California. In the legislature, people going to Sacramento representing the Republican party, they get their finances from big business through the party. If you don't have party support in Sacramento and you want to become a legislator, you've got to be a Republican. You had to be, until recently, anti-abortion. It was one of the blood tests you took when you received Republican support. You've got to be an anti-abortionist. Republican women who believe that's their own business are becoming strong today. They have a powerful interest in their one issue. So they had sort of an agreement.

So consequently in Sacramento, you saw the votes come down. You saw the Democrats on one side, and the Republicans [were] anti-abortion. They would get up and quote the Bible. I got enough. So one day I got up and said.... We had an issue on the floor on the budget, because the children's hospital and a bunch of other

groups couldn't receive any money until the budget was passed. We had tried to exclude certain people from that restriction. The issue was what we could do to ease the burden of nursing homes, the children's hospital, and other places that were receiving state money. They couldn't receive it, so people couldn't get help. These are people [who] live from day-to-day. I quoted the Bible, [which] kind of surprised them. But the section of the Bible that says, or Christ said, "For that which you do to one of these the least of thy brethren you do unto me." So I asked the Republicans, who are always quoting the Bible, didn't they remember what he said? "These people live from day-to-day, eat from day-to-day in the children's hospital or wherever. Financially, they're the least of our brethren. So I expect every Christian over there on the Republican side to vote for these people." And I said, "I'm Jewish, and there are others on this floor [who] are Jewish. I can tell you how we are going to vote. We're going to remember what the Bible said." [Laughter]

ISOARDI: So in looking back at the S and L's then, during

the Reagan years, you think it was a combination of the strength of California business interests and the attitude of the California Republicans that really got that through. That led to the S and L...

BANE: No. As to the Republicans of California, that wouldn't make the difference. That's not enough. Big business and financial power are very active politically. The banks partly were antagonistic to savings and loans. They wanted to get rid of them. Other people who wanted to be in the position to take public savings, whether money market CDs or the stock market, wherever, they wanted to be the only ones collecting money. So the lack of consideration for what they were going to do to the savings and loan industry, the grief it caused, which was intense, was a result of politics ruled by large financial interests.

Charlie Keating, who came from that background and was crude in his application of the principles of "owning" votes, just gambled. At that time when investments in the savings and loan business crumbled because of his brethren

BANE: [Laughter], he got caught in that. I have mixed feelings about Charlie Keating. This was something that very few people know. The California corporations commissioner was the one who approved the selling of those stocks in the savings and loan offices. The people who went to the commissioner at that time were composed of a former Republican corporations commissioner and some of the main financial people in the Republican party. [They] visited the California corporations commissioner and persuaded him to approve [it]. That's where that came from.

So hey, I could have had a ball debating that issue, because I had a lot of knowledge about the savings and loan industry and the financial markets. I could have really had a good time. But my election was at stake. I had tried what I just told you on a couple of Democratic clubs. And I tell you, [you] take a look at the people in the audience, and they weren't buying it. They thought they had a scandal, and it was Charlie Keating who was the cause of it. They weren't about to be persuaded. Well, when the financial troubles came, it's difficult to

understand how the powerful financial figures and the moves they made politically from Washington could cause all the trouble they caused. Well, obviously I couldn't win the battle, you know. So when it came to the savings and loan issue, people would call me up and I would tell them the truth.

Lincoln Savings and Loan is a federally chartered institution. In California we have no authority over them at all. And nothing I did in Sacramento, nothing I could do in Sacramento at the state level, could have any bearing whatsoever regarding Lincoln Savings and Loan. It was simple fact. I let it go at that, so consequently they were never able to [Laughter] keep me involved in the savings and loan scandal. Well, when we got into Charlie Keating, we were...

ISOARDI: We were talking about your ten years or so out of politics and your involvement in the S and L's then. Maybe we can come back at a later time, when we get into your career in Sacramento in the eighties, to talking a bit more about the S and L explosion, since it was so important during the

eighties. But how do you get back into politics in '74? How does that come about?

BANE: It was a tough one.

ISOARDI: How so?

BANE: I'd go around and talk to people, friends of mine. They would say, "Look, Tom, anybody that's been in politics can't make it back."

ISOARDI: So you were starting to poke around yourself. You wanted to get back into the action?

BANE: Oh yeah.

ISOARDI: Yeah, OK. You had missed it.

BANE: Well, I was sixty years old. Where did I enjoy most of my life? It was in the political arena. So I was a young sixty and a vigorous sixty, you know. I didn't look sixty.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] So this wasn't an issue.

BANE: Colored my hair. I mean, I didn't have any gray in my hair. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: So this indicates you're pretty serious about coming back. [Laughter]

BANE: Oh yes. I quit my job with the savings and loan industry.

ISOARDI: In 1974?

BANE: Yeah. They were paying me a lot more than

twenty-five [thousand dollars] at that time.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Yeah, you must have really loved the action in politics.

BANE: People thought I was nuts, giving up the job I had to go back into that place. But it's what I wanted to do. Some of my best supporters said, "Look at so-and-so from San Diego or San Francisco. He went out, tried to come back, and couldn't do it." I said, "He was a drunk. I'm not a drunk." [Laughter] But I had that hurdle to climb over, having been there, to get back, because no one makes it back.

ISOARDI: Really? That was sort of an unstated rule then?

BANE: I guess everybody else who had tried it had never been able to get back. And I said, "I'm not so-and-so. I'm Tom Bane." All the political powers that be, including the ones from Sacramento, didn't want me back either.

ISOARDI: Really.

BANE: Oh no.

ISOARDI: No old loyalties.

BANE: They didn't want more competition for leadership.

ISOARDI: Ah. Because they figured if you came back, you would be up there.

BANE: Yeah. Willie Brown and other Democrats were running for speaker.

ISOARDI: This is '74, yes.

BANE: Nobody figured I could make it back. I was too old, you know. All the money and support was going to Jack McGrath.

ISOARDI: The party support and party money.

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: So you were really out there on your own.

BANE: Yeah, I was out there on my own with my own money.

ISOARDI: You ran with your own funds?

BANE: Yep.

ISOARDI: How did you do it?

BANE: I put them all on the line. I intended to win, and I did win.

ISOARDI: What kind of a campaign did you wage? Was it going back to your original strategy of intensive footwork, meeting people?

BANE: Well, the first time I ran and won, I only slept two hours a night. When I got to be sixty, I had to sleep four hours a night.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Oh jeez. That's still all you were sleeping was four hours a night. And the rest of

the time you were out campaigning.

BANE: Tell you the truth, I took a half hour nap at lunch.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] You're allowed. You're allowed. Jeez.

BANE: Marlene used to bring me over a tuna sandwich sometime around lunchtime.

ISOARDI: So by this time, you knew Marlene?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: When do you meet her? Does that happen when you're out of politics?

BANE: No. Let's see. No, I met her during the Kennedy campaign.

ISOARDI: Kennedy campaign?

BANE: Yeah, for president of the United States.

ISOARDI: Nineteen sixty?

BANE: Yeah. I was just employing her. She later came down to see me when she was out of work. She had two kids to feed. Her husband wouldn't take anything, except what he wanted. She came down, and at that time I needed a staff. The staff I had was leaving to take another job, upward mobility. I really ran a one-person office. The staff I needed, I hired. I hired a lobbying

BANE: firm.

I retained the guy who later became chairman of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board. It was when I picked him out of SC [University of Southern California] and hired him to do some analytical work on the savings and loan industry. I supported him for savings and loan commissioner of California. The Savings and Loan League [Laughter] had somebody else in mind. A guy named [Richard] Roe. I supported Roe when he ran on the federal level, because the California league didn't have any punch on the federal level. But then when he was seeking an appointment as the savings and loan commissioner of California, he got the support of the California league and then he would not talk to me. No savings and loan leader can survive if he can't talk to the commissioner. So I looked around for a guy and got him to seek the spot. His name was Preston Martin Jr., and he [was] at SC. He held a doctorate in finance and some other degrees. Very fine, clean man that would appeal to Ronald Reagan. [Laughter] I got him on the list.

BANE:           And I did something Jesse Unruh taught me, [which] is to get your man in the wings and then go out and cut up the guy that's in front. So I visited certain Republican powers in California and took them to lunch. I found a guy who's a big money man, collected funds. He asked me what I was doing now, which I was very glad he asked me. I said, "We've got a real chore coming up now." "What's that?" he said. "Well, I'm supporting Preston Martin for commissioner. He's the head of the financial department for USC. He's running against a guy named Richard Roe." And the guy says, "Richard Roe? That so-and-so"--the only reason I'm not giving the words is that.... [Laughter] "I'll take care of that." My memory gives me a little trouble with names. [Stuart] Stu Spencer is the guy who trained Ronald Reagan to be governor of California. He took him from an actor and made him a politician. I went to Spencer, a Republican. He and I were very good friends. Are today. He used to invite me up to his place up in Oregon. Except that I could never accept because you've got to report those things. That's enough to defeat you for

BANE: office. But he and I are good friends. His daughter was in a lobbying job in Sacramento. I always treated her very nicely and very well. She was always welcome in my office. Stu Spencer is a wonderful man. He really is a wonderful guy, very bright. The president took Stu Spencer with him to Washington and he became his guiding light back there. Well, I talked to Stu about Preston Martin, and he was a little helpful. Tom Bane [Laughter] beat the California Savings and Loan League again, and, oh God. [Laughter]

[End Tape 6, Side B]

[Session 7, July 29, 1995]

[Begin Tape 7, Side A]

ISOARDI: Tom, last time we talked about your return to the assembly. We talked about your campaign in 1974. Maybe you can begin by talking about what your district was like. Now you're representing what is called the Fortieth [Assembly] District.

BANE: Uh-huh.

ISOARDI: Was it pretty much the same district as your previous one?

BANE: No, it was an entirely new district, really. Of course I knew some people because people moved from my old district into my new district, so I wasn't a total stranger. I ran against Jack McGrath and others. The name identification survey showed about 6 or 7 percent name identification for each of us. Jack was supported by [Congressman James C.] Jim Corman. He was Jim Corman's campaign manager. Jack had built quite a few connections which were very

valuable, because they were key support people for Corman, and Corman was backing him.

ISOARDI: Who were some of these connections?

BANE: There were many people. Everybody told me it was impossible to come back. So I didn't want to embarrass any of my friends. I decided to pay for my own campaign. So when I started out my usual campaign of meeting people, I had set my goals to meet one hundred thousand people in the markets...

ISOARDI: Supermarkets.

BANE: Supermarkets, on the street corners, and restaurants and whatever. So that was my goal. I kept track by the literature and whatever item I passed out as a giveaway. I hired a couple of friends, but they were high-powered performers, workers. So I'd done....

No, I take that back, I didn't do it. I had access through Howard Adler in Orange County, who worked for Congressman [Richard T.] Hanna, to an intensive labor survey [which] was taken about voters' attitudes. Voters' attitudes were sort of a rebellion to campaign pieces and campaign propaganda, so that maybe a mimeograph

sheet would be more effective than a high-powered brochure. So Howard Adler and I sat down. He was going to run for Congress, and I was running for assembly, so we were both running. We mapped out the campaign--this was six months before filing, really--and to pick early the most effective campaign during that period of time. I paid for my own campaign. We didn't run a democratic operation. I was the boss.

[Laughter] So we ran the campaign that I had laid out. Howard Adler developed a campaign committee and had a lot of people helping him run his campaign, volunteers, his campaign committee. He lost. Of course, I immediately said, "That's what you get for letting somebody else run your campaign." But that isn't quite true. We had different districts, and the problems were different.

ISOARDI: What were the issues in the Fortieth District? Does anything stick out in your mind? What were people concerned with?

BANE: Well, my assembly district had a bloc of senior citizens, which my opponent never bothered to do anything with, although he had connections. He

had a key person in the senior citizens group on his campaign committee. But I went to the people, you know, the older people. I kept track of where their lunches were and where their functions were, and I went to all of them. I handed them pot holders or ballpoint pens, or something like that. Those were the items I handed out toward the latter part of the campaign. I can remember it was a senior group, and some people always want two pens or two pot holders, or whatever it was. [Laughter] I was so pleased that they wanted them, I gave them to them graciously. The one that really I never forget is, one guy says, "Could I have another pen for my mother?" [Laughter]

ISOARDI: [Laughter] One of the seniors?

BANE: Yeah. [Laughter] Of course, that got a laugh out of the table and also another pen out of me. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: How could you resist. [Laughter]

BANE: So it was pretty hard campaigning, but one that was really a pleasure to do.

ISOARDI: Did you meet your quota of a hundred thousand?

BANE: Oh, I broke that. I broke the hundred thousand.

And you understand that they're sometimes very short contacts. For instance, I would go into a market. First, I would survey where the manager of the market was, see what row he was on, then I'd start on the other side. Then he'd try to catch me. I could see over the shelves, and he couldn't. [Laughter] There were seven of us running for the Democratic primary.

ISOARDI: That many?

BANE: Yeah. Marlene was my campaign manager. She would get very upset with me. I was very, very much aware it was the general campaign [that] was an important one. We'd go to these public meetings at some auditorium some place. I always start out with the pitch that I thought the people of the district were very fortunate to have the caliber of people that were running...  
[Interruption]

ISOARDI: ...Was the Fortieth District a little west of your previous district? How was it different from the...

BANE: Well, it was practically a new district. The first time I ran, my first district was up in.... I lived in Tujunga. So I had Sun

Valley and all that.

ISOARDI: You had Burbank?

BANE: No, I didn't have any Burbank. I used to have Burbank in the first district. I didn't have any Burbank, it was so far out west. Not Burbank.

ISOARDI: So this is quite a change, then?

BANE: It was quite a change. I got rid of the gray in my hair and grew a long head of hair because long hair at that time was fashionable. I'd meet people sometimes. When I met this woman, she said, "You know, I voted for your father."

[Laughter]

ISOARDI: What did you say to that?

BANE: "He was a good man." [Laughter] Alan Robbins, the state senator, who I'd known since he was twelve years old, and we worked on lots of campaigns together, he had run for the senate about six months before when Tom [C.] Carrell died. Jack McGrath had managed his campaign. I knew Jack's style, his campaign from beginning to end, because I had watched him for years. So I talked to Alan, I said, "He's a man on a smear operation, so I've got to get prepared to smear him back. I've got to check him out." So I

BANE: checked him out. He didn't have a bad record, except he [was] picked up on a warrant because he hadn't responded to the police to do something. But his brother was mixed up in narcotics. That was on the rap sheet.

