

California State Archives
State Government Oral History Program

Oral History Interview

with

WILLIAM H. LANCASTER

California State Assemblyman, 1972-1992

November 22 and December 13, 1994; January 9, January 30 and
March 4, 1995
Covina, California

By Enid Hart Douglass
Oral History Program
Claremont Graduate School

VOLUME 1

RESTRICTIONS ON THIS INTERVIEW

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 an state toward the preservation and documentation of its governmental history. It supplements the often fragmentary historical written recorded 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

This interview is printed on acid-free paper.



WILLIAM H. LANCASTER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTERVIEW HISTORY i

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY iii

SESSION 1, November 2, 1994

[Tape 1, Side A] 1

Family background--Growing up in Sacramento--
Father's wholesale grocery business--Move to
southern California--Marriage--Work in sales for
various food companies--Field representative for
California Taxpayers Association--Early interest
in politics--Activity during incorporation of
Duarte--Candidate for first Duarte City Council--
City incorporation movement in fifties--Election
to Duarte Council in special election--Serving as
mayor of Duarte--Decisions of new city re
infrastructure and services.

[Tape 1, Side B] 41

Unification of school district--Development of
Master Plan for Duarte--Value of local government
experience--Contract Cities concept--Work in
northern California for California Taxpayers
Association--Managing first congressional campaign
for Charles Wiggins--Administrative Assistant in
southern California for Congressman Wiggins--First
campaign for Assembly--Republican politics in
southern California--1972 special election primary
and June final to fill Pete Schabarum's assembly
seat--Regular primary and final election in 1972--
Campaign organization--Establishing permanent
Republican party headquarters in his district.

[Tape 2, Side A] 79

Service in assembly from June to November 1972--
Initial committee assignments--Decision to retain
home in Covina--Nonpartisan atmosphere--The Derby
Club--California Coastal Commission Act--Beginning
of environmental movement.

SESSION 2, December 13, 1994

[Tape 2, Side B] 97

Cal Plan--1973 freshman class--Beginning and impact of two-year sessions--Suggestions re Ways and Means Committee--Use of consent calendar--Ghost voting--Substitute roll calls--New ability of legislature to reconvene itself--Association with Robert Monagan--Speaker Robert Moretti--Commerce and Public Utilities Committee--Intergovernmental Relations Committee--Water Committee--Joint Committee on Motor Vehicle Inspections--Filling school board vacancies--School crossing guards--Revenue sharing and local government--Reagan's Proposition 1--Redistricting.

[Tape 3, Side A] 136

Possible application of open meeting rules to the legislature--1974 gubernatorial election--Impact of Nixon's pardon on Houston Flournoy's campaign for governor and Republican seats in legislature--No-fault insurance--Republican caucus--Administration of the Assembly--Appointment to Finance, Insurance and Commerce Committee and changes in committee name--Subcommittee for Unemployment Disability--Streetlighting assessment districts--Municipal liability insurance.

[Tape 3, Side B] 171

Election to Rules Committee--Minority leaders--Role of committee in house administration--Defining role of each assembly committee--Assignment of bills--Politicizing of Rules Committee--Joint Committee on Restoration of the Capitol--Proposed plan for Collier towers--Decision to restore capitol--Restoration work--Various Lancaster bills--1976 and 1978 district election campaigns and issues--First applications of Fair Political Practices Commission--Financing of campaigns--Questions structure of Commission.

[Tape 4, Side A] 207

Power of appointment to state commissions and commission structure--Responsible to executive or legislative branch--Increasing election of suburban candidates--Need to redefine role of county government--Special districts.

SESSION 3, January 9, 1995

[Tape 4, Side B] 221

Republican party leadership--Committee assignments--Local Government Committee Subcommittee on Force Accounts--Subcommittee on Transportation Reform--Discussion of problem of completing Foothill Freeway--Annual introduction of bills re Foothill Freeway--Legislation addressing financial problem of declining school enrollment--Route 39 legislation--Commentary on problems that resulted from passage of Proposition 13 in 1978--Opposition to Proposition 13 and support of Proposition 8.

End of Volume 1

INTERVIEW HISTORY

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Interview Time and Place

November 22, 1994
Assemblyman Lancaster's home in Covina, California
Morning Session of 2 1/4 hours

December 13, 1994
Assemblyman Lancaster's home in Covina, California
Morning Session of 2 3/4 hours

January 9, 1995
Assemblyman Lancaster's home in Covina, California
Afternoon Session of 2 hours

January 30, 1995
Assemblyman Lancaster's home in Covina, California
Afternoon Session of 2 1/2 hours

March 4, 1995
Morning Session of 1 3/4 hours.

Editing

The interviewer/editor checked the verbatim manuscript of the interviews against the original tape recordings and verified proper names. Insertions by the editor are bracketed.

The edited transcripts were forwarded to William Lancaster who made only minor emendations and returned the approved manuscripts in April and May, 1995.

The interviewer/editor prepared the introductory materials.

Papers

Assemblyman Lancaster has deposited his official papers in the California State Archives in Sacramento. He holds eleven scrapbooks and other miscellaneous material at his home in Covina, California.

Tapes and Interview Records

The original tape recordings of the interview are in the Oral History Program Office, Claremont Graduate School, along with the records relating to the interview. Master tapes are deposited in the California State Archives.

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

William H. Lancaster was born in Bakersfield, California on April 29, 1931. His father, Benjamin Lee Lancaster, was in the wholesale grocery business, and his mother, Elizabeth Tibbetts Lancaster, was a housewife. He attended elementary school and high school in Sacramento, California. A family move to southern California led to his graduation from Palm Springs High school in 1949.

In 1951, he married Amarilyn Treece Whittaker. They had three children: William Cortland Lancaster, Elizabeth Dianne Lancaster (Russell), and Christopher Whittaker Lancaster. Mrs. Lancaster died in 1992.

In 1951-1952, Mr. Lancaster worked in sales for H. J. Heinz Company. From 1953 to 1964, he was with Alpha Beta Company and Pepsi Cola Company and then was a sales representative for Sunshine Biscuit Company in southern California. In 1966, he became Field Representative for the California Taxpayers Association in northern California. From 1966 to 1972, he served as Administrative Assistant to Congressman Charles Wiggins in southern California.

In 1958, William Lancaster was elected to the City Council of the recently incorporated City of Duarte. He served as mayor for three one-year terms before resigning in 1965. A registered Republican, he was elected to the California State Assembly in 1972 and served until he decided to retire in 1992.

An active member of the Republican Caucus, William Lancaster was elected to the Assembly Committee on Rules in 1976 and served as Vice Chairman of the committee from 1976 to 1982. His longest committee service was a fourteen-year term on the Committee on Finance, Insurance and Commerce. This committee was later named the Committee on Finance and Insurance, and soon it was divided into the Committee on Finance and Bonded Indebtedness, on which William Lancaster continued to serve, and the Committee on Insurance.

Well known for his expertise in local government, William Lancaster served as a member of the Committee on Local Government for ten years. He carried a good deal of

legislation which addressed county and city matters, and he was viewed as a person with whom those representing local governments could discuss their concerns. In pursuing his approach of expanding his knowledge about the vast array of legislation which might come before the Assembly, he made a point of serving on a variety of committees, namely fourteen committees other than the three named above.

In addition, William Lancaster served on the Joint Committee on Restoration of the Capitol from 1976 to 1982. This committee's charge was the oversight of the restoration of the capitol to its 1910 status. In 1985, he was named Chairman of the Joint Committee on Legislative Ethics, in which capacity he served until his retirement in 1992.

Since 1993 Mr. Lancaster has served as a member of the East San Gabriel Valley Hospice Board of Directors and of the Mount San Antonio College Foundation Board of Directors. He recently established the Bill Lancaster Foundation, a nonprofit institution which makes grants to communities.

[Session 1, November 22, 1994]

[Begin Tape 1, Side A]

DOUGLASS: You were born, I believe, in Bakersfield?

LANCASTER: That's right. On April 29, 1931.

DOUGLASS: How did your parents happen to be living in Bakersfield?

LANCASTER: First of all, my mother was born in Bakersfield. My father came to Bakersfield--I am not sure what date--and he was a manager for the Western States Grocery Company in Bakersfield. That's where he met my mother.

DOUGLASS: So your mother was a native of Bakersfield.

LANCASTER: Yes. And her mother and her father are natives of California and Bakersfield. Actually, her mother and father were born in Kernville, which is under Lake Isabella at the present time.

[Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Why had they come West? And where did they come from?

LANCASTER: My father's family originally was from Texas. So you would have to say that they were always

westerners. I am not totally sure, Enid, where the family originated. I have heard stories of Pennsylvania, but I just don't know, to be honest with you.

DOUGLASS: You don't know how they got to Texas.

LANCASTER: No.

DOUGLASS: Your mother's family. Where did they come from originally?

LANCASTER: Well, the family name was Tibbetts. It's an English spelling. So I don't know for sure.

DOUGLASS: So you were a second-generation and a third-Californian.

LANCASTER: Third-generation My mother's parents were born in California. They lived for awhile in Quincy, California, which is in northern California, in the northeastern part of the state.

DOUGLASS: Were your paternal grandparents in Texas? Or did they move out West?

LANCASTER: They moved West. They were here. In fact, all my father's family were in Bakersfield also. So it was a family move.

DOUGLASS: It must have been nice growing up with that much family around.

LANCASTER: Yes, they were all around. Of course, I didn't stay very long in Bakersfield.

DOUGLASS: How long did you stay in Bakersfield?

LANCASTER: Nine months. [Laughter] Then we moved to Sacramento. My father was transferred to the Western States Grocery warehouse as manager in Sacramento. He eventually, just before World War II, went into his own wholesale grocery business.

DOUGLASS: So did you go to school in Sacramento?

LANCASTER: Yes, I did. I went to grammar school, junior high school, and almost completed high school in Sacramento. My father passed away in 1947, and my mother remarried and we moved to southern California, to Palm Springs, which is where I actually graduated from high school.

DOUGLASS: Did you go to McClatchey High School in Sacramento?

LANCASTER: C. K. McClatchey.

DOUGLASS: What was the junior high?

LANCASTER: California Junior High School. And Crocker Elementary School. That's an old California name.

DOUGLASS: Right

LANCASTER: So is C. K. McClatchey, by the way, the owners of the Sacramento Bee and the Modesto Bee.

DOUGLASS: What was Sacramento like to you? That would be in '32--of course, you were an infant--but you experienced a different Sacramento.

LANCASTER: Basically, there were two Sacramentos when I lived there. There was pre-World War II Sacramento, which was basically a small town. It was the state capital, but the state government at that time was just not around that much. It was a part-time legislative body, and it wasn't as big. I guess the welfare office was in one room of the capitol, or something. Basically, it was a small operation compared to what it is today. The total population was about 100,000.

DOUGLASS: Oh, it was that big?

LANCASTER: Yes. In the whole area. You have to consider Sacramento was like it is here. You've got a lot of suburbs, and even then you had North Sacramento, Carmichael, and various other small communities

DOUGLASS: So by the time you counted greater Sacramento it would be about 100,000.

LANCASTER: Yes. And K Street was the main street. It was a small town. You could--and I did--ride your bicycle up to Sacramento's downtown and go to the Senator Theater and leave it out front unlocked. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: And the old Tower Theater.

LANCASTER: The Tower Theater. I was raised in that area, on Ten-Eight Way. It was in the south Land Park area. My father built a house in the Land Park area in 1937. We were, at that time, maybe the third or fourth house in that area.

DOUGLASS: It sounds like a pretty nice place to grow up.

LANCASTER: It was very nice.

DOUGLASS: So the last job your dad had before he passed away was when he set up his own business.

LANCASTER: He set up his own wholesale grocery business, which he ran throughout World War II, and he died in 1947.

DOUGLASS: That must have been an interesting experience. Do you recall anything he commented on about doing that during a war period?

LANCASTER: He actually started it just before the war.

DOUGLASS: I mean the problems of operating in wartime.

LANCASTER: Yes, they were interesting. It was a family operation, basically. We had my mother and my

sister, who is seven years older than I am. They worked also in it. They had a lot of circumstances we are not faced with today. You know, ration stamps, things of this nature. All food, as you now, was rationed.

They used to operate the ration stamps like they did banks. You would take them down to the bank, and you would put them in the bank and write checks on them. It was interesting.

DOUGLASS: I don't recall that.

LANCASTER: In the wholesale grocery business, that was the only way you could do it. As they would sell the canned goods to the market, the market would pay the wholesaler in stamps for the canned goods. They would get all these stamps, and they would put them in the bank. And then they would write a check to the government.

DOUGLASS: I never thought about the third party, the middleman, and how that worked.

LANCASTER: Yes. It was a monetary system.

DOUGLASS: Did you absorb some of that?

LANCASTER: Yes. In fact, I worked part time in the warehouse itself, after school and things. It was quite interesting.

DOUGLASS: So then when your mother remarried what was the name of your stepfather?

LANCASTER: [Phil] Vahey. He was a retired naval officer from Watertown, Mass. [Massachusetts]. They were married for quite a while. Mother passed away in '77, and he passed away a couple of years later. My dad died in the forties.

DOUGLASS: So why was the move to Palm Springs?

LANCASTER: Well, I really don't know whether I can answer that question, Enid. They moved just to start a new era, I guess. My sister, by that time, had married, and I was seventeen years old. And so the family had kind of grown up already. So we lived in Palm Springs. Then we moved to Pasadena.

DOUGLASS: Was he retired by then?

LANCASTER: Yes, basically he was. But they did go into business together.

DOUGLASS: They did. What kind of a business was it?

LANCASTER: They went into the laundromat business, not in Palm Springs, over in Pasadena.

DOUGLASS: That was at the beginning of that way of life.

LANCASTER: That's right. Then they ended up in owning a laundromat and running a laundromat in Truckee, California at Donner Lake.

DOUGLASS: Was that a wrench for you to move from McClatchey High School to Palm Springs?

LANCASTER: Yes. That was my senior year. And, being at that age, you know.

DOUGLASS: It was hard. And you had spent all of your knowledgeable life in Sacramento.

LANCASTER: Yes. It was quite a change. It is kind of interesting, too. You know, as an aside, I was raised in Sacramento, and I ended up back in Sacramento. [Laughing]

DOUGLASS: Not many legislators have that record.

LANCASTER: No, I'm sure they don't.

DOUGLASS: What did you have in mind? It is 1949, and the postwar world is changing a lot. What did you decide to do on graduating from high school?

LANCASTER: Well, I had to work, Enid, and I just did odd jobs, I guess. I worked at various and sundry places getting my feet on the ground.

DOUGLASS: Was this in Pasadena?

LANCASTER: Yes, Pasadena, in this area.

DOUGLASS: Whereabouts in Pasadena?

LANCASTER: East Pasadena. We lived in a mobile home in a mobile park on Halstead [Street]. The street is no longer there.

DOUGLASS: That would be in east Pasadena?

LANCASTER: North of Colorado [Boulevard] and between Foothill Boulevard and Colorado. Now I think it is a pharmaceutical manufacturing plant where that property was. Unfortunately, I did not have the wherewithal to go to school. So I did not. Frankly, at that time I am not sure what I wanted to do.

DOUGLASS: So, as time went along, what did you finally do?

LANCASTER: Well, the Korean War came about. And I did not go into the service, but I was draftable, eligible for the draft. They did not draft me. [Amarilyn] Treece [Whittaker], and I decided to get married. So I got married, and then I started out into the work force.

DOUGLASS: How did you meet Treece? She was Treece Whittaker.

LANCASTER: Treece Whittaker. Her father--they are from Circleville, Utah--came down here and built the Hastings Drive In Theater over on the corner of Rosemead [Boulevard] and Foothill in Pasadena. She worked there, and I worked there as an usher with a flashlight. She worked in the cashier's cage. And that's where I met her,

and one thing led to another. [Laughter] And I was nineteen and she was eighteen.

DOUGLASS: You were young. You were married in 1951.

LANCASTER: Oh, yes.

DOUGLASS: At that point, did you keep that same job or did you make a job change pretty soon after being married?

LANCASTER: After I got married. I can't remember the exact period of time. But then I went to work for the H. J. Heinz Company as a chain-store merchandiser. I was back in the grocery business now. Outside of my activity in government, most of my career was involved in the grocery business, one way or the other. In sales, mainly.

DOUGLASS: So they had an office in the Pasadena area? You were living in Pasadena, I assume.

LANCASTER: Well, let's see, at that time we were living in. . . . Do you know where Clearman's [Restaurant] is on the corner of San Gabriel [Boulevard] and Rosemead?

DOUGLASS: Yes.

LANCASTER: We were living above a garage. We were living in that area at the back of a private home in an apartment over a garage. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Well, that's how a lot of people started out married life.

LANCASTER: That's right. Anyway, I went to work for the H. J. Heinz Company as a chain-store representative. My job was to go to various and sundry chain stores and to make sure the product . . .

DOUGLASS: Represent their products?

LANCASTER: Well, primarily it was a function of making sure the product was taken care of on the shelf. And after that I left H. J. Heinz, and then I went to work for Alpha Beta [Company] when they only had thirty stores. It was still owned at that time by the [] Gerard family. It was still a family owned business.

DOUGLASS: Where was their home base?

LANCASTER: La Habra. That's where their main base was at that time. Originally, I think Alpha Beta actually started in the Riverside area. Anyway it was still owned by the Gerard family, and I went to work for them as a clerk. I stayed with them about three years. Then I worked as a driver-salesman for Pepsi Cola Company in the Ontario-Chino area. I did that for five years

before I ended up as sales representative for the Sunshine Biscuit Company.

DOUGLASS: So that was in '65. Did you say the Sunshine Biscuit Company had another name?

LANCASTER: Well, it was a bakery company. Now, it is owned, I think, by American Tobacco Company. I don't know who owns it now.

DOUGLASS: So you did sales for them?

LANCASTER: Yes, sales.

DOUGLASS: In the region. Did this mean some traveling it wasn't . . .

LANCASTER: It was all local.

DOUGLASS: It was very different from now. There are so many large chains and so many places to go.

LANCASTER: Yes. It has changed. The markets have changed considerably. In those days it was kind of a dual thing. You would not only go to the headquarters operation, but you were also into the individual markets themselves. This is not necessarily the case any more.

You see, Sunshine is a direct shipper. So that meant that you had to contact all kinds of outlets. The product is snack products. And it just sold every place.

DOUGLASS: Not just in grocery stores.

LANCASTER: No, no. In those times we had everything. Every place. In those days, they didn't have the magnitude of the products they have today.

DOUGLASS: Did that put you in touch with the school systems?

LANCASTER: Yes, in school systems too. And governmental entities, in hospitals. Snacks, crackers, cracker meal, cooking with it.

DOUGLASS: You got to know the various communities that way?

LANCASTER: Yes, my territory was from Pasadena throughout the foothill area. Restaurants, everything.

DOUGLASS: It would be interesting to think about what it was like then, the changes.

LANCASTER: Oh, it has changed dramatically, obviously.

DOUGLASS: Then I guess the next thing you did was become field representative to . . .

LANCASTER: After I left the Duarte City Council--I left the Duarte City Council in 1965--I went to work for the California Taxpayers Association. In Sacramento.

DOUGLASS: Right.

LANCASTER: I went up there and worked out of that office, not necessarily with the state, but I did some work with the state. My primary job at that

point was to work with county governments in northern California. And I traveled extensively through the northern part of the state. All the way into Eureka and through there.

DOUGLASS: Why don't we jump back and talk about your service on the Duarte City Council. First of all, when did you first get interested in politics as something you would put some energy into?

LANCASTER: Well, I always had a basic interest in politics. I was very interested in the 1948 election, the [Harry] Truman-[Thomas] Dewey election, where I couldn't vote. [Laughter] In those days, you had to be twenty-one. I spent not a lot of time, but I spent some time involved in that election. Primarily, at that point, believe it or not, Enid, even though I was a Republican, I was kind of a Truman fan. But I was not a Democrat even then, but I wasn't registered because I couldn't be registered.

DOUGLASS: What about your mother and father?

LANCASTER: My mother was a Republican, but then my father was a Democrat. She told me she registered Democrat because that was the thing to do in

those days, you know. But, frankly, both of them voted Republican as long as I can remember.

DOUGLASS: Then you were sort of intrigued with Harry Truman?

LANCASTER: Yes, I was. I was intrigued with his personality, and I was intrigued with his frankness. I thought, at that time, that he fulfilled a need, and I think he did a good job, frankly. But, in 1952, I saw the light.
[Laughter]

DOUGLASS: You were an enlightened person by then?

LANCASTER: Yes, right. And I got actively involved in politics, in fact partisan politics, in the [Dwight D.] Eisenhower era and my first vote.

DOUGLASS: Was he sort of an inspirational figure?

LANCASTER: Yes, he was. I admired--and still do--Dwight Eisenhower tremendously.

DOUGLASS: Now, he wasn't a "politician." Was that appealing to you at all then?

LANCASTER: Not necessarily. I just considered him to be a great man. I think he was. I think he had a lot of common sense, and I think he had an ability that, unfortunately, not enough of our leadership has. And that is the ability to

lead in the correct way. He obviously was not a demagogue, and he would come out with the basic needs. I agree with his comments, his philosophy. He was a very quiet man, and I admired him and I always did.

DOUGLASS: So what did you do during that campaign?

LANCASTER: Precinct activity and that kind of thing. I worked in Duarte. By that time we had moved to Duarte.

DOUGLASS: I was going to say, when did you make that move? From Pasadena to Duarte?

LANCASTER: Well, actually, about '54. Bought a house.

DOUGLASS: Why did you move to Duarte? Because the house happened to be there?

LANCASTER: Yes, the house happened to be there, primarily.

DOUGLASS: Duarte was pretty small. How many people lived there?

LANCASTER: Oh, maybe eight or nine thousand, maybe ten thousand. It was unincorporated.

DOUGLASS: When did it incorporate?

LANCASTER: In 1957. That's where I got active in local community politics.

DOUGLASS: O.K. So you weren't on the first council, were you?

LANCASTER: I ran for the first council and lost. It is kind of an interesting story. What happened was I was interested and active in the community. I had been active in a couple of situations where we had opposed the expansion of a rock quarry south of us and all of those kind of things. In that area that now belongs to Irwindale. And spent a lot of time in what in those days was called the Duarte Citizens Association, which was a natural group of people getting together because we were in the county. Even in those days, in the fifties, the County of Los Angeles was just too big.

And that was a wave of incorporation. By the wave, incorporations of the cities in California was caused by the Bradley-Burns Act, which created the uniform sales tax. Which meant that the county areas and the city areas were all collecting the same amount of sales tax. Before, the county sales tax was lower than the cities' sales, and there were all kinds of variations on what the rate was. The state very wisely put together a uniform sales tax throughout California. Now it is gone. You know, it is not exactly what it used to be.

But, anyway, so that caused incorporations, and the Lakewood Plan was developed.

DOUGLASS: Yes. Contract services.

LANCASTER: Yes. All cities contracted. You know, that is just a name that was stuck on the program because the contract services [cities] contracted more than the so-called independent [cities]. So, anyway, the Lakewood Plan was put together.

In 1957, the incorporation movement really became--there is a book on it, we can talk about it for a long time--caused by the annexation policies of the neighboring cities, Azusa and Monrovia. Because they were always grabbing territory to get the sales tax. So that was what was doing it. Plus there was a natural expansion in that area.

DOUGLASS: It was no advantage to you in just being a loose piece of land in the county.

LANCASTER: No. And we were an entity unto itself. Duarte is an entity, and it was not just like you are taking. . . .

DOUGLASS: A piece of vacant land.

LANCASTER: Yes, that's right.

DOUGLASS: It had its own community.

LANCASTER: So, anyway, How I got involved was kind of interesting, to take a moment. There was a nice man by the name of Russ Moore, who owned a women's dress shop in Duarte, and he was kind of the guiding light on the incorporation movement. I didn't know him, but I went up to talk to him to see what it was all about, that I was interested in it. He didn't know me at all, and he kept saying to me what his plans were for the area of Duarte. And he felt that we did not need a city-management form of government. He said that all we needed was a council and a clerk, and we could run [the city]. And I didn't think that was right.

So I got to thinking about it and decided to run for that council, promoting the concept of city management because I believed--and I still believe--that laymen should be on city councils, active in the community, and they also should hire a professional and fire a professional if they want to. I would hate to see a city-clerk type of. . . . You know, that's why I opposed the insurance commissioner concept. I don't believe you ought to elect an

administrator. You ought to hire one so you can fire one.

DOUGLASS: Probably the City of Bradbury might be a good example of the sort of thing you are talking about.

LANCASTER: Well, Bradbury, by the way, was a spin-off in the incorporation of Duarte.

DOUGLASS: That's what I wondered.

[Interruption]

LANCASTER: Duarte had this desire to incorporate. When you do that, you form a committee and you call an incorporation meeting. I happened to get on that and worked with it.

DOUGLASS: It's a lot of work?

LANCASTER: Yes. And you draw boundaries, and you take these boundaries down to the Board of Supervisors. At that time, we did not have the law as it is today. You didn't have spheres of influence or any of that stuff. You just tend to have it open.

DOUGLASS: Drew lines?

LANCASTER: That's right. The original boundary, believe it or not, included Bradbury and Irwindale. And the Board of Supervisors, being the kind of a body they are, I am sure received a lot of

comment from the various rock companies in Irwindale. And Bradbury was a two-and-a-quarter-acre zone type of area, and they were afraid that Duarte City would go ahead and let somebody subdivide at two-and-a-quarter acres. Since in order to do that they had to have a population of 570 people. So that had to take one subdivision, with lots of 7500 [square feet] and bring them all in. That's where all of the people lived. And they actually, believe it or not, designed it by councilman districts. One man, one vote was not a possibility then, either. So all of the people that made up a population of 500 people were in one councilmanic district, and the other ones had like twenty. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: That's amazing. What year did they incorporate?

LANCASTER: It was '57.

DOUGLASS: It was about the same time.

LANCASTER: All three did.

DOUGLASS: O.K. Did Duarte make the first move?

LANCASTER: Yes. Duarte primarily made the first.

DOUGLASS: And that ticked off the others? They reacted?

LANCASTER: The nature of the political scene in those days--and the Board of Supervisors controlled that agenda--they got their boundaries ahead of ours. [Laughter] Bradbury and Irwindale.

DOUGLASS: Who was chairing the board of supervisors then?

LANCASTER: The members of the board in those days were Frank Bonelli, Burton Chase, [Ernest] Ernie Debs, and I don't know whether Warren Dorn was a member then or not.

DOUGLASS: So who was your supervisor then?

LANCASTER: Bonelli, Frank.

DOUGLASS: So was he helpful in this?

LANCASTER: Yes, he was. He was for the contract program, and the county at that time had people on staff that were very good at coming out and explaining to the population, making estimates on revenues, things of that nature. Because they were actually encouraging incorporation. There was no incentive for them, necessarily, to keep the area because, under the contract plan, they were getting paid for the services.

DOUGLASS: Right. They were being reimbursed for what they did.

LANCASTER: And, of course, it was so new, and these cities were so new. And the people were not that

experienced. I don't know what the first contracts did or did not do as far as the county was concerned. Nobody really knows.

DOUGLASS: Whether they saw it eventually as a negative or a positive?

LANCASTER: They didn't know either.

DOUGLASS: So it was a matter of who had the most to pull together.

LANCASTER: Let me give you an example of that. One of the things they said was they have to provide sheriff's services for just the fines and forfeitures. But that didn't work either. I mean I don't know what the average sheriff car costs now, but it has got to be a quarter of a million dollars for pretty near the whole thing.

DOUGLASS: So you did have a contract with them for sheriff services.

LANCASTER: Oh, yes.

DOUGLASS: And was it one car?

LANCASTER: Well, yes.

DOUGLASS: Did you immediately get involved in Duarte politics?

LANCASTER: I ran for the city council in '57. There were nineteen running.

DOUGLASS: Nineteen running for five seats?

LANCASTER: So I ran because I was interested. Oh, I thought it would be nice to serve. So, anyway, I lost. I think I was ninth out of nineteen. And then as new city councilmen sometimes have a tendency. . . .

You know, one of the interesting things about a new city that you don't really have--I know you were a [council] member of a developed city, it was there--but once you are involved in a new city, all of a sudden that neighbor of yours who is parking his semi at night in front of his house in a county, here comes the city saying you can't do that any more. And they don't understand. So the new council got in all kinds of trouble.

This was in August of '57, and by April of '58, which was a regular municipal election year time, I ran again. This time I was part of a group of three who thought we could do a better job than the ones that were in there. Anyway, I came in fourth. I lost again. In the meantime, we had a resignation, and then I got elected.

DOUGLASS: A special election?

LANCASTER: Yes. A special election. I was named "Special Election" Bill because I know how to win special elections. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: There has to be a group of people who handle the incorporation and a committee that signs on. Were you one of those who signed on?

LANCASTER: No, I didn't. I never did.

DOUGLASS: Were the council that got elected the first time among the group who signed?

LANCASTER: You know, I honestly don't know.

DOUGLASS: There is no necessary relationship to one's activity in the incorporation?

LANCASTER: The county records would show. I don't really know. I have never seen a copy of the actual incorporation.

DOUGLASS: It must have been interesting running a campaign in a town that has never had local campaigning.

LANCASTER: Yes. We had no history, and nobody knew exactly. I had a theory about city management, and others thought you didn't need a city manager. That kind of became the differences between candidates, plus, of course, community activity. I had been involved in youth baseball activities. Even though I lost the

election, my philosophy prevailed. They did not go the city clerk route, that type of thing. They did actually go into city management and hire a city manager.

DOUGLASS: Now when the first group was elected that was on the table. What did they decide to do? The first time you ran and didn't make it.

LANCASTER: They hired a city manager.

DOUGLASS: They did. So that idea won then.

LANCASTER: That idea won. In fact, the people who won the first time were pretty much of the same philosophy I was.

DOUGLASS: So who was that?

LANCASTER: Let's see. [Walter] Walt Hendricks was the first mayor of Duarte. Vera Hacker was elected. Jean Aboshar was elected. The music teacher from the high school.

DOUGLASS: You can fill it in. What I really wanted to know was who was the first city manager?

LANCASTER: Oh, [Robert] Bob Wilson.

DOUGLASS: Where had he been?

LANCASTER: He was an assistant. . . . Gosh, I don't remember.

DOUGLASS: He had some managerial experience?

LANCASTER: Yes. Right. He went to the University of Redlands and specialized in public administration. He did a good job, by the way.

DOUGLASS: You were happy with him.

LANCASTER: Oh, yes.

DOUGLASS: Did he stay quite a while?

LANCASTER: Yes. He stayed quite a while. He left while I was on the council. I was on the council for seven years. And he went to work for Vinall Pauley, which developed Via Verde. The person we hired to replace him was [Robert L.] Bob Poff. We hired him from Claremont.

DOUGLASS: Right.

LANCASTER: He was assistant out there. He, of course, left us and went to San Dimas. He left San Dimas. He is now in private business.

DOUGLASS: As a consultant?

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: When you ran again, I suppose the same issues were on the table. But when you finally ran in the special election, was there much opposition? Were there several people who ran?

LANCASTER: Yes. In fact, the person I ran against who essentially after that became a good friend was a fellow by the name of Allan Bostwick. He was

a doctor in town, and he was chairman of the planning commission. I guess I was the anti-incumbent. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: You could run on that. That is interesting because everything is new. The planning commission is new. Everything is new. So was this a time of a lot of turmoil but maybe enthusiasm? Getting all these commissions together. You had to have a planning commission.

LANCASTER: Yes. Well, the council could be the planning commission, but they wisely decided not to be. I thought that made sense. In fact, what we did was. You know, when you have a newly incorporated community, you have a wave of enthusiasm and everybody. . . . Well, I'll put it this way. When you have wandered around in the woods and you know where the trees are, you have bumped into a few, and so, consequently mistakes were made.

But, by and large, because we had one thing to draw on and that was the experience of the Lakewood Plan itself as it developed. And there was a lot of help from other communities. I think in that span, don't hold me to this

figure, something like twenty-six cities incorporated in that five-year period.

DOUGLASS: I didn't realize it was that brief a period.

LANCASTER: Oh, yes. Let's go through them right in the [San Gabriel] Valley. You've got Industry, Bradbury, Duarte, Irwindale, Baldwin Park, San Dimas, La Puente. Just in our area.

And there were other communities down around Lakewood. You've got Cerritos, which used to be Dairy Valley, and all that stuff.

DOUGLASS: Yes. Some of those places, I still can't figure out where they are.

LANCASTER: They were now part of a conglomerate, blocks of houses. It is not like that here. We are fortunate out here. We've got well-defined communities. And, unlike the San Fernando Valley, which grew as a part of a big community, we are fortunate, in my judgment, to have what we have done, which was to develop a lot of small communities. I think the ideal size for a town, my personal feeling, is about 50,000. With no councilmanic districts. Where you are able to still know the people involved.

DOUGLASS: When you ran in that special election, was there an issue on the table?

LANCASTER: Yes. The issue was the question of the council. . . . No, I can't really say that there was an issue.

DOUGLASS: What were you talking about when you went out? What were the questions out there?

LANCASTER: Basically, you talked about the disenchantment that people had with. . . . Which is understandable in a community with the activity that was going on. I can't say there was one particular issue. You are really selling yourself.

DOUGLASS: So was there another person who came in close to you?

LANCASTER: Oh, it was a special election, and it was basically a runoff. There were only two of us running for the seat, an unexpired term.

DOUGLASS: I understand. But you two surfaced. Only two of you surfaced.

LANCASTER: Basically, yes.

DOUGLASS: And, of course, city council seats are nonpartisan. But did that get into it?

LANCASTER: Both of us were Republicans. No, it didn't really get into it. He is a good man. I liked Allan Bostwick, I always have.

DOUGLASS: So you became friends?

LANCASTER: Yes, basically, and he stayed on the planning commission.

DOUGLASS: You were very young. You were only . . .

LANCASTER: Twenty-seven, yes.

DOUGLASS: . . . twenty-seven. That is pretty young to get your feet wet on a city council. Now were you mayor?

LANCASTER: Yes, I was elected mayor. First of all, I ran for reelection in 1960. I was elected in '58, and I ran for reelection in 1960, at the end of the unexpired term. It is interesting. You know, I went out, and I had a coffee hour. Nobody showed up. And I never had another one. And I carried every precinct in Duarte, when I was reelected. And I was elected mayor at that time.

DOUGLASS: Obviously this is a city council that elects its mayor from within the group.

LANCASTER: That's correct. And I was elected mayor three times. Everybody wanted to be mayor.

[Laughter] And we came to a decision to have mayors only for one year.

DOUGLASS: Not a two-year term, but one year.

LANCASTER: And I was elected three times. The third time I was elected. . . . And I had actually made

the statement prior to the election night for the mayor at the meeting before that I was not a candidate because I had been there two terms and everybody wanted mayor. So I just stepped aside. Anyway, we came to the meeting to elect the mayor, and they couldn't get together. They reelected me.

DOUGLASS: So was there someone else on there who had a burning ambition?

LANCASTER: Yes. Don Keeler. He was mayor before me, and I took him out.

DOUGLASS: So it wasn't a matter of somebody who hadn't been mayor.

LANCASTER: No. And, of course, the argument of rotation became an argument, as you can imagine would happen. You have been there, Enid.

DOUGLASS: Yes. It is interesting.

LANCASTER: So, anyway, I just stepped aside. Actually, I don't really believe in the rotation concept to that extent. So, anyway.

DOUGLASS: Did this take a lot of your time?

LANCASTER: Considerable.

DOUGLASS: And you had a young family.

LANCASTER: Yes. It took a lot of time, Enid, because we were still ploughing the ground constantly. We

were shifting from a total contract city to a partial. In other words, there were certain things--like take recreation--we took away the recreation department and made it a city function directly. We took over the street sweeping. We did and took over building inspection.

DOUGLASS: Oh, you did.

LANCASTER: Yes. Things like that started to move that way. And it became a matter of economics. In other words, which was cheaper and also which provided the better service. The county leaves a lot to be desired. In fact, one of the interesting things when we incorporated, the sheriff did very little traffic enforcement. In fact, they did none. They still don't. But they do it in cities.

And so we literally had to go through a process of training of sheriff's officers to do traffic. And then they came to the question of identity. Baldwin Park split off and went their own way and put together their own. Downey did the same thing. Duarte never did, and I'm glad we didn't. But then you need to identify. You needed the officer. So we got

into the whole process of not rotating officers. Have the same officers and city seals on the side of the car and all that stuff.

And then we got into a real financial bind with the sheriff. And they realized that their costs were going up considerably. They were no longer doing it for fines and forfeitures. They were charging. So we put together a geographical area for the county sheriff, which included Bradbury. It also included Duarte, and it also included a county area that was right adjacent to Duarte.

DOUGLASS: Your argument here was that this would be cost effective?

LANCASTER: Yes. Cost effective for us too.

DOUGLASS: And Bradbury also?

LANCASTER: Well, you see, they really didn't have a lot to say about it. They didn't care for the Duarte car coming into Bradbury and doing police work because there was a car rolling there that had a Duarte seal on it.

DOUGLASS: Bonelli facilitated that?

LANCASTER: Yes, well, the sheriff did. The sheriff in those days was [Pete] Pitchess.

DOUGLASS: So he was fairly cooperative about it.

LANCASTER: Yes. And at that time we were working out regional concepts for the sheriff because they realized that they were in danger of losing their force because once you reach an economic point, you will shift to your own.

DOUGLASS: So they basically want to make a deal.

LANCASTER: That's right.

DOUGLASS: What about firefighting?

LANCASTER: Firefighting is a consolidated fire service district, and we always were in there, thank heavens, as Claremont now is. That's very sensible. A regional fire is a very sensible thing. It is anywhere. When you talk about mutual aids and everything else, basically it really is practised statewide. So we never changed that.

DOUGLASS: So that wasn't a problem.

LANCASTER: No. But the fire district went into a very solid program of community identity. They, for example, built a fire station in Duarte. They do that. They go over and they locate it.

DOUGLASS: As you may know, Claremont reluctantly give up its own fire department because we had a fire station downtown. You know, the identity, the

kind of thing in a built city that you run into.

LANCASTER: Covina is going through that right now. Covina has had on the burner county fire. Glendora went.

DOUGLASS: What was the acreage per square miles of the town when you were involved in Duarte? It couldn't been very large.

LANCASTER: No it wasn't.

DOUGLASS: Seven, eight square miles.

LANCASTER: About that. It was typical north-south boulevard kind of thing, just like Claremont.

DOUGLASS: Meanwhile was it growing as you were on the council?

LANCASTER: Yes. But we had a problem. You see, in the county zoning we had enough commercial zoning on Huntington Drive to support a quarter of a million people.

DOUGLASS: So you didn't have a problem with your tax base?

LANCASTER: Well, they didn't have it, didn't have the commercial. In other words, they had vacant land. [Laughter] So we went through a whole thing. At that time, Huntington Drive had no curbs and gutters or street lights.

DOUGLASS: Huntington between? Give me a couple of streets.

LANCASTER: San Gabriel River and Mountain Avenue in Monrovia. So we went through a whole process with building the community. Establishing lighting districts. In fact, it was interesting. The county system of sanitation facilities had a real bad problem in the neighborhood. And then the people would petition the county and so the county would come in and do that neighborhood, nothing else.

DOUGLASS: Do a spot.

LANCASTER: Yes. And Duarte had no, if any, sanitation service either. It was my idea. We came up with the concept of--I don't know how I ever worked this out--putting sewers in the whole town at one time.

DOUGLASS: Oh, so you had one sewer assessment district?

LANCASTER: Well, three districts.

DOUGLASS: You had everybody face the cost at once.

LANCASTER: Once. And I sold it.

DOUGLASS: That was revolutionary.

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: You got away with that?

LANCASTER: Got away with it and got reelected. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Amazing.

LANCASTER: I voted against the individual thing. I said, "You know, if this keeps up, we are going to have one here, nothing here, one here, nothing there. And the people who have it are not going to help the [other] people to pay for it. And that's going to be more expensive for the people that don't have it."

So we floated a total community assessment district, 1911 Act, in three areas, geographical areas.

DOUGLASS: So did you also unify all that?

LANCASTER: Yes. We ended up being unified.

DOUGLASS: O.K. It is amazing. Every single city function becomes a challenge when you are brand new.

LANCASTER: Yes. We had to put in lighting and improvement district on Huntington Drive for curbs, gutters, and sidewalks. We did that too.

DOUGLASS: How about the residential areas? Did you have a problem? Where there are a lot of places developed in the county, often there are no sidewalks.

LANCASTER: Yes, that's right. In the residential sections we didn't go into an older section and put in sidewalks. Of course, on a new development they required it. And we got involved in lots of interesting programs because we were in the Angeles National Forest. Therefore, we had to put in electrical pumps and things of this nature to maintain the water pressure because Duarte went around Bradbury, and Duarte is developed in lots of places in the hills. So, therefore, to be involved--and I guess Claremont has that--to get involved in maintaining the pressure, which means you are involved in a lot of electrical pump systems in all the streets. Of course, we had one road up there that had a 20 percent grade.

DOUGLASS: That was the Angeles Forest area?

LANCASTER: Well, you go toward it.

DOUGLASS: Oh, so you had some development in the foothills?

LANCASTER: Oh, yes, lots of it. We developed the foothills, actually.

DOUGLASS: You had all kinds of problems with that, the hillsides.

LANCASTER: Well, they were challenges. We worked them out. And developers, as you know, they have a tendency to. . . . But that was the golden era, see, they were selling everything they built. Developers, as I say, they try to hold their costs down. So when you come in with this idea of putting in a pump, for example, to maintain the water flow, they. . . .

[Laughter]

[End Tape 1, Side A]

[Begin Tape 1, Side B]

LANCASTER: Prior to my election to the city council I was involved with the school district in helping them unify. At that time I moved to Duarte it was Monrovia-Duarte High School [District] and Duarte Elementary [District] and Monrovia Elementary [District]. Arcadia has spun off. It used to be called MAD [Monrovia, Arcadia, and Duarte].

DOUGLASS: Arcadia had become a unified school district?

LANCASTER: Yes. And that was the era when the state was pushing unification. So I was helpful in the process of development of the unification of the Duarte School District. Then we had the high school.

DOUGLASS: You had one elementary district, or several elementary districts?

LANCASTER: We had one elementary district in Duarte, but the high school was part of Monrovia.

DOUGLASS: Yes.

LANCASTER: So we unified and that went over. Then we began the process of building a high school, a four-year high school, to be there.

DOUGLASS: So when was that? Was that just before you incorporated, around that time?

LANCASTER: It was in that process. I think the high school was after the incorporation. I am trying to remember here. It was back in the fifties. What I am really trying to point out is that there was dramatic change in the whole concept of home rule at that point. We started the unification of school districts. We were involved in incorporation. It was kind of an exciting time, when you think back about it. And we were involved in community development.
[Interruption]

DOUGLASS: It was a very exciting time, and anything you can think about it that's pertinent is important. Because people don't realize what change was going on, and how rapidly, in the nature of the area.

LANCASTER: One of the most exciting things that happened in those days was the development of a master plan, from scratch.

DOUGLASS: Yes. You didn't have any ordinances.

LANCASTER: County agricultural zoning. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: What was the zoning there?

LANCASTER: Agricultural.

DOUGLASS: Yes, but what was the density?

LANCASTER: Oh, about 7,500 [square feet].

DOUGLASS: So any homes that were built they had come into the county and gotten permission to put in that particular plan.

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: So you kept the planning commission busy then, working on that.

LANCASTER: Oh, did we. And we developed a master plan. That took quite a few years. And, as you know, master plans require updating all the time. It was interesting.

DOUGLASS: Did you find that these experiences of founding a city--you went through almost every kind of exercise--plus the campaign experience was helpful to you?

LANCASTER: Oh, yes. Absolutely. I know you can't do it constitutionally, but I have sometimes said before that I would like to see anybody at the state level to serve at least a term on a city council or school board before they go up there. Because it's part of the fabric of the state. Too often many people in Sacramento don't realize how deep our fabric is as far as local, as far as home rule is concerned.

DOUGLASS: Well, there is a well-known bit of wisdom that if our cities fail, the country fails.

LANCASTER: Yes, you know this argument has been going on ever since we became a country. It is the question of the centralization of authority. I think it is one of the basic differences between the two parties. My personal background and my personal belief is that we should decentralize our central system into something else. And I think you see it tend now that way. But this goes back and forth. The pendulum swings, as you know. Anyway, Sacramento has become the dominant financial resource, unfortunately, for local government. Prior to 1978 it wasn't that way.

DOUGLASS: We'll get well into that later. I want to jump back now. You took the job as field representative for the California Taxpayers Association at the time you went off the city council.

LANCASTER: I resigned to do that.

DOUGLASS: How did that opportunity come along for you?

LANCASTER: Well, there was a gentleman in Duarte named [William] Bill Powers, who worked for the California Contract Cities. Excuse me the California Taxpayers Association. [Laughter] I

was involved in the contract cities, too. I was the vice president.

DOUGLASS: As an elected official?

LANCASTER: Yes. In fact, I was in the formation stages of that organization.

DOUGLASS: Were there enough of those cities around that they decided they needed to organize?

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: As contrasted to the League of California Cities, which tended to be more independently-chartered, self-sufficient cities?

LANCASTER: It was that belief. In other word, the League of Cities had, at that time, a point of view that a contract city wasn't a full-service city. And they did not have anybody who would help us. I am talking about contract cities. Our lobbying efforts had to be with the board of supervisors.

DOUGLASS: Right. I can see that.

LANCASTER: And you go to cities like Pasadena, who say we are not, we don't contract with the county, so who cares, but they did. Every city contracts for something with the county. Anyway. So our desire was to get representation before the board of supervisors. So I was involved in the

initial meeting, but Duarte and various other cities did join together and put together the contract cities.

DOUGLASS: Was that for Los Angeles County?

LANCASTER: Yes, basically at that time. Now it's statewide.

DOUGLASS: I was going to say, because you were where the contract cities were. When did that spread? I remember it expanding. In the seventies?

LANCASTER: It expanded right along The incorporation rash, if you want to call it that, started beginning about '55 to '65.

DOUGLASS: Yes. I was thinking, though, out of Los Angeles County.

LANCASTER: When it moved out of L. A. [Los Angeles] County? That was closer to the seventies. You now have contract cities--they call it contract cities--in San Diego County and in Orange County.

DOUGLASS: But for a decade it was pretty much in L. A. County. Was there a meeting held?

LANCASTER: Yes. There were a lot of meetings held, and it was put together, actually it was spearheaded by [City of] Lakewood. The purpose was, first of all, to have somebody to try to do a better

job with the board, who became our legislative body, in sense. And also to understand the contracts.

DOUGLASS: Geographically that pretty much meant cities that were east of Pasadena. . . . Weren't all of you fairly contiguous?

LANCASTER: No. Lakewood, and then you go down to Bell Gardens, they were part of the southeastern part of the county. Mainly, the contract city concept--and now it's changed--was east of Los Angeles. Southeast, in that part of the county.

DOUGLASS: Even though it goes clear down there, there is a gap there between you and the southern cities.

LANCASTER: You ran into old-line cities like Whittier. Now, see, Pico Rivera is a contract city.

DOUGLASS: So you went to this meeting

LANCASTER: Yes. And was an officer. I was a vice president. Would have been president, except I didn't take the presidency--it was a chair thing--because I ran for the state legislature in 1964. I was the chairman of the annual convention.

DOUGLASS: When you went off the city council you went off of that?

LANCASTER: No, no.

DOUGLASS: Well, that's a whole story unto itself.

LANCASTER: It is. It is exciting, what happened. We had to do it. It's interesting. Since then the other cities have formed what they call the Independent Cities Association. [Laughter] Whatever that means.

DOUGLASS: They all exist within the overall context of the League of California Cities.

LANCASTER: Yes. And, by the way, I am very proud of that plaque on the wall, which is "Legislator of the Year," League of Cities. The big one. I was "Legislator of the Year" one year.

DOUGLASS: What year was that?

LANCASTER: 1991.

DOUGLASS: Oh, look at that. It's a gorgeous thing. Let's go back to the job with the California Taxpayers Association. How did you happen to be offered the job?

LANCASTER: Well, Bill Powers, who was a friend of mine and lived in Duarte, worked for the California Taxpayers Association in Los Angeles. And they were looking for a person to work out of their

Sacramento office to primarily work with local governments. And because I had this vast experience of local government development, if you want to call it that, they offered me a position. I took it because I thought I would enjoy it, and I did.

Though I did some work with the state, I wasn't involved as a state lobbyist type of thing. I basically worked with county government in northern California.

DOUGLASS: So you were based out of Sacramento and you were traveling.

LANCASTER: Quite a bit.

DOUGLASS: Some of those distances are great.

LANCASTER: Yes. See, those are small counties. I recognized immediately--of course, this was '65 --the problems they were having. I mean the counties had been around a long time. Of course, they all have. They were having all kinds of development problems. California was in the growth period. And northern California was kind of behind us, in a sense, because they hadn't hit that peak yet which had overtaken us. What I would do I would analyze their budget and make suggestions as far as type of

activities that would be beneficial financially.

DOUGLASS: That's interesting. The California Taxpayers Association then must have quite a wide menu of operations.

LANCASTER: They operate with state government. They operate with county, city, and with schools. I think that primarily now they are state and county. I am not too sure they are heavily involved. We used to do publications of comparison of budgets and things of that nature, and they were well read. Because how, in those days, would you know if you were from Kern County what's going on in Mariposa County or wherever you happened to be, Trinity County. So we used to put all these figures together in booklet form so they could go down in various fields and take a look at it.

DOUGLASS: So you were particularly dealing with counties in terms of the development going on?

LANCASTER: Their budget.

DOUGLASS: Their budget. As it related to contract services maybe?

LANCASTER: Oh, whatever. And we'd make recommendations, you know. The politics in some of these

counties are fierce, particularly between the sheriff and the board. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Some of them are not densely populated.

LANCASTER: In those days, they weren't at all. I enjoyed doing it very much. It was not only interesting, but it was also beautiful scenery. Because I drove all throughout the Trinity National Forest and the area. Eureka and through Weaverville and Redding and all that [country].