His campaign manager and I knew each other very well. I think at the time he was a city councilman, or he was getting prepared to go for the city council. So he became sort of a spy on what I was doing. He stopped by [as an] old friend to chat a while about the campaign and stuff. So I'd tell him whatever I wanted Jack to know. [Laughter] I shared with him my rap sheet. I said, "I'm going to have it all ready to go. I won't use it unless Jack puts out a smear sheet. If he puts out a smear sheet, I'm ready to go on this one." That put Jack in a straitjacket position, where he couldn't use a smear sheet very early. He had to use it at the last minute. I knew he would have to do that.

So my campaign letter went out the weekend before the election. There was a letter from Alan Robbins on Police Protection League stationery, and it carried a P.S. You know, one

thing people all read in letters are the P.S.'s.  
They may not read the rest of it...

[Interruption]

...So I mentioned the P.S. was very important, which meant the rest of the letter had to be short, concise, and to the point. The P.S. that went out with Alan Robbins's blessing [contained] a warning against last minute smear sheets and phony telegrams. Jack McGrath's campaign always had a smear sheet and also had a telegram. Well, we sent that out the weekend before the campaign. And on Monday morning I put out a postal card-- Monday, Tuesday was the election--and had the red, white, and blue approach. And it carried their polling place to remind people where to vote. And it also [said] "Beware of smear sheets and phony telegrams."

ISOARDI: Right on the card?

BANE: Yeah. So sure enough, Jack McGrath came out with his smear sheet and a phony telegram. People were so mad at him for doing that.

ISOARDI: Really? It backfired on him?

BANE: Oh yeah.

ISOARDI: What was he saying? What kind of things were in

his smear sheet?

BANE: Well, in his paper one, he had me sitting in a chair with some lobbyists. Me with a cocktail in my hand with a drunken gesture, you know. Of course, the people that knew me knew I didn't drink at all, though.

ISOARDI: Yeah. Was he trying to play into the Prop[osition] 9<sup>1</sup> sentiment in 1974? I think, wasn't [Edmund G.] "Jerry" Brown [Jr.] pushing that reform?

BANE: Yeah, but that didn't become an issue, because we both supported that, of course.

ISOARDI: Right.

BANE: This was a standard Jack McGrath campaign.

ISOARDI: But it didn't work.

BANE: No, because I knew what was coming and how to deal with it. Alan Robbins was state senator and well-known in the district at that time because he'd gone through the campaigns he learned from me of hand-to-hand combat. He used to wait until people were getting out of markets to get out in the street, and going wherever people are and

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<sup>1</sup> Proposition 9 (June 1974), Political Reform Act.

meeting them personally. He knew what time the theaters got out, then he'd hit the theater at that particular time. People were coming out from the show, why he'd have [Inaudible] to make a contact with. So he was pretty well-known, and they knew him. So a postal card coming from a state senator carried some punch. He's the one that issued the warning against the smear sheet and the phony telegram. And sure enough, there was a smear sheet and a phony telegram.

ISOARDI: Predictable. [Laughter]

BANE: It was a very interesting campaign from a strategy point. I beat him two to one. He was putting out letters on Congressman Corman's stationery with...

ISOARDI: Convincing. Very convincing.

BANE: ...Corman's signature. It was tough. But part of the survey showed people would be responsive to personal contact, which I was doing, and a personal message. I had no idea. My wife's mother and other people handwrote in green ballpoint pen ink fifty thousand postcards. Then when we got down to campaign time, we used people to address them with ballpoint pens in

green ink, so that the addressing would match that on the back of the postal card. And it was signed by four different people. Depending on the makeup of the precinct, depending on which name we used: "I remember I called you." It was a personal message: "Remember, I called you on the phone." The campaign carried a lot of personal message stuff.

ISOARDI: Very effective.

BANE: And Jim Corman had called me. He was also doing spy work. "How are things going?" I said, "Oh, I think they're going pretty well." He said, "How's the campaign looking?" He was checking for Jack McGrath, you know. I said, "Well, Jim, it looks pretty good." I said, "My last poll showed I was beating him two to one." He said, "Two to one?" Of course, I really was baiting him to put out the smear sheet. Otherwise, it wouldn't fit into my campaign.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] So you wanted him to do it.

BANE: Well, yeah.

ISOARDI: That's good. That's good.

BANE: But the whole strategy worked very well, and I really was beating him two to one.

ISOARDI: And you ended up beating him two to one.

BANE: He helped me. He wrote the letters I said he was going to write. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Yeah, really. Fulfilled your predictions.

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: So what's Sacramento like when you go back? How does it strike you? Has it changed much?

BANE: Well, you understand that it was a growing state, healthy economy, lots of aircraft work, lots more work. Every year we'd have more money to dish out than we had the year before. That's a very healthy place to be, you know. We make lots of friends, we give our pet projects some money. The economy was good. That's my first term in Sacramento. The economy was good all the time. So nobody was taking the politicians on. The politicians were always getting more money for this, more money for that. The budget was easy, you know. So a very pleasant.... Politicians didn't have any dirty names. [News]papers hadn't cut them up.

Second time was a little different. But as I probably told you last time, Jesse Unruh and I

became enemies during my first campaign because he was supporting my primary Democrat, who was a good candidate. I taught him how to campaign, and he was following pretty much my approach. Then Jesse made the mistake of telling John Snyder, "Bane better find out who's boss of Sacramento and find out fast." I already was carrying a chip on my shoulder for him, and he knocked it off with that one, you know. So I went and said, "Jesse Unruh is not and never will be my boss." I sent that message back to Jesse. I did some other things I haven't mentioned. I told you of some of them off the record. But, you know, I was feisty.

ISOARDI: Coming back to Sacramento, though, after your election victory in '74. When you left you were one of the inner circle, you were one of the movers and shakers in the assembly.

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: How does it feel now, coming back? You don't have that position anymore. Who's running things? How much of an impact can you have, initially?

BANE: Well, of course initially, I had to establish

myself. Of course I knew how the operation worked.

ISOARDI: So that hadn't changed much? You felt...

BANE: No, it had, it had. I became a force on my own and a strong person on my own. I ran across some problems. I had taken the insurance companies on, when I was up there before, on the home office tax exemptions. So their home office was always a great big building, which they rented out to lots of clients and renters. They were making money off all those home office tax exemptions. I kept my files on that issue, even though I lost the battle when I was up there the first time. When I came back, I started out with that bill. I'd done all the quotes and stuff that goes with a proper newspaper article.

Democratic consultants and the speaker were talking about how much help they could give to any of the new members. So I turned my news copy announcing my bill over to the caucus operation, which helps people write drafts and stuff like this, because I wanted this to be perfect. If they could help me any, I'd be glad to take it. They didn't return my copy to me. So I had

scheduled the eighteenth of January to go to press on that bill. On the seventeenth I called the caucus operation and said I hadn't received my copy yet. So on the seventeenth, some time during the night, they slipped it under my door. I opened the paper on the eighteenth of January, and it has a headline on the third page, which is a prominent page, "Berman Takes on Insurance Company with Tax Exemption Bill." Those guys had taken my bill. They didn't even bother to change the wording, you know. They couldn't improve what I'd worked on for a long period of time. So I joined some people to recall the speaker. There I was again. Well, I couldn't allow that to happen to me and not do something about it.

ISOARDI: Do you remember when this was, Tom? The speaker then was Leo [T.] McCarthy?

BANE: Yeah, whom I had voted for.

ISOARDI: You voted for initially, right?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: When you first got there.

BANE: I couldn't allow anybody to do that to me and not sting somewhat. That's why I could go after the head guy, which was Leo McCarthy. We had some

meetings.

ISOARDI: Now, who is "we"? Who else was trying to unseat him?

BANE: Willie Brown's old friends.

ISOARDI: Ah. [Laughter]...

[Interruption]

...So you were working, then, in the group that was opposing McCarthy, [which] was Willie Brown and his friends, that were starting this push against McCarthy?

BANE: No. I was one of the ringleaders who was starting it.

ISOARDI: Oh really?

BANE: Yeah. Republicans would look at those battles going on with Democrats, between Willie Brown and McCarthy. They had considered supporting me for speaker.

ISOARDI: Did they approach you?

BANE: Well, I was informed of that by one of the prominent members of the senate, a reliable person. He said they didn't consider me a new member, you know.

ISOARDI: Right.

BANE: I never wanted to be speaker.

ISOARDI: Not at all?

BANE: No. It takes complete control of your life. You no longer do what you want to do. You do what everybody else wants you to do. And that really wasn't where I wanted to be. I knew what kind of hell the speaker goes through because I had seen Jesse Unruh go through it. So that really wasn't my cup of tea.

ISOARDI: Right.

BANE: I could be the closest to the speaker and work together with the speaker.

ISOARDI: Yeah. And I guess these Republicans didn't mind your past connections with Jesse Unruh. I assume they weren't too fond of him. [Laughter]

BANE: Well, I always was an individual, you know.

ISOARDI: And they recognized that?

BANE: They knew that. They knew we'd have to deal, make some agreements, which I wouldn't do. So I didn't encourage them. They aren't too fond of Willie Brown either.

ISOARDI: Why not? Politically too liberal?

BANE: Yeah. And there were also some racial issues involved.

ISOARDI: As well.

BANE: Yeah. That's one of the things that Willie Brown suffered from that Jesse didn't have to put up with.

ISOARDI: So at this time, you were one of the ringleaders, you start organizing an opposition to Leo McCarthy. Do you have a candidate in mind to take his place?

BANE: Willie Brown.

ISOARDI: Really? You had decided early on that he would be the person?

BANE: Well, that's the only place there was any nut of votes, organization. So Leo McCarthy got hold of it and had somebody watch my office.

ISOARDI: He had someone watching your office?

BANE: Oh yeah.

ISOARDI: Just to see who was going in and out?

BANE: Yeah. So he had lunch with me. He says, "I understand you're unhappy with my speakership." And I said, "Well, this is what your caucus did to me." He said, "I'm sorry to hear that."

ISOARDI: He claimed he didn't know about it.

BANE: Yes. But he didn't do anything about it either. So I was still there. So I became an opposition to the incumbent speakership.

ISOARDI: How soon did this happen after you returned to Sacramento, Tom?

BANE: On January 18, the first month afterwards.

ISOARDI: 'Seventy-five?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Just after you got back this happened?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Oh, I was under the impression it was a year or two later. But this happens instantly that they treat you like that.

BANE: Oh yeah.

ISOARDI: Jeez.

BANE: They called me in the office and suggested that I develop a subcommittee to study something I wanted to study. He'd make me chairman of it. I said, "Don't, Leo. I'd rather have nothing than next to nothing." I think he must get a reaction to my directness and my dealings. But that also became my stock-in-trade. In the twenty-four years I was up there, I never broke a commitment. Always level. So my word was good. I could get some bills through that other people couldn't get through because I worked hard and took my bills very seriously.

Willie Brown had become chairman of some committee when Leo McCarthy beat him. Willie Brown was just too smart. You couldn't let him [Laughter] run loose either, you know. At the beginning, Willie came to me to talk about the speakership vote, just before the battle between Leo McCarthy and Willie Brown reached the assembly for a vote. He came to me and said that he'd like to have my vote on this. "Well, I can't do that," because I had promised Leon Ralph, who I had hired to be organizer for the Los Angeles County Democratic Central Committee. I taught him how to work between conflicting groups. He later ran for the assembly, when I was not there, and got elected. He became chairman of the Rules Committee. So I promised Leon Ralph. I said, "He's the only one from Sacramento who's been friendly."

ISOARDI: Really? When you came back?

BANE: Yeah, when I came back. I said, "They didn't think the old man could make it back." He wasn't an old man. He was only sixty. [Laughter] But you understand the attitude.

ISOARDI: Yeah, of course.

[End Tape 7, Side A]

[Begin Tape 7, Side B]

ISOARDI: So initially, then, you supported Leon Ralph.

BANE: No, I voted for whomever he was supporting.

ISOARDI: Oh, I see. So you followed his lead on that, and he was supporting Leo McCarthy.

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: I see. That's how you came to vote for McCarthy then. Now, let me ask you.... Very shortly, you swing to Willie Brown, and you start out organizing against McCarthy. When do you meet Willie Brown? Maybe you can tell us something about how you establish a relationship with Willie Brown. Is this your first dealing with him?

BANE: No. He got elected the year I left, but I was still Rules chairman when he came up. He went through the halls and gave me the old glad hand. He said, "I understand you're the man to see," and that sort of stuff.

ISOARDI: So that was 1964?

BANE: Yeah, that was 1964. So I met him then, and he was Willie Brown from the very start.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] What was it?

BANE: He came to me, and he says, "Well, you know you're on the losing side." And I said, "Willie, if it's only Leon Ralph and me who are voting for the losing speaker, that's the way it will be." So he looked at me and said, "I like your style." I had a bill and I said, "If the senate does amend it, I'll bring the bill back to this committee for its approval, whatever they do." So somebody said, "Mr. Brown"--who was chairing-- "how do I know he will do that?" Well, he said, "You apparently don't know Tom Bane, do you?" So I'm a strong believer in your word is your bond. It's the only tool you have to deal with in Sacramento, is your word, you know. So I established myself as the person I wanted to be. It worked out very well.

We weren't successful in recalling Leo McCarthy, but Howard Berman [Laughter] came into the picture as a candidate. And my district, the politicians around this area, were all Berman supporters. It was the normal place for me to go. Besides that, when he heard about how he got his insurance bill, he called me over to the

office and told me he knew nothing about that.

ISOARDI: He knew nothing about your bill that has his name on it?

BANE: Well, you understand, the caucus staff would write his legislation for him. So they wrote the bill, and they didn't tell him. He convinced me that that's the way it was. And he was a nice guy, you know. His friends really became my friends. So when he came in to see me asking for support, I told him, yeah, I'd support him. I'd rather lose with him than win with somebody else. I did caution him about moving after the speakership. He made major errors, which I tried to keep him from making.

ISOARDI: During the fight for the speakership.

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Such as.

BANE: Well, the battle became who was winning the Democratic primary in some of the districts. His campaign took on Jack [R.] Fenton to try to beat him. And I think he did, I think he beat Jack Fenton. Well, that's something that you know was not well-taken by any other. Because they felt that if he does that to member Jack Fenton, he'd

do it to them. That's a major rule, major rule.

ISOARDI: Yeah, truly.

BANE: On top of that when he decided to run, he notified Leo McCarthy that he was going to run against him. He asked him to resign. I fought against that approach but some of the other eager-beaver freshmen were all gung ho, you know. Because Howard Berman and his brother, Michael Berman, didn't understand the power of the incumbent speaker.

ISOARDI: Well, they underestimated Leo McCarthy's willingness to use it. Maybe they didn't take him very seriously, I don't know.

BANE: I think it's just that they didn't know what he could do.

ISOARDI: Really.

BANE: The incumbent speaker can give powers and committees and things. All a candidate for speaker can do is promise. Politics will burn the hand. Howard, I think he recognized that if he listened to me, he'd be speaker. He'd have the speakership.