DOUGLASS: One keeps forgetting another third of California is from the bay area up.

LANCASTER: Yes, that's right.

DOUGLASS: How did your family like moving to Sacramento?

LANCASTER: They enjoyed it. You see, I was only up there a year.

DOUGLASS: I have 1965 to '67. Was that stretching it a little?

LANCASTER: Yes, it is basically because here's what happened. I went up there after I resigned from the council--I believe it was April of '65, thereabouts and I had run the year before for the state assembly--I moved to Sacramento for this job. I enjoyed it very much, and I moved back here in April of '66, actually.

DOUGLASS: To Duarte?

LANCASTER: No. I moved back because [Charles] Wiggins, who was the mayor of El Monte and who was also my treasurer for my campaign for the assembly in '64, wanted me to come back and run his campaign for congress. So he hired me.

DOUGLASS: That's why you came back here so early.

LANCASTER: Yes. Basically. So I didn't start as the representative for Wiggins until '67. That's the gap in there. That year, '66, I was the campaign manager for Charles Wiggins, and he paid me personally.

DOUGLASS: I see. That's the gap, with the campaign.

LANCASTER: That's the gap. Yes.

DOUGLASS: So where did you move to? What town?

LANCASTER: I moved to Covina. We went to Duarte to try to find a place to live. Couldn't find anything. And it was one of those deals where you had to make a judgment decision within a matter of a day or two. And so we moved to Covina, been here ever since.

DOUGLASS: To this house?

LANCASTER: No, no. I rented an apartment first and bought this house later.

DOUGLASS: Did you have three children then?

LANCASTER: Yes. It takes an understanding wife, really.
[Laughter]

DOUGLASS: I know you probably had known Wiggins as mayor of El Monte, but tell me about the campaign. Who was the chief contender against him?

LANCASTER: That was an incumbent congressman by the name of Ronald Brooks Cameron. He had been in office. He was a former state assemblyman from the area. He had been in office--I guess he was in his third term--and he was running for his fourth term. This was 1966, the [Ronald W.] Reagan year for the governorship. The district was better than 60 percent Democrat, and Wiggins won. Knocked out a Democratic incumbent.

DOUGLASS: How did you account for that?

LANCASTER: Well, first of all, El Monte was the biggest bastion of Democrat strength, registration-wise in the district. He was the mayor. He came from a pioneer family in El Monte. Wiggins' family came with the [] Monte boys, you know. Anyway, so he was a very excellent--in my judgment he was a good congressman--an excellent public official in El Monte, an attorney. And he worked very hard.

DOUGLASS: So he had the chance to carry El Monte.

LANCASTER: He carried it like four to one.

DOUGLASS: That would have made the difference?

LANCASTER: That did make the difference. He was a very popular local person, and very good and articulate. He is now a federal judge, by the way, on the ninth court.

DOUGLASS: I saw that. So he had a law practice, probably, in El Monte.

LANCASTER: Yes, he did. Wiggins and Wood.

DOUGLASS: He had the advantage of being an elected local official, probably.

LANCASTER: Plus another factor is involved. I think Ron just didn't think he would lose. That always a tragic error for an incumbent politician to make.

DOUGLASS: How was it to be running a congressional campaign?

LANCASTER: It was interesting, very interesting.

DOUGLASS: Did you apply some of the methodologies you had use in running in Duarte?

LANCASTER: Nothing changed. The one overriding philosophical concept was remember you are a local. I have never forgotten that, Enid. And always you are from El Monte. I remember when

a Republican strategist came in and said, "Bill. You're four deep in El Monte. When are you going to get out of there. You've got enough local." In this valley it is important. I think it is the right thing to do is to pay attention to the local situation. Not to get involved in it because it is basically. . . . I believe in that separation between governmental entities but understand them because they have mutual interests.

And he did a good job. Of course, he did something else, too. He spent a lot of time in supermarkets, businesses, and he was a good-looking man.

DOUGLASS: Did he walk house to house then?

LANCASTER: He walked businesses and grocery stores. It's impossible in those kinds of races to do that.

DOUGLASS: It was an area that big.

LANCASTER: So he was out where the people were.

DOUGLASS: Was it an exciting campaign in that you weren't sure, it was very much up for grabs? Or did you have the feeling that things were going his way as election time neared?

LANCASTER: It kept growing. It kept growing. More and more people were involved. I was literally

sitting there on top of my hat with no idea how many people were involved in that campaign.

What was the tip-off? CBS [Columbia Broadcasting System] called me the day before the election. They had been out here polling.

DOUGLASS: That was good news.

LANCASTER: Yes. "Where are you going to be? Where are you going to be?"

DOUGLASS: Where were you headquarters?

LANCASTER: El Monte, where else? Actually, you know, it is interesting. There was a guy who owned the Santa Fe Inn--which is not there any more, it is something else now--had right on the property to the west of him they had a medical center building with a doctor who, I don't know he did something wrong, was gone. So it was empty, a vacancy donated to the campaign. I had a plush office you wouldn't believe and room galore. I had them all, people working in there all the time, volunteers. It was a magnificent deal. In those days, you know, this was '66, you didn't have the professional you've got working today. You're still licking stamps and that kind of stuff.

DOUGLASS: How did you and he work together on this? Did he give you quite a bit of latitude?

LANCASTER: Basically. We had our weekly meeting on strategy. He was good at that too. And we would map out the week.

DOUGLASS: Was he a person who delegated to you?

LANCASTER: Oh, yes, absolutely.

DOUGLASS: And you didn't have to worry about having him come around again.

LANCASTER: No, he didn't do that.

DOUGLASS: Then you became his district representative, which was a natural follow-through. Where were your offices then?

LANCASTER: El Monte. We set up in El Monte, and then eventually we ended up with two offices, one in Orange County and one in West Covina.

DOUGLASS: The district went to that area?

LANCASTER: Reapportioned into northern Orange County and also he lost El Monte.

DOUGLASS: That is quite a big distance.

LANCASTER: Yes. And, of course, the district turned from Democrat to Republican. That was another new experience, too. I had never done that. But I put together a district-office operation, which helped me, by the way, down the road.

DOUGLASS: I would think so. How big was the staff?

LANCASTER: Just myself and one secretary and a part-time secretary.

DOUGLASS: Did you go to [Washington] D.C. some, too?

LANCASTER: Yes. I went about once a year, twice a year.

DOUGLASS: But, basically, your duties were in the district.

LANCASTER: My job was here.

DOUGLASS: As you were pointing out, you believe that is the important place.

LANCASTER: Exactly right.

DOUGLASS: I picked up that you had some experience in resolving problems between your constituents and federal agencies.

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: Which is a natural part of life.

LANCASTER: Yes. People do have problems with the government, and one of the things we learned very fast is that there is a real need to help people. Primarily, you know, the biggest problem people have is communication. Just to help them understand the circumstances around their whatever-it-is. So we did a lot of case work. And, eventually, that part-time person that we had did nothing but case work. Which,

by the way, was the way it was in my office here, too. People have problems, and one can develop the reputation that they can call and get information.

DOUGLASS: That you are helpful.

LANCASTER: That you are helpful. And the office personnel makes sure they understand what's Claremont's concerns and what's the state's concern and what's the federal concern. In other words, not getting embroiled in areas that are not their responsibility. And that's the hardest thing in the world. And too many elected officials today don't seem to get that message.

DOUGLASS: Who was the assistant? Was it one person during the time you were there?

LANCASTER: Yes. Jane Dresham. She was the campaign secretary, too. An El Monte girl.

DOUGLASS: So she was local.

LANCASTER: Yes. And, in effect, she became the office manager.

DOUGLASS: Was it a challenge for you to understand federal problems after you had been dealing so much with state?

LANCASTER: Not really. You have to understand the federal government wasn't as big in those days. And

this was just, well, it wasn't, actually, the [President Lyndon B.] Johnson administration was there and that big expansion of federal bureaucracy had not really happened. It was on its road because he started that with his "War on Poverty" and whatever he did. He started that expansion.

DOUGLASS: You had that position until the point at which you went to the assembly. But I would like to backtrack, if I might, and talk about your first try for the assembly.

LANCASTER: O.K., 1964.

DOUGLASS: When did you decide that you wanted to run?

LANCASTER: It was a natural progression, I guess. I had had the interest. When you are on a city council, as you are well aware, you have to deal with the government for the city. You have to deal with the state legislative bodies. And I frankly thought that I could do a better job than, though he was a friend of mine (he has passed away), Harvey Johnson I picked the wrong year. 1964 was not a great Republican year, that was [Barry] Goldwater I did pretty good. I got about 46 percent of the vote in a Democrat district.

DOUGLASS: Yes. I've got the figures here. You did very well in the final, actually. David George and you and Harvey Johnson were in the primary. He got the most votes, and you picked up 9,578. But in the final election in November, Johnson had 39,954 and you had 31,971.

LANCASTER: You know, what is interesting about this primary election. This is where I learned a lot. First of all, I considered myself not to be a liberal. They tried to paint me as a liberal--remember this was Goldwater--and they [the Republicans] tried to paint me over in that liberal corner. I frankly don't consider myself a liberal necessarily, though I tend, I think, to be somewhat conservative, I really don't wear it on my sleeve, so to speak. Of course, in those days, you had to wear it on your sleeve. I didn't. My message was different than the message at that time, which was "through the rascals out."

DOUGLASS: I take it George was the chief contender.

LANCASTER: He was the so-called conservative. We haven't seen hide nor hair of him since then.

DOUGLASS: How much state party involvement was there in the primary situation?

LANCASTER: None.

DOUGLASS: So it would be his people who were trying to paint you as a liberal.

LANCASTER: Yes. And Frank Walton was the candidate for congress, who ran against Ronald Brooks Cameron.

DOUGLASS: That year.

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: So Wiggins was only in for . . .

LANCASTER: Twelve years. I don't know why he did not run again. I think what happened was he wanted to become a part of the chair system in the Republican caucus, and he didn't make it. And the guy that beat him for the Republican caucus chairman, I guess it was, was a fellow by the name of [John] Anderson. Remember him. He ran for president.

DOUGLASS: Yes, as an independent.

LANCASTER: So, anyway, Wiggins, he went back to practicing law.

DOUGLASS: Tell me about Harvey Johnson.

LANCASTER: Harvey was a nice guy, a good friend. In fact, he and I ended up as seat mates. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Oh, you did. The first year you were in?

- LANCASTER: Yes. And he was very helpful to me. Like I say, he has passed away now. Our campaign was not a bitter campaign at all. But, anyway, he was a nice guy. He had his problems.
- DOUGLASS: I just checked the Statement of Elections, and he carried the district in 1966, '68, and '70. He was reelected. Did you decide you wouldn't try again?
- LANCASTER: In '66, I didn't run because I was working for Wiggins. Frankly, in '66, I probably would have beat Harvey because that was a Reagan year and the Republicans were on a sweep.
- DOUGLASS: You weren't out there.
- LANCASTER: No. When he won, he only won by 1,500 votes, in '66, and against a total unknown by the name of Dean [J.] Whipple "This is Whipple country." That was his billboard. And I was running Wiggins' campaign, so I didn't run. Then, by that time, I decided, "Well, it's silly for me run in a Democrat district." So I stayed with Wiggins for six years.
- DOUGLASS: After '66 Johnson still had it. Then let's talk about what happened in '72. Did you know Pete [Peter F.] Schabarum particularly at that time?

LANCASTER: Oh, yes. I knew him before he was a supervisor. Before he was an assemblyman. I knew him when he was the chairman of the county grand jury.

DOUGLASS: How did you happen to get to know him?

LANCASTER: Activities together. Republican activities. Activities in the community. Pete was very active in the Republican party, and he took [Assemblyman Houston I.] Hugh Flournoy's place over there in the old 49th [assembly district]. Who I had helped by the way earlier.

DOUGLASS: Oh, had you?

LANCASTER: Oh, yes. When he ran the first time--he took [Assemblyman Ernest R.] Geddes' place--I was involved in his campaign in Duarte.

DOUGLASS: You were.

LANCASTER: That's right.

DOUGLASS: He was a fresh, young college professor then.

LANCASTER: That's right. Nice guy.

DOUGLASS: Yes. Very intelligent.

LANCASTER: Very nice personality. He lives in Sacramento now.

DOUGLASS: I happened to interview him some time ago, and his story of his amazement at being elected controller on the Reagan coattails . . .

LANCASTER: Yes, '66.

DOUGLASS: Yes. He had no plans to move from Claremont. He was practically stunned the next morning, I think.

LANCASTER: Yes, you know he quit the legislature because of the economics of the circumstances at that time.

DOUGLASS: Yes. He planned to return to the college.

LANCASTER: Well, he had to. I mean I am sure his family was saying, "That's enough of this \$6,000 a year."

DOUGLASS: Then he turned around and won this election.

LANCASTER: Yes, that's right, and should have been elected governor, in my opinion.

DOUGLASS: I would like to get into that a little later. So let's describe the situation. There was an opening on the [Los Angeles] county board of supervisors.

LANCASTER: Yes. Frank Bonelli had passed away, and the competition for that board of supervisors' seat was between [Assemblymen William] Bill Campbell and [Assemblyman] Pete Schabarum. The appointment was made by Governor Reagan. Reagan appointed Pete, and that created this

vacancy circumstance here. Pete was not going to run again.

DOUGLASS: He was not going to run again for the assembly?

LANCASTER: No, he was not. In fact, he had declared himself out of the race before this whole question of the supervisors' seat came up. When he declared himself out of the race--by that time I had lived and I was in that district, the 49th--I said, "Well, I'm going to gear myself to run in the next general election."

DOUGLASS: You already had this on your mind.

LANCASTER: Oh, yes. And, of course, when he got appointed to the board that opened it immediately.

DOUGLASS: Then [Bill] Campbell resigned, didn't he, in order to compete with Pete Schabarum for the board of supervisors?

LANCASTER: Yes. The regular board election.

DOUGLASS: All right. Then you were mentally prepared to get into this.

LANCASTER: That was pretty well set up.

DOUGLASS: Did Schabarum encourage you at that point?

LANCASTER: No. Pete never. . . . I didn't want him involved. It was an interesting race. I ran against. . . . In that special election there

were some people in your area. [Richard C.]
Dick Brownell, the mayor of Pomona.

DOUGLASS: [Gene] Axelrod was the Democrat.

LANCASTER: He was the La Verne city attorney. And there
was a gal in that race, too, I am trying to
remember the Democrats. It was a special
election, so it could have been a winner-take-
all. It wasn't.

DOUGLASS: So that was consolidated with the regular
primary, wasn't it?

LANCASTER: Well, it started out. Another person who ran
against me was Frank Haven, the mayor of
Covina.

DOUGLASS: In that first special election?

LANCASTER: Yes. And Jim Head, a Monrovia city councilman.
I mean it was up for grabs. Anyway it was
interesting. I carried Covina. I carried my
basic area where I lived. I came in second to
Brownell in Pomona, and I came in second to
Head in Monrovia. So my strategy was to come
in second, a strong second every place and
carry my own area, and I did. I won it myself.
[Laughter]

DOUGLASS: You only had a month or so, a couple of months,
before the special election?

LANCASTER: Yes. The special election was held thirty days before the primary election date. It was held in May.

DOUGLASS: Oh, it was held in May. It was not consolidated with the primary.

LANCASTER: No. It was later. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Tell me because I found this confusing.

LANCASTER: All right. It was confusing to the voter, too. It was kind of similar to what happened to [Assemblyman Richard] Mountjoy. Anyway, the special election was in May, and it was designed for the runoff to be held concurrently with the primary election. And so I ran in May and won that primary. I didn't get more than half the votes. So that meant I had to run against the leading Democrat, which happened to Gene Axelrod.

DOUGLASS: Right.

LANCASTER: Then we ran off against each other in June. And also at that time had filed for the regular primary. [Laughter] And all the people that ran--the Republicans that ran in May--against me were also on the ballot in June because they had the same problem.

DOUGLASS: You mean they had filed for the regular election.

LANCASTER: They had to because, you see, if they had won the special, if they hadn't filed for the primary in June, they'd only have been in office until November.

DOUGLASS: I see. To cover your tracks you had file for both. The special election and the regular primary and yet be, like you and Axelrod, in a final election.

LANCASTER: And he, by the way, had filed also the same way, and he won the primary.

DOUGLASS: The Democrat primary.

LANCASTER: And lost to me. I won the Republican primary, and I had to beat Axelrod again in November.

DOUGLASS: That's amazing. What a story.

LANCASTER: It is, isn't it.

DOUGLASS: So you became a member of the assembly on June 21st

LANCASTER: Yes. In other words, I won the [special] election.

DOUGLASS: You were allowed to sit as an assemblyman as of June 21 until the November final [election] of the regular primary.

LANCASTER: Right. And then I was sworn in. In those days, we went into session in January, and I was sworn in to the full term in January.

DOUGLASS: I have that in November you beat Axelrod very plentifully.

LANCASTER: Oh, yes.

DOUGLASS: It was 74,776 to 42,292.

LANCASTER: Oh, yes. See, by that time all my competition was gone. He and I were by ourselves finally on the ballot.

DOUGLASS: Let's take that first May primary, was that pretty dicey?

LANCASTER: Yes. It was very highly contested. Very highly contested.

DOUGLASS: A lot of strong local people, like Brownell certainly.

LANCASTER: Yes. I forget the total amount. I got more votes than the other guy, but I wasn't overwhelming.

DOUGLASS: Could you describe the 49th district?

LANCASTER: Yes. O.K. In those days, it was Monrovia, north Duarte, north Azusa, Glendora, San Dimas, La Verne, Claremont, and north of Holt [Avenue] in Pomona. Covina, West Covina, and Walnut. And a little bit of Temple City.

DOUGLASS: That would have been a Republican district.

LANCASTER: It was.

[Interruption]

DOUGLASS: Do you know the percentages? I can look that up. I usually have it. But it was a district that a Republican should take.

LANCASTER: Oh, yes.

DOUGLASS: Who was your strongest contender, do you think, in the May election?

LANCASTER: Jim Head from Monrovia. Jim was a barber. He was the city councilman from Monrovia. The complete cities at that time in the district were Monrovia, Covina, Glendora, San Dimas, La Verne, and Claremont.

DOUGLASS: That would be important to take those.

LANCASTER: Yes. And, of course, Jim Head won Monrovia, it was his home town. I came in a strong second, beat out Brownell and Haven. And, of course, I had to beat Haven here [Covina], which I did and he came in second. He was on this council. Then when I started moving east towards where you live, I think I carried San Dimas and La Verne. I don't remember what I did in Claremont, but I did very well out there. And Brownell carried Pomona, but I came in a strong

second to him. And West Covina went for me,
and Walnut

DOUGLASS: So Head was more of a challenge than Brownell.

LANCASTER: He did better overall, I believe, than Brownell
did. Dick Brownell was an interesting man.
You know, he was kind of a wild card kind of
guy. I don't know whether you know him.

DOUGLASS: No. I really don't. I just know his name
constantly was appearing in connection with
Pomona. I don't know much about him. Would
you define these people as more or less liberal
than you? For instance, where did Brownell
fall on a scale?

LANCASTER: I was tagged by some Republican in my area as
"Brand X." [Laughter] Well, like I said, I
never necessarily wear my philosophy on my
sleeve. Though I consider myself to be more
conservative? I don't think so, and I may have
appeared to be.

DOUGLASS: Were there any big distinctions amongst you in
terms of philosophical viewpoint?

LANCASTER: I think there was one basic difference. Even
though they were all local government people, I
was stronger for the home situation. I am more
of a community-oriented person, I think.

DOUGLASS: Local.

LANCASTER: Yes. Always have been.

DOUGLASS: They would be more statewide?

LANCASTER: Yes. It got to the point where they were talking issues. I pretty much stayed with the basic thing.

DOUGLASS: Did that help get you elected?

LANCASTER: It didn't hurt. I won.

DOUGLASS: Who ran your campaign?

LANCASTER: Basically, nobody.

DOUGLASS: You ran it?

LANCASTER: Well, I had very competent people working with me. Marguerite Johnson from your community was there. Genny Mann was there. They ran the campaign. [William] Bill Odom was my chairman. [Clem] Neibold from Pomona was my co-chairman. I had a very active, active volunteer group. I had a lot of people involved.

DOUGLASS: What was your approach? Did you try to walk precincts at all?

LANCASTER: Very difficult. I tried and I did a lot of ballooning.

DOUGLASS: What is ballooning?

LANCASTER: Bill Odom and I would get in his motor home on weekends and go out to all the shopping

centers. And I would go out and I'd walk into every business I could walk into. Then we had a crew of volunteers who put balloons on all the cars in the shopping center.

DOUGLASS: Did you have a volunteer organization in each of these towns?

LANCASTER: Yes, very much. You see, I have never believed it's necessary to go in and say. . . . A lot of people say to me you're my town chairman. I kind of put together a group, and we didn't give them a lot of direction. They knew what to do.

DOUGLASS: So it wasn't necessary to say I've got to have two people for El Monte.

LANCASTER: No, no.

DOUGLASS: You put together generally a group that would cover the area.

LANCASTER: Yes, basically. And a lot of them from Claremont. I had a lot of support out of Claremont, a lot of support.

DOUGLASS: Well, that must have been pretty exciting and frenetic.

LANCASTER: It was good. I think some of them enjoyed it.

DOUGLASS: Did you think you had a pretty good chance?

LANCASTER: Yes. I thought I had an excellent chance. But, you see, the issues in 1966 were kind of interesting. The Republican party was going through a stage of growth, I guess. It was in the Goldwater years, which was a dramatic change. Because what happened to Goldwater, who had lost the election, developed a huge cadre of volunteers. And those people were around in '66. A lot of them were with me.

DOUGLASS: In '72?

LANCASTER: Yes, in '72. In '66, I ran Wiggins [campaign]. They were around then too. I know it gets confusing with all these dates.

DOUGLASS: I was forgetting you were involved with his campaign on the federal level.

LANCASTER: Yes. But it didn't make any difference. Republicans worked in both campaigns.

DOUGLASS: Oh, sure.

LANCASTER: One of the things I did, you know, after I got elected, I immediately got together with a group of good solid Republican Central Committee members and put together a permanent headquarters in this district. It is still there.

DOUGLASS: Oh, is it.

LANCASTER: Oh, absolutely. It's in Covina, right down here on Rowland Avenue.

DOUGLASS: Who did you get to head it?

LANCASTER: It started with [] Rusty Pedersen from West Covina. Oh, golly, a lot of local Republican folks, mainly through the Federated Republican Women, and I agreed to donate a certain amount of money each month, which I did all the time I was in, to the maintenance and the rent of the headquarters itself. I think that's important. Volunteers have a place to go in this district, always.

DOUGLASS: Did you have to rent the facility? Or do somebody donate it?

LANCASTER: We paid low rent.

DOUGLASS: Where did you say it was?

LANCASTER: It's on Rowland, right down here, in Covina. I think Mountjoy has maintained it.

DOUGLASS: At that time you needed. . . . How many salaried people worked for you? You just name your district office people.

LANCASTER: No, no. I named the people working in the volunteer headquarters. That had nothing to do. . . . The only thing that is interesting in what I did--and I consider it to be the

right thing to do--I totally separated my district office from my political office. So I had a district office staff. I didn't let them get involved in politics. I mean on my time. Although they did it on their own time.

DOUGLASS: When you said there is an office still down on Rowland now, were talking about a campaign office?

LANCASTER: I am talking about a Republican party office. That's the first thing I started, and that's still there for the Republicans. Volunteers in this district needed a place to go. And the central committee met there.

DOUGLASS: So the party just continues to rent the space.

LANCASTER: Yes. I was blessed with a very strong central committee of activists. Politicians have tendency to downgrade central committees. They shouldn't do that. They discourage them, and they shouldn't. They should encourage them.

DOUGLASS: So you have quite a volunteer organization that stands in place. As you say, they had a physical place to be.

LANCASTER: It's still here, too. You see it in every election. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: I know some of the faces.

LANCASTER: I'm sure you do.

[End Tape 1, Side B]

[Begin Tape 2, Side A]

DOUGLASS: Were there any particular issues by the time you were running against Axelrod for the final election in November?

LANCASTER: My basic theme has never really changed that much. I always was talking about home rule and that type of thing. And, frankly, every person who has ever run against me from the other party has always had to defend their Sacramento concept of the Democrat party, which, frankly, is not pro-local government, in my opinion. So that's been a continuing situation. It's always been an issue. I mean you've got the economics, too. The biggest primary role that government plays in our lives and the distinction between the levels.

DOUGLASS: And that was being discussed then?

LANCASTER: Oh, yes.

DOUGLASS: In your mind that was what was on the table?

LANCASTER: Oh, yes. Same thing.

DOUGLASS: What was the Axelrod's political background?

LANCASTER: I don't know.

DOUGLASS: Where did he live? What town?

LANCASTER: He lived in La Verne. But after he lost to me he just kind of disappeared from the scene. I don't know where he went.

DOUGLASS: Was he on the city council in La Verne?

LANCASTER: He was city attorney.

DOUGLASS: That was it.

LANCASTER: I never saw him again. Most of my opponents I have never seen again. There are only one or two around left. Sandy Baldonado is one.

DOUGLASS: What I was also interested in. Did you feel that ballot propositions had an effect on the turnout?

LANCASTER: Oh, yes. You can never discount ballot propositions. In fact, I just recently--just the last couple of weeks ago--I spent Sunday morning with the church over here talking about the ballot propositions. I still do that.

DOUGLASS: Oh, good.

LANCASTER: I'll got out and talk about them.

DOUGLASS: Great. Volunteer service.

LANCASTER: Basically. They asked me do it at the Assembly of God Church over here, which is a big church. It is a regional church. They enjoyed it--talking about the ballot propositions--and then they asked me my point of view. Yes! Yes!

The ballot propositions. There was quite a difference of opinion between myself and my opponents on the ballot propositions.

DOUGLASS: Well, the death penalty, Proposition 17, was on that one.

LANCASTER: That's right. There was a difference.

DOUGLASS: That would have helped a turnout of Republican vote.

LANCASTER: Yes. And I was in favor of it. In fact, later on when the death penalty was reenacted in California I was the fifty-fourth vote that put it across. I was in the hospital in '77 with heart surgery. And they had to wait for me to come back to the legislature in order to pass it.

DOUGLASS: Let me just ask about that strange period you had between the 21st of June and November. You are in the legislature. You are in the assembly. I have the committee assignments you were given, which were Employment and Public Employees, Labor Relations, Local Government, and Welfare.

LANCASTER: What happened was when I was elected, I came in at the tail end of a twenty-month continuous session. The legislature, in those days, was

part time constitutionally. But it wasn't.

[Laughter] It would go on and on and on. And so I walked in the door, and everybody was trying to get out of there, frankly. They wanted out of the place.

DOUGLASS: Here you were, a brand new member.

LANCASTER: Brand new and what do you do with the guy.

[Assemblyman Robert] Bob Moretti was speaker at the time. I said, "Look, I'm partial to local government, and I want to be on the Local Government Committee. He said, "Well, I'll talk to Jack Knox." [Assemblyman John] Jack Knox was the chair of the Local Government [Committee], who I knew, by the way. He said, "I'll talk to him." And I said, "I don't want to take anybody off." He said, "If he'll let you go on as an addition, I have no problems with that." And I said, "Well, rather than mess up the whole apple cart here." At that time [Assemblyman] Craig Biddle had run for the senate in the same special election over there and his assignments were vacant. I said, "Just stick me on those. We're here for a month." I got off all of those right away. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: I was going to say that these aren't Schabarum's appointments.

LANCASTER: I'm not sure that Schabarum. . . . I heard that one of the reasons Schabarum decided not to run was because he was knocked off of good committee assignments. I don't really know.

DOUGLASS: So you picked up Craig Biddle's [appointments].

LANCASTER: Basically. Those were terrible appointments from my point of view. I was having a terrible time.

DOUGLASS: So Local Government would have been the only one here that . . .

LANCASTER: That's the one I requested.

DOUGLASS: How was Moretti towards you?

LANCASTER: Just fine. No problem. Bob Moretti was a very nice guy. He passed away. He died on the tennis courts. He evidently had a heart attack. He was a tennis buff, and he got out there in the Sacramento heat.

DOUGLASS: What kind of an orientation did they give you?

LANCASTER: None

DOUGLASS: Were you just out there swimming on your own?

LANCASTER: I walked in the door, and they said, "Here's your hat and wear it." [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: What kind of an office did they give you?

LANCASTER: First stall. Whatever was around.

DOUGLASS: A very small one. Because everything would depend on the November election and then the whole ball game would start over?

LANCASTER: People had to shift. In other words, they started shifting. The minute there was a vacancy, in those days, the shift started.

DOUGLASS: They started moving into the offices.

LANCASTER: So whatever was left is what I got. They did keep Pete Schabarum's staff there for me.

DOUGLASS: Were you in one place and they in another place?

LANCASTER: No. We finally came together in this little office.

DOUGLASS: How much staff would that be?

LANCASTER: I had two girls up there.

DOUGLASS: How about district staff?

LANCASTER: I started off with two. Then I expanded that.

DOUGLASS: In that very first module of service?

LANCASTER: Yes. Marguerite Johnson, and I took Pete Schabarum's AA [Administrative Assistant], in the district office, [] Lou Guilford.

DOUGLASS: Where was the district office?

LANCASTER: On Barranca [Street] and Rowland [Avenue].

DOUGLASS: How much activity was going on in this period between June and November? Were there many committee meetings?

LANCASTER: Lots of committee meetings. A lot of short tempers. It was an election year, and everybody was sick of each other. Nothing, in my opinion, was being accomplished by being there.

DOUGLASS: They wanted to be back in the district.

LANCASTER: You know, you get involved and sometimes it is better to leave for thirty days and come back. You know, politics being what it is, particularly partisan politics, you find yourself in--they call it gridlock--you can find yourself in a situation where nothing happens. Everybody is mad. Everybody is short tempered. It just happens. And that's basically the way it was when I went there.

DOUGLASS: That must have been sort of a downer. Was it for you?

LANCASTER: No. Because I knew it was happening.

DOUGLASS: You knew that was going to happen.

LANCASTER: Because, you see, they had been in session for all these months. What happened was the

governor kept calling them back. This was before we became a full-time legislative body.

DOUGLASS: Who were the chairs of these committees? Do you remember?

LANCASTER: Oh, golly.

DOUGLASS: I can check it. I was just curious if somebody stood out in your mind here. Obviously, Jack Knox.

LANCASTER: Yes. Jack Knox is the only one that did. I don't remember.

DOUGLASS: I guess the point is which is the one that had the most action during this period?

LANCASTER: Local Government. Jack Knox was a very active chairman. He developed, and he believed in taking tours to find out what was going on in the rest of the world.

DOUGLASS: That was probably pleasant.

LANCASTER: Well, it was very interesting and exciting too.

DOUGLASS: Were there any members of that first committee that Knox chaired that you remember particularly?

LANCASTER: I'd have to think about that.

DOUGLASS: How about living arrangements? What did you do with your family during this period?

LANCASTER: They stayed here. My children were in school. My son was out of school. My daughter was just graduating from high school. In fact, she was homecoming queen and all that stuff, and a cheerleader. And my [other] son was in high school here. So we stayed here. And I lived in a hotel up there. Eventually, I rented an apartment. I kept it year around.

DOUGLASS: Which is what people did.

LANCASTER: Or bought. I should have bought, and I didn't.
[Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Famous last words.

LANCASTER: Well, I never wanted to, frankly, do that. I'll be honest with you, Enid. A lot of members of the legislature live in Sacramento. And I don't think that's the way it ought to be, personally. I mean I had this house. I kept it.

DOUGLASS: Some of them aren't back in their districts all that much.

LANCASTER: Yes. Well, they don't live there.

DOUGLASS: Yes. That's what I mean. You have to go to Sacramento to talk to them. Obviously, during this period from June to November you had to keep your mind on the campaign.

LANCASTER: Basically, yes.

DOUGLASS: So how distracting and difficult was that?

LANCASTER: It wasn't that difficult because by that time the momentum had been built. I built it. I just kept the whole thing moving.

DOUGLASS: Of course, everybody else was facing the same problem of a final election.

LANCASTER: Yes. Of course, the only one left was Axelrod.

DOUGLASS: Yes. But I meant all the other assemblymen were running.

LANCASTER: Yes. The same thing. They were all anxious to get home.

DOUGLASS: Do you remember where your apartment was in Sacramento that first time.

LANCASTER: Well, I lived in a hotel. You always start out, for some reason, in El Rancho [Motel] in west Sacramento. And I stayed there that year primarily.

DOUGLASS: Were there many others there?

LANCASTER: Oh, yes, a lot of them. The people, at that time, all considered themselves part time, but they weren't. So they never developed roots. The roots started developing because of the change in the sessions.

Several of the old-timers lived up there, but a lot of them didn't, either. When I was elected, members of that body. . . . Well, [Assemblyman Vincent] Vince Thomas was elected in '38 and he was still there, and [Assemblyman John L. E.] Bud Collier was there, [Assemblyman] Frank Lanterman was there, [Assemblyman] Carley [V.] Porter, the guy that put together the water program for California was there (in fact I served on a committee with, the Water Committee, later on), [Assemblyman] Frank [P.] Belotti was there.

DOUGLASS: Collier was one of the oldest ones.

LANCASTER: He was elected in 1946.

DOUGLASS: How about in the senate?

LANCASTER: There were old codgers there. [State Senator] Hugh [M.] Burns, [State Senator Randolph] Randy Collier All those guys. There they were still. It was different in those days. It was a different atmosphere. Totally different. It wasn't partisan.

DOUGLASS: It was like taking care of each more, wasn't it? Incumbent oriented?

LANCASTER: Yes. I guess you would call it that. The word that has been used is club. I guess it was, in

a sense, you know. I was a member the California Derby Club. In fact, I still am.

DOUGLASS: Oh, that's the one where they do the thing in the restaurant.

LANCASTER: I was man-of-the-year one time. I've got the plaque over there.

DOUGLASS: What is the restaurant near the capitol?

LANCASTER: Posey's [Restaurant]. See that plaque over there, the lowest one, that's from the Derby Club. I was man-of-the-year for the Derby Club. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: For the information of a future reader of this, explain what the Derby Club was.

LANCASTER: The Derby Club was made up of legislators and lobbyists. In order to be a member of the Derby Club--it was by invitation only--you had to be approved by this secret committee. The secret committee was so secret that nobody to this day knows who was on it. [Laughter] Not really. It started because four or five senators were back East some place, and it started to rain and none of them had hats from California. So the only answer they could find was the derbies. I don't know the year. They came back and started having the Derby Club.

It was before I got there. One room in Posey's, which was the original Posey's Restaurant, was set up there for that purpose.

DOUGLASS: Not on the same site?

LANCASTER: Same site.

DOUGLASS: Did they rebuild it?

LANCASTER: The original Posey's was just a cottage. I don't know if you have seen it.

DOUGLASS: Yes. I've been there.

LANCASTER: The cottage is at the end of the parking lot, and then they added the front part. And the cottage is where the Derby Club meets.

DOUGLASS: Where the meeting was, in the back. That is quite a place.

LANCASTER: Oh, yes. In fact, I talked to Jose [] the other day, the owner of Posey's. on the phone. I called up a good friend of mine who is around there quite a bit. [] Mike Douglas, and I talked to him. A nice guy.

DOUGLASS: So the club had lunch there?

LANCASTER: Every Tuesday.

DOUGLASS: And you got a good turnout.

LANCASTER: Oh, yes. Of course, this was pre-Prop. 9 and all those things, you know. Members of the legislature were honored guests. Of course,

then after Prop. 9 was adopted,¹ we had to pay our own way. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: So who was picking up the tab? The lobbyists?

LANCASTER: Oh, yes.

DOUGLASS: So was this a cross-section party wise?

LANCASTER: Oh, yes, Republican and Democrat both.

DOUGLASS: So when did you get initiated in?

LANCASTER: Right away. In fact, I'll show you my derby hat if you want to see it.

DOUGLASS: Right away, being before the final election?

LANCASTER: Yes. Well, actually I went in in January. I am trying to remember when we actually adjourned that year.

DOUGLASS: One other thing that was on the 1972 ballot was Proposition 20, which was the Coastal Commission Act. In retrospect, that seems like an important date. But at the time do you remember being concerned about it?

LANCASTER: Yes. [Assemblyman] Alan Sieroty, who was a member of the assembly, carried that bill on the assembly floor, and they killed it that year. That was the beginning of the initiative process to go around the legislature.

¹ Proposition 9, Political Reform Act passed June 4, 1974.

DOUGLASS: Would you view as one of the first . . .

LANCASTER: I opposed it.

DOUGLASS: . . . in the flow of petitions that went on the ballot?

LANCASTER: Yes. The reason I opposed it would be very obvious to people who knew my background. It totally usurped the ability and authority of local government.

DOUGLASS: So how did it happen to win?

LANCASTER: When you think of the change in politics in California, that was the interesting development. First of all, it was the year that kind of television came into its own in this area of advertising. You remember the "Save Our Beaches," "Save Our Beaches," and so on. It is a very complex question. It really is. If you go back and read the ballot definition and the ballot proposition itself, it is very difficult for people, unless they have a total understanding, to understand it. And it became a slogan era. And there were people just mildly concerned about maintaining their beaches, and it was kind of that era. The legislature killed it, though. That was

also the year of wild rivers. Of all these great things we were involved in.

DOUGLASS: Speaking of the beginning of the whole initiative . . .

LANCASTER: Well, it wasn't the beginning of the initiative process, but it's kind of interesting how modern it is, as we know it today.

DOUGLASS: What I am saying is the story of the circumventing of the legislature, at that point were there professional groups going out and gathering the signatures?

LANCASTER: They were starting.

DOUGLASS: Just starting. Because that is an interesting development.

LANCASTER: They were just starting.

DOUGLASS: Were you surprised that it passed?

LANCASTER: No.

DOUGLASS: You thought it would.

LANCASTER: Yes. And it shouldn't have, and I still don't think it should have. Because I really believe that those types of things ought to be done legislatively as much as possible. I really believe that.

DOUGLASS: Solved in the legislature.

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: What was your feeling in your district?

LANCASTER: I don't remember whether it carried in my district or not. It probably did. But I opposed it publicly. I have always done that. I think people have a right to know how I stand on issues.

DOUGLASS: Well, and, of course, as you point out, the problem was resolving things in the . . .

LANCASTER: That's really what started it. You know, that was kind of a combination of what I mentioned earlier. Remember, this was the twenty-month session. Everybody was mad and nothing happened. And there was obviously a legislative need to develop a sensible program for saving our resources on the beach. It really was kind of a knee-jerk situation they were involved in. Because that was kind of the era that involved in the beginning of the environmentalist movement. They started the wild rivers. They started concern about oil wells and all of these things. Now they are good and bad. But these things, when they start, have a tendency to kind of go . . .

DOUGLASS: They have a life of their own?

LANCASTER: Yes. And they keep going maybe further than they should. Like [Prop.] 13 destroyed local government's ability. But we could have done something legislatively. Some of us tried because they didn't want it. We'll get to that.

DOUGLASS: I would like to have an intense discussion about that. And also about the whole business of the two-year session and how important that was.

LANCASTER: O.K. Sure

[End Tape 2, Side A]

[Session 2, December 13, 1994]

[Begin Tape 2, Side B]

DOUGLASS: I meant to ask you at the end of the last interview: was Cal Plan a part of anything you did in your campaign? Did it help you?

LANCASTER: No. Cal Plan did not get involved in the primary election for the vacancy, the special election for Pete Schabarum's seat. After I won the nomination, the [Los Angeles] County Republican Committee got very involved in the action out here. Because it was a confusing because I had to run on the same ballot twice. So they were involved in the regular general election for the special election. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: The county committee.

LANCASTER: Yes, the county committee and, of course, the whole central [committee] was part of it.

DOUGLASS: Cal Plan was still getting going then?

LANCASTER: Actually, Cal Plan had reached its peak in the late sixties, when [Assemblyman Robert] Monagan was elected speaker.

DOUGLASS: The reason I particularly wanted to ask is that I interviewed Alan Heslop, and, of course, he became responsible for Cal Plan around '72 and spoke a little bit about the activities. So it was waning by the time your election came around?

LANCASTER: Yes. They were involved in development of candidates, where this district had no shortage of candidates. They were already there.

DOUGLASS: Yes. And it was a pretty good Republican district.

LANCASTER: Oh, it is a Republican area. Yes.

DOUGLASS: One thing that happened--I am trying to pick out anything that happened during that very first period you were in the assembly in '72-- you were appointed to a conference committee by Monagan, who was the minority leader. Having to do with correctional counselors and their retirement.

LANCASTER: Oh, golly. I don't remember the issue.

DOUGLASS: You and [Assemblyman John K.] MacDonald were appointed.

LANCASTER: Yes. MacDonald was a member from Santa Barbara County. Yes. But I don't remember the issue itself. I have to apologize.

DOUGLASS: That's fine. It would have been your first experience. That's all I was getting at.

LANCASTER: But the thing I noticed, just for a kind of little bit of thought, what happened when I first went up there. I was elected in a special election, as you know. I did not take office until the latter part of June. When I got there the assembly and senate had been in session for about twenty straight months, even though at that time it was constitutionally part time. So when I got there, everybody wanted to go home.

DOUGLASS: Right. And you mentioned about just taking Biddle's spots.

LANCASTER: Yes, except for Local Government, which I particularly asked for. And [Robert] Moretti did appoint me to Local Government.

DOUGLASS: At that time your caucus chair was [Assemblyman] John Stull.

LANCASTER: Yes, that's correct.

DOUGLASS: And then that changed right away.

LANCASTER: John Stull went to the state senate. And [Assemblyman William] Bill Craven, who is now a state senator, came into the assembly from San Diego County. He was a member of the board of

supervisors down there, and a very nice guy, by the way. As an aside. But it was interesting, we stayed in session for another couple of months and then everybody got out of there finally.

DOUGLASS: And you had this upcoming election.

LANCASTER: In November, right.

[Interruption]

LANCASTER: You know, one of the interesting things, Enid. The federal department of parks and recreation has been running a feasibility study on restoring the de Anza trail. That's their report. I didn't ask for it, but I have been on their list for a long time. They continue to leave me there. So I am still getting the stuff. Which, of course, is a very historical thing for the San Gabriel Valley, you know. That's where they came through here, on their way to San Gabriel.

DOUGLASS: We'll have to get that story later on. It is interesting. What I want to ask you now is can you remember your freshman class? By that I mean the class that came in in '73, which essentially you became because of your brief service in 1972.

LANCASTER: Yes, I can. In fact, I have a picture.

DOUGLASS: Yes. I would like to see it. I know that [Assemblyman] Paul Bannai and [Assemblyman] Louis Papan where in the class.

[Lancaster takes picture off the wall]

DOUGLASS: So we've got a Democrat and a Republican. Who else was in the class? By that I mean the group that entered.

LANCASTER: That year.

DOUGLASS: Yes. We are doing 1973 because you were only there six months before.

LANCASTER: Yes. Oh, golly. There weren't that many. In those days, you know, we didn't have dramatic changes like we are having today. Want to see a picture of [Assemblyman] Willie [L.] Brown [Jr.]?

DOUGLASS: Oh, yes. Look at the clothes. I was just curious. I interviewed Paul Bannai a long time ago.

LANCASTER: I think [Assemblyman] Richard Alatorre came in about then.

DOUGLASS: Mention some leads and I'll check them.

LANCASTER: Richard Alatorre. Isn't this interesting. [Assemblyman] John [E.] Thurman [Jr.]. I believe he came in there too. John Thurman

from Modesto. I believe that's about it. That I see in this picture, anyway.

DOUGLASS: That's interesting because there just wasn't that much change.

LANCASTER: Very little turnover.

DOUGLASS: So you didn't have a big entering class like you might have had in '66 or after Proposition 13.

LANCASTER: Yes. The next big change was in '78, Proposition 13. Then the next major change was just recently.

DOUGLASS: Yes. Very recently [November elections].

LANCASTER: Here is a picture of [Assemblyman] Leo [T.] McCarthy. You can tell that is late sixties.

DOUGLASS: Where are you?

LANCASTER: I'm right there.

DOUGLASS: You don't change much.

LANCASTER: Not much. I'm twenty-five years older.

DOUGLASS: That's pretty nice. What I want to do now is discuss Proposition 4, which passed in November, when you were running, and was the beginning of regular two-year sessions. Could you talk about what it was hoped it would achieve and what it did or did not achieve?

LANCASTER: I think it achieved its goal, and the goal, Enid, was to recognize the fact that the California procedures were very historic but they were antiquated, in the sense that we were not a continuing body.

DOUGLASS: At the end of the year, everything dropped out.

LANCASTER: Right. This allowed us to become a continuing body, which led to the criticism by some people that we had now become full-time legislators. But the fact of the matter is we were full time, even under the part-time mechanism. Because what used to occur was. . . . Like I said when I first got there they had been there twenty straight months, twenty months in a session, which is almost a two-year term. So what happened was this allowed the legislature to become a continuing body. A piece of legislation to hold over to get more scrutiny, more activities. The legislature could do things, call itself back, and all that kind of thing, if necessary, to try to solve problems. I think it made a lot of sense and had very strong bipartisan support. I voted for it. And I think it has accomplished its goal.

Now there is a failure on the system. The failure is on the part of the legislature, I guess, really, to let the public know that frankly it is beneficial to them to have a legislative body that is on top of things. When it was part time, it really wasn't. And, at that time, most members of the legislature had other jobs.

DOUGLASS: Even after '66, you are saying?

LANCASTER: Yes. Right.

DOUGLASS: When it supposedly went, in one sense, to a full-time salary.

LANCASTER: It went to a salary structure, which was better.

DOUGLASS: So you are saying that in this period to '72 these people had other professions.

LANCASTER: Oh, yes. they had other activities. Well, for example, we both know Hugh Flournoy had to quit the assembly because he couldn't do that, two jobs. And so we eliminated that problem by putting it on a full-time basis. And I think today, though other members have--I don't know what their other vocations are--they are in effect full-time legislators. They really are. And I think that's important because there are

30,000,000 people living in the state of California, and it is important, I think, that its legislative body, the policy makers, ought to be on top of that. Now, of course, I don't know what term limitations will do to that, but we'll see.

DOUGLASS: Well, the fact that a bill died if it hadn't got out of its house of origin before January 31st of the next year, also put some pressure on things to pass through, or else they dropped by the wayside.

LANCASTER: That's right. And I think it's important, particularly in California with our diversity-- we have a very diverse economy and diverse everything--it is important that some legislation be held over until the next year.

DOUGLASS: Yes, but then if you don't make it out of the assembly to the senate by January 31st, then it dies.

LANCASTER: Then it dies, but it is into the next year's hopper in the senate. In other words, instead of it all having to come out of the senate--let's use this year--instead of it all having to come out of the senate in 1993, the bill could hold over in the house of origin, the assembly, and

then it goes to the senate process in 1994.

And the reverse in the senate. So that means that a bill actually had a two-year scrutiny.

DOUGLASS: Yes. But let me go back to make this clear, though. I noticed some of your bills had this on it and supposedly died.

LANCASTER: It hit that wall.

DOUGLASS: It hit that wall. If it didn't get out of the assembly, wasn't passed by the assembly by January 31, it was dead.

LANCASTER: It was dead.

DOUGLASS: But if it did make it out of the assembly . . .

LANCASTER: Or the house of origin.

DOUGLASS: Yes, the house of origin. Then it had a year.

LANCASTER: It was back in the other house, you see.

DOUGLASS: I see two years were there for bills that could survive that deadline.

LANCASTER: A lot of bills need a lot of work. And sometimes you need a lot of research and things of that nature that just don't get done in the crunch of the last weeks.

DOUGLASS: Also, wouldn't the situation be in a crunch at the ending of the year that the fiscal committees that are involved are just jammed with bills?

LANCASTER: Yes, they are.

DOUGLASS: Bills they have to consider because it took so long to get them to that point.

LANCASTER: You know, that's a needed change that ought to be done in the California legislature. In the assembly and the senate. The number of people on Ways and Means [Committee], for example, in the assembly ought to be reduced to a maximum of fifteen, and it ought to require that any member of that committee serve on no other committees, put in all their time to the budgetary considerations of legislation going through them. Rather than going from here to there. I think that's been critical, and I think they have to do that in Sacramento. Eventually, they are going to have to. And it ought to be, if you can find one, somebody who has been there more than one term.

DOUGLASS: The other thing, looking back in the history of this, Monagan, when he was speaker, apparently worked very strongly for this reformation.

LANCASTER: He did, he did. In fact, it was kind of his baby, so to speak.

DOUGLASS: The one thing that he suggested which didn't fly, and I wondered if you could comment on it,

is the congressional system, where a bill becomes a committee's bill, rather than the name of the particular legislator, he felt would speed things up. How do you feel about that?

LANCASTER: Frankly, I have a lot of sympathy for that approach--and I did at the time--because you find a lot of legislation that is similar. It can be put into one bill. Now that requires a lot of committee work and activity in which you can actually cut down on your work load by putting similar situations into one piece of legislation.

DOUGLASS: And that could become a committee bill, but then legislators like to have their names on the bills.

LANCASTER: Yes. The downside by doing that, by that way, is that in order to pass a bill you would have to go for maybe some provisions you don't like. So there is a downside. But, on balance, I think 90 percent of the time it would make a lot of sense. And I think it would save money.

DOUGLASS: Then I read an article that was written after the first year of trying this. I guess the three problems that still persist right now--

and they aren't attributable to what is in that proposition--and that is, the misuse of the consent calendar.

LANCASTER: Yes. Well, I wouldn't call it misuse.

DOUGLASS: The use of, I gather.

LANCASTER: Yes. And I think it has been misused. So I guess you can say that. But the consent calendar became more of a tool to speed up the operation of the house than it should be. And I think that's a mistake, and that is caused directly by the total amount of legislation coming through and where the committee structure could help that, but they don't.

DOUGLASS: Some things shouldn't be on the consent calendar?

LANCASTER: Some shouldn't.

DOUGLASS: And some should.

LANCASTER: That's right. What you need is a closer scrutiny of that.

DOUGLASS: Of what goes on the consent calendar.