The chairmen of the committees were a power. None of them wanted to lose their chairmanships.

They were supporting Leo McCarthy because he was the speaker, and he gave them the chairmanships. But they met with Berman when the fight developed between him, Leo, and Willie Brown. McCarthy was out, very obviously gone. The Republicans picked up Willie Brown. They were the minority party, but they were going to throw all their votes to somebody. And they threw it to Willie Brown. When the battle developed between Willie Brown and Berman, the chairmen of the committees got together, and they met with Howard Berman. They said that if they could keep their chairmanships, why, they would go with him for speaker. Again, Howard didn't understand that you could take care of your friends eventually, you know, as time goes on. Things change very rapidly.

ISOARDI: Sure.

BANE: There's lots of things you can do for them. And I told him that he didn't desire.... He didn't understand it just takes a little time, that things change, you know.

ISOARDI: So he wouldn't give them the guarantee.

BANE: Sure. Well, he wouldn't have had to take all of them, you know. He could have taken enough of

them individually to keep his forty-one votes. He said, "No. I have commitments to my supporters. I have to keep my commitments."

ISOARDI: That's like telling them that "A lot of you are going to lose your jobs."

BANE: Oh yeah. So there was much honor involved, and he was forthright. And it ended up none of his friends survived.

ISOARDI: Really?

BANE: But I'd seen the grief that being speaker had given Jesse Unruh, because he and I were very close. I'd seen the turmoil that existed in him when he would get a blast at the newspapers, because the newspapers zero in on the speaker. We generally consider the press to be a Republican press, so the newspaper reporters could get copy in their papers by attacking the Democratic speaker. So Willie Brown ended up being elected speaker without my vote. I stuck to my vote commitment to Howard Berman. I stuck with him...

ISOARDI: Did you? To the end?

BANE: Oh yeah. That's part of my code, you know. You don't peel off. If you've got a commitment, you

go down with it. Because whoever was the winner understands that. If you want to deal with that new power, it's very simple. You're dealing with word and agreements, so that I was reliable.

So I went to Willie Brown's reception after he had won and shook his hand. I said, "I stopped by to offer to you my sympathies." He said, "What do you mean? I won." I said, "Willie, the time will come when you'll know what I mean." And he did, you know. Because they gave him all the stuff they gave to Jesse Unruh and added to it racism on Willie. Willie did not drink. He may have taken a drink, but he was not a drinker. Willie handled it very well. With all the stuff he got, he handled it very well. I had no trouble working with him.

ISOARDI: Why do you think he handled it so well? What was there about him?

BANE: I think he'd been under attack since he was a kid, so it wasn't anything new. He accepted it for what it was.

ISOARDI: You mentioned earlier that Berman didn't understand the power the sitting speaker had. Was there any arrogance in there as well?

Because it strikes me as you relate the things that he did, there seems like a kind of arrogance to it.

BANE: Well, you can paint another picture. His brother was running the campaign for speakership, and his brother had never breathed in the air of Sacramento. He thought it was like you do things in Congress. Now this is something that they didn't have, [which] was a sensitivity to each person.

In the field of politics, you have to always know where the other fellow is that you're dealing with. You can't deal with him unless you know. If you don't know him thoroughly, then you can say something to him that's offensive, which wouldn't be offensive to anybody else. So you work with them in what I'll say is "their language." You can't speak to a monolingual person who is French and talk to him in English. He won't understand. You've got to speak to him in French, or get somebody to talk to him in French. Oh, you see it all the time today, just plain business, and work at it.

ISOARDI: Yeah.

BANE: They didn't understand how people were going to react. I don't think it's that they didn't care about the other person's wishes or wants, or whether their own wishes or wants were dominant to the point where they couldn't sense that. And Michael Berman did not understand Sacramento. Well, I had been there. I'd been through the whole thing.

ISOARDI: Right.

BANE: On top of that, Michael Berman was after votes. He figured if he'd knock off Jack Fenton, another vote for Howard. But you understand how all the other members felt.

ISOARDI: It sounds like probably he had a serious problem of having people trust him.

BANE: Well, they could trust him to knock them off. They didn't go beyond that. I don't think it was a matter of trust. They trusted what they thought he would do. He did it to Jack Fenton, he'd do it to them. They trusted Howard Berman to do that. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: What was the speakership like in the seventies, then, when Leo McCarthy was running it, and during this battle when Willie Brown eventually

won? What was required of a speaker? What was required to be a good speaker? What was the most important thing you had to do in office?

BANE: Stay in touch with each individual member. Leo McCarthy built a sheltered office. He went to committee chairs who themselves had been little dictators. So the people who were contacting the membership, Leo McCarthy had put in place. It was a final court. It didn't get to Leo. Let me give you a feeling of it: when Leo McCarthy walked in the chambers, all quieted down and a dark cloud came over the chambers. That was Leo McCarthy's regime. Now, take Willie Brown. Willie comes in the door of the chambers, "Hey, there's Willie."

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Big difference. Big difference in tone.

BANE: Yeah. So everybody liked Willie.

ISOARDI: I mean that's one dramatic example, I guess, of personal relationships at a minimum. But what things would a speaker have to do to be in touch with the membership to keep them on his side, or her side now?

BANE: Well, Willie was speaker, which meant that he

ended up being the head of the caucus, even though there was a caucus chairman. He'd get into issues and knew all of them. Now, he and I became very good friends because I protected his back. The Rules chairman has a lot to do with the membership.

ISOARDI: Quite a bit. [Laughter]

BANE: I dealt well with the membership. I recognized each of them as a person of importance and a being. I never gave the fear that some of Willie Brown's chairmen gave, you know. I'd come to him. I didn't hate Republicans. When I took over as chairman of Rules.... Sometimes you make tough decisions.

Sometimes you may have a guy like Steve Peace who--very bright, very bright--on an issue.... Particularly the computers, where Steve was against buying computers and the computer business. The Republicans were against it, too, because they figured it was a tool the Democrats could make good use of, you know. They could, if they knew how to use it. Steve liked to debate and argue. I always ended up getting his vote, because [Richard] Mountjoy was always debating

and arguing too. So I let Steve argue with Mountjoy, until Steve would turn to me and say, "Let's vote on this thing and get it over with." So Steve would convince himself [Laughter] against Mountjoy. So sometimes we had some long meetings until Steve got to that point.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] You just let him go.

BANE: Let him go.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] That's good.

BANE: I let Mountjoy go, too. Mountjoy ended up being a very good friend of mine. He's the one that carried the resolution on the floor naming the Rules Committee room after me. He's the one that really organized putting it together.

ISOARDI: Very nice.

BANE: But it was proper. Mountjoy had to state his piece in the Rules Committee meeting or to the press afterwards. So Mountjoy always had his chance to speak his piece. It was his job for the Republicans to speak his piece. If somebody objected, I'd say, "No, let Mountjoy finish." When he was through, "Are you done, Mr. Mountjoy?" And he'd tell me, "Yes," and then I'd go on with the meeting. That's understanding

what the other guy's about, you know, what he's got to do. He had a noble purpose: to oppose the chairman of Rules. So I wore him out, you know. It's an individual thing. Willie Brown worked that same way as speaker.

ISOARDI: Well, isn't this one of the keys to his winning, the fact that he could get along with Republicans?

BANE: Let's say he dealt with the Republicans.

ISOARDI: Or dealt with them. [Laughter] More accurate.

BANE: He dealt with the Republicans. But they ended up building a hatred for Willie Brown. They tried to paint Willie Brown as all the bad things they could paint him.

ISOARDI: Well, it's certainly I think probably at a fever pitch now. [Laughter]

BANE: It's the Republicans who have the fever.

ISOARDI: Yes. [Laughter] No question. He has to have had one of the most extraordinary exits in the history of the California legislature.  
[Laughter]

BANE: Well, you understand the power of the speaker is great, and he can do lots of things for you.

ISOARDI: Yes. So let me ask you, how do you start? I

mean, early on when you return to Sacramento in '75, you're working with Willie Brown and his people opposing McCarthy. A few years later you support Berman and his fight for the speakership that Willie Brown eventually wins. How is it that you come to become a staunch supporter, then, of Willie Brown?

BANE: It's amazed lots of people.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] How does this happen? How does this develop? Is this just in the normal course of day-to-day activity? You find yourselves more often than not drawn together?

BANE: Well, I had a rather successful career in Sacramento, but I also was always open, always forthright. What I said, I meant. What I said, I kept. So that I followed my rules of your word is your bond. A lot of these never bothered me very much because they knew where I was going to vote. It was a very reliable vote.

Working on the floor with Willie Brown--I may have told you this before--one day when he was fighting a bill being carried by the optometrists.... Now, I had worked with the optometrists at the very beginning of my term in

Sacramento. I had a close relationship. I had terrible trouble with my eyes. I understood the optometrists' position, and what they were like. I was a very strong supporter for alternative care. I didn't hate the doctors, or I didn't hate the lobbyists for the doctors. I understood their business, and what drove them to do what they want, like make more money. And the optometrists were working hard to get good treatment to patients. And the ophthalmologists were a bunch of M.D.'s...

ISOARDI: Right.

BANE: ...working hard to keep them out of the business. So I was a supporter of alternative care, to bring more people into the field of providing services to the public, which I thought was a healthy approach.

I never worried about anybody taking me on for office. On this issue you won't understand, nobody else will understand, and you won't believe it. But I really loved my constituents, really loved them. They voted for me. When the newspapers took me on, which they did to try to wipe me out, my constituents stayed with me. No

matter what the trend was, my constituents stayed with me. The big issue, Proposition 140,<sup>1</sup> with term limitations and all that, my district never voted for that. And I didn't campaign on that issue either. But there wasn't a household in my district, at least once a year, that didn't get a telephone call taking a poll and asking their opinion of things. They heard from me once or twice a year, at certain hours of the day, when people were home. And my staff did nothing else but do outreach work.

[Louis J.] Lou Papan was chairman of Rules, and he spoke against the optometrists' bill on the floor. And I spoke against the optometrists' bill. And Willie was committed to supporting that bill.

ISOARDI: Why?

BANE: Why did Willie support it?

ISOARDI: Why was he committed to supporting it?

BANE: I'd say it fitted his agenda.

ISOARDI: Yeah. Was this before he was speaker?

BANE: No, it was while he was speaker.

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<sup>1</sup> Proposition 140 (November 1990), limits on terms of office, legislator's retirement, legislative operating costs.

ISOARDI: While he was speaker, OK.

BANE: I was working side by side with him from early morning to late at night.

ISOARDI: But on this issue you found yourself on opposite sides.

BANE: But he never asked me to change my vote. He knew Tom Bane.

ISOARDI: And if he had asked?

BANE: "That's up to you, Willie." I'd tell him, "I've got a commitment. Before I break my commitment to them, I'll break every commitment I have to you, too." You know, that's where I would have been. I was prepared for that. He respected my vote and my commitment. He knew what kind of person I was. He knew he couldn't get a vote from me. He never asked me for a vote. He figured I knew, when I voted, why I was voting that way. There's a reason for it.

ISOARDI: Is that unusual? Is that how he dealt with most people?

BANE: No. But he dealt with me that way because he knew what kind of person I was, and he dealt with everybody else because he knew what kind of person they were.

ISOARDI: He really knew his membership.

BANE: Knew his membership. He made comments to me that he didn't make to other people about certain members. Willie was very sound on the issues, generally. His caucus was committed to education. He was committed to education because he came from a background where.... What education did for him, he became a lawyer. And then that's the only way other people are going to make it in life is if they can get an education. So in the battle between those in education, he was 100 percent. I was very much a person opposed to any discrimination: racial, religious, and sex. He was committed to the same place. His caucus, for the most part, was opposed to any kind of discrimination. We always supported the junior colleges, because they took care of the people who.... It's the only education they could get. So he was very reliable on the issues. He was dealing with some issues like tobacco, and some of the others we raised questions about. I never raised the question. I knew what his deal was, you know. He had to have a constituency in the business

BANE:           area. But on the guts of the people issues, he  
                  was solid. You couldn't touch him.

[End Tape 7, Side B]

[Session 8, August 26, 1995]

[Begin Tape 8, Side A]

ISOARDI: All right, Tom, today let's get into your legislative career, legislation that was of interest to you. How you got it through, how, maybe, ideas came to you in a general sense.

BANE: You know, people often think there's a lot of glory in legislation. That's just plain persistence and work, and overcoming the opposition. When [Benjamin S.] Ben Hite was city clerk--head of the election division--he and I became friends in the process of running for office because I made a lot of use out of the files. I asked him what he wanted out of the legislature. "For twenty-five years," he told me, "they have been trying to get the uncontested judges off the ballot." There are about sixty judgeships, and they'd take up a whole sheet of the ballot, the printing, postage, tallying.

ISOARDI: Sure. Statements.

BANE: It was totally of no use. So that sounds like a simple idea. He said, "Don't you believe it. [Laughter] There's a lot of voting philosophy in mind. The whole democratic process and people's right to vote. When you start fooling with that, you run into really a cat's nest."

So I got to Sacramento and decided I would cure that. There was no romance about that, but it was a hard run. It was harder than I thought when I took it on. But I put in a bill to try to eliminate the uncontested judgeships from the ballot in the general election. Well, that bill didn't get very far, you know, it really didn't. From the process, I learned what the objections were. It was plain and simple. People have a right to choose. If you take the judges off the ballot, they lose their democratic right to choose and name judges. And the thought really ran against the thinking of 120 legislators, you know, because voting was a precious thing. They didn't want to take that right away from people. So I talked to most of the assembly members and pointed out the problems to them: printing problems and counting problems. I was unable to

BANE: get it out of committee the first year.

[Laughter] Well, we're into the philosophies.

As time went on, why, when I put in my second term there, I had my members pretty lined up with who would go for it and who wouldn't. So I spent the time talking to all of those who were opposed to it. I talked to them about the printing problems, counting problems, and the lack of effectiveness that actually defeated the democratic process because there were so many uncontested judgeships. There was an election that people really didn't have much interest in. So the voting didn't take place. And I'd compiled some of the records to show that people weren't voting on them. So they weren't exercising their right. Still [it was] causing a lot of work, a lot of time, a lot of printing expense. So I made more progress as the years went on.

There was one legislator that was adamant. He was a good legislator. He wasn't obstinate. Just his mind was so concerned with the voting philosophy and pure democracy that it was very hard to overcome him. I guess the second year, I

made quite a bit of progress. But the hard-core philosophers were kind of.... So I had to come up with something that would satisfy that and still accomplish what we wanted to accomplish. I tried various things. I think he was getting a little tired of me coming after him every year.  
[Laughter]

ISOARDI: Who was this?

BANE: I can't think of his name right now.

ISOARDI: OK.

BANE: One of the liberal Democrats. Very studious. He spent time reading the bills, and reading and studying. He'd be in there late at night with his studies. So he was a committed person, you know.

ISOARDI: Was this your second tour in Sacramento in '74?  
Or was it your first?

BANE: No. My first.

ISOARDI: Your very first term.

BANE: And really my first bill of any consequence that I remember. I think that the thing about legislation is that the tough ones a lot of people don't like to tackle. So it was easy to find one to carry, if you're looking for a

workload. If I tackled that one, I was determined to get it through. It was a lot tougher than I thought it was going to be. I finally got down to get my hardest opponent to agree to support the bill if I provided [a procedure] a person could do in a general election [to place] an uncontested judge on the ballot. They just have to write a letter to the registrar of voters with a hundred petitioners asking that person's name be put on the ballot.

ISOARDI: Only a hundred?

BANE: Only a hundred!

ISOARDI: Gee, that's nothing.

BANE: That's nothing. To this day I don't think it's ever been used.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] You made your point, didn't you?

BANE: But at that, he just couldn't think.... It was no longer a hindrance to democracy. And in fact, it was a helper. So he supported my bill. I guess my fifth year in the legislature, I was able to get it through the assembly and the senate. So I got the bill. But it was a lot of work over a small issue.

ISOARDI: Five years is a long time.

BANE: Oh yeah. You have 120 legislators and you've got to deal with their philosophy. Because in those days, maybe more than now, I don't know, but I always found the legislators took their responsibilities pretty seriously. When you try to get a change in a democratic process of voting, you've got 120 people to contend with. And you can't do all those in a short period of time. It takes a long time.

ISOARDI: What was the bill called, Tom?

BANE: Well, I don't know if it had a name.<sup>1</sup> The first use came into being when one of the judges had a hold on an issue dealing with civil rights. I can't remember; it wasn't busing. But it was an area which still made for conversation. I was strong in that area of civil rights, democracy, and people's rights. And he made a courageous and unpopular ruling. To me it was a proper ruling, you know, when he was a judge. The only time I think it's ever been used was on him. So it was a hot issue, which it always is. So they got him on the ballot. Because they didn't have

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<sup>1</sup> A.B. 289, 1963 Reg. Sess., Cal. Stat., ch. 1553.

to go through these sixty judgeships to find him, they defeated him. I felt a little ashamed, because I really set up a process so he could be defeated.

ISOARDI: But if sentiment was that high, he might have been defeated anyway, if all the judges were on the ballot. Do you think your legislation was instrumental in his defeat?

BANE: Yeah, I think so.

ISOARDI: Really? Because it set him apart?

BANE: Yeah, set him apart. I used that whole argument in support of my bill, because they could, if they really wanted for some reason, remove a judge. If he's controversial, they can get to him. I'm sorry it worked against a person whom I considered a friend of mine. But it did, really, in a sense, prove my point as far as democracy is concerned. Even though that adversely affected my basic philosophy on the issue. I don't think it's ever been used since. Well, anyway, it served its purpose. We have the uncontested judges off the ballot.

At that time, which was a long time ago, the savings on that were five hundred thousand

BANE: dollars in printing costs alone. The saving, then, was the counting, the manpower, the time, and the computer work, [which] really ran into multi-thousands, when you consider all the polling places and all the votes. [You] have them build a computer system, as time went on, that could count the ballots. If you have this uncontested judgeship, the size of your computer system of going through all the ballots at one time.... Really, the saving was a tremendous amount of money, a tremendous amount of manpower. So it was a constructive bill. To support the little things in government that people are not conscious of, no romance to it, nothing exciting, just plain hard work. So that I was not one looking for press and stuff like that, so I took on those chores.

There's another one I took on. It was the investment of public funds.<sup>1</sup> Well, today there's easily fifty billion dollars in public funds that rest with our government. But you got all the expenditures draining on that all the time,

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<sup>1</sup> A.B. 2099, 1978 Reg. Sess., Cal. Stat., ch. 1016.

BANE: everyday and every minute. And you got the collections of taxes and revenues and other stuff coming in. So they're coming in, and in fact there's always fifty billion dollars there. It's not the same fifty billion dollars, but the accumulation of all that's going through, there is always fifty billion dollars. So what the state was doing was putting that in the banks. The banks were paying, oh, 4 or 4.5 percent interest. They claimed they had to do all this bookkeeping for the state, and it was costly to do that. So they didn't give us very much money on the bank deposits. We were talking about, say, fifty billion dollars that the banks had the use of. The only cost to them was they lent [it] out and made a good killing on it. Well, I put in a bill to open up for bid for the deposits of the public funds. I was taking fifty billion dollars away from the banks. And you recognize that they had a screaming fit. And they put all their lobbyists to work on it. Well, they had about five top lobbyists, the banks did. All good friends of mine. Nice people. That one I put through my second term in the legislature...

ISOARDI: Now, this is, then, after you'd come out of the number of years of experience in the S and L industry, right?

BANE: Right.

ISOARDI: So this would open up...

BANE: So I understood interest and money and deposits and stuff.

ISOARDI: Right.

BANE: So I got a great education in the ten years I was with the industry about money and how much a little change made in the revenues.

ISOARDI: So your bill essentially, then, would have made it possible to invest public funds in S and L's?

BANE: Well, that's right.

ISOARDI: So the banks were hopping mad.

BANE: Oh yeah. You see, the banks had it tied up where the only security you needed for those deposits was some bonds. So the banks would put the bonds on the pawn, reap the interest rate from the bonds, and get the interest rate from the money they loaned out. So they had a really nice thing going. And you understand why they put all the lobbyists to work. I don't know whether they didn't understand all the laws and safeguards and

rules of handling money. Or they chose not to understand. They made a lot of statements that were just totally inaccurate.

ISOARDI: So the thrust of them being that the people's money would not be safe?

BANE: That's right.

ISOARDI: Essentially.

BANE: But when you have to put the bonds up, why, the public's money was guaranteed, you know. So that if we put public money in savings and loans.... Well, the savings and loans were all for it. They immediately became strong supporters of mine, you know. Of course, it was able to get through the assembly, because that's my house, you know. It had strong Republican support, and it was across-the-board support.

ISOARDI: Was this the early eighties? Later seventies?

BANE: Well, it had to be probably in the seventies.

ISOARDI: Oh, just as soon as you got in for the second time.

BANE: Oh yeah. It was a complex subject, interest rates, investments, deals and security. The savings and loans had mortgages, not bonds. Had a warehouse full of them.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Truly.

BANE: So my bill did the value-added mortgages. They all had a value, not money was outstanding on them. The savings and loans would have to put up twice the value in mortgages for every dollar they got in deposit. So that was OK. [Laughter] They just had a warehouse full of mortgages. And so they could furnish collateral all over the place. So it became a battle between the savings and loans and the banks, and the banks and Tom Bane. I got so tied up in that battle that I was taking Tums to keep my stomach from hurting. And pretty soon, my insides got clogged with Tums, and that [caused] a lot of discomfort. But the heat of the battle blanked out everything else. The bank lobby put out documents with about five points against my bill. And all the five points would have to be refuted. The bank lobbyists didn't even understand or they were plain prevaricators.

ISOARDI: Right.

BANE: So I put out five letters taking them on one point at a time, each letter on a different point in detail. Part of the battle in Sacramento on

legislation is based on the integrity of the person who's carrying the bill, the knowledge he or she possesses. So I ended the battle with the five letters. You know, one at a time. And pretty soon, I was bringing the bill before the senate committee. One of the senators commented, "Sure be glad when this is over. I can't stand this paper war." [Laughter]

ISOARDI: What was the division like? How much support did you have? And how much opposition did you have?

BANE: Well, you can only measure that as to whether the bill passes or whether it doesn't.

ISOARDI: Was it a close one?

BANE: I won strongly in the senate committee, but I had on my side the state treasurer.

ISOARDI: Helpful.

BANE: Highly respected man. He appeared in the committee for me. And the committee respected him and his knowledge. He would have to handle the investments of the funds and stuff. So he solved all those problems, because it was in the treasurer's office that this money was going to be handled. I can't remember just what issue the banks raised. They asked Jesse about what the

bank said. He replied, "Well, that's OK, if that's all you've got to say." So he was very effective and very helpful. Jesse Unruh, the treasurer, you know. So I won that battle with Jesse's help.

That's another incident that the press didn't report because they didn't understand it. You know, the people who go up to Sacramento as reporters to report on the legislature are not specialists in banking or anything else. They're journalists. And they didn't understand it. I never got public credit for that bill.

ISOARDI: Really. Weren't you the point man? I mean, it was your bill.

BANE: It was my bill, but I was unable to provoke any credit from the public, acclamation, you know. The bill increased revenues, of course, because there was open bidding for the money. The interest rates really doubled, and we raised them about 4 percent on the money. Now other factors may have come in to increase the value of the money, besides that. There was not any question that at least 2 percent was the result of competition for the funds. You take fifty

BANE: billion dollars, and at 2 percent, that's a billion dollars a year. We're talking about a billion dollars a year, not a million dollars. A billion dollars from that little bill.

One conversation I had with Jesse when he was in the hospital before he died, I said, "You know, Jesse, I have a problem. It was a very valuable bill. It brings in over a billion dollars every year into the treasury. It was not affected by Gann,<sup>1</sup> because it was not tax money. It is a billion dollars every year to fund whatever the legislature wished. But I never got any credit." "I understand, Tom," Jesse said, "but you ought to give it up. You'll never be able to get credit for it, because nobody is going to understand it." I never relaxed on that issue until my conversation with Jesse. He was a very bright man. We had lots of conversations about lots of issues while I was with him in the hospital. I got a report back that after I left the hospital, Jesse was high for the whole rest of the day because it gave

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<sup>1</sup> Proposition 13 (June 1978).

his mind a little exercise.

ISOARDI: So you had just come back from your second term. You had been away for a while. And here you are aligning. You and Jesse are allies again on this bill. You find yourselves working together again.

BANE: Well, I'm not sure we were apart prior to the time I carried that bill. We had gotten back together when he ran for mayor of L.A. I supported him and contributed heavily to his race.

ISOARDI: How long did it take you to get the bill through from start to finish?

BANE: Pretty close to two years.

ISOARDI: That long.

BANE: Yeah. It's a tough bill, a tough process. Remember, you're dealing with 120 legislators, 80 in the assembly and 40 in the senate. The big battle was, of course, in the committee. And the toughest battle was in the senate.

ISOARDI: Was it really?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Well, because the bankers had a lot of support there?

BANE: Yeah. And for various reasons that the lobby activity and campaign funds and stuff are heavier in the senate than in the assembly.

ISOARDI: Really?

BANE: Because, you see...

ISOARDI: You need more?

BANE: No. At that time, the special interests.... Special knowledge is good because they talk about Boy Scouts' and Girl Scouts' support for the goodies as special interest. They're a special interest. But I'm talking about the monied interests. Outfits like the banks and all those that were protecting big business over the years and had gotten everything they wanted in the constitution and the laws. So what they had to do was start bringing more of the people's interest. The Democratic party was more in line with small businesses, small people, and labor. Therefore the special interests had to fight a defensive battle. They had to kill bills. They needed fewer votes to kill any bill, whether a labor bill or any other bill. It endangered their revenues. At that time it was a defensive battle on the part of the monied interest. So

BANE: that it's easier to kill a bill in the senate. You have fewer people to work on. And the contribution reports become more critical. They probably had more influence in helping a new person get elected to office. The members stayed in the senate longer than they did in the assembly, so it was cumulative work year to year.

That's one thing that people don't understand about lobbying is that it's lobbying over a long time. Lots of people think you can bring a lot of money and go up to Sacramento. All of a sudden with these big expenditures, you will your way through. It doesn't work that way, because most of the legislators are.... For a lobbyist to become effective, he has to be there a while and also gain confidence with the new members. You bring a batch of money up there for the lobbyist on a new issue on a one-year basis, it's kind of difficult to bring it about. You are getting the feeling of the smallest movement of it, and any change in philosophy like the investment of public funds. You have 120 legislators to convince. However you build your support on what's taken place in the past,

because it's really against the past, or the future, if you're doing any major changing. So it took a couple of years to get that bill through.

ISOARDI: It's interesting that you began both your tours in the assembly with tough bills that would take you a few years to get them passed. Can you compare [the two]? When you came back in the mid-seventies in the assembly and you started getting this bill through, was the process of getting a bill through pretty much the same as the way it was the first time you showed up there?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Nothing had changed really very much?

BANE: No. The process is the same today. Except you have different players.

ISOARDI: So not much change, then, over time.

BANE: Different philosophies. Everybody thinks that the legislative process is to get bills through. You think you've got a good bill, you ought to be able to get it through. But the process is very difficult. First thing, you got to get through a policy committee in the assembly or the senate.

BANE: And first thing you get in, you got to find somebody who's sold on the issue. Legislation doesn't make it unless somebody cares about it. There are a lot of changes in government that have been suggested. The personal bill has been attacked a great deal, because the personal bill aided the lobbyists. I didn't want personal bills anymore. But a personal bill is the only thing where you get somebody who studies a bill.

Anyway, I want to wind up on that one. I feel a great comfort today knowing that my bill is producing a minimum of a billion dollars a year in additional revenues. I take that, [along] with the getting uncontested judges off the ballot and the printing and computer costs, as successes. I've done a great deal to accomplish what the people clamored for: cut the cost of government and to become more efficient. [I] accept the intricacies and complexities, dealing with things that are really so complex that the public never appreciates it when it's done. [Laughter]

[End Tape 8, Side A]

[Begin Tape 8, Side B]

BANE: So you realize the job of carrying out good legislation is very bad for what everybody wants. Nobody appreciates the guy that does it. So my discussions with Jesse were on that issue. We had a good conversation about it and some of the people involved in the battle.

ISOARDI: What about some of your other pieces of legislation? I mean, the most important that sticks out in my mind is the hate crimes bill.

BANE: Well, I had a real tussle with the hate crimes bill, because people have a difficult time understanding the gay issue.

ISOARDI: Let me go back. Why did you initiate this bill? What are the origins of it?...

[Interruption]

...OK, Tom, as you were saying?

BANE: Well, the public doesn't know what goes on in the legislature. People get very emotional. You know, they put so much into it. Dealing with the interests of 120 legislators is no easy task.

ISOARDI: So did you have the same kind of fights with the hate crimes bill?

BANE: Yeah. The first draft of the bill did one major

BANE: thing. It took a lot of laws put on the books to fight discrimination, prejudice, whatever you have in that field. It gave the people the right to go to court and sue. But generally speaking, the people being discriminated against don't have as ready access to the courts, and the lawyers don't get involved in taking those cases. They're tough cases and the financial rewards are slight.