LANCASTER: Yes. And the way that we used to control that --the rule was and I imagine it still is--if there was one "no" vote any place along the process, it couldn't go on the consent calendar.

DOUGLASS: Oh. Any committee "no" vote?

LANCASTER: Right.

DOUGLASS: And this was the Rules Committee deciding what goes on the consent calendar?

LANCASTER: No. It was the committee itself. In other words, if you were before the Insurance [Committee], the committee would recommend consent. It had to be finalized.

DOUGLASS: So if there was a "no" vote on that question and not the bill itself . . .

LANCASTER: No. On that or the question or the bill. Yes. Until you get down to the very end of the session, then the agreement starts hitting the wall. It's got one "no" vote in the senate, and none in the assembly. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: The second one the article mentioned was ghost voting, which is still a topic. The ability for one member to vote for another who is absent.

LANCASTER: First thing is define what is absent. The assembly defines being on the floor and being in the perimeter. Not in your office, but you could be in the lounge or you could be in another part of the floor, but not sitting at your desk. Then, if you leave instructions

with your seat mate that he would vote for you on that issue. But what happened was that got abused, and we had to put a stop to it.

DOUGLASS: I can see the logic of it as you describe it.

LANCASTER: Yes. That was the intent.

DOUGLASS: But it got pretty wild.

LANCASTER: It got wild, and then, of course, you should use it. To utilize your seat mate and tell him, "I'm going in the other room," and then come out, "would you vote me 'aye'." There is nothing wrong with that. It's a good thing.

DOUGLASS: O.K. The other thing--and I am not sure I quite understand it--is substitute roll calls. That is, passing a bill by use of a previous roll call. How exactly does that work?

LANCASTER: What happens is they will get a roll call, and, again, this is more common at the end of the session when you are expediting the process. They will get a roll call vote. All members who are on the roll have voted "aye" for the bill. Then they will take that roll call and then they'll [move] the process, when they start limiting debate and they say there will only be three people speak, or whatever. And if nobody is speaking against the bill or

talking against the bill, they will ask permission of the house to substitute that previous roll call, which was . . .

DOUGLASS: As the recorded vote.

LANCASTER: Yes. And then if one person objects, they won't do it. So, in other words, if one person objects. . . . I think it is incumbent upon the party leaders to watch that very carefully, very carefully. And, frankly, they should object, and there ought to be somebody on the party leadership of both parties that has the responsibility to stand up and object.

DOUGLASS: In other words, there is some slippage that goes on, and that is where the problem is?

LANCASTER: Yes. But you have to be alert, and that's a party leadership responsibility.

DOUGLASS: You have to know the rules of the road.

LANCASTER: You have to know what is going on. Right. Just like you need to know what the parliamentary procedure is at all times. That's important, too.

DOUGLASS: Incidentally, how long did it take you to feel a mastery of those things?

LANCASTER: Well, I don't think I have yet. I will say I am more knowledgeable than I was when I [began].

DOUGLASS: Was it an awesome task when you went up there?

LANCASTER: Not necessarily for me because, as you know, I had been involved in governmental activities. It took a while, though, and I can't really pinpoint a time. I would say at least a year.

DOUGLASS: Then there are those individual legislators who have made a lifetime career out of being excellent at that.

LANCASTER: Yes, and Willie Brown is one. He just showed it again in this [speakership fight].

DOUGLASS: I guess [Assemblyman John] Burton was one, too.

LANCASTER: Oh, absolutely. He was chairman of the Rules [Committee]. Now what's interesting with Burton, he was there when I got there. Then he went to congress and came back. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: A big trip to [Washington] D.C. The other thing I was interested in, too, was that this was the moment beyond which the legislature could reconvene itself. Up to that time the governor had to call a special session.

LANCASTER: Yes. that's true. Prop. 4 changed that.

DOUGLASS: Right. Which is pretty important.

LANCASTER: Yes, it is. In fact, it has happened a couple of times. You see, what's happened, when the governor has called us back into session for a specific purpose, then the legislature could adjourn that session and call itself back in, And not necessarily for a specific purpose. So that's where your party leadership and your savvy, if you will, is critical, again, to keep an eye on that kind of stuff. Because, you know, forty-one votes is the rule. It is called "the rule of forty-one." If you've got forty-one votes, you run the house. You preside. It's important that you watch that kind of stuff.

DOUGLASS: Apparently, Moretti's system, too, was that on Mondays and Thursdays the assembly would meet in chambers for overall debate and on Tuesdays and Wednesdays they had committee hearings.

LANCASTER: That was a dramatic change, again, and I support that change. Because when I first went up there, we met every day at noon.

DOUGLASS: The whole house?

LANCASTER: Yes. And that had a tremendous interference with committee work, which was just critical. And so, therefore, you created this problem of

members being absent on the floor and then they started ghost voting. Maybe they would be some place else on legitimate business, I am not saying they were goofing off. And then that also, see we eliminated finally that proxy voting, where you leave your vote in the committee.

DOUGLASS: Oh, in the committee. That's the other side of it.

LANCASTER: That's the other side.

DOUGLASS: When was that eliminated?

LANCASTER: In '73 or '74. It was all part of that reform mechanism.

DOUGLASS: So you couldn't vote by proxy in your committee.

LANCASTER: That's right and, see, before you could. In other words, you would be on the floor and the committee would be going. The chairman would be there, you'd go for the quorum. You would go back to the floor, and you would leave a written note, "Vote me 'aye,' 'aye.' or 'no,' 'no.'"

DOUGLASS: So, even though that would prevent abuse, it became a barrier to the progress of the legislation?

LANCASTER: Well, it became a flaw in the system because it eliminated the ability of the member to hear testimony on legislation. Which is critical. Remember, I think I said to you that you can go before a committee and just convince that one person who is there presiding you were right. And the guy says, "Yeah, I'm on your side. I vote with you." Then they start reading off the other side. All these votes were cast before you got to testify.

DOUGLASS: A lot of frustration

LANCASTER: Well, we eliminated that. We used to have people called Birdwatchers. They keep an eye on things. I thought that was a good change. So a lot of things have happened in the seventies.

DOUGLASS: So in '72 and that period right after it was pretty seminal in terms of some progress?

LANCASTER: Yes. And we also made some campaign financing reform during this period of time. Before the passage of Prop. 9.¹

DOUGLASS: Then I gather you felt you were treated fairly well by Monagan, who became the minority floor leader.

¹ Political Reform Act of 1974.

- LANCASTER: Yes. Monagan and I are good friends. And he was a very competent person, is a competent person. He is now in the private sector. Again, he was minority leader when I went up there, and he did a good job.
- DOUGLASS: Had he just been . . .
- LANCASTER: He had just been speaker prior to that. He knew his business. He really did. He is good. He was an excellent floor leader.
- DOUGLASS: That was nice to come in with that kind of leadership.
- LANCASTER: That helped me. In fact, Bob Monagan. . . . There was a group of us, there were seven us in the assembly: [Assemblyman] Frank [J.] Murphy, [Assemblyman Robert G.] Bob Beverly, and people like that who had been around, and myself. I was included in that by Monagan. We used to go out to lunch and talk about things and had a good time.
- DOUGLASS: Even as a fairly new legislator?
- LANCASTER: Yes. Well, I knew Monagan, and I knew Beverly. See, I had served with Beverly. Bob Beverly was the mayor of Manhattan Beach, and I was the mayor of Duarte. So I knew all of them.
- DOUGLASS: So you knew them in local government.

LANCASTER: Yes. That's right. It was a natural transition.

DOUGLASS: Well, that must have been wonderful to be included in those kinds of informal discussions.

LANCASTER: That's right. That's one of the reasons why I got on Local Government [Committee] because Jack Knox, who was the chairman, I had met him before in my activities immediately.

DOUGLASS: Now Local Government was the only committee that remained out of that original assignment.

LANCASTER: Yes, basically, right.

DOUGLASS: But you were made vice chairman of the Commerce and Public Utilities Committee in '73. Now how did that happen?

LANCASTER: Gosh, I don't remember.

DOUGLASS: I was impressed that it was a vice chairmanship. Was that because it would go to a Republican?

LANCASTER: Yes. Basically, in those days under Moretti, if he could, he would try to. . . . Well, first of all, you have to understand, in those days--when I was elected, for example, it was 43-37 [Democrats-Republicans]--so there was just quite a similar circumstance of what we

have today. And so, therefore, it was not a situation where at one time it was 57-23, and there is a big difference. So Moretti, who was in a sense a consensus speaker, would make sure the Republicans participated in the decision-making process. Unlike [Assemblyman Leo] McCarthy, by the way, or Willie.

DOUGLASS: Why were you assigned to that committee? Had you asked for it?

LANCASTER: Yes, I did. I am trying to remember what the issue was that I was concerned about.

DOUGLASS: It didn't have to do with water, did it?

LANCASTER: To a certain extent it did, and also there was another aspect of it, too. We had a Water Committee, which I served on too. And that was Assemblyman Carley Porter. In those days, it was insurance. I don't think we had an insurance committee per se. The Commerce and Public Utilities Committee dealt with the banks.

DOUGLASS: That was the precursor to the Finance, Insurance and . . .

LANCASTER: And Utilities. It was Finance, Insurance and Utilities. They took off the Utilities away from it.

DOUGLASS: Yes. And it became Finance and Insurance.

LANCASTER: That was it. Basically, that's right.

DOUGLASS: All right. And then you were on Intergovernmental Relations and Water.

LANCASTER: Intergovernmental Relations was an interesting committee. Intergovernmental Relations was a committee which--I never did it--it was kind of the traveling committee in those days to find out what was going on in other communities, other states, and that kind of stuff.

DOUGLASS: Oh, you went out of the state.

LANCASTER: I didn't, no, I personally, didn't. I could have. I wasn't, frankly, a traveler too much.

DOUGLASS: That [subject] was complicated enough then, but that's become extremely complicated now.

LANCASTER: They don't have it any more, basically.

DOUGLASS: They don't have that committee.

LANCASTER: Really it's all done within the speaker's office now. You see, that's another thing.

DOUGLASS: So there is no committee on that.

LANCASTER: No. Not unless they've got one now, of course

DOUGLASS: All right. And then you had probably requested the Water Committee?

LANCASTER: I did, I did request Water because it is critical to the district. And I have always

been interested in the subject, and I had the opportunity, a very fortunate opportunity, to serve on the same committee with Carley Porter, who was . . .

DOUGLASS: The Burns-Porter Act.²

LANCASTER: Yes. Porter and Cologne were very important in that Water Act that built the California aqueduct system. And I learned a tremendous amount about California needs and water needs and a lot about the peripheral canal. The peripheral canal, which is still not built, unfortunately, was an issue then for discussion because the original act that was adopted by the people included a bypass in the delta, and they approved it. That committee was trying desperately to develop a peripheral canal project, which is still essential. That was an essential to us down here because we are. . . . I don't know what the percentage is today but a very heavy percentage of our water supply comes out of the California aqueduct system. So I remember that.

² The Burns-Porter Water Bonds Act of 1959, called the California Water Resources Development Bond Act, provided the \$1,750,000,000 in bonds for the California Water Plan be presented to the voters in 1960 as Proposition 1, which passed.

DOUGLASS: So that was an education for you?

LANCASTER: Well, it was an education, yes, but it was also important to the district. And I learned a lot about water, believe me.

DOUGLASS: I think there are endless amounts to learn about water.

LANCASTER: Oh, yes. Judiciary was a committee--I'm not an attorney, as you know--but I went on the Judiciary Committee because they asked me to.

DOUGLASS: That wasn't that year, was it?

LANCASTER: No. That's right. We'll get to that later.

DOUGLASS: Let's just finish up the 1973-74 period. You were put on a Joint Committee on Motor Vehicle Inspections that was actually introduced by Craig Biddle in the senate by a senate concurrent resolution.

LANCASTER: Yes. Back in those days, as you know, we did not have a motor vehicle inspection program, and there was a huge push to develop one in California. There is an interesting issue that finally came to pass and is working very well. Very wisely, we did not proceed with the emotion of the times, I guess, and did wait--I forget the year and I did finally vote for it--a few years to develop a comprehensive motor

vehicle inspection system in California, utilizing the private sector. We went through a process then of developing legislation to inspect cars on resale. We developed state-run private sector contract stations. I don't know whether you remember these or not.

DOUGLASS: That's not the same as what we do now?

LANCASTER: No. These were private contractors just for that. Now, and this is coming back, and that's fine.

DOUGLASS: In other words, they were an arm of the state.

LANCASTER: Basically, yes.

DOUGLASS: They were official but privately run.

LANCASTER: And we only did it in certain geographical areas. We didn't do it statewide. We did it in what they called an air quality containment area, as I recall, and that was the start of the process. And through that whole process we refined it to where we are today, which is working. For example, instead of annual, we went to every other year.

California's problems are unique. First of all, we have great portions of the state that don't have an air quality problem. Then we have other portions that do, obviously, have

a bad one. And then we've got eighteen or nineteen million, or whatever it is, people floating around. So it is just not a situation we can say, "We are going to inspect your car every year. So we finally developed a system that's working very well.

DOUGLASS: Were you assigned to that committee because you came from an area with air quality problems?

LANCASTER: Probably.

DOUGLASS: Or because of the Biddle connection?

LANCASTER: Well, that too. Probably too. We didn't really accomplish a lot except the groundwork, I guess, which is important. It was several years later before we developed the whole pilot program. Which was fine.

DOUGLASS: It takes a long time.

LANCASTER: That's right.

DOUGLASS: I wanted to talk about, specifically, a few bills which I think are important and I am sure you do. But there are others I am not picking up. One was A.B. 1031 that you, with Senators [Alfred] Alquist and [Arlen] Gregario, put on the table. It had to do with filling the vacancies on school boards.

LANCASTER: What happened. When I got there, the assemblyman from Bakersfield, for what reason I don't know, I was told because he happened to be mad at this person who was appointed to the school board in Kern County, got a bill through that prohibited appointment when there was a school board vacancy by the school board. They had to go to an election. I frankly don't think that was correct. So what I did was I put together a kind of a coalition, mainly state senators, to change that. To allow school boards, under even more controlled circumstances. . . . Frankly, I wouldn't have given them all of the controls I put on them, but I had to do this in order to get the bill out. The effect is they can fill the vacancy, but it is a preliminary appointment where the people, if they get a certain percentage or whatever it is, they can protest, you must call an election.

DOUGLASS: I read that. It gets quite complicated. But the idea was to save the school district the cost [of a special election].

LANCASTER: But also to put the responsibility in these cases where it really, in a lot of ways,

belongs. With the school board. As an aside, you see, one of the things I have been concerned about over the years is the lack of school board authority, I guess is the word to describe it. They just simply need . . .

DOUGLASS: To control their destiny?

LANCASTER: Yes. They are really having problems. So I thought, because city councils can fill a vacancy like that. And districts do it all the time. And I thought school boards couldn't be exempt from that.

DOUGLASS: I see. School boards didn't have what city governments had.

LANCASTER: They did once, but it was taken away from them.

DOUGLASS: Yes. By the bill from the senate. Which had passed relatively recently?

LANCASTER: Well, it was before I got there.

DOUGLASS: Then one very interesting bill was A.B. 3129. It was enabling legislation to allow local government to form a school crossing-guard maintenance district. That was opposed by the State PTA [Parent-Teacher Association].

LANCASTER: Yes. Well, You have probably written. . . . Yes, you did. They wanted us to spend gas tax money when gas tax was very short. We wouldn't

do that. They couldn't do it anyway by law. But no city council would do that because it was just cutting into their street deficiency problem, which existed even then.

So, anyway, I got to talking to the city manager from Glendora. He was telling him his problems. The city council was saying it is the school's responsibility, and the school district was saying [it was theirs]. And it bounced back and forth.

And I said, "Well, there is a need for crossing guards, obviously. Why don't we go to the people? And if you convince them of the need." This is, by the way, pre-[Proposition] 13. "And you see the need. You go ahead and you do it." And there are safeguards in the bill that require certain things, like assessment valuation and protest and all that.

DOUGLASS: Yes. The usual things.

LANCASTER: That's right. And that made sense, and it was working.

DOUGLASS: Would the stimulus have come from a school district? Or the city and a school district?

LANCASTER: The one that would have to oversee it would be the city. You are talking about their streets,

but, the fact of the matter, schools cannot form special assessment districts.

DOUGLASS: So it would have to be with the leadership of the city council.

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: So the city would have to decide it wanted to put it on the line for another district to bring some money in.

LANCASTER: Yes. In other words, they have to take the time to do it with the participation of the people in the area. And, of course, you have to prove benefit. In other words, you can't put an assessment district out without proving benefit to the property.

DOUGLASS: So did many cities take advantage of that?

LANCASTER: I don't know how many took advantage, to be honest with you. Because this was back in 1974, and they were just kind of getting off the ground. . . .

DOUGLASS: When Prop. 13 passed.¹

LANCASTER: Yes. But I thought it was a good idea.

¹ Proposition 13, (Jarvis-Gann) initiative constitutional amendment limiting taxation passed June 1978).

DOUGLASS: Yes. I was very interested in that because I faced that same question of how you fund the crossing guards.

LANCASTER: And there are some needed crossing guards. And the cities would say, "Well, they are your kids," you know.

DOUGLASS: It is one those little divisive topics.

LANCASTER: That's right.

DOUGLASS: Very creative. So that came out of a specific local Glendora conversation.

LANCASTER: That's right. A lot of stuff comes out like that.

DOUGLASS: O.K. Then there was your resolution, Assembly Joint Resolution 10 on revenue sharing. It was one of those pleas to congress to allocate a larger share to cities?

LANCASTER: Yes. You see, let's go back to the contract plan. First of all, all the contract cities were saying to the world, "We don't have a property tax rate." But they did. The only difference was it was in a special district, whether it be fire or library or whatever the case may be. Remember, this is, again, pre-[Prop.] 13.

And the federal government, under Nixon, was moving towards revenue sharing. Money was coming back to the community based upon their tax effort. [Laughter] Out!

DOUGLASS: I see. That left the contract cities hung out to dry.

LANCASTER: Well, a lot of other cities, too. Because every city contracts for something. What this did was ask the Congress to redefine tax effort to include our unique, and probably not that unique, generation. I don't remember exactly what the wording ended up, but it came out more favorable. So it had some effect eventually.

DOUGLASS: So, once again, you are taking the side of local government.

LANCASTER: Yes. In California.

DOUGLASS: Then, also, I wonder if you could just comment on Proposition 1, Reagan's measure, which was a special election, I believe.¹

LANCASTER: It was.

DOUGLASS: In November 1973.

LANCASTER: I have to be very candid. I don't really remember the finite details of Proposition 1.

¹ Initiative to limit the legislature's ability to raise taxes was defeated in November, 1973.

DOUGLASS: There are a lot of little details. But the point was that it was the first effort to limit taxation.

LANCASTER: Which I supported

DOUGLASS: You supported it. And it was an initiative constitutional amendment.

LANCASTER: But it didn't interfere with local jurisdictions.

DOUGLASS: It had a ratio. It limited the amount of revenue that could be raised from taxes each year by a declining ratio of state personal income tax. So there was some sort of rationale there.

LANCASTER: Yes. But it also left the jurisdiction questions alone. In other words, a city council still had their own responsibilities and vice versa. It became a planning tool. Also, at that point, and I know you remember it, we were in a situation on property tax assessment. It was starting to climb.

DOUGLASS: Well, this is '73.

LANCASTER: It started then because it was '78 when it was corrected, according to them. And this was when the process started, really. Remember,

they were doing the five-year assessment practice or some routine. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Also, within the limitations set up by this ratio, it would take a two-thirds majority to change the rate. Then if you exceeded the limit that they set up, it took a vote of the people. That failed. I think he thought that would launch him nationally.

LANCASTER: He didn't need it.

DOUGLASS: Right. But he was banking on it.

LANCASTER: I don't remember all the details of it, but I don't think it violated the principle that I have been trying to stand for throughout my career, which was the retention of local authority. But it did put some real controls on the property tax.

DOUGLASS: Then I would like to discuss reapportionment with you. First of all, I would like to ask you. Could you define your original district geographically? What did it include?

LANCASTER: All right. The original district when I was first elected, the old 49th, included Monrovia, part of Duarte (the northern part), north Azusa, all of Glendora. all of San Dimas, all of La Verne, all of Claremont, Pomona north of

Holt [Avenue], all of Covina, Walnut, a little bit of Temple City, and a portion of West Covina.

DOUGLASS: That was some pieces of a lot of places.

LANCASTER: Yes. That was the original district.

DOUGLASS: So you were looking at what would happen to your district, probably without quite so much the concern of others. You generally probably would end up with a Republican district. Or were you really worried about this?

LANCASTER: No. Not particularly, Enid. The area, it's always been a [Republican district]. I don't think there ever has been a Democrat elected from this area. Maybe so, I don't know.

DOUGLASS: So if it was generally the same area . . .

LANCASTER: The way that I would have gotten into trouble is if they had put in Baldwin Park, El Monte, or La Puente. Say, the surrounding area. But they wouldn't do that because that would have an adverse effect on what they trying to do. I could only benefit.

DOUGLASS: The Democratic strategies didn't lend themselves to be participating in changing your district.

LANCASTER: That's right.

DOUGLASS: It was an interesting experience, as you may recall, because Reagan decided that since it was a Democratic legislature . . .

LANCASTER: It was definitely in favor of the Democrats, and I voted against it.

DOUGLASS: Against those bills. But he vetoed the first three bills (there was a bill for each entity). And the legislature failed to override the veto. Meanwhile, there was a state supreme court decision imposing the existing legislative districts for two years, rather than what the governor had vetoed.

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: Then, in '73, three more bills came out of the legislature, and Alan Heslop wrote the veto messages Reagan gave.

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: Obviously, Reagan was betting on the fact that the master's plan would be more beneficial than the Democrat's [plan].

LANCASTER: Than the Democrat plan. Yes. We were at an impasse on reapportionment in those years. There is no question about it. Reapportionment is a very interesting political study, if you

ever really want to make a study on just
reapportionment. Believe me.

[End Tape 2, Side B]

[Begin Tape 3, Side A]

LANCASTER: So, again, I wasn't adversely affected that way.

DOUGLASS: You just said that the strategy didn't work out the way the Republicans hoped.

LANCASTER: No, it didn't. The court's plan actually ended up in a lot of people's districts, including my own, worse than the original plan. So hindsight is always good, you know. We would have been better off with the original Democrat plan. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Incidentally, mentioning Alan Heslop. Did you have ever any dealings with the Rose Institute [for State and Local Government]? Did you ever use them as a resource on precincts or any of that kind of thing?

LANCASTER: Personally, no. But I know the party out here did. I benefited by information that came via. Activities at the state level on things of that nature. Because, see, at one time he was heavily involved with that election. So, therefore, I received information, which was good information, on trends.

DOUGLASS: Demography, that kind of thing.

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: But you didn't have a lot of direct contact?

LANCASTER: No, no contact. He was never under contract.

DOUGLASS: There is one piece of legislation which I was very interested in your opinions about. That was '73 open-meeting bills that came close to passing but failed.¹ We can go back to the 1953 [Ralph M.] Brown Act, which I am sure you know a lot about, and talk about why that failed. Why was it the legislature was unwilling to apply the same rules of openness that they did to local government?

LANCASTER: Oh. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: In fact, when [Governor Earl] Warren signed, he said that the legislature should do this too.

LANCASTER: Actually, I don't disagree, but, you know, that becomes a very interesting question again. It develops a lot of impasses. I'll give you an example. Should a Republican or Democrat caucus be open?

DOUGLASS: I guess the arguments would be about where you draw the line?

LANCASTER: That's right. And that becomes kind of a cloudy area. Now, there are rules and

¹ Bills introduced by Assemblyman John Burton and State Senator Donald Grunsky.

requirements that I do support that were in effect, and I hope they still are. Where committee meetings had to be announced in public. We went through a whole process of making sure the committees were duly noticed so that people would have the chance to attend. And, also, the biggest problem we had had to do with conference committee reports. See, a conference committee would meet, and nobody knew where they were meeting. So we finally got into a process of at least twenty-four hours notice on a conference committee report.

I mean the whole thing is really an open process, but then, unlike local city government, for example, the city council applied, it becomes a partisan matter. You have to draw the line there. You have to leave that up to each caucus, whether they are going to be open or closed. But, basically, there is no other closed situation per se.

But what is different then. If three members of a city council are sitting in some place having lunch, people say, "Oh, you're [discussing public business]." Legislators are out, forty or fifty in one room. But, you see,

the very nature of the structure of the assembly doesn't lead itself to those kinds of situations where you have a crowd.

DOUGLASS: Well, I could see the arguments for the caucuses not being open because that is strictly partisan.

LANCASTER: It's a policy situation, you are thinking of.

DOUGLASS: It is a partisan thing. You are not making policy.

LANCASTER: No. You are not voting on policy. You are trying to formulate it

DOUGLASS: I hadn't thought about the difficulties of meetings. Should meetings like that occur, where there are forty or fifty legislators in a room?

LANCASTER: How would you stop it? [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: I don't know. I am trying to think in theory.

LANCASTER: But our meetings are open to the public.

DOUGLASS: Right. But that didn't really come for a while.

LANCASTER: No. But you still can have a caucus of the whole that is not open to the public.