So I took a look at the laws on the books, which were giving civil relief if you proved you had been discriminated against. But you had to find the lawyer, and you had to pay the cost. So most people discriminated against had to bear it because they didn't have the funds to do anything else. So the laws were really ineffective. So I took a look at them and made them a crime. As soon as they became a crime, then the government was responsible for fighting those cases and assuming financial responsibility. So it was a major shift in the whole legal process when it came to discrimination issues. It puts responsibility on government to see to it that people's rights were protected. And that's a lot

different. And you have a lot of people out there being discriminated against who, if they could afford it, could have gone to court, you know.

ISOARDI: Why did you come up with the bill in the first place?

BANE: Well, it's kind of hard to go back and say what perked in the brain, except you recognize that's one of the reasons I got into politics was the issue of discrimination. It was my main issue. It was getting toward the end of my time in the legislature, and I really hadn't done anything dramatic. My voting record was good. I helped get the good pieces of legislation through with support and all that. But I hadn't made any great contribution to the field. If I was ever going to do that, the time was now. I didn't have a long time left in the legislature.

The public had gotten pretty well accustomed to the laws, even though they weren't effective. So I recognized that the laws weren't effective, and so did the legislature and everybody else. They weren't effective, because the people mostly harmed by discrimination were the ones that had

least access to the courts. It had been established that discrimination was bad. So the changing of it from a civil action to a criminal action wasn't a big step in people's minds, because they didn't understand the difference between civil action and criminal action. I mean, it's not where the public is.

ISOARDI: Right.

BANE: The differences in the effects of the law are entirely different. I think it came about because of the length of time I've been in the legislative process. My mind was sharpened to the issues and was sharpened to the effects of the law. And then, you deal in that field of controversial law. Sometimes it's your last term. [Laughter] Well, I was there another two terms, and that didn't make any difference. On top of that, I was well established in my district. I had a responsive district and an agreeable district with my views. The time had come for me to make a major move in the field of that legislation. I supported it all, but I was not as satisfied with my own real contribution. I needed to be satisfied for that. Being there

was for a purpose and not wasted time.

ISOARDI: Did that bill give you the satisfaction?

BANE: Yeah. It gave me enough satisfaction. When it got through and was signed by the governor, I could have left the legislature at that time and been happy with my term. But, you know, my hate crimes bill has been a model bill throughout the United States. So it not only affected legislation in California, it had an effect on legislation throughout the whole United States. It gave some leadership in the field. And when your bill becomes the model bill, it brings you some satisfaction. Maybe that's all you get is satisfaction. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: [Laughter] How easy or how difficult was it getting that bill passed?

BANE: Well, the difficult issue was on discrimination against groups. They just didn't commit a crime. They committed a crime because they didn't like a person's race, religion, color, creed, or whatever about that individual to the group he belonged to, and not anything about him personally. Well, that brought into focus a very hot issue, and that was the homosexuals. That

BANE: was a group. When people went out committing crimes against homosexuals, they were not committing crimes against a particular individual. It was because that individual belonged to a group. It was a racial group, a religious group. Well, the gays belong to a group.

Sometimes a legislator gets to the point where they're far better educated on a subject than the public is, and the public isn't ready to accept something. A lot of times you're driven by, "Can't you get a piece of legislation passed where the public is?" Well, the first bill I drafted didn't include gays in the way of description of the group, you know. The committee put me together with some lawyers and some staff. They knew any bill having to do with the gays was doomed to failure. So the bill was perfected, except they left the gays out. Then I took a look at it and realized that I didn't have the guts to take the issue on. All this other stuff would be issues, except it wouldn't be complete. So before I put the bill in--it crossed the desk, so to speak--I included the

sexual views of a person or a group. And you could see the bristle go up, you know, and I recognized that. I felt I really wanted to make a contribution, and I should not dodge the hot issues. So I took it on. It was the issue before every committee: homosexuals. It brought the churches against it. The Republicans were adamant against it because there was an issue that affected them. It was a hot potato. And it took quite a bit to sell it. And that got down to a one-on-one basis. I got one Republican in committee to give me a vote. He got defeated in the next election.

ISOARDI: On that issue?

BANE: I don't think it helped. It was a hot issue. It's still a hot issue. I don't think the public ever will understand the creation of life in carrying on species, the changes that come about, and how the chromosomes are mixed in the process of fertilization of the egg. That sometimes, from our point of view, a mistake was made. A chromosome ended up in a person who has a different body or different physical aspects. Maybe other chromosomes that affect the emotional

aspects. But it happens. It was a hard sell. You know, I sold it also on the basis of, if a person has hate in the soul, if you're allowed to go out and hate one group and annihilate them, kill them, and badger them, [if] they would wipe that whole group out, they'd be looking for somebody else to hate. So it's just kind of a function that goes on in society that we can't allow to happen because there's no end to it.

ISOARDI: Whether or not you're gay it will affect you if gays are attacked.

BANE: I didn't hear what you said.

ISOARDI: Well, whether or not you're part of a particular group that's being discriminated against, it could affect you in the future.

BANE: Yeah. There are some cases where a married couple was walking down the street, arm in arm, and the guy was wearing long hair. They were not dressed normally, by normal standards. They were dressed in a liberal or hippie fashion. Some people decided they were gays, and they beat the hell out of them, you know. The woman was pregnant. So that there were those incidents that were happening, and these were cases I used

to support my bill.

ISOARDI: How did you deal with the governor [George S. Deukmejian] on this one?

BANE: The main bill was dealing with discrimination, and Armenians have been subjected to that to no end.

ISOARDI: Oh. So that wasn't a problem?

BANE: One of the finest young men I ever had came up through my office, because I always hired kids who were looking for a job. I'd bring a bunch of kids to the office, and we'd work on things and work on the campaigns. I did that for a couple of reasons. One is that I liked to do it. [Laughter] I enjoy the kids and enjoy teaching them, and help them go through school. On top of that, I realized that I was an older legislator. To really keep current, I had to have some young people around me.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] That's good thinking.

BANE: And my wife is an old schoolteacher. Not old schoolteacher, former schoolteacher. [Laughter] She would kind of adopt the kids, you know. So we have some who still come back to see us. Our effects on their lives were extensive. I was

very strict in the office about what they used the phones for. I had several phones for somebody who wanted to make a personal call. Like for that [call], use that. So I kept the phones of the office, supposedly, free from using public property for personal use. I'd never let anybody in the office on staff work on any of my dinners or stuff like that. I was always under attack because "Well, so-and-so does it. He uses his staff all the time." And I'd say, "I'm not so-and-so." As time has gone by, I realized more and more that my rules were the safest, you know. So that we had enjoyment out of the young people who worked there. Some of them became doctors, lawyers. I have a young fellow that's still pretty good friends. He still comes around. He contributes to my dinners. He comes here for some of the Jewish holidays. He's not Jewish, he's Armenian.

ISOARDI: Ah. Was this kid in your office at the time of the bill?

BANE: Well, he was in association with me, you know. Because I think he went through high school and college, both, working in my office, and law

school also. And he's still with me.

ISOARDI: Who is this by the way?

BANE: I really kind of hesitate putting names on tape, you know. He's a very, very fine young man. The kind that you like to have work in the office, knowing that he would get the strength to.... With proper coaching to be able to withstand the needs and problems of financing. How to handle a district so that you can support your views and have the support to stay there.

I'll give you an example. My staff was instructed when people called my office and asked a question, people could answer, "I'm not sure what the answer to that is, but I'll talk to Mr. Bane and I'll call you back." Now, you see, if they called up my office and asked a question, we'd give an answer on the phone. What kind of relationship has been built between the constituent and the office? Or with Tom Bane, you know? But when they got a call back, I could have an impact. That's one of my secrets they'll learn if they read this. Very effective. Build a relationship between you and your constituents.

So there are lots of ways of strengthening

BANE: your relationship with a district. I'll give you an example. I had the Daily News taking me on. Very Republican paper, you know. It's the newspaper business. And I say that kind of scornfully, you know. [Laughter] They were looking for publicity for themselves, exposing public officials and attacking them. So they had taken a poll in their circulation district as to who was the best-known politician, on the basis that it didn't do any good to attack somebody that nobody knew. But to get somebody everybody knew and expose them for something or attack them, that made publicity. I've lived in the Valley all my life, and I had a good relationship with my constituents, because I called them back. There were two of us that won the poll: Alan Robbins and Tom Bane. And I was a liberal legislator.

Let's see, they picked up the issue of lupus because my wife has lupus. I had established a lupus research group and became National Lupus [Erythematosus Foundation] chairman. I contributed a great deal to the study of lupus because lupus patients have flare-ups. I

monitored Marlene very carefully to see what caused her flare-ups and what had happened in her life. It became very apparent that what was happening in her life had a great deal to do with the flare-up of lupus. So she's alive today. When I married her, she only had five years left to live. So the issue is very dear to me. I had managed to establish a state-funded research program. One year I had to take a reduction in the lupus appropriation. I think the only reason I ever got there to start with was the fact that I was well-known. Marlene was well-known. There were only two members that voted against that bill. I still remember them.

ISOARDI: I would think so.

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Do you remember the reasons why they voted against it?

BANE: Yeah. They had good reasons. It wasn't the state's...

ISOARDI: Job to do it.

BANE: ...job to do medical research. But I did it so that the only people that the state gave money to is the University of California. So in a

sense, we were just allocating some of the research work in that direction.

ISOARDI: Right, right.

BANE: And that said we hoped...

ISOARDI: Established research institutions that had been working on this.

BANE: They had to be already working on it. They were established institutions defined so that well-known institutions would get the money. There was a little committee of three people to approve the grants on the restrictions that were in the bill. And Marlene is probably one of the best-informed people in the area of lupus that exists. She was invited to come and speak to national and international groups. I had a committee composed of real sharp guys [the Select Committee on Genetic Diseases]. I picked it. We went around interviewing these people who were doing our research work to see to it that they are doing it properly. I guess the University of California had one guy there who was doing research, who had connections with lupus, who was very opinionated and arrogant. [Laughter] In the process, Marlene became a consultant to my committee. So

she would teach us, and she used to raise the questions before these doctors who were doing our work. And UC [University of California] San Francisco didn't take us very seriously. After all, a bunch of legislators coming down on what they were doing. And did we shake them up!

ISOARDI: [Laughter] I'll bet.

BANE: One doctor who was doing research work expressed to me he didn't think the legislators had any business deciding on what research work he did. I said, "Well, are you willing to change your research work so that it applies to lupus?" He said, "No." "You're going to lose your grant and want to fight it?" He said, "Yes." He lost his grant. But the attitude of the various places we went changed rather rapidly, whether we knew what we were doing or not. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Truly. Truly.

BANE: Of course, Marlene is very bright and had a keen interest. She eventually became chairman of the [Lupus] Appropriations [Board]. I had to give up some of that money. I didn't give it up. I transferred a certain portion of it to some work on AIDS. My response was to give a chance of

getting it back with sufficient funds. Well, the lupus groups were, maybe, six or so. They said, "The legislature can't take that money away from us." Some people [who] made their living off of running a group attacked me and attacked Marlene. And they got that money back. Even one lawyer got involved. A woman over in our condominium here has lupus. Of course, it's hereditary. More genes, again. The unfortunate mating of two people can cause those situations to exist in the body. It causes you to be subject to lupus. So that's where I got my training and experience in the field of genetics. Interesting subject. God, that's an interesting subject.

ISOARDI: Well, it sounds like in your last years in the assembly, then, you were able to pursue and accomplish a couple of important things, legislatively, that were close to you, both the hate crimes as well as the work on lupus.

BANE: Yeah. We contributed a great deal, Marlene and I, to the research on lupus. Not only in raising money for it, but in the effect of emotions on the disease. I remember in San Francisco I asked the question "Does the emotional condition

surrounding lupus patients have any effect on lupus?" I remember one of the best doctors/researchers in the nation said, "No. It had nothing to do with emotions." So we spent some time educating the researchers. It changed their research work to include the emotions, and it became part of it. So I was able to tabulate Marlene's reactions, which was interesting. Because she can hypnotize herself, she was able to rule out all the things that happened to the emotions that affect the immune system to keep them from affecting the immune system. All except one, that is. And it pertains to her kids. She was unable to control the effect of her kids. It affected her all the way through, you know.

[End Tape 8, Side B]

[Begin Tape 9, Side A]

ISOARDI: As you were saying, Tom?

BANE: Anyway, a brand-new attorney got in and filed suit against the state, me, Marlene, the lupus board, and the whole works. She got great publicity out of it, you know. That's all she did it for, because I gave her the sources. The

legislative counsel she could talk to in Sacramento, whether she had a case or not. But she was a new attorney, and she used her mother as an example. It ended up destroying the whole lupus program. She didn't understand that all her grandchildren were at risk. Anyway, it made a good publicity lawsuit. And the Daily News and the L.A. Times egged them on, you know. I was investigated for six months by the attorney general of the state of California. And all this time it was going on, all this publicity, you know.

ISOARDI: On what basis? They didn't recognize the scientific validity of it?

BANE: I am surprised you asked the question. You understand a Republican newspaper.

ISOARDI: You mean that was it? That was the motivation?

BANE: Yeah. The Republican newspaper wanted to build up their circulation. An attorney who wanted to increase her "circulation." They wouldn't take it to court. I tried to get it before the courts so it would be ruled out as soon as it hit. They wouldn't take it to court. They kept their suit open. So I had bad publicity for about six

months. The attorney general also investigated our tax-exempt foundation, which was receiving contributions. They examined that. The foundation's work was done by volunteer help. That kind of worried me a great deal, because what if some volunteer screwed up somewhere along the line. They went back ten years. They all just said they had never seen such a clean nonprofit organization. [Laughter] And lo and behold, they couldn't find a thing. There wasn't anything to find. Of course, I was much relieved. But when it was all over, one little story, "Tom Bane Exonerated."

ISOARDI: Page twenty-six?

BANE: With a little mistake, they could have said, "Tom Bane Electrocuted." But, you know, my district lost a lot of the meaning of "exonerated." That was it. So the story of all that good I've done, and how much money I raised for lupus research, all of it was lost in this lawsuit. And that was done in an attempt to defeat me for office, to attack me. I was well-known. You don't get any publicity, anything going, unless you attack somebody who's well-known. My being well-known,

paying attention to my constituents, and doing my work was no part of it. They were out to sell newspapers.

Discrimination. We talked about this young fellow who had worked in my office, who went to USC law school. And he's Armenian. Fine young man and nice-looking young man, who would really love to take on a political career and a legislative career. He can't do it because he's an Armenian and the discrimination against Armenians. I didn't realize it myself until I talked to him about it. The district he had to run in and the handicap of being Armenian. So Deukmejian had.... All Armenians have suffered discrimination, you know. I'm surprised he signed my hate crimes bill. I doubt that [unless] he'd been conscious of the fact, unless you're Armenian, of the tremendous antagonism and discrimination against Armenians.... He felt that, and he signed it because he believed in it. He understood it. It's very fortunate.

ISOARDI: Yeah. Yes.

BANE: So I got the hate crimes bill...

ISOARDI: Passed by a Republican governor.

BANE: ...passed by a Republican governor. Anyway, it shows the extent of discrimination and the reasons for the bill. It is also a model bill.

I don't know if we want to start on the NRA [National Rifle Association] bill or not, do we?

ISOARDI: We could take it up next Saturday, if you want.

BANE: That also talks about the area of strategy and moving legislation. And the fact that I was a seasoned legislator and chairman of Rules and knew the rules.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Controlled the rules.

BANE: I never control them. It's abiding by them. You make use of rules, you don't control them. So I never used the power of the Rules Committee. I used to joke about it. I think I probably told you that power is like a tank of gas: the more you use it, the less you got. The perception of power is much more important than the power.

[Speaking to the perceived power of Rules chairmanship and why I chose to seek the chairmanship of the assembly Rules Committee deserves a bit of explaining. I had made it quite clear that I had not the slightest wish to be speaker. This position made it easier to get

the chairmanship. The speaker need not worry about me. The chairman of the Rules Committee of the state assembly is automatically chairman of the Joint Senate-Assembly Rules Committee. The Joint Rules Committee has jurisdiction over the use of the capitol building. Even the governor asked the chairman of the Joint Rules Committee for clearance. The chairman of Rules had many entrees into the lives of the senate and assembly membership. Every senate or assembly bill that passes through the legislature has to pass through the assembly Rules Committee].\*

ISOARDI: OK. Well, next time we'll begin, then, with the NRA and that legislation.

BANE: All right.

[End Tape 9, Side A]

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\* Mr. Bane added the preceding bracketed material during his review of the draft transcript.

[Session 9, September 2, 1995]

[Begin Tape 10, Side A]

ISOARDI: Tom, we were going to resume today with your dealings with the NRA, the National Rifle Association, in the assembly.

BANE: You know, they really control politics in the United States much more than people realize. I think they're becoming more concerned now with the power of the NRA.

ISOARDI: But do you think this has always been true? Or have they been asserting themselves?

BANE: It has always been true. They're a powerful group, powerful group. And they are very much offended if anybody dares to meddle in arms control or that sort of field. Arthur [M.] Kassel, who runs the Beverly Hills Gun Club, owns it, was also on very intimate social and political terms with the police in the United States...

[Interruption]

ISOARDI: ...As you were saying?

BANE: They were powerful. The way they were powerful is they were very tough. Very, very tough. And if you don't vote with them, they put out a bulletin, which goes out to the gun magazine and to all gun owners. A lot of people are members of the NRA, because they own guns...

[Interruption]

...They put out bulletins to all who own guns, sportsmen and stuff like that. So they end up fighting for gun ownership and getting control on all other issues, garnering some votes from very good people. I made the habit if somebody called me on an NRA bill, I would go out to their house, meet them, talk to them, see their gun collection and what they're interested in. I explained to them the bill I was carrying. And they weren't concerned about that at all. What they were concerned about was if I was going to take their sporting gun away from them.

But my bill was simply to control the production, transportation, possession, and sales

of the "police killer" bullet.<sup>1</sup> I use the word "police killer" bullet. It was really of no value to anybody or anything, except to somebody wanting to shoot a cop, because it could go through a bulletproof vest. Any people who do a drive-by shooting could shoot into your house. [It would] go into your house and probably go through a couple of people and out the other side of the house. And you couldn't fight it. It was an extremely dangerous bullet. I had to learn about sixty different bullets and what they do. I had to learn the difference between the length of a barrel and the power of the bullet, because the longer the barrel, the more power. Those are things that I'm not accustomed to because I'm not a gun owner. So I had to learn about the manufacturers, how the bullets were constructed, and the difference.

ISOARDI: When did you introduce this bill, Tom? Do you remember? Was it shortly after you'd gotten up there, or was this later on?

BANE: I think it was a little later on. I think I was

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<sup>1</sup> A.B. 2392, 1982 Reg. Sess., Cal. Stat., ch. 950.

chairman of Rules. Yeah, I was chairman of Rules.

ISOARDI: So this was in the eighties? The mid-eighties or so?

BANE: Yeah. Maybe late eighties. My bill just eliminated the manufacture of those kinds of bullets. They were no good for target practice, because these bullets were not accurate. If you shot a deer it made one clean hole all the way through the deer and out the other side, the deer was left with one clean bullet hole. So the deer would take off. The hunter might eventually find the deer, he might not. So there was no need for it for hunting. As President [William J.] Clinton, who is now talking about making my bill a national bill, said, "I'm a sportsman and I have never yet come across a deer wearing a bulletproof vest." So I put the bill in. I started getting the letters from the vilest people you'd ever want to talk to and write to. Threatening violence. I don't even want to repeat some of the words they used and some of the stuff they said. It really was vile stuff.

ISOARDI: Was this NRA orchestrated?

BANE: Oh yeah. And, you know, I would write them back one letter and explain my position. And I'd get another vile, filthy letter back. So I merely cut off the correspondence at that time. But in presenting the bill, they were working all the members of the legislature with threats and getting their members to write the members of the legislature. They were trying to get votes out of legislators by threatening to defeat them at their elections. In some cases, I got personal threats of bodily harm.

ISOARDI: Really?

BANE: I kept in touch with the police--had some special numbers to call--and with the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation]. It was a constant through my life. It reminded me of when one of my Republican opponents was supported by the Ku Klux Klan. That's a tricky campaign to run, you know. I had moved to this house at that time, but didn't change my registration because of the election. I filed my change of address with the county clerk. I knew him personally, and he kept it on hand. I remained at the recorded address as long as I could. I was warned not to stand in

front of any windows, never to appear in a building with my opponent, just not appear. He wasn't such a bad guy, but the fellows around him, who were supporting him and supporting the Ku Klux Klan, were a bad lot.

ISOARDI: Did you ever discuss this with him? These potential problems?

BANE: Discuss it with whom?

ISOARDI: With your opponent. I mean, you said he wasn't a bad guy. Is this something he tried to address in any way?

BANE: No. I can't understand what you expect to accomplish by talking to him. He wasn't going to quit the race. He ran on the Republican ticket against Dolores Lefevre, who was well-known and supported by the Republican party. [He] beat her in the primary. Just came out of nowhere. It gives you some feeling of the underground. The right wing and the Ku Klux Klan, and mostly because they all knew him. They were supporting him very vigorously and with enough support so he won the Republican primary. His name was John [C.] Kennedy. It made it a little difficult.

ISOARDI: Gee.

BANE: I was concerned both about the growth of the NRA and the growth of the Ku Klux Klan. If I were to publicly accuse him of that, all that would do is get more of the Ku Klux Klan type of people organized for him. That's one thing in politics, the running for office is sometimes used as an organizational tool. You get some publicity. Lawyers used it to get free publicity.

ISOARDI: So do you think that the Klan is fairly active in your district? Or at least they've grown somewhat over the last few years? Or do you think a lot of this support came from maybe a state organization or something who had targeted you, particularly?

BANE: No. There's a lot of people who are right-wing and some other dissident folks. If they can be rallied together, they have a good-sized voting bloc. So I would say that there is even more than people would think. I was involved in a battle. The L.A. Times wanted to come down and talk to me about the campaign, and I wouldn't meet with them. I would not get involved in the newspaper coverage. They were a little disappointed, because I wouldn't get involved

with what they thought was a great story: the Ku Klux Klan running against a liberal Democrat. Great news story, if they could get it going. But I would not let it get going, because I wouldn't talk to them, wouldn't make comments. Just rode it out. I would have stirred up more antagonism against me. I may have stirred up the wrong people to get organized.

ISOARDI: Was it because of your cop killer bill, the bullet bill, that they really started focusing on you?

BANE: No. Don't tie in the candidacy of John Kennedy and the KKK with the cop killer bullet. They're a different time. John Kennedy, I ran against in 1980, which is the same year I moved into this house.

ISOARDI: Uh-huh. And your bill came a few years after that then.

BANE: A few years after that, yes. It would have been a great battle to get a lot of publicity on. But I was afraid of the results, organizing what I call the fringe group. It didn't hurt the Republican party to oppose him, which they did. They opposed John Kennedy, and they put out a

letter.

ISOARDI: Really?

BANE: They didn't want him representing them in the legislature, Congress, or anyplace else. The Republican candidates and I were friendly; I never attacked my Republican candidate, either. I never attacked my opponents. Our personal relationship was good. My sympathies went to the Republican woman candidate who had the endorsement of the Republican party. Good person. She had my sympathies. After it happened, I called her up and expressed those thoughts to her. She was so incensed as to what had happened, because she always thought she could beat me, you know. I never thought she could.

ISOARDI: I guess you've got to have faith if you're going to run.

BANE: You've got to have more than faith. You've got to have faith in the truth. [Laughter] Never sell them short. We never sold anybody short. We continued polls, so always we knew where the public was on issues, where the public was on candidates. You could pick the districts where

you run across the gun owners. You knew they were gun owners. Politics is reduced to, as much as possible, a science. We tried to do that. We'd run tests every year, certain things to see what the response was from the public. And then we handled ourselves in accordance with where we were. Obviously, I am getting away from the NRA bill, and we don't want to do that, because I want to leave time for your questions...

[Interruption]

ISOARDI: ...As you were pursuing your cop killer bullet bill, maybe you could talk a little bit about the NRA as a lobby in Sacramento. How effective are they? How do they work against you?

BANE: They were very, very effective. They controlled recommendations and endorsements to all people in the sports magazines and things like that. So they controlled and blocked the votes. They always threatened to go after you and defeat you, not just vote against you. It's a question of defeat, and that's something that they've been able to do, you know, defeat people. It also depends on how close a legislator is to his or her constituency. The NRA is a powerful group.

BANE: My bill was a very simple bill. It was a bill about a bullet that was being manufactured and had no use for anything, except by those who wanted to go through bulletproof vests. Kind of a simple thing. The lobbyists for the NRA are very effective, very smart. They play a tough game. They know what they're doing. But you can see how someone skilled in bullets and guns, who has sixty bullets to play with and all different kinds of rifles, handguns, could end up confusing people on the bench or the members in the committee hearings or a personal discussion. How they can confuse them as to what the real facts were. They could talk about a bill, this bullet, that bullet, the length of this gun, and the length of a handgun and stuff like that. So in order to compete with them, you really had to learn the business and learn all about guns and all about bullets. And then explain to the committees that the lobbyist was purposely trying to confuse them, because when you talk about such and such, they were talking about something else besides a bullet. So I was able to keep them on track, because I learned all about bullets.

ISOARDI: How tough was it persuading your colleagues?

BANE: Well, I got it out of the assembly [Criminal Justice] Committee, because they're rather small. I didn't have too many to talk to, you know. But then, it had to come before the Ways and Means Committee. The Ways and Means Committee basically has around twenty members, and it's fairly evenly divided between Republicans and Democrats. So when I appeared before the Ways and Means Committee with my bullet bill, a lot of the Democrats would be busy someplace else. And sometimes there was no quorum. So I had to be able to get to the committee, look them in the eye on the bill, have them face the facts. They then had a hard time voting against the bill, but they had a hard time supporting it.

So what I did was take my bill up and watch the committee disappear. [Laughter] Call for the vote, and they recorded everybody's vote. And I moved to a call of the committee, [which] was to hold it so I could go out and get some more votes. So I worked that bill on the agenda to a point that it was number one and number two on the agendas. So on the last day, the

committee had to meet and put bills out. It came up early in the morning. They took the roll call in the morning. And I'd sit in committee right there, until I see some of my votes come in. And I'd get up, "Mr. Chairman, I'd like to lift my call on such and such a bill." And he says, "Fine. The secretary will call the roll." I'd pick up another couple of votes and put it back on call. I kept that up all day long. Finally, after having them take the vote, there were members I had to go and see. I'd go see a lot of them and talk to them. Finally I got to the last day, working up to the top, I was able to spend all day picking up my votes, lifting the call and picking up one vote at a time. I think being chairman of Rules was helpful, because a chairman of Ways and Means was also helpful to the Rules chairman, you know. So that I had him helping me on it. I had him with me, really, on the bill. So that by the time the day was over, I'd finally gotten my majority vote out of committee and got my bill out. And I think maybe that was the first time the NRA had ever been defeated.

ISOARDI: Really.

BANE: Yeah. And of course, they really threw their venom out at me over the years after that. I'd always had opposition. But to use the power of the Rules Committee against the power of the NRA was a kind of interesting example of political maneuvering. I talk about this because it shows that taking up a bill, presenting it before a committee, and getting a bill out is not as simple as the public ever stops to think. They don't realize what goes into a bill. At the same time, I guess you don't always get a bill carrier as determined as I was. I met the challenge, and I didn't back off, but stayed at it. And that's what has to be done when you get a tough bill through.

ISOARDI: It sounds like also, then, it was important that.... I mean, you had a lot of experience at this time. You had a lot of understanding of how the assembly worked. You had years of experience there, as well as being...

BANE: Oh yeah, yeah.

ISOARDI: Just to throw in a different subject. But given that, what do you think about the term limitations? How is that going to affect this

kind of mastery of the legislative process?

BANE: In six years, you can't get enough experience to master anything because you have four hundred thousand pages of law. You've got the constitution to deal with. So when you take a bill on, you have to know how it fits in with the present codes and whether it's constitutional or not. You really have to know every member and what they think and what they feel. You've got to know what they're interested in. You present your legislation in a way where you reach their sympathy. If you couldn't get the vote, at least you had them with you. The NRA had the power, but didn't have the personal contact with the members. They didn't know the members as well as I did. So that you just use all the tools you have and stay at it. You've got to deal a lot with the facts. You've got to understand the subject matter. Sometimes there's a great study of an issue.

ISOARDI: If I could just deduce something from what you just said, then, in terms of term limitations, does that mean that, say, in the future that assemblypersons would be more likely to fall

under the influence of lobbyists like the NRA, because they don't have the experience and they haven't been there for long? Do you think they'll play a greater role, outside forces, then?

BANE: They don't have anybody with real knowledge or any experience to deal with the subjects. So that I would no longer in the first six years be able to get my bill through whereby the state is today enjoying a billion dollars a year additional revenues from interest income. Today there would be a bullet that could go through your house, kill you, and go out the other side of the building. You can see what drive-by shooting would be without my bullet bill being in existence. There's a lot more people alive today because of the fight I put up to beat the NRA.