DOUGLASS: A caucus of the whole of whole?

LANCASTER: Of the whole assembly?

DOUGLASS: You can?

LANCASTER: Oh, yes.

DOUGLASS: You are calling that a caucus. There is another word for it. You mean meeting as a committee of the whole?

LANCASTER: No. As a caucus of the whole. In other words, the legislature can convene itself as a committee of the whole. But this is out of the room in. . . .

DOUGLASS: Oh, I see. So they could go away from the chambers and have a meeting. A nonpartisan meeting. It's just everyone.

LANCASTER: I've never seen that abused, Enid, because there is a real leveler, if that is the word of use. When you have a partisan circumstance, if one side does something wrong, the other side is going to talk about it.

DOUGLASS: The story gets out?

LANCASTER: The story gets out. There are no secrets in Sacramento. None. So you would have a caucus of the whole to talk about something. You may get involved with legislation or sometimes legal problems, or something like that. Believe me, you might as well open it up. The press is outside the door, and the first guy that walks out the door gets nailed.

DOUGLASS: We are seeing the problems in both categories with what is going on in Orange County. Where you can meet for certain legal reasons and personnel reasons. Where does that line get drawn? That's not that easy, I would assume.

LANCASTER: No, it isn't. And, of course, your county counsel in this case is very critical. I'll just use an example of current events. Now Willie Brown has proposed that five Democrats and five Republicans meet to discuss house management for the next two years. Obviously, a critical issue and a public issue. Should they be required to hold public meetings?

DOUGLASS: Maybe they should. But would anything happen?
[Laughter]

LANCASTER: See what I mean. In other words, these are the kinds of questions that come up. So the pure form of the Brown Act, which was intended, by the way, to stop collusion, that type of thing
. . .

DOUGLASS: Under the table.

LANCASTER: Under the table deals, yes.

DOUGLASS: Well, maybe it wasn't so easy to transfer that to a large body.

LANCASTER: Or a partisan body.

DOUGLASS: A city council is supposedly nonpartisan.

LANCASTER: I know. I would like to keep it that way.

DOUGLASS: Oh, I agree.

LANCASTER: And, consequently, if you take these ten members and they do this, they are going to be meeting. . . . They will know they are meeting, but I don't think it will be an open meeting.

DOUGLASS: Those are interesting points because, just on the surface it sounds unreasonable that they are not applying.

LANCASTER: Checks and balances, though, will apply because if anything is wrong, the other side is going to say something about the other side.

DOUGLASS: The majority party . . .

LANCASTER: No matter who is the majority party. That's right.

DOUGLASS: Incidentally, I happened to be looking at the *California Journal*--1973 is very early--but they had a listing, as you know they do, of the people who strayed from their party votes, Democrats and Republicans. You were at 25 percent. You were among seventeen who were above 20 percent in not always voting the party line. Those in that group were Beverly, Frank

Murphy, and you. At different times you are going to come out differently on that, aren't you?

LANCASTER: As you know, I try to think things out, if I can, and if I am opposed, just because it's a Republican author, I am not going to vote for it. Or I am not going to oppose just because it is a Democrat author. I guess that's the way it works out. But, of course, I am a Republican, and the majority of the time, you know, philosophically, I agree. But there are times when I disagree.

DOUGLASS: Have you changed in how you view yourself as a Republican? Moderate, liberal, conservative?

LANCASTER: There has been a dramatic change. I don't think I personally have changed. When I first went up there, I was probably one of the most conservative members of the house, and when I left, I wouldn't say--if you use the definition of conservative--that I was all that conservative. You see, it was conservative when I first went up there to think like I think on local government activities.

DOUGLASS: Really?

LANCASTER: Yes. Because there was this great tendency to "mold the world," so to speak. I mean there are differences now. I am proud, frankly, that I voted 25 percent the other way. Just like a city council. If they always vote 5-0, there is something wrong. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: In the '74 primary, Reagan decided to stay neutral on the Republican candidate for governor. This was when [Lieutenant Governor Edward] Reinicke was beginning to have trouble with the probe about the [Republican] San Diego convention and ITT [International Telephone and Telegraph Company]. As you watched this--in that election [Attorney General] Evelle Younger and Robert Finch decided not to run, which left Hugh Flournoy as the party candidate--where were you in all that?

LANCASTER: I supported Hugh Flournoy.

DOUGLASS: You did? That's interesting.

LANCASTER: Yes, very strongly. I have known Hugh for a long time. I consider him a very competent individual. He would have made a good governor. And he was the kind of person we needed at that time because he was able to work very well with both sides of the aisle and he

was very well-known as an individual because he had been around for a while. So I actually thought he'd have been a good candidate now. He lost to Brown. I have a theory on why he lost.

DOUGLASS: What's your theory?

LANCASTER: I think that [President Gerald] Ford defeated him. By pardoning Nixon.

DOUGLASS: The timing was less than perfect?

LANCASTER: What happened was that everything was going very smoothly, and Flournoy was building up momentum. And people were now beginning to recognize [Edmund G.] Jerry Brown [Jr.] for what Jerry Brown is. What happened was when the pardon hit--just before the election--everything stopped in Republican activities. It came to a grinding halt, and it never recovered the momentum.

DOUGLASS: I interviewed Hugh Flournoy a long time ago. It was very evident this was a terrible blow.

LANCASTER: Oh, it was. It was terrible. A lot of Republicans didn't agree, you know, to what Ford did. So, therefore, they just stopped. And, as you know, it takes a lot of volunteer work.

DOUGLASS: So things came to a grinding halt.

LANCASTER: They really did.

DOUGLASS: I heard Flournoy and Brown debate--I think it was a League of California Cities affair--at the Biltmore [Hotel]. It was very interesting. Did, in fact, these problems of Watergate and Vietnam have any impact on your election that year in '74?

LANCASTER: I couldn't tell you whether it did at all. You had an impact on the Republican turnout, I think, which impacted me obviously. But I don't think so. Not in '74.

DOUGLASS: Now in that race you defeated Gerry Jordan. Are we talking about the Gerry Jordan who was at the Claremont Graduate School and Claremont Men's College? A college professor?

LANCASTER: No. It was another Gerry Jordan. And, to be honest with you, I never met him.

DOUGLASS: You are kidding. [Laughter] He did pretty well, actually. I mean considering. You had 44,458 and he had 30,072. So you beat him by 14,000.

LANCASTER: The Democrats were on a swing that year, on the upswing. So I guess I was affected.

- DOUGLASS: But you had no primary opposition. And that's your second election where you won. By '74 you were in your new district, the 62d.
- LANCASTER: Yes.
- DOUGLASS: You described the 49th [district]. Could you just point out the changes, in retrospect.
- LANCASTER: They changed again, you know, after that in '80. So I have got to think back.
- DOUGLASS: Yes. But I meant out of the seventies.
- LANCASTER: O.K. Let me go back then. I lost Monrovia, and I picked up Temple City. I am trying to remember. I think I took all of Pomona and all of West Covina, all of Covina, I still had Claremont, San Dimas, La Verne, and Glendora. I picked up all of Azusa and lost Duarte, lost Monrovia. I lost Walnut.
- DOUGLASS: What had happened in the east side that was a change?
- LANCASTER: I had had north Pomona, but I got it all.
- DOUGLASS: At the time, Leo McCarthy became the new speaker. How did that impact your life?
- LANCASTER: No change, particularly. But Leo was more of a partisan than Moretti was. But, at that time, '74, we lost I forget how many seats. So when Leo McCarthy came in, the close marginal house

situation had changed to become more predominantly Democrat. So Leo McCarthy was more of a partisan speaker. And, at one point it reached--in fact that was the year I think--we dropped down to twenty-three.

DOUGLASS: I wanted to go back just a moment to ask you about [Lieutenant Governor] Robert [H.] Finch, who seemed to be quite a comer and then, of course, went to the president's cabinet with Nixon. Did you know him at all?

LANCASTER: I have met him, but I did not know him per se. I have always admired him, though. Why he left the Washington scene has never been clear to me, frankly. You know Bob Monagan went back there, too, and he came back. Obviously, the Nixon administration, I guess it was common knowledge, was having all kinds of problems with their personnel situation. Which is another story.

It was a tragic situation. Because Bob Monagan and Bob Finch--and [Assemblyman] John Veneman went back too--and these were quality guys who I thought would do good work. But in some way they never were assimilated. They never talked to me about it, to be honest with

you. But they finally became disenchanted with Washington. So that's what they did.

DOUGLASS: Then that took Finch out of state politics.

LANCASTER: I took him out of the state. And then he got, I guess, practising law or whatever he is doing.

DOUGLASS: He was an Occidental [College] graduate.

LANCASTER: Is he?

DOUGLASS: I wanted to ask you about one other thing in '74. [Assemblyman] Jack Fenton had a no-fault insurance plan that apparently came within an eye lash of passing. It was supported by most of the insurance firms and guaranteed a 15 percent reduction of premiums. I guess the failure of it was attributed to the change from Moretti to McCarthy as speaker. Now since you are a person who becomes very involved with the insurance committee, what was your view of that proposal at the time?

LANCASTER: I voted against it, Enid. And, by the way, I have changed my mind on that question of no-fault insurance. I voted against it because I, frankly, at that time did not think the concept of no-fault was the way to go. I didn't believe that a person who had a situation where

another person had hurt them and it was the other person's fault should be deprived of the ability to collect damages. But, very honestly, under very restricted circumstances, I have changed my mind. I now am a supporter of no-fault insurance. It's interesting, isn't it? [Laughter] It evolves.

DOUGLASS: Yes. The record changes and your thinking evolves.

LANCASTER: Yes. It came from experience and watching what was happening to it.

DOUGLASS: Apparently, the reason for the failure was that Moretti had back Fenton and his bill, and McCarthy backed a rival bill by [Assemblyman John F.] Foran.

LANCASTER: Which was more to the liking of the trial attorneys. The issue is really the issue of insurance versus trial attorneys.

DOUGLASS: So neither passed, at that rate.

LANCASTER: That's right. And what finally came to a head with me, I'll be honest with you, and one of the reasons I changed my thinking, was beginning to change, was back when we put out AB2XX, which was the tort reform measure for medical. Just through the process of learning

I found out that, unfortunately, we were going have to take away some ability to recover damages in order to make our system work. Therefore, now I support a limited type of no-fault.

DOUGLASS: Did you say AB2XX?

LANCASTER: AB2XX, which was a special session called for the purpose of solving the medical malpractice question. It was a second extraordinary session. One "X" is one session. Two "XX"s is the second. And we even changed the colors of the bills.

DOUGLASS: Yes, I have seen the colors of the house record. It gets very confusing.

LANCASTER: You can imagine, when I first went up there, that's the way it was. We were all doing nothing but we had "X"s all over the place.

DOUGLASS: So you had these different colored records and different colored bills.

LANCASTER: You know, when I first went up there, we didn't have the well-defined staffing operation. The office of research at that time was really a tool of the speaker's office. It did nothing for the actual membership. The only thing I

had on my desk was the bill itself. No analysis.

DOUGLASS: So you didn't have the legislative counsel as the . . .

LANCASTER: Not analysis. We didn't have all the analysis we have now. And that was reform that came in, by the Republicans demanding it, under Leo McCarthy.

DOUGLASS: Oh, really. They demanded it of him, and he responded?

LANCASTER: Yes. Because, unless you happened to be on the committee and heard the bill, when you walked out on the floor you had an agenda and the bill. So you relied upon people who testified before the house who served on the committee . . .

DOUGLASS: To whom you had access?

LANCASTER: Yes. Or to speak on the bill, to make a decision. So we have done some good things.

DOUGLASS: I would have thought that it would have been ideal for both parties to have access to the analysis.

LANCASTER: We do now. But only the Democrats did then.

DOUGLASS: I am trying to think why he went along with it. I think it would make sense.

LANCASTER: Of course it did. And the Republicans were always complaining about that because the Democrats had basic--it was different--and, frankly, you just didn't get. . . .

DOUGLASS: They had the information highway if they needed to get information?

LANCASTER: Well, I'm not sure that they did either. I think certain members did. It was kind of the old school. If you talked about water issues, Carley Porter stood up on the floor.

DOUGLASS: I see. You depended on an articulate speaker to bring up points.

LANCASTER: That's right. Who knew the subject. That's the way it used to be when you were part time. So that's just changed.

DOUGLASS: Under McCarthy [Assemblyman Louis J.] Papan became [speaker] pro tem, and he was one of your freshmen classmate. Under McCarthy, also, [Assemblyman] Howard [L.] Berman was the majority floor leader and [Assemblyman] Julian [C.] Dixon was the caucus chairman. At least those two were fairly strident and partisan.

LANCASTER: Papan was, too. He wasn't necessarily with me because he and I eventually served on Rules [Committee] together, and at that time the

Rules Committee was not a committee that really dealt in the political area. It was a committee of house administration. And he and I worked very closely and very well together on house administration matters. That changed, unfortunately. That's why I got into some problems with my own caucus because I felt that ought to be house administration. They wanted it more politicized than just administration.

DOUGLASS: Yes. I want to get into that more a little later. There were changes that were made during this period. [Assemblyman Paul] Priolo was the minority leader and Beverly had been in '75.

LANCASTER: Yes. Beverly went onto the senate right away.

DOUGLASS: Could you comment about Beverly?

LANCASTER: Yes. As I just said, I knew Bob before, and he and I had worked together on various projects when dealing with local government. Bob Beverly was the mayor of Manhattan Beach, but his firm was also the city attorney for the City of Industry. And Bob and I had worked on a couple of. . . . In fact, it is interesting. We attended the mayor's conference together in '64 in Miami Beach. We got along fine. And

Beverly is a very talented person. Gosh, he has been up there pretty close to thirty years, I guess.

DOUGLASS: He is still in the senate?

LANCASTER: Still in the senate. He is not running again, and this is his last go-around.

DOUGLASS: That's why he just served for a year as the minority floor leader. And then what about Paul Priolo, who succeeded him?

LANCASTER: Paul was a good man. He did a good job. We all had problems. The legislature was changing then, and I am not sure if Paul was up to the dramatic changes that were occurring. That's not a fair statement because the caucus was changing, too.

DOUGLASS: Was the caucus divided?

LANCASTER: Oh, yes. It was always divided.

DOUGLASS: What would you say the basis for the division was?

LANCASTER: Allegedly, it supposedly had to do with conservative-moderate. But I don't know. Voting conservative candidate or moderate candidate, I just look at the person. The elections were very close. I mean sometimes these minority leaders are elected by one vote.

That brought about a dramatic change. You know, we used to elect the minority leader, the caucus chairman, and the whips separately. And I suggested one caucus--I was getting tired of this battle, battle, battle--if we are going to vote for a minority leader, let him appoint the rest of these folks, and we'll hold them all accountable to him. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: In fact, I have noted that here. So you were the one who did that?

LANCASTER: Yes, right.

DOUGLASS: This is a change. Either up or down.

LANCASTER: Either keep the whole team in or throw the whole team out.

DOUGLASS: So the minority leader could appoint those people.

LANCASTER: See, [Assemblyman John] Stull was always fighting with Monagan, and each had their own staff. And they weren't talking to each other. I thought that was stupid. So I suggested a change.

DOUGLASS: You had a range, I guess, from [Assemblyman Kenneth L.] Ken Maddy of Fresno to [Assemblyman] John [V.] Briggs in that caucus.

LANCASTER: Yes, we had a lot of people like that.

DOUGLASS: Quite a spectrum.

LANCASTER: Yes, it was. Stull was the problem here.

DOUGLASS: How much did you participate in the caucus in the seventies? Were you average?

LANCASTER: I was a heavy participant.

DOUGLASS: Did you get involved immediately?

LANCASTER: Yes, with Monagan. Monagan got me involved immediately when I went up there. Bob put me in a lot of positions of counsel. You needed to be, I guess, part of the inner circle. I don't know what that means.

DOUGLASS: So he was sort of a mentor?

LANCASTER: Yes. And then it depends on who won. Frankly, I never wanted the job.

DOUGLASS: It sounds like a no-win position.

LANCASTER: Well, no, and I didn't want the job because I wanted to concentrate on what I was doing. But, anyway, Priolo, who I didn't vote for, and things changed.

DOUGLASS: Who was opposing Priolo in that, do you remember?

LANCASTER: Yes. I think it was [Assemblyman] Eugene [A.] Chappie.

DOUGLASS: O.K. Because Chappie became the caucus chair.

LANCASTER: Yes. Priolo appointed him to heal the wounds. Priolo only won by one vote.

DOUGLASS: Were you interested in being a whip?

LANCASTER: No. I was more interested in administration and rule change process, which I found getting myself involved in. I saw some serious downsides to the way we were doing things, frankly. Like lack of information, lack of analysis. House administration was, you know, kind of a lackadaisical way of doing things. Sergeant at arms needed to improved, and the state police needed to be improved. All these things that serve the public, in a sense, with the legislative process. Which they, by the way, have been. State policemen. Well, the sergeant of arms was kind of just "here's old Johnny Smith, make him a sergeant" type thing. Now it's different.

DOUGLASS: It's a different world.

LANCASTER: That's right.

DOUGLASS: You served in '75 on the Committee on Education for just a year. Could you explain how that happened?

LANCASTER: Why I left?

DOUGLASS: Yes. But why you went on?

LANCASTER: Well, I was asked to go on, and I went on because. . . . I found, to be honest with you, that Education was not necessarily the committee that I could do the most good on. And I think I resigned to go on Rules [Committee].

DOUGLASS: That's what I was going to ask you because it so appears . . .

LANCASTER: That's exactly right.

DOUGLASS: . . . rules would take a lot of time.

LANCASTER: That's right. And I didn't want to give up Local Government or Finance and Insurance, either. So I shifted to that.

DOUGLASS: I tried to track [education] bills. In '75 you carried a couple of bills. One that kept coming up was this business of the Covina School District experimental kindergarten.

LANCASTER: Pete Schabarum started that process. I can't remember the name of the school. Cedar Grove, I think it was.

DOUGLASS: It was called the Covina-Valley Unified School District.

LANCASTER: Covina-Valley Unified School District. It's one elementary school in that district. Anyway, the bill kind of took an experimental

program under the fund of the state Department of Education and gave more latitude to the school district.

DOUGLASS: It was because of a particular project?

LANCASTER: Experimental program. To be honest with you, it's getting a little fuzzy on top. I just got it renewed because Pete Schabarum started it.

DOUGLASS: Yes. Pete Schabarum had carried a bill in '72. That came up again.

LANCASTER: They could go ahead and do their testing and that kind of stuff without following necessarily the guidelines of the state Department of Education. Now I don't know how that has worked out, frankly. That's one of the downsides of being in the legislature. There are so many things going out there you lose track.

DOUGLASS: Then that year went onto what is called the Finance, Insurance and Commerce Committee, which, as you pointed out, was changed from the original that you were on.

LANCASTER: It did. Yes.

DOUGLASS: You were fourteen years on that committee. So if you add the earlier one, you were on about sixteen years.

LANCASTER: That's right. Sixteen years.

DOUGLASS: Interestingly enough, Bannai and Papan were
. . .

LANCASTER: And Beverly too.

DOUGLASS: So your people were seeing each other, your
freshman class.

LANCASTER: Beverly wasn't a freshman.

DOUGLASS: No. But Papan and Bannai were. And that name
change went one more time and became Finance
and Insurance.

LANCASTER: Yes. We dropped the commerce aspect, and the
banking went on its own way, you see. What
happened . . .

DOUGLASS: So banking got pulled out of finance. It
wasn't considered under finance, was it
commerce?

LANCASTER: Yes. It was the commerce aspect. You notice
also that they dropped the public utilities out
of there, too. We ended up with 900 to 1,000
bills in 1980. We used to deal with tariffs
for trucks and stuff. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: I pulled together your bills by subject, and it
was amazing. I think there were thirty-nine
just under the topic of insurance. Then you
had a lot of bills that addressed credit

unions, which I want to go into later about why those bills were there.

LANCASTER: Which is commerce. I also got involved in escrows and things. I did kind of get into the commerce area.

DOUGLASS: We will go over that legislation. In '75, you were on the Subcommittee for Unemployment Disability of the committee.

LANCASTER: Yes. Off and on I was on that subcommittee.

DOUGLASS: You carried quite a few bills over the years. At that time, was that as heated a topic as it has become?

LANCASTER: No. It was not. The whole process was just starting. It's still not solved.

DOUGLASS: So you saw it from the beginning?

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: Did that subcommittee meet very much?

LANCASTER: Often.

DOUGLASS: Do you remember who was on it? Any of them?

LANCASTER: No. You see, what happened. We changed the policy, and it was a good policy change. We had these subcommittees meet on various subjects and then recommend to the full committee. Which broadened the whole aspect of the ability to keep more time for hearing

legislation. So the subcommittee process started to work in the house at that time. Remember, now, we've eliminated proxy voting. We've required membership to be there to create a quorum. All of this stuff is there. So then that gave us the opportunity--because there members were around--to start processing bills through subcommittees.

DOUGLASS: So did the committee just take that . . .

LANCASTER: That didn't happen before. That was a reform measure.

DOUGLASS: Let's take this committee, the Finance and Insurance. If you came in with a recommendation does the full committee have to accept that?

LANCASTER: Yes, basically.

DOUGLASS: You were a filter basically.

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: And they didn't tend to override.

LANCASTER: No. And we heard the bill. The subcommittee heard the bill.

DOUGLASS: O.K. What did the committee as a whole do?

LANCASTER: First of all, the chairman of the subcommittee, or a member of the subcommittee, whatever, would issue a report. Now remember this

subcommittee had its own staff. The committee would get the full report. Now we are disseminating information. Then the member of the committee, or the chairman of the subcommittee would sit there and report what happened, including even giving the roll call vote in the subcommittee on the bill itself.

Then the full committee would adopt or not adopt the subcommittee report. Under rare circumstances they can be reopened for hearings.

DOUGLASS: Now this meant you had more meetings to go to, but it did expedite process?

LANCASTER: Yes. And we also, at that time in that committee, anyway, the chairman--I think it was [Assemblyman] Alister McAlister--would not tolerate trying to amend that bill in the full committee. [Laughter] It's kind of interesting. There were exceptions always.

DOUGLASS: That must have been a pretty large committee.

LANCASTER: Twenty-one members, I think.

DOUGLASS: Was that pretty true through the years?

LANCASTER: No. They finally cut down a lot of things. We started losing. We lost commerce, for example. And now it is just an Insurance Committee, and

banking is now Banking [Committee]. It was when I left.

DOUGLASS: I wanted to cover during the 1975-76 period your service on the Local Government Committee, which, according to my records, you were on from 1972 to '78 and then '89 to '92. Why was the hiatus there?

LANCASTER: Well, I don't know.

DOUGLASS: Was it other demands?

LANCASTER: Yes, other demands. [Looking at the committee service summary] I went on Governmental Organization, for one thing, which was critical. That was in '79.

DOUGLASS: So maybe your focus changed and then you came back ten years later.

LANCASTER: Yes. Then I got involved in policy research. I know. I also got involved in transportation issues because there was a real need in our district to get involved in that issue.

DOUGLASS: In '75-76, you were chairman of the Committee on Municipal Annexation Reform.

LANCASTER: Yes. We really didn't do a lot. We had a couple of meetings, but we didn't really. . . .

DOUGLASS: But that was right to the heart of your experiences.

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: But that hadn't become as broad a problem then, I suppose?

LANCASTER: No, it hadn't. I thought it was important. We had a couple of meetings, but there was not that much interest in reforming annexation. Remember, at that time we were starting in the sphere of influences, the whole process on annexation was starting to change. It didn't last very long.

DOUGLASS: I tried to pick out a few bills. A.B. 2765, which dealt with the ability to have a special district to a property tax for the cost of electricity.¹ That would be in 1975-76. I think it had to do with lighting, didn't it?

LANCASTER: Yes. It did. That's right. San Dimas had a particular problem relative to an assessment situation. There was some quirk in the law, and San Dimas was in the process of developing their western theme for their downtown. They had a problem, I remember, with their assessment district on streetlighting. That

¹ A.B. 2765, 1975-1976 Reg. Sess., Cal. Stat., ch. 461 (1976).

was the purpose of it. To correct whatever the problem was.

DOUGLASS: So they could collect more in order to do the lighting.

LANCASTER: You see, I happen to believe. . . . One of Covina's problems: my lights out here are not charged in the assessment; they pay for it out of the general fund. I don't think that's right. I don't think a person who doesn't have streetlights ought to be paying for my streetlights. Or at least the power.

DOUGLASS: Of course, there would be business differentials, too.

LANCASTER: That's right. And so, anyway, that solved the problem Covina had. So, basically, that was what it was. It was to help correct the problem. Now [City of] Camarillo, they got involved. Evidently, they had a similar type of circumstance.

DOUGLASS: That's why Craven was on the bill.

LANCASTER: That's right.

DOUGLASS: It is interesting that in the period you were on a Select Committee on Health Sciences Education, and I wondered if that came out of

being on the Education Committee because I thought that was unusual. Do you remember?

LANCASTER: Yes. [Assemblyman Gordon W.] Duffy asked me to serve on that committee. Duffy was an optometrist, not an M.D. but an optometrist, and he wanted to put together a group of people to review something. I'll be honest with you, I don't remember what it was. But it was a special-purpose situation.

DOUGLASS: All right.

LANCASTER: A select committee, by the way, is usually for a special purpose.

DOUGLASS: Yes. Very specific. In other words, it isn't just to deal with this topic.

LANCASTER: Not, for example, the unemployment disability insurance aspect.

DOUGLASS: Then there was a Select Committee on Municipal Liability Insurance.

LANCASTER: Yes. Beverly and I. That's when we started to run into problems in local government to get insurance. Things of that nature. And that committee met and we did some pretty good work. See, a select committee doesn't report to another committee. Holds hearings, try to ascertain what the problem is.

DOUGLASS: It doesn't report to the speaker?

LANCASTER: It reports back to the house when it comes into session. But then individual members of that committee will pick up and start in the direction of legislation. And sometimes you get a select committee bill through. But we were starting to review the whole question of municipal liability insurance. Because, remember, this was the time when a tree trunk would fall on somebody's head.

DOUGLASS: Right, on Euclid Avenue in Ontario. Was it in this period the notion of allowing pools or self-insurance started.

LANCASTER: Yes. It started. It's not a direct result of that activity of the committee itself, but it's that committee. In other words, there became a clear place for the City of Claremont to go and just talk about their problems relative to that. Not on a particular piece of legislation because nobody really at that time had an answer. So we had to have a vehicle, a mechanism, so the city could come forward, or whatever, and confer and say, "Gee, this is what's happening to us."

DOUGLASS: So you would hear the problems

LANCASTER: Yes. And we did a lot of that. Craven was, by the way, a supervisor. Knox, who was chairman of Local Government. Myself. McAlister, chair of Finance and Insurance. [Assemblyman Bill] McVittie. Papan. McVittie is now a judge.

[End Tape 3, Side A]

[Begin Tape 3, Side B]

DOUGLASS: You went onto the Rules Committee in '76, which we gather is why you went off Education.

LANCASTER: I think that's right.

DOUGLASS: And your fellow freshman, Papan, was the chairman.

LANCASTER: Yes. He was a McCarthy supporter. The Rules Committee is elected by each caucus. And at that time it was an administration committee, not like it is today, unfortunately, and it was made up of three Democrats, three Republicans, each selected by their own caucus and elected by the house. The chairman was appointed by the speaker.

DOUGLASS: And he could break a tie vote?

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: The majority party really had four votes if it came down to it.

LANCASTER: That's true. But it was equal representation. And the vice chairman was always of the other party.

DOUGLASS: Who was vice chairman when you first went on it?

LANCASTER: When I first went on the chairman was a [Assemblyman] Leon Ralph from Los Angeles.

- DOUGLASS: Who was the vice chair?
- LANCASTER: Chappie was the vice chair. In '77 it changed. When I went on in '76, it was old Rules Committee. In '77, it was the new Rules Committee.
- DOUGLASS: So what was the change?
- LANCASTER: Papan became chairman. And [Assemblyman [Jerry] Lewis and [Assemblyman William M.] Thomas. Lewis was on before with me. Thomas was new. [Assemblyman] Larry Chimbole came on. [Assemblyman Joseph B.] Montoya was on that committee and [Assemblyman Herschel] Rosenthal.
- DOUGLASS: This was quite a coup, to be appointed to the Rules Committee.
- LANCASTER: Elected. You have to be elected.
- DOUGLASS: Selected. How do you think that happened that you emerged at that point?
- LANCASTER: Well, I was always very interested in house administration. And the minority leader at that time was Beverly, I think.¹ So, anyway, I won the election.
- DOUGLASS: Was that every two years, or every year?
- LANCASTER: Every two.
- DOUGLASS: So when they organized, they did it.

¹ Priolo in 1976 and Beverly in 1975.

LANCASTER: Yes. Down the road, you will find that I was not reelected. That's when I was having fallouts with the [Assemblyman Patrick J.] Nolans of the world. He was the minority leader.

DOUGLASS: Actually, wasn't it when [Assemblyman Robert W.] Naylor was the minority leader that you were removed?

LANCASTER: Yes. But that's when the person who was not called the minority leader was the minority leader, Nolan. Naylor was just kind of hanging on.

DOUGLASS: I read two different statements that confused me. One said that because of Nolan you weren't continuing. And the other said . . .

LANCASTER: Naylor was reelected minority leader, but he was hanging by a thread. So it was only a matter of time. But I, frankly, had real problems with that administration, the Nolan administration.

DOUGLASS: We might as well talk about this now. You had been on the committee for seven or more years. How did the question come up?

LANCASTER: Well, it comes up every two years.

DOUGLASS: Yes. But I meant you had been reelected.

LANCASTER: Well, you know, the Rules Committee had a well-defined responsibility, basically house administration. And the aspect of rules were involved in granting if you could hear resolutions of the full house and all of that type of thing. And we were involved in setting rules, adopting rules, for the house operation. But, you see, we were also involved in the staffing requirements and all that, which is administration.

Well, there was a change in '78 through there where there were people who wanted the Rules Committee to be other than that and more politically oriented. And I didn't agree with that at all. I favored it ought to be house administration. That's what happened.

DOUGLASS: So the politicizing of the role of the committee?

LANCASTER: Which is a mistake. When you are talking about house administration or creating a circumstance more favorable to the individual member of the house to gather information, to provide analysis, and all of these things, which I don't take credit for but participated in

changing, were, I think, important things the Rules Committee continued to operate on.

For example, we got a change from the speaker assigning bills to committee to the Rules Committee assigning bills to committee. Those kind of things. More and more that was starting to happen until we got politicized. Once you don't have forty-one you lose. And the Rules Committee became. . . . In fact, I don't think they even have a Republican vice chairman any more. They also enlarged it, which I thought was a mistake, too. You don't need nine members.

DOUGLASS: By the time you were on, the committee was deciding the assignment of bills.

LANCASTER: Yes. That was the reform in '74.

DOUGLASS: There's where it gets tricky, I suppose, because the Rules Committee essentially can deep-six a bill by sending it to a certain committee.

LANCASTER: Yes. And I worked on that, too. In fact, as the vice chairman of the Rules Committee I had a staff member assigned to me on the Rules. And Papan and I put together a committee--I was on it, he was on it--to define the jurisdiction of the committee. So, therefore, when my staff

member would review the bill, a piece of legislation dealing with insurance, he would let me know this bill should go to this committee.

DOUGLASS: It went to the policy committee first and then to the finance . . .

LANCASTER: It went to the Rules.

DOUGLASS: No. After Rules. I mean you would assign it to the policy committee.

LANCASTER: Yes. But, you see, we worked out a system on the Rules Committee where we actually had defined the responsibility and role of each committee. And so that was in writing.

DOUGLASS: You had objective standards.

LANCASTER: Yes. That was a change too. Then this staff member of mine would review all the bills coming up for assignment that day before the committee, and then, in effect, tell me whether they had been assigned to the right committee or not, based on the parameters that were decided. And we also did something else, which was a reform. We put in job descriptions for our employees. We didn't have any. [Laughter] And we had 1,500 people working for the legislature.

DOUGLASS: In those days, was the assignment of room space and that kind of thing still pretty vindictive?

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: The minority party members definitely didn't get the better space.

LANCASTER: Yes. Unless you happened to be in on Rules, which I was. You know, I spent twenty years in the assembly. I didn't move. I was in one office. I got this corner office I liked very well. You were there. And I could have gone to a big elaborate thing, but I didn't. I, frankly, liked that office. It was just right for me. But, anyway, so we did some dramatic changes.

DOUGLASS: So you were trying to reform the system.

LANCASTER: And we were. And Papan and I worked very closely on that. Then it got political, and then Papan went to his Democrat political stuff. You know, when I went off, that was it. It just became political.

DOUGLASS: You mean he wanted it more political? Or was he reacting?

LANCASTER: No, he didn't. He reacted.

DOUGLASS: He went out of the legislature in the eighties.

LANCASTER: He ran for the senate and lost [1986].

DOUGLASS: Now there are some people who came on and off that committee. One was [Assemblywoman] Carol Hallett. She, of course, was involved with the Republican caucus. What was her view of the Rules Committee?

LANCASTER: She had a tendency more to the political side. And she ended up as minority leader. That's when they started the political side. That's when the people elected in '78, on the Republican side, started to take hold of the caucus.

DOUGLASS: In fact, didn't I see that Nolan put himself on the Rules Committee?

LANCASTER: Well, he was on the Rules Committee for a long time.

DOUGLASS: But he was the minority floor leader.

LANCASTER: Well, no, that was caused by Willie [Brown]. Willie changed the rules and required them to be on the Rules Committee to show them what was going on.

DOUGLASS: So that's why. I thought that was odd.

LANCASTER: Yes. He didn't want it at all. But he ended on the Rules Committee eventually.

DOUGLASS: So Brown said the caucus chairs had to be on the Rules Committee. That would make it more political.

LANCASTER: I didn't agree with that at all. There were Republicans who became very politicized, and the other party became very politicized. It became interesting. And I didn't like to see it, frankly, because I think it lost something.

DOUGLASS: Did that begin in about the late seventies?

LANCASTER: In '78.

DOUGLASS: So you became vice chair in '79. How do you account for that? You served '79 to '82.

LANCASTER: You were elected by the Rules Committee.

DOUGLASS: So that is strictly within the committee, but it is tradition to make a minority leader vice chair.

LANCASTER: Yes. It was tradition. And usually the senior member. [Assemblyman] Jerry Lewis, for example, was vice chairman before I was.

DOUGLASS: The other thing that you did during this period was you started serving--and I gather this is a function of the Rules Committee--as part of the Joint Committee on Restoration of the Capitol.

LANCASTER: And, by the way, the other Democrat member on that was [Assemblyman] Dennis Mangers, of the Joint Committee on Restoration.

DOUGLASS: He was on the Rules Committee?

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: Tell me about the composition of the restoration committee. Was the Rules Committee automatically in the restoration?

LANCASTER: Well, in house administration. Yes. Both Rules Committees, the Senate Rules Committee and the Assembly. So you had a Joint Rules Committee made up of the members of the Assembly Rules Committee, plus the Senate Rules Committee. Plus add-ons in the senate because we had seven and they only had five. And that committee was chaired by the Assembly Rules Committee chairman. The vice chairman was a senator, usually of the opposite party, again.

The joint committee was a committee responsible for the capitol restoration project. And they appointed a subcommittee that consisted of three from each side to act as the oversight committee. Because they didn't want to deal with it on a regular daily

basis, and it required day-to-day operation almost sometimes.

DOUGLASS: Now Bannai was on the committee during that period too. He talked about that experience. So [Senator James] Jim Mills was involved for that reason, from the senate.

LANCASTER: Jim Mills. That's right. And [Senator Nicholas C.] Petris was still there. Who is the other? Bill Craven

DOUGLASS: You had Craven and Lancaster in the assembly and Mills, Petris.

LANCASTER: Mangers was on there, too.

DOUGLASS: Did Papan carry the necessary legislation for getting the restoration done?

LANCASTER: Primarily, because he was chairman of the Joint Rules [Committee]. Now Mills was the chairman of the oversight committee. And should be because he was the guy with the background for it.

DOUGLASS: I gathered there were some altercations, or let's say some feuding going on. . . . The fact that Mills had [Raymond] Girvigian trailing all of this. It was expressed in the article I read that he was being sort of nit-picking about this.

LANCASTER: Well, Mills is an historian, and there is nothing against that because I admired Mills very much for that, actually. But, you know, it has a tendency sometimes if you are an historian, you become--nit-picking you don't call it--more precise in trying to do something. And, frankly, sometimes you just can't do it. He wanted that. His goal, everything precise to the time. You know, 1910, what we were trying to do. He was having a little bit of difficulty, I guess, and so he needed somebody to help him formulate these programs. Girvigian was the guy then. Frankly, Girvigian did a good job, and he helped. But we didn't accept necessarily everything that he recommended because it just, in some instances, was not practical.

DOUGLASS: Well, plus expensive.

LANCASTER: That's right. And sometimes it was just not practical. I mean you can get involved in things that historically, and you know this better than I, you would like to see happen, but you just can't do it.

DOUGLASS: This must have taken quite a bit of time?

LANCASTER: Yes. It was an ongoing thing until it finally got resolved. Because we were ploughing new ground. They were meeting on maybe a monthly or something. Finally, the whole thing-- contracts were let, architects were chosen, all of these happened--it became very involved.

DOUGLASS: Could you just comment on what was supposed to happen, which was [Randolph] Collier towers?

LANCASTER: Oh, yes. What happened was, and this is the reason why the figure quoted is forty-three million dollars. Actually, it cost them closer to seventy [million]. What Collier wanted to do on the corner of Fifteenth Street, across from the capitol park on Fifteenth, on the east side of the park--the state owns apartment buildings over there because that is part of the capitol expansion program (or was originally)--they wanted to tear those down and put two twin towers over there. The assembly one side and the senate on the other, and they would meet in between.

And some members, including myself, felt that would not be the way to do it. That we ought to do what we did do and restore the capitol. Otherwise, it would have just

practically deteriorated. He was chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee. He always used to stick forty-three million dollars in there for the Collier Towers.

DOUGLASS: I read that there was sixty-five million dollars.

LANCASTER: Well, we spent eventually about seventy million.

DOUGLASS: No. But there was sixty-five million there to spend, but you spent about sixty-seven million. The implication was that sixty-five was money that had been part of the Collier . . .

LANCASTER: Only about forty-three million.

DOUGLASS: So how did that change to seventy?

LANCASTER: Well, he put in money every year. Of course, we never spent it. So we finally grabbed it one year.

DOUGLASS: Now to what do you attribute the reasons for his failure to get the Collier Towers?

LANCASTER: Well, I think, frankly, those of us who were on the other side of the issue finally prevailed. First of all, the state architect condemned the building.

DOUGLASS: Who was the state architect then?

LANCASTER: I don't know. Anyway, he condemned the building as not safe in earthquakes.

DOUGLASS: The capitol.

LANCASTER: Yes. And so consequently we had a decision to make, and the decision was to tear it down--that would have been a mistake--to fix it, which we ended up doing, or put beams or something on the second floor and just leave the first floor. We didn't want to do that. Make a partial building out of it. So when finally we came to the issue of we've got to do something--see up until this point we didn't have to do anything, so it just kept going along its merry way--the majority very wisely decided to restore the building.

DOUGLASS: But, also, at that point wasn't Brown trying to become speaker and he failed?

LANCASTER: Yes. But that was not a part of this.

DOUGLASS: You don't think that is partly why this failed?

LANCASTER: No. Because this was a senate and an assembly decision, basically. It had nothing to do, in a sense, with one individual house.

DOUGLASS: That's true. It was both houses. But this other plan had to involve the destruction of the capitol. What would have happened to that?

LANCASTER: It was never clear to me. That was never answered. In other words, that question . . .

DOUGLASS: Tear it down and use it as a park?

LANCASTER: First of all, it made little sense. If we were going to tear it down and build a new legislative chamber, it ought to be where that building is anyway. Because that's where the offices are. See, he was going to replace the whole thing. See what I mean. He was going to replace everything, including our offices. And I guess the argument would be to turn it over to the executive branch, which is one problem. Because California does need an executive office building. And the legislature could very easily use all that space. So that was the judgment decision. But we were forced to make that decision.

DOUGLASS: You were in the hot seat.

LANCASTER: Yes, basically. We had to do something. Did you see what we did while the building was being renovated, where we went? Did you ever get up to see us?

DOUGLASS: No. I didn't see where you went. I was inside the building because I was on the California

Heritage Preservation Commission. I saw the work in progress. Where did you move?

LANCASTER: We moved to the east side of the building and put two big mobile homes up.

DOUGLASS: Oh, yes. I did see those.

LANCASTER: We spent five years over there. It took '76 to '82.

DOUGLASS: It went through on schedule.

LANCASTER: Yes. Things were moving. That committee was a very fine committee to get things done. And if we ran into certain circumstances where we were having a problem, we just sat there and hassled it out. It wasn't a partisan group at all. Everybody was working for. . . . We were all interested in the same thing.

DOUGLASS: Were you pleased with the end product?

LANCASTER: Oh, yes. Superb, super.

DOUGLASS: It is really beautiful. Who would ever figure that in your life as a legislator you had this once in a century or more experience?

LANCASTER: That's right. In fact, the building will last a hundred years, now that we've rebuilt it. There is an interesting thing on that. You know, we photographed the whole building before we tore it down.

DOUGLASS: So you have the before and after.

LANCASTER: We also photographed every piece that came out and put them in computers. And we saved what we could and we put them back.

DOUGLASS: I see. That's why everything is back in the building. That must have been quite a job.

LANCASTER: They were going around there. You would be surprised. Take the tiles, for example. You will notice when you go through, when you go up there next time, you go to the main building downstairs and you see the seal in the tiles when you are coming through the door. We took all of that and put it in the computer. We had a big warehouse over in west Sacramento.

DOUGLASS: So it is what you would call restoration to the degree possible to what it originally was?

LANCASTER: That's correct.

DOUGLASS: Then you have the kind of ratskeller there in the basement for a restaurant.

LANCASTER: Yes. We don't know for sure, but in 1906, I think it was, the speaker closed the bar in the cellar. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: I didn't know they had a bar.

LANCASTER: I didn't either. This is an interesting thing. It used to be the stable. It didn't dawn on

us. We said, "Well, here is the basement."
You know, that is part of the museum complex.
So we put that in.

DOUGLASS: As you may know, in Europe, particularly in
Germany, that is very common. The city hall is
where you can get some of the best food. You
go to the basement of the city hall.

LANCASTER: They did a pretty good job. I didn't, you
know, eat there that often.

DOUGLASS: It's nice to have it there.

LANCASTER: They give tours. Another issue, do you serve
beer and wine? It was finally allowed.

DOUGLASS: During this period you carried a bill having to
do with the Pomona Valley Water District.
Apparently, they were having a bond election.
It was A.B. 1198.¹ To form nine improvement
districts composed of various cities

LANCASTER: Let me see.

DOUGLASS: Apparently, they needed a bond election because
of the water quality problems and the rapid
development, meaning more demands. So I guess
this was something you did to facilitate the

¹ A.B. 1198, 1975-1976 Reg. Sess., Cal. Stat., ch.
291, (1975).

formation of these districts. And it was the various cities in our valley.

LANCASTER: And, of course, my tried and true personal opinion, it went to the people themselves to make sure it worked.

DOUGLASS: This, it seems to me, is the first clear-cut evidence that the resources of the infrastructure were beginning to suffer from the development. Something needed to be done.

LANCASTER: Well, also, as you know, when you say development, it is all inclusive. We have a serious problem out here of nitrates and things of that nature from the agricultural era. That's right. It was a step put together to start process on that whole thing. Infrastructure, water. We are still dealing with that.

DOUGLASS: Yes. We will always be dealing with it, I guess. Also, you had a number of bills off and on that had to do with the Vehicle Code, but I picked up one that sounds like it was a local problem. It was A.B. 1664.¹ It was an amendment to the Vehicle Code having to do with

¹ A.B. 1664. 1975-1976 Reg. Sess., Cal. Stat., ch. 213 (1976).

local regulation of assemblage and processions and for-hire [vehicles]. It had to with local government being able to regulate parades. That kind of thing.

LANCASTER: Or cabs.

DOUGLASS: In other words, that was a state function.

LANCASTER: Yes. It came under the Public Utilities Commission.

DOUGLASS: Really. Taxis?

LANCASTER: Yes. It also did other things.

DOUGLASS: Had there been any problems about parades or assemblies?

LANCASTER: No, not really. Well, yes. I am trying to remember.

DOUGLASS: What triggered it?

LANCASTER: I don't remember. It came locally. Somebody locally had a problem. You don't remember anything, letters, in the file?

DOUGLASS: I don't know on that bill particularly.

LANCASTER: I've got to go up there one of these days and go to the archive and look at my stuff.

DOUGLASS: Your bill files are great. Very helpful.

LANCASTER: I sent them every two years. And most members don't do that.

DOUGLASS: The 1976 election. Was the challenge from Sandy Baldonado the strongest one you had had?

LANCASTER: Oh, yes. There is no question about it. Sandy did yeoman's work that year.

DOUGLASS: Now neither you nor she, I think, had any primary opponents that year.

LANCASTER: I don't think I did.

DOUGLASS: I don't think you hardly ever did.

LANCASTER: I did one year. I had primary opposition from Gary Miller, who ran against me as a Republican in '78, and then he ran against me as a Democrat. He reregistered. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: So he ran in the primary in '78.

LANCASTER: And then he ran against me. He got the Democrat nomination. He did that in 1980. Sandy, as far as opponents, she gave me the best race. Sandy is a very competent person.

DOUGLASS: What were the issues then? Do you remember? She ran against you later, too.

LANCASTER: Yes, in '78. It had to do primarily, I guess, with her philosophy and mine. It was just a genuine difference of opinion on the way we ought to conduct our state government. She is more liberal than I am. I mean her philosophy was. She believed what she believed in. The

big issue she made headlines on in '76 was the City of Industry situation.

DOUGLASS: Oh, did she?

LANCASTER: Yes. She was very critical of the development of the City of Industry. Which I am not.

DOUGLASS: Why would that be laid at your doorstep?

LANCASTER: She just used it as an issue, you see. Well, because I frankly, and still am, a supporter of the concept of the development of communities like the City of Industry.

DOUGLASS: Are you?

LANCASTER: Absolutely. Because, you see, I was around when it was formed. And the purpose of the formation of the City of Industry was to allow the development of types of industry that would create jobs out here that you wouldn't let in Claremont. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Well, that's right. But then what are your comments then about a city that has like 500 to 600 hundred people. And families are running the city council.

LANCASTER: You can't do that now, obviously, the way it was then. It has changed.

DOUGLASS: Well, it wasn't changed by '76.

LANCASTER: No. That's one of the things she was advocating. I frankly think it's O.K.

DOUGLASS: But, you know, there were fathers and sons, to find five people who could run for the city council.

LANCASTER: Well, it's not new in California. You've got [City of] Vernon.

DOUGLASS: No. And there's [City of] Commerce.

LANCASTER: Yes. Well, Commerce has changed a lot. [City of] Irwindale.

DOUGLASS: I can understand the need for a place where these things happen. You have the congruence of the transportation system there to do it.

LANCASTER: There must be 50-60,000 jobs in the City of Industry for people who live in our cities.

DOUGLASS: Then that gives them an incredible tax base.

LANCASTER: It wouldn't be there otherwise. That's a property tax basis of about twenty years ago. Covina wouldn't let them in. You wouldn't let them in.

DOUGLASS: You mean theoretically?

LANCASTER: Well, they wouldn't.

DOUGLASS: Did they try to get into Covina?

LANCASTER: Over the years, this valley, because of its transportation and location.

DOUGLASS: You mean the elements that make up the city.

LANCASTER: Yes. Now you would let them in if you had them. Covina, for example, didn't annex where the May Company is. That's in West Covina. Which was silly because of downtown Covina, we didn't want this shopping center here. You see what I mean.

DOUGLASS: So was Industry incorporated during the time you were in the legislature? I thought it was earlier.

LANCASTER: No. It was back in the fifties.

DOUGLASS: Schabarum, I think, was involved.

LANCASTER: Actually, the guy in the legislature at that time was Geddes.

DOUGLASS: Yes. It probably was. So they incorporated in the fifties?

LANCASTER: In the late fifties.

DOUGLASS: So that was one of the issues.

LANCASTER: Yes. Then I don't know what the other issues were. She was critical of my vote against the Equal Rights Amendment, which I voted against.

DOUGLASS: That's a national issue.

LANCASTER: Well, an amendment to the constitution of the United States.

DOUGLASS: Yes.

LANCASTER: It could have been an issue with her. I don't know.

DOUGLASS: I think it probably was.

LANCASTER: I am sure it was. I expected the wrath of womanhood to fall upon me. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: The district at that point was 50 percent Democrat and 44 percent Republican. That's the highest Democrat ratio I think I ever saw.

LANCASTER: That's right. Which is one of the reasons why it was such a close race.

DOUGLASS: Was that because of the new district, the change?

LANCASTER: Yes. That's right.

DOUGLASS: Percentagewise that's considered a fair challenge, isn't it for you take a district with that kind of ratio.

LANCASTER: Oh, yes. It was a very nip and tuck close race. It really was.

DOUGLASS: The final was 51,550 and Baldonado 44,373.

LANCASTER: In '78, it was even closer. She had honed her campaign by then. And, also, in '77 I spent eight weeks in the hospital with bypass surgery.

DOUGLASS: That's when you had the heart surgery. There was one article I picked up in the *Los Angeles*

Times, which I wanted to ask you about. The headline was about a gift from the California Medical Association.

LANCASTER: Oh, yes.

DOUGLASS: As I read the fine print, it also got down to the point that CMA [California Medical Association] may have had a problem if they gave this money.

LANCASTER: Remember Prop. 9 was adopted in 1974, when Jerry Brown ran for governor. And Prop. 9 established the Fair Political Practices Commission. I received a thousand-dollar honorarium from the medical association for participating in a panel for them. The Prop. 9 board, FPC [Fair Political Practices] board, sent their investigators out, and they thought --this was brand new--it was not legal, and it was. Well, they said, "It was a gift. What did you do for it?" They couldn't define, as they have now, when you get an honorarium. They finally defined what it was, you have to participate. You just couldn't take the money. Which I never do, anyway. It was an honorarium for participating in a panel. That was the headline. It was very new back then, and that

was it. I just reported it, and that's all I did. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: You did appear at the meeting?