It was very difficult. The few years later when they had the big open session of the assembly on gun control, we called all the experts up, including the attorney general, to testify. When the NRA guy got up he talked about how they had supported the anti-police-killer legislation, but did not refer to me. I could

have had a great deal of joy taking that son of a gun on and laying him out on the aisle. But it would have been of no purpose, no value. And no use getting into a fight, unless you need to win. But it's interesting to find that President Clinton is now moving in that direction to give the police and the public more protection. Of course, he's taking the NRA on. My defeat of them on the bill was indicative of everything that can be done. Later on, Mike Roos took them on on the gun control bill, and he beat them. We have some control laws now. Term limits would have obviated that.

ISOARDI: Was the hardest part of your bill getting it through Ways and Means? Was it easier after that? Was that the toughest part of the fight?

BANE: Yeah. They don't want to attract the publicity they get if they go through the second house. The bill really becomes alive when it passes out of one house. It's tougher to overturn the decision of one house if it's a new bill. They can't play all the games and affect it. Also the embarrassment of losing gets pretty great, you know. That's what stung the most, because it's

too difficult to make any sensible argument to try to protect the existence of a bullet that has no use, except to kill policemen. When you lay it out simply, and they're opposing it.... The people who wrote to me and the people who talked to me are the people I went out to see in my district. Very puzzling why the NRA would oppose that bill. Not often do you get anybody go to that length to win it, you know.

On term limitations, I guess all the bills I've talked about, and how long it takes to get a bill through.... That's impossible because no longer do you have an experienced legislator who understands the constitution, understands the laws of the state, understands the strategies and knows the members. So you're totally left with surface legislation. Term restrictions handicap anything with a great deal of depth that takes time to fight, like the fight I had against the lobbyists on the investment of public funds issue and with the NRA. The kinds of bills I was carrying were the ones that for other people [were] too tough to carry.

ISOARDI: What do you think is going to happen to the

assembly, as a result of this, in the near future? How is business going to be conducted? What's going to determine things if there are no seasoned legislators there?

BANE: Well, the lobbyists will control and the administration will control. For instance, when you have a member there who is carrying a bill that may be unpopular to the bureaucracy, the bureaucrats can win by delaying the process. Who's going to run the legislature? There will be mistakes and lack of constructive solutions. You can have bad publicity; newspapers like bad publicity. They love to attack legislators. They have fun with the legislature doing that. They sell newspapers, or they think they do.

But the legislators really are the representatives of the people. That's basic. That's the form of the government we have. When we start tying the legislators' hands, so they can't do this and they can't do that, they can't represent the people anymore. You know, I'm glad I didn't have to have a two-thirds vote of the Ways and Means Committee to get out the bullet bill. That would have beat me and any other

BANE: anti-special-interest legislation. You lose one-third of the vote because of the two-thirds vote because you've got people who are absent, people who are sick, all that, members who are confused, and members that don't want to get involved in some hot issue. You can pile up a third of that legislature very fast. So the legislature is in bad repute because they don't do anything. That's an exaggeration that they don't do anything. They do lots of things. But the controversial things, there's no use trying, because you can almost count on a third of the people voting against you on anything. Because if you don't understand something, the easiest thing is to vote no or not vote. Then, if somebody questions [you] about it, you say, "Well, the bill wasn't clear. The bill did this. The bill did that." They could slough it off.

I'd say that the initiative system in California, when it was designed by Hiram [W.] Johnson, was a good democratic people's issue. But what has happened to it is the only people making use of it are the big corporations, or some really special interest bloc who has the

BANE: money. They can raise the money to take up their legislation and use a lot of money advertising to convince the people they should do it. Now, they may pick an issue that has lots of subtle effects to it that are not apparent on the top. But then, they don't talk about those subtle effects. They talk on the main issue. So they pick the issue, doctor the bill, and then present it for signature. They've got the money to get the signatures. They've paid the people to get the things circulated and paid them to get the signatures and put it on the ballot. Then they use the publicity and all the techniques used in fooling the public.

There are certain attempts to correct the illnesses. But the people do not want to give up the power of being able to address their own feelings on issues and address their own bills. They will eventually repeal the term limitations. It will be a long time before they do it. Who's going to put the signatures together, and all the money and all the expense? So the correcting of the ills is expensive; I think it will be with us

a long time.

[End Tape 10, Side A]

[Begin Tape 10, Side B]

BANE: I think that pretty well covers the issues that are extraordinary and took the greatest amount of work to get through.

ISOARDI: Let me ask you one follow-up to what you've just been talking about. In looking back over your career, it seems like Jesse Unruh and yourself, certainly in the later fifties, early sixties, were instrumental in creating a different kind of legislature in California, a different kind of assembly, a more independent, a more professional, a more aggressive kind of assembly structure. Do you see term limits as ending that? Do you think it has the potential to do that? Or as a setback to that ideal?

BANE: See, we did something else, too. One policy that we invoked was not 100 percent proper. In creating a better legislature, we created a position in each person's office where they could hire a consultant. The consultant was to be approved by the Rules Committee in terms of quality. We also established a rule that had

some debate--and a justifiable debate--that we not allow the position, which was going to be higher paid, to be filled by any incumbent staff person. That on the face of it raised a lot of questions as to what's fair or not. But we also knew that some members would be under the pressure of their secretary to hire them to be the consultant and give them a raise in pay. So if you allowed that to happen, then we would make no headway as far as quality was concerned. Just somebody would be getting more money. We had a real strong battle over that. I fought very hard for that policy. I would say Jesse backed me. I don't think he was very happy in backing me, but he knew what I was saying was practically right, you know. So as long as I took the heat for the bad policy, he let me do it. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: [Laughter] In your years, Tom, you served under probably a number of speakers, but certainly two of the most controversial and powerful in the history of California politics, with Jesse Unruh and Willie Brown. In looking back now, what do you think makes an effective speaker? What qualities?

BANE: Basically, he has to be very intelligent to be able to cope with all the issues. He has to be very intelligent. And Jesse Unruh was a very intelligent man, very competent man. He could sit in a room and have a couple of conversations going on and listen to both of them. He was a very sensitive man. He was really tortured as speaker because the public zeroed in on him. A lot of pain and a lot of suffering by the speaker to put up with the publicity that he gets and the accusations. For instance, Willie Brown was constantly accused of being lobbyist controlled. He even exemplifies to some people all the bad things in politics. He really exemplifies [Laughter] what I think are very good features of a speaker.

ISOARDI: Such as?

BANE: Extremely bright. Extremely bright. You just have to have a special brain and extreme competency to handle eighty members of the legislature. Just extremely bright. You also had to pretty well run the house without apparently running it, because of the safeguards you put up. As I told you, I didn't vote for

BANE: Willie Brown for speaker because I had made my commitment to Howard Berman. I had a reputation when I made a commitment, that that was it. That reputation helped me a great deal in politics because whatever I said, I would do. They didn't find me flip-flopping. So that people questioned how I can move between Willie Brown.... Not supporting him for speaker and moving into his operation. He had a very clear understanding that I was reliable and I was loyal. I kept my word. So I was able to find myself in the battle of the speakership, and coming out of it not scathed, because it was nothing personal. But the quality Speaker Willie Brown has is his extreme brilliance. Willie is extremely brilliant. He always has to be very careful and has to have a great deal of integrity.

But you know, the biggest attack on a speaker was on Willie Brown. They used every technique they had to cut him up, including racial. And they appealed to the general feeling of a lot of people in the public such as, "Why should this black have luxurious cars, sporty clothes, and dress well, when I don't have it?" But he got

himself through school. He got himself in the law business. His competency as a lawyer was recognized throughout the United States. We would have meetings with him, and he would have to take off and fly to Chicago because his clients in the East wanted to talk to him, and the only way they could talk to him was to meet him halfway. So he would be at a meeting in Chicago. He'd fly there. They'd fly to Chicago. And Willie would be back that same day, after he had the meeting.

ISOARDI: Sounds like you need a tremendous amount of energy as well.

BANE: Oh, he does have. Willie Brown has tremendous energy. Somebody needed to talk to him, and I'd arranged for that at one of the dinners he had. After dinner was over, we'd meet with Willie and we'd discuss issues. There was Willie, who had been on the go all day long. After dinner, he was leaning against the wall in a hotel hallway-- it was because he was so tired, it was hard to stand up--and carrying on a conversation with somebody who felt he needed to talk to the speaker. And he worked very hard. Just

hardworking. So that's another quality they have to have, willingness to work long and hard, and also neglect your family life and everything else to be speaker. I never wanted to give up that much. I love my wife. She's the most important thing in the world to me. Nobody can be more important to a speaker than the speakership. In order to be a good speaker, you've got to give up everything, give everything to that. I never wanted to go that far, you know. And today, I have a good family life. I'm not saying Willie doesn't have a good life. I think he does, but not the depths of a good marriage, not the depths there.

ISOARDI: Let me ask you, Tom. Your career, with your hiatus in the private sector, does span quite a few decades--right?--from the late fifties through 1990. Over that period of time, over thirty years, did the assembly change very much? Do you see it changing as an institution at all?

BANE: There was change from the poor educational quality of the members through salary increases.

ISOARDI: So from the period after you effected your changes in the mid-sixties up until the time you

left, was it pretty much the same? Nothing changed quite as drastically as those early years you were there?

BANE: No. I think every year the quality of the individual members of the legislature has improved.

ISOARDI: Oh, truly.

BANE: I'm not sure, since term limitations, that still applies.

ISOARDI: Uh-huh. But at least up until your final years there, you think that was on a constant increase.

BANE: Yeah. The quality of the members was constantly improving over the period I was in. It didn't all happen at once. It just took us some time to bring that about. But then, it had the quality of leadership, a quality of members. They all became leaders.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Did that prove to be a problem, as Jesse thought it would be?

BANE: Well, it's very difficult to.... Except that Willie Brown had a problem with me, you know. I knew what my principles of the world were and my positions on issues. They become very clear in your mind. Because with these bills coming

through, a hundred of them a day, you've got to take a look at them and say, "Does this violate any of my principles?" You've got to read the bill and be able to tick off immediately where you are and would it violate any of your principles. Willie Brown never asked me for a vote in all the years I served as Rules chairman. Now, that's hard for anybody to believe, because I liked him very much and respected him very much. I saw firsthand the effects of his brilliancy and his leadership. One day there was a bill up before the legislature dealing with optometry. I had a strong belief in aiding the development of alternative forms of medicine.

ISOARDI: Oh, I think you mentioned that one. You were on opposite sides on that issue, right?

BANE: Yeah.

ISOARDI: Yeah.

BANE: I worked with him all day long, toward the end of a session, early in the morning, and late at night, when I had the assignment to see that certain bills got through and to straighten out some problems. I'd be working the floor, and we'd be discussing them all day long. I sat

there waiting for him to ask me. He never did. I remember he called Lou Papan in once. Lou was about as tough a legislator as you could find, you know. Lou got up and changed his vote. He didn't even blush when he was changing it. Tough guy as the speaker. But he never asked me.

ISOARDI: Let me ask you, Tom. You go from voting against Willie Brown, supporting Berman for the speakership initially in 1990, and a few years later, you're chairman of the Rules Committee. How do you become chairman of the Rules Committee under Willie Brown's speakership?

BANE: Well, I don't think it was difficult because I never personalized any of the battles. I don't hate Republicans. I just don't vote against Republicans, you know. They're human beings. They represent their district. So I never had a feeling of hating Republicans.

For instance, Mike Roos was majority floor leader. I was assistant speaker pro tempore, and I was presiding over the legislature. And Mountjoy, who is Peck's bad boy,<sup>1</sup> causes the

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<sup>1</sup> George Wilbur Peck wrote Peck's Bad Boy and His Pa and other Peck's bad-boy stories.

BANE: Democrats trouble all the time. Mike Roos figured, "Well, I'm a Democrat, I'm loyal, I'm strong. I won't hesitate whatsoever in moving him out of order." Mike Roos got up and moved Mountjoy out of order. I ruled against Mike. "He's not out of order. He has a right to do that. Everyone has certain rights, and he's got a right to do that." Mountjoy came up after the meeting was over and wanted to thank me because he knew it was very simple for me to move him out of order. They can take it on the floor, and the Democratic majority would support the speaker, the speaker pro tempore or whatever. Be simple to move him out of order. But that was not right. There are certain rights a member has on that floor, Democrat or Republican, good or bad. Mountjoy had taken a right and was causing the Democrats a lot of embarrassment. My theory is he intended to do that. But Mountjoy always had his right to speak when he was a member of the Rules Committee. I'd never let anybody cut him off, because he had a job he had to do. Sometimes he was going to speak to the press later anyway, so you might as well let him get it

BANE: off his chest.

I remember an instance in which somebody had made an accusation against my administrative assistant--the chief executive officer was my administrative assistant--as having a financial interest in some bill that this member had. He was trying to get it referred to the wrong committee. Most people had a clear understanding of how bills are assigned. He did everything in the book, including accusing my administrative assistant of having a financial interest. So I called a special meeting of the Rules Committee and just laid out the situation. I even brought the member down and talked about the bill. We really talked about the issue of accusing [Robert] Bob Connelly of having a financial interest. And Bob couldn't let that rest. So I had a closed meeting on it, and the member backed off. He said, "No. You misunderstood me. I didn't mean that."

So in that meeting, Mountjoy said, "I've known Mr. Connelly for a long time, and I don't think he would let any financial interest interfere with any of his decisions." So Dick

Mountjoy was always fair and square. He said, "I've been a member of the Rules Committee for fourteen years." Willie Brown was sitting in there, because he knew about the meeting. I said, "Fourteen years?" He said, "Yes, fourteen years." I said, "Boy, Mr. Mountjoy, it seems a lot longer than that." [Laughter] Willie Brown practically fell off the chair. Mountjoy was a tussle. He was a tussle, but he'd only go so far.

ISOARDI: So Willie Brown must have appreciated these characteristics in your approach.

BANE: Willie was having trouble with Rules. Jesse Unruh told him "Look, make Bane Rules chairman and get rid of all those troubles."

ISOARDI: Really? He did? [Laughter]

BANE: I also told you somewhere along the tape about when Willie came to see me in San Francisco, when he was running for speaker. Willie Brown came and met me in San Francisco, and was seeking my support. I said, "Willie, I'm totally committed to Leon Ralph, and whomever he wants for speaker, he has my vote. He's the only member up there that gave me any help or assistance or

BANE: consolation when I was running for reelection. He's the only one. And all I could do for him in return is, if he needs me to support somebody for speaker"--Leon Ralph was Rules chairman at the time--"Leon can count on my vote." And Willie said, "You know, Tom, you're going to be on the losing side." I said, "Willie, win or lose, I've got my commitment. If it ends up where Leon Ralph and I are the only two guys voting for the losing speaker, that's the way it's going to be." I remember him saying, "I admire your principles."

Later on, he was chairing a committee. You can't ignore Willie. He's just too bright. He's too valuable. So he had a chairmanship under Leo McCarthy. And I was over presenting a bill. Some members of the committee agreed to the bill, but they were afraid what the senate would do with it. I said, "Well, if the senate does [anything], I'll bring the bill back to this committee. If anybody wants me to bring the bill back to this committee, I'll do that. And this committee gets the last shot at the bill." I remember, again, I was very pleased. The members

said, "How can we be sure he'll do that?" And Willie said, "Apparently, you don't know Tom Bane." So I'll say that that answers your question.

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Truly does.

BANE: That answers your question. The only thing you have really in politics in the legislature is your vote and your word. That's the only thing you have. I felt that way. And I never broke a commitment all the time I was up there. The members knew that, and Willie knew it. So it was very easy. Willie did give me a rough time right after the--not a rough time--right after he got to be speaker. When he was at the reception, I gave my consolation, you know. He said, "I just won. What do you mean a consolation?" I said, "The time will come." And it came. Willie never asked me for my vote when he ran for speaker--the Republicans supported him and he ran for speaker--because he knew where I'd be. No matter what, that's where I'll be. He said, "Tom, make an appointment with my secretary. Let's talk." I said, "OK." So I made an appointment with the secretary. When the time came up for the

BANE: appointment, he canceled. He had something else to do, whatever it was. So I reset it. We made another appointment. When it came up, same thing. He had to cancel it. So that took care of my negotiation meeting with Willie Brown in my mind. And so time went on. One day, his secretary talked to my secretary--they happened to be relatives--"By the way, Tom wanted to meet with the speaker. Does he still want to do that?" "I don't know. I'll talk to him." So I said, "No. He broke two appointments. That's enough. I don't want to talk to him." "So you mean that?" And I said, "Goddamn, right. I mean it." So she goes back to tell Willie Brown's secretary, and she was stunned that I would not meet with the speaker. [Laughter] Anyway, I told his majority floor leader.... I can't remember his name. A fellow from up north, he became a congressman. I said, "I remember I was talking to you the other day. You were going to talk to Willie for me." I said, "Don't do it." "And why not?" "Because I've just come to the conclusion that I don't want to talk to him." That weekend I got a call from Willie Brown. And

you know, it crossed my mind that he has something more important to do than talking to me. He was just a busy guy. But there it was. It's a question of honor, self-respect. A guy breaks two appointments with you when he suggests you make them. You can't waste your time with him. So he apologized. He told me some of the troubles he was having. But I was never a pussyfoot.

ISOARDI: Truly. Tom, do you have any thoughts on the relations between the assembly and the senate? Now, you headed up the Joint Rules Committee, didn't you?

BANE: Yeah, I was chairman of the Joint Rules Committee, because the agreement between the senate and the assembly was that whoever was chairman of the Rules Committee in the assembly became chairman of the Joint Rules Committee, and the vice chairman of the Joint Rules Committee was a senator. So with my spot as chairman of the Rules Committee in the assembly, I inherited the position of chairman of Joint Rules.

ISOARDI: How important was that committee?

BANE: Well, it was a job to do. You get senators to

come to meetings and meet the quorum from both sides. It took some persuasion, personal persuasions. We ran a lot of the business of both houses from that point. The most important part of that job was the relationship between the chairman of the Rules Committee in the assembly--the chairman of Joint Rules--and the governor's office, because the governor has certain controls over the chambers and buildings. The Joint Rules Committee had a power over the building. Lou Papan was in a constant battle with the governor's office. One day, he kicked all of the governor's staff out of the garage.

ISOARDI: So did you have many dealings in that position with the governor?

BANE: Oh, I was always very cooperative with the governor. I felt that building belonged to the people of the state of California. And he was the governor. If he wanted to use it, he should have a right to use it. So that was the basis of my reasoning. He was the governor. If he wants to have a reception at such and such a time and at such and such a place with people, he should be able to do that. So we didn't run into any

real problem. Had some differences a couple of times, but nothing critical. Any other questions?

ISOARDI: Yes.

[End Tape 10, Side B]

[Begin Tape 11, Side A]

ISOARDI: Well, perhaps, Tom, as a way of wrapping it up, why don't you respond to a couple of big questions. In looking back on a life in California politics, what do you think of the experience as a whole? And perhaps something of your looking back now, your philosophy, maybe about politics and what it can accomplish.

BANE: Well, the experience as a whole, I think I've had a wonderful life. As a member of the assembly, you've got experts from all over the world come before the committee on some issue or some bills. You get to meet the president of the United States and the candidates for president of the United States. But the whole experience, it's a learning experience, if you like to learn. You learn a great deal in that life. It's a challenging life, not an easy life.

I think I made it easier on myself than lots

BANE: of people in politics, who have difficulty making up their minds and squirm over voting this way or voting that way, or doing this or doing that. I really had a very simple rule. What was right was right. What's right for me, you know. It might not have been right for somebody else, but I had to live with myself. It makes it kind of difficult always to satisfy everybody when you take that viewpoint. But my life was really simplified, I think, compared to other people's lives.

The fact that I can make a commitment to Howard Berman and support him in every move for the speakership, and Willie Brown won--that's the way the process is--and I can go over to Willie Brown right after that. Speakership battles are very, very, very vicious, you know, and long lasting, but I didn't find it so because of my principles and practices of your word is your bond and staying with your commitments. It's the kind of people that any speaker wants around. And [I] never got personal with it. I never hated Willie Brown or made attacks on him. I kept my commitment when I voted for Howard Berman

for speaker. I made that commitment. I didn't know who was going to be the opponent at the time, but that's where it was. It didn't keep me from being loyal to Willie and supporting him, because the Rules chairman really protects the back of the speaker a great deal. He has to have somebody there that he could trust and is smart enough to be able to protect his back.

ISOARDI: Do you feel the process of being a legislator over that period of time changed you personally in any way? Do you have any sense of that?

BANE: Oh yes. The education I got was better than you could ever get at any college. [Laughter] You understand that the issues that affect the lives of people and the life of the state all came before the legislature. A few people sit in committee meetings and listen to the experts in the world and experts in the United States, nationally, who come before the legislature. You get a chance to ask them questions. What a school. What a school. And the difficulty about it was the early years were all easy. You gain more money in the budget every year. Sometimes you run across trouble for the governor on a bill

BANE: or something. I became well-known as the person who had something to say about what the houses did, what the members did, and how the legislators operated. The governor paid attention to that so I had influence on the governor. I had some influence on the president of the United States when he was running for office, you know. How could you beat that kind of life? How could you beat that? And the education and the learning. The whole excitement of it. Just how could you beat it? You're in a position to work with people and work with all kinds.

You had to be able to understand who you could trust, who you couldn't, and who you pick your struggles with. But I had friends among Republicans as well as Democrats. I presume that gave Willie some problems that he never mentioned. He also had to put up with my characteristics, you know. But the thing a speaker needs most, and has very few of, is somebody they can have total trust in. I maintained that position. I didn't have much difficulty making up my mind as some of the

politicians did. Sometimes I made political decisions which they weren't totally happy with, but I made them and stood by them. Can you satisfy your own integrity and keep your self-respect? That's the important thing.

ISOARDI: And you feel you accomplished that?

BANE: Yes. I feel that. I'm satisfied with my life, satisfied with my accomplishments. I went as far as I wanted to go politically, that was as chairman of Rules. [Laughter] I had the wholehearted help of a fantastic wife, Marlene. We worked side by side in doing the chores of representing our district. Much of my success is because of her. I had the enjoyment of working with Willie Brown, who's really one of the brightest men that I think ever walked those halls in the state legislature. I feel pains with him when he takes a beating on racial issues. The thing's unfair. I feel deeply sympathetic and share in his pain. I probably would have had a few less problems if I hadn't been as strong in supporting him as I had been. But I just think he's a wonderful man. The brain. The memory.

BANE: I'll give examples, maybe I have before. I think the first time I realized that Willie Brown had a brain was when I felt, like everybody else did, [that] he was a tremendous orator, very influential. I went through a period of listening to him because he was very interesting, and I was casting a few votes that were influenced by him. He made it seem so logical, and I guess they were logical, except it didn't fit in my district. A couple of instances where I voted not on course with my district, the people I represented. I shook my head and said, "My God, what am I doing? I let this guy talk me into this. [Laughter] I'll have to run for office in San Francisco because I'm not going to make it in my district." So after that, I pretty well made up my mind on issues before I listened to him, because he sat right in front of me when he wasn't the speaker. But I listened to him, and I'd say, "Willie"--[when] he'd get through-- "great speech. But you didn't tell them...." [Laughter]

The joys I still have in life are the people I met when in office, I worked with and knew.

All different kinds. A lot of good, great people are up there. I don't share the stuff that legislators don't care, because I've seen physical fights on the floor over an issue. I've seen the pain on a member's face when they lose a bill or all the joy when they win a vote. And I had my own enjoyments on legislation. Strangely enough, since I've been out, I never thought that I would [make] the kind of impression on the public that concerns my own integrity, and what kind of person I was. But I found out that a lot of people did respect me, and that means a lot to you.

ISOARDI: Truly.

BANE: I had somebody call up here just a couple of weeks ago. "I've had a hard time getting this number. This really Tom Bane's number?"

My wife said, "Yes."

He said, "I just want to tell him, give him a message, would you please?"

She said, "I will."

"Get his ass back in Sacramento."

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Who was it?

BANE: I don't know. "Get his ass back in Sacramento."

He said, "Ever since he's left, that place has been a mess." Well, I will say I got a push out of that.

ISOARDI: Truly. Tom, any final thoughts about California politics and what it's been like for the last thirty, forty years, and where you might think it's going?

BANE: Yeah. I have concerns, but then sometimes I'm afraid that parents generally think that what happens to the kids is they're all going to the dogs. I want to be careful that I don't fall into that kind of a trap.

ISOARDI: Yeah.

BANE: But I guess the thing that's concerned me the most is when the people vote against us for things they believe in because they're fooled into it or led into it. Some groups set us up to vote against, and [it's] an illogical vote to vote at all. How in the world can you run a state and take care of the people if they won't even vote for themselves because they don't understand. I'm concerned about term limitations. The public seems to be enhanced and charmed with the thought of term limitations.

BANE: California got its way, and we have it raising its head in Congress. You can imagine the disaster it has been to California government and the effect in representing people. Disastrous. The chaos that we do to ourselves. That's what we will have in Congress is people with no experience. I can only have the feeling that people have the right to do it: vote what they want and support anything they want to support. They have a right to do that, but they also have a duty to understand what they're doing.

I have sympathy with the public because the public has no way at all of ever finding out what the truth is about what's going on in Sacramento, for instance. No way. They can't take the time to become totally aware, and they're not clairvoyant. I think the initiative system makes it impossible to run a government, a budget, and a state by initiative process. That's not going to go away, because to do it you have to take a right away from the people. Although the right turns up results that are wrong, to take the right away is something I don't think that the public will do and I don't think the legislators

BANE: will do it either, because they have the right to do that. So in California you've given them the right to wreck our state is what it is.

Everybody fears bureaucracy. In California the bureaucrats didn't like legislators. They had a tendency to figure, well, they [the bureaucrats] are in here permanently, and the legislators just temporarily. But after a legislator has been there a while, they didn't seem so temporary. So a new legislator had no effect on the bureaucrats. If somebody had been there some length of time, was seasoned, they didn't feel [they were] going to go away. So they had to pay attention to the legislature because they couldn't tell which ones were going to be there and who was going to be temporary. However, at this point now, they're all temporary. All legislators are temporary. So there's no reason for a bureaucrat to pay any attention to a legislator representing the people, because they aren't going to be there for that long. So they would go about their way and figure if anybody wants to give them trouble, they won't be around very long anyway. They're

not temporary.

I guess the main aspect of it is good legislators are not made in a six-year period. You know, it's like General Motors [Corporation] or any of these big corporations [who] have a man that's been running their business for years and years, and [he's] high quality, understands the business, and is very, very effective. You pass a law saying, "I have to be fired," and it doesn't make sense. It doesn't make sense in the state to destroy your effective and experienced [people], running the government out of office strictly because they've had too much experience. Let's see, term limitations will be a disaster when it hits our federal government, which it will. But then, civilizations have grown and fallen before. So I've a lot of concerns about California politics. I've come to the conclusion, if I were there, things would be different, you know. [Laughter]

ISOARDI: [Laughter] Well, Tom, would you like to leave it on that note? Or do you have any final thoughts? Anything at all that we might have skipped or anything you'd like to sign off with?

BANE: No. I guess I would just hope there are enough young people who enjoy challenge. The challenge in running for office today and being an elected official is very great. Because officials themselves, everybody is against. [They] will pick up any stone they can against an incumbent legislator because they want his job, they want to sell newspapers, or they want their party to have the power to do this. The confrontational press, I think, has contributed to the demise of respect for people in office. And what that's ended up is qualified people won't run for office because they don't want to be classified as a politician, which the press has demeaned to the point that anybody who's a politician has to be disrespected and not trusted. So a lot of things get back to trust.

ISOARDI: Yeah.

BANE: There are still a few people who I want to challenge when they run for office. It's kind of a shame that you create a job that is so important to your life--how you create a job and the system of government is so important--then you spend all your time criticizing them,

demeaning them and accusing them of everything to the point that too many people run for office because they think they can get away with so much, so they become a legislator. So I would hesitate today in advising anybody to go into politics, even though I enjoyed it so much. A lot of satisfaction, self-satisfaction with it. It's great living with the self-satisfaction if you get some appreciation from the public for what you do, and you get more and more self-satisfaction. It's tougher and tougher when the public demeans you.

My wife and I have gone on cruises, and we would never let anybody admit what my occupation was. We took a trip together into the Far East. What I'm talking about are the people on the other side of the Pacific. We've taken those trips. We decided we wanted to get some break from politics, so that's the first trip we took. We came back and went to the shore, "Aren't you Tom Bane?"

ISOARDI: Did you deny it? [Laughter]

BANE: Kind of hard to deny. But it meant that we paid for some side trips in going with the group, so

the whole group ended up knowing I was Tom Bane. All of them had their complaints. So we ended up renting a car and a driver, and our side trips and travel we did by ourselves. We found out, by the way, that that's really the best way to go.

ISOARDI: No question. Yeah.

BANE: So it has its pluses and minuses. I think I've participated in the better years of California's life. I want to thank you because you've forced me to remember what a great joy it was.

ISOARDI: Oh, that's been a pleasurable task. Thank you very much for sharing all this.

[End Tape 11, Side A]