LANCASTER: I participated in the panel. Yes. I didn't just take the thousand dollars.

DOUGLASS: Well, apparently, different people did different things with it. It was Bannai, Priolo, Stull and you, Republicans. And then Democrats [Assemblyman Frank] Vincencia and Dixon. Still, the way the article was written, it looked as though actually the onus was going to be on the person from the California Medical Association for doing this.

LANCASTER: I guess in the past . . .
[Interruption]

LANCASTER: Anyway, it was an honorary participation in a panel discussion. And, if you remember, the hot topic at that point was medical malpractice.

DOUGLASS: Was that the subject?

LANCASTER: Yes. That was the one I was on.

DOUGLASS: Wasn't it the political arm of the CMA? It was the Political Action Committee.

LANCASTER: You see, what they used to do. They used to bring members in. They were forming their

action PACs [Political Action Committee], and PACs are a direct result, by the way, of reform. Did you know that?

DOUGLASS: No. I never had it put in that light. Explain that.

LANCASTER: O.K. Before, individuals used to give contributions straight. The doctors contributed. Then when campaign reform came in, then the medical association said, "Well, let's just consolidate, and then we'll get out, in effect, more money because it is not individual." And that's a PAC. And all these PACs formed right after Prop. 9 was adopted.

DOUGLASS: I see. I sort of knew that, but I hadn't thought about Prop. 9 in direct relationship to it.

LANCASTER: So now the PACs, you know, are criticized.

DOUGLASS: Yes, I know.

LANCASTER: So what they'd do, they would bring their people in for meetings, and these are people who contributed to the PAC, I guess. And then they would bring people in and talk about issues.

DOUGLASS: Incidentally, what do you think the problems are with the financing of campaigns today? Do

you think there is an answer to controlling the amount of money that gets poured in? And then the differential between the person who, say, is independently wealthy.

LANCASTER: You can't constitutionally prohibit the person from spending his own money.

DOUGLASS: No. But let's say the person who is an incumbent and has an enormous fund.

LANCASTER: I am not for public financing of campaigns because I don't believe that taxpayer dollars should be utilized for the purpose of providing monies to people you don't philosophically agree with. In some areas you can earmark money for certain things. You can't in California but you can. You can do it that way by tax deduction, for like the Republican party or something.

What is needed, Enid, and what we do have in California now, and maybe not totally enough, we have strong reporting procedures. Not just the person who receives the money, but the person that raises the money and how they raise the money. We need a strong law, as we now have on the books, of limitations. I believe seriously that you ought to have a

limitation figure on the amount of money that anybody, PAC or otherwise, can contribute to an individual campaign. And the range is one thousand dollars or something. There ought to be that limitation.

DOUGLASS: Now there are always going to be ways around that, I suppose.

LANCASTER: Well, the way around it now--I can see right now problems developing--the size of the candidate committees. They are all over the place now. One group will form a committee on their issue. And they won't even talk to the candidate, and they'll go out and they'll support and send mailers in, supporting this candidate over that candidate, based on their issue. And they are raising money to do it. In other words, they are not controlled by the candidate. How do you stop that? I don't know. And it wouldn't change with public financing. That won't change anything. But I think you can legitimately put caps on the amount of money contributed, and you can get into maintaining and making sure there is a good, solid, strong reporting process. Public awareness. That's the only thing you can do.

DOUGLASS: And have the reporting spaced in such a way that it is effective? That it reflects what's going on?

LANCASTER: Basically, like, for example, the situation in Long Beach. Philip Morris [Company] dropped \$125,000 into this guy's race at the last minute. This Republican candidate who beat this gal down there. You see, that's supposed to be reported. I presume it was.

DOUGLASS: The impact of that report--that came so late--that any report that is filed won't reflect it until well after the election?

LANCASTER: Well, that's supposed to be reported in twenty-four hours. Any contribution received in the last week, I think it is, of a thousand dollars or more has to be reported to the Fair Political Practices Commission. The question is: is the media picking it up? I don't know.

DOUGLASS: So, in other words, they have to have it in within twenty-four hours of receiving it.

LANCASTER: Yes. Or knowledge of it, actually, in the last week.

DOUGLASS: So if that is properly enforced, that ought to take care of the last-minute contributions.

LANCASTER: But, see, the whole theory is that the media will be the watchers. I don't know. If you have ever been in the Fair Political Practices Commission office, I never have, I can just imagine the paper blizzard that hits them. It all comes by telegraph.

DOUGLASS: It must be incredible at election time.

LANCASTER: Yes. In the last week. They don't even get it filed probably.

DOUGLASS: Do you think that the commission has been effective in a way? That it has helped?

LANCASTER: I think it is structured incorrectly.¹

DOUGLASS: How would you change it?

LANCASTER: First of all, I don't think the administrative officer ought to be the chairman. I have never gone for that concept. And, secondly, it's a-- I don't know how you would change it--the controller, who is a Republican, appoints a Democrat. This kind of thing. There is a lot of theory there. I guess it has worked all right. But it took them quite a while. They

¹ The Fair Political Practices Commission is a five-member board, not more than three of whom may be from the same political party. The governor appoints two members from different parties, including the chairman, who is the chief administrative officer. The attorney general, secretary of state, and controller each appoint one member.

had a shakedown cruise problem for a long time. They had to get involved in lots of trial and error. And, now what do you do with the local stuff.

DOUGLASS: The governor appoints the chairman.

LANCASTER: Yes. They all do.

DOUGLASS: And the controller has an appointment, the Secretary of State has an appointment. So there are all these slots. How else would you do it?

LANCASTER: I don't know, but I would like it different.

DOUGLASS: A different formation. And, as you say, the executive director . . .

LANCASTER: . . . never should be the chairman. The chairman ought to be. . . . Because I don't agree with that. He is paid, you know, full time. And the others don't get paid, which is O.K., but, frankly, none of them should get paid. They ought to be there just doing the job.

DOUGLASS: Which raises another question which is going on now.

LANCASTER: One thing. By the way, the chairman can't serve more than four years. He's out. There is a term limitation.

DOUGLASS: On the administrator.

LANCASTER: Which I think is also a mistake. If he is a good administrator, he ought to be there.

DOUGLASS: That reminds me of one thing that is coming out now--talking about party largess--the ability of Willie Brown as speaker, which has been pervasive, to appoint people to these commissions and boards at large salaries. Which makes you wonder why some commissions and boards are paid--I know they are supposed to carry a workload--and why others are not?

LANCASTER: Well, that needs to be clarified. In other words, each board and commission's role ought to be defined and scrutinized. And that's the whole process of sunset. Remember the sunset group were trying to get involved in it?

DOUGLASS: The sunset law.

LANCASTER: We didn't get it through, unfortunately, but we needed a sunset. These boards and commissions ought to be sunsetted, or reviewed automatically every so often. This is a change, by the way, that happened over the last decade, in the eighties.

DOUGLASS: The ability to make these appointments?
Because they are obviously taking care of
people.

LANCASTER: That's right. I frankly think it's a practice
that ought to be eliminated. It's pretty tough
to fix responsibility. Just, for example, I
don't agree with the concept of an insurance
commissioner being elected. But I think there
ought to be somebody responsible for insurance.
But who do you hold accountable? That you hold
accountable to the governor. In other words,
there ought to be clearly well-defined areas of
responsibility.

DOUGLASS: So it would be like a department head?

LANCASTER: Yes. In other words, if you are dealing with
areas of executive responsibility, you don't
need to clutter it up with legislative
[involvement]. Enid, this is one of my basic
concerns about what is happening.

[End Tape 3, Side B]

[Begin Tape 4, Side A]

LANCASTER: One of the things that I am very concerned about in California--I have watched it occur over a period of time--to me it is getting worse--we are losing well-defined areas of responsibility by levels of government. We are too centralized in our governmental power, if that's the word to use, I use authority, in Sacramento. And it's getting worse, not better. And we were talking about the relationship of commission assignments. If the legislature is responsible for the commission and their activities, then the governor shouldn't appoint anybody. If the executive branch is responsible for that activity, then the . . .

DOUGLASS: He should.

LANCASTER: That's right. Because now we are having problems fixing responsibility. Which has been the trend. Let's see, it started with the Coastal Commission.

DOUGLASS: Oh, did it? Was that the first one?

LANCASTER: I think so.

DOUGLASS: And that was happening as you came aboard.

LANCASTER: Yes, '74. I am trying to remember. The makeup of the Coastal Commission. . . . I don't remember whether we changed that or not.

DOUGLASS: I thought I had a conversation with you that when you ran . . .

LANCASTER: I did not approve of the Coastal Commission.

DOUGLASS: Yes, I know. You said that. When you ran in [November] '72.

LANCASTER: '72 was an issue at the legislative level and we killed it. That's where we took it [to the ballot]. I think that was the first time, to the best of my knowledge, anyway, that that process was established of the speaker, and the Rules Committee. . . . At least in the senate it is a committee that makes the appointment, in the assembly it's the speaker. Frankly, if we are going to maintain this concept of doing that, which I have problems with to start with, then it ought to be done by the Rules Committee of the assembly, not the speaker.

DOUGLASS: So it can't be such a personal payoff kind of situation?

LANCASTER: That's right. You can't, in other words, you can't reward bad performances.

DOUGLASS: First of all, how is the judgment made between a commission which has a paid position and a commission which is not paid, like the Fair Political Practices Commission members?

LANCASTER: Well, the Fair Political Practices Commission was done by Governor [Jerry] Brown. He did that.

DOUGLASS: No. What I am saying is . . .

LANCASTER: Because that was done by him when he wrote the initiative process, Prop. 9.

DOUGLASS: There is no objective standard for why a commission is being paid. Like the PERS [Public Employment Retirees' System] commission.

LANCASTER: No. It is separate. Yes. You see, my own standard would be that the administrative officer should not be a member of the board, period. And I think that, frankly, if that was law, that would be more effective. No. Each individual case is an individual piece of legislation, whether it be a constitutional amendment or a bill.

DOUGLASS: Then you get this scatter-gun kind of approach.

LANCASTER: The tradition, now, has been established when you form one of these things, legislatively,

you put powers of appointment into the hands of the legislature, regardless of what it is.

That's pretty well standard now.

DOUGLASS: Then the question, again, of a paid position. All of those would deal with the paid position, I assume, if it is a major piece of legislation?

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: I mean the implication. . . . I don't know if the bill spells it out. Does it?

LANCASTER: Sometimes it does. Yes.

DOUGLASS: So now the commission that [State Senator] David Roberti has been assigned to . . .

LANCASTER: Well, he's a judge. It's not a commission.

DOUGLASS: Oh, he's an adjudicator?

LANCASTER: Yes. In other words, he hears--it is unemployment, I think, or is it disability--I can't remember.

DOUGLASS: I think it is disability. Well, I am not sure.

LANCASTER: Regardless, he actually reviews cases and makes awards.

DOUGLASS: Oh, I see. Individually?

LANCASTER: He is an administrative judge. That's different. That's not a policy appointment.

DOUGLASS: I understand. But wasn't it described as being a commissioner?

LANCASTER: They call them commissioners. That's where it gets--that's needed to be cleared up to--very confusing to people.

DOUGLASS: So he is an administrative judge.

LANCASTER: Basically, yes. For which he has a very substantial salary, and, frankly, should have.
[Laughter]

DOUGLASS: There are a few others, apparently, people Brown had known were appointed to. That clarifies that, but getting back to the central issue.

LANCASTER: The central issue is that the legislature ought to sit down very carefully and review this whole process. One is the commission needed? Two, if it is, is it structured properly to try to do what is necessary to be done? And, following my rule, I would never have an administrator on the board. Not of the program. To make another change we made unfortunately. . . . You see, the Board of Geology, they used to hire their own staff. But they were changed under Jerry Brown. Jerry Brown had all these staff people appointed to

these various consumer affairs boards, appointed by the director of [the Department of] Consumer Affairs. That's not right either.

DOUGLASS: It's a conflict.

LANCASTER: And so all these things that fall under the consumer affairs umbrella, the department director is involved in all the board staffers of all these various. . . . There has got to be a happy medium here some place. Personally, I don't think we need all the boards we've got. Then, you know, by the same token they ought to be careful. I am a believer in the concept of review, call it sunset or whatever. I am a believer in that. Because I think these things are out of hand. Particularly, with the California legislative situation, where you really don't know, unless something is brought to your attention, what that board or commission is doing. The theory is that if you have a legislative appointee to the board, that they will come back and tell. But, you know, it doesn't work that way.

DOUGLASS: Thinking about the Board of Regents and other bodies where people automatically have a slot.

LANCASTER: That's constitutional.

DOUGLASS: Yes, that's in the constitution. Let's take a case which is not in the constitution. In that instance, how well does this work? Is it a checks and balances thing, where the governor can make appointees?

LANCASTER: No. They are well-defined appointments. In other words, they have so many. The speaker appoints two and the Senate Rules Committee appoints some, and the governor appoints six or something. That's the way it is.

DOUGLASS: Yes. But do you think that works?

LANCASTER: No, I don't. It can work, but it should not be a standard thing. You should tailor it and review each one. You ought to go back and review each one every year or two.

DOUGLASS: You mean in terms of following what they do?

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: How about the original appointment power?

LANCASTER: No. I think that ought to vary, too. In other words, you ought to determine who is responsible for policy. Is the commission's responsibility to develop policy for the governor, the executive branch? You have got to affix responsibility. That's where I am concerned about California.

DOUGLASS: A reporting system.

LANCASTER: That's right. That's my concern. For example, school boards have lost a huge . . .

[Interruption]

We are going to have to get into this whole process in depth because I really want to see California get back to well-defined responsibilities. And one of the things [Prop.] 13 did, it removed that responsibility too much from the local areas. Because they lost their taxing base. And that was the problem with it. That's why I opposed it.

DOUGLASS: That is obviously central to what your philosophy is.

LANCASTER: To my basic philosophy. Yes.

DOUGLASS: And where you put your energy in the legislature.

LANCASTER: I tried to do that as much as I possibly could. I had a lot of people nervous, too. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: I was thinking of Bannai and Papan. Both were out of local government. Bannai was on the city council. In those days, more people were than now?

LANCASTER: Yes. That's right.

DOUGLASS: That is one of the problems?

LANCASTER: Well, I think that is changing again.

DOUGLASS: You think it is going to go back?

LANCASTER: Yes. Because what's happened, you see, the legislature now is becoming more suburban. Reapportionment had done that. From a partisan standpoint, this means you are going to see more and more Republicans, probably, elected to the state legislature. Because of the nature of the district itself.

And you will see more and more local people, and I encourage them to do that, to become involved in this. Now, for example, and there have been rumors locally, I don't know who is going to run, but you've got [Robert] Bob Margett from Arcadia, running for Mountjoy's seat, city councilman. Jenny Joyce, member of the Duarte city council. Bob Kuhn, former member of the Glendora city council. All these people thinking about running for Mountjoy's seat. So I mean you are starting to see more and more of that activity. Because the districts are changing. More suburban. You see, I was fortunate enough to always be in that arena of suburbia.

DOUGLASS: That's right. Everything is becoming that, of the undeveloped areas, now.

LANCASTER: Are now developed and reapportionment. In the year 2000, it is going to be further east than us. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Yes. Hard to imagine, but it is. So, in a way, what you think is a good basis for a legislature may be coming around again?

LANCASTER: Yes. I hope so. Then the next issue is not to forget it. And that's where the [California] League of Cities and various other organizations, or school boards associations or whatnot, have a huge responsibility, I think, to stay on top of these things. And your local elected officials. You have to develop a rapport with your state legislator. I think I was blessed with a pretty good rapport with my local constituents.

DOUGLASS: Judging from some of these bills you carried, you were responsive to local needs.

LANCASTER: Tried to be. But, you know, I took some stands on 13, and I opposed [Prop.] 140. And I oppose term limitations, too.

DOUGLASS: Do you?

LANCASTER: I do, yes. I said so, too. I still won, but it is interesting. You see, what we need, rather than all these things we are doing now which is really kind of like bandaging things, we need to define areas of responsibility. And they have to have their base to do it.

DOUGLASS: Do you think county government's role ought to be redefined?

LANCASTER: Yes, I definitely do. Like, for example, I really believe that the welfare aspect ought to be taken over totally by the state. Take the county out of it. They can have a general relief program if they want to, or maybe should have, but that would be their program, not the state's. But I think the state ought to take it over and conduct it. Because they do it anyway.

DOUGLASS: What about the county's role in planning? We have seen a change just in the last twenty years where the county had quite a bit of power because it had quite a bit of vacant or undeveloped land, or semi-developed land, and then we got into that whole business of cities annexing.

LANCASTER: In 1978, Prop. 13 changed that, too. You see, that's the key economically.

DOUGLASS: I am trying to think. The origin of counties was that they were supposed to be reigning over rural areas.

LANCASTER: They were to provide necessary municipal services to an unincorporated area, and it was well defined. Then the city would provide, supposedly, a higher level of service. With eighty-six cities, or whatever it is, I have no idea what it is now, the county's role in Los Angeles County ought to be different than it is in Siskiyou [County]. That's right.

DOUGLASS: I was pointing out that you and I have lived through an era where the county was very proactive in planning.

LANCASTER: Yes. But one of the things, they ought to relieve the county of any burden on welfare and, frankly, they ought to make sure that the cities stay out of the social programs. I am talking about the welfare aspect. Because that's the way the eastern seaboard got into so much trouble. They got municipalities trying to get involved in the welfare aspect. I am

not saying recreation and all that kind of thing, the seniors program. That's fine.

DOUGLASS: The basic welfare kinds of things.

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: Of course, the county is by law defined as the receiver and dispenser of monies that come through the state.

LANCASTER: Well, yes, that's right. And Prop. 13 again, living with that aspect, we set up a whole mechanism to do that. In other words, in the special district aspects of it because we funded, and the county set up the apparatus, to give the money out to the districts. And special districts, which most people don't realize, is a real important part of municipal services, or public services.

DOUGLASS: Always has been.

LANCASTER: Always has been. Always will be. I mean you don't have mosquitoes because we have a mosquito abatement district. But most people don't know we have one. It's a county-administered district.

DOUGLASS: It's very complicated.

LANCASTER: Well, flood control. What would we do without flood control in our district?

DOUGLASS: Yes. A lot of people wonder why that dam is up there above Claremont, but some of us know why.

LANCASTER: That's right. Well, listen, I've got to break this up.

DOUGLASS: Right. Thank you very much.

[End Tape 4, Side A]

[Session 3, January 9, 1995]

[Begin Tape 4, Side B]

DOUGLASS: I wanted to touch on the leadership of the Republican party in '77. Paul Priolo was the minority floor leader, and he succeeded Beverly in '76, I believe. The caucus chairman was Eugene Chappie. Could you talk about Priolo and Chappie and what your relationship was to them, or to the caucus?

LANCASTER: Well, that was kind of an interesting change. Paul Priolo had wanted to be the minority leader for quite a while. He was the person that was the most critical, if that is the word to use, of Bob Monagan when he was the minority leader. And I was a part of the Monagan team. Bob Beverly took it when Monagan left, and, finally, when Bob Beverly went to the senate, he became the minority leader. Gene Chappie, who was also part of the Monagan team, ran in opposition to Paul Priolo, who won it by one vote in caucus.

I suggested a rule change, rather than each individual--the minority whip, the caucus chairman, and the minority leader--be elected separately that the minority leader be elected and he choose his team. And so he chose Gene Chappie as his caucus chairman, which was second in command. And Paul did a pretty good job in unifying a then divided caucus, along what lines I frankly never did quite figure out.

DOUGLASS: Was it partly his personality, do you think, that he managed to do that?

LANCASTER: Well, it was all back before I got there, Enid. You know, Bob Monagan was the speaker and Priolo was active in the group that wanted to be a speaker. So that's the way it worked. Interesting. Kind of a carryover.

DOUGLASS: We touched briefly on Bob Monagan. Is there anything you particularly want to say about him?

LANCASTER: Yes. Bob Monagan, I didn't have the privilege of serving with him as speaker, but I did serve with him as minority leader and knew him when he was the speaker. And I frankly was a supporter and a fan of his abilities. He is

very articulate. Very good administrator. A good legislator. And he spoke very well, and, I think, spoke very articulately and relevant to the Republican point of view. Remember, he was the guy that had to deal with the [Assemblyman] Jesse Unruhs of the world. And Jesse Unruh, at that time, was said to be the most powerful speaker in California's history, while he was minority leader.

So I think he did an excellent job. I am not sure what he is doing now, but he went on to become a part of the Nixon administration, came back here as executive director of the California Manufacturers Association. Then [Attorney General George] Deukmejian was elected governor, and he was involved in some sort of a consortium for business development in California. But I have lost track on that. I have a lot of pride in my friendship, and also I was very proud of his abilities as a leader.

DOUGLASS: You got along with Priolo?

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: And had you gotten along with Beverly pretty well?

LANCASTER: Beverly and I were old friends. Yes. Beverly was the mayor of Manhattan Beach when I was the mayor of Duarte.

DOUGLASS: Right. I think you mentioned that.

LANCASTER: Beverly was also the city attorney for the City of Industry before he went to the legislature. I was someone who walked precincts for Bob Beverly when he ran the first time.

DOUGLASS: You did?

LANCASTER: Yes, in Venice.

DOUGLASS: So you were old friends then.

LANCASTER: Oh, yes.

DOUGLASS: I want to touch on your committee service now. To return to the Rules Committee. As I recall, 1976 was the first year you were on the Rules Committee

LANCASTER: Yes, it was because I was on the Rules Committee when we put together the oversight committee for the reconstruction of the capitol. So, yes, it was in '76. Right. In fact, I know it was. I took Gene Chappie's place.

DOUGLASS: Why was Chappie going off the committee?

LANCASTER: He became caucus chairman.

DOUGLASS: It was an important assignment to serve on that committee.

LANCASTER: Yes. It was an election. You are elected by your colleagues. You are nominated by the caucus and elected by the house, which at that time accepted their choice.

DOUGLASS: Your own caucus has to nominate you. And they will only nominate one, I assume.

LANCASTER: Well, there were three slots they nominated.

DOUGLASS: Yes. But one for each position.

LANCASTER: Yes. Each position.

DOUGLASS: Then the whole assembly votes.

LANCASTER: That's correct. To be very candid, though, I don't know whether it still is, it was standard procedure for the other members to accept the caucus recommendation.

DOUGLASS: That's a singular honor. You must have been pleased.

LANCASTER: I was very pleased. And the Rules Committee, as we progress with our interviews, has changed considerably over the years. But when I was on the Rules Committee, it was an administrative committee. It did a lot of administrative work and made some very sincere rules changes, and, I think, made some progress of job

descriptions, things of this nature, of our employees. We also did the capital outlay program for the capitol building, over which we had jurisdiction as a joint [committee]. So it worked out very well.

DOUGLASS: You must have enjoyed that.

LANCASTER: I did. Thoroughly.

DOUGLASS: All right. You were on, again, Finance, Insurance and Commerce.

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: I noted--maybe you were on it earlier--that you were on the Subcommittee for Unemployment and Disability Insurance?

LANCASTER: Yes. At that time, Finance, Insurance and Commerce had so many bills going through it that we actually broke into a lot of subcommittees dealing with various subjects and responsibilities. And that's the subcommittee I served on.

DOUGLASS: Then that meant that the subcommittee's recommendation must have carried a lot of weight. Did it?

LANCASTER: Nine out of ten times that did it.

DOUGLASS: You were on that a long time.

LANCASTER: Yes. Quite a bit. I forget how many years.

DOUGLASS: Had you been on it before then, do you think?

LANCASTER: Enid, I don't remember.

DOUGLASS: Of course, it changed names in . . .

LANCASTER: We got rid of the commerce aspects.

DOUGLASS: . . . 1973.

LANCASTER: See, we used to have all of the public utilities and all of that.

DOUGLASS: I noticed you carried some legislation that did bear on those topics.

LANCASTER: Yes, right. I did.

DOUGLASS: Alister McAlister was chair of that committee, I don't know for how many years.

LANCASTER: At least ten. Very good.

DOUGLASS: What was your impression of him?

LANCASTER: I liked him very much. He was a very fair, and, I think, a very knowledgeable chairman. And also a very bright person as an individual. If you put classifications on--moderate or whatever--I would put him in the slightly right-of-center Democrat category. In fact, he probably now is a Republican. I presume he has probably reregistered by now. I am just guessing. He is a lobbyist now, or was a lobbyist.

- DOUGLASS: When did he go out of the assembly? In the eighties?
- LANCASTER: Yes. Or the early nineties. I think it was '88, '90.
- DOUGLASS: Not long before you.
- LANCASTER: No. I went out in '92. He was gone two or three years before I left.
- DOUGLASS: Then the Local Government Committee, the chairman was Craven. This is where you had a lot of interest, I know. I didn't follow the chairmanships, but at that time Craven was chairman.
- LANCASTER: It was Knox before him.
- DOUGLASS: You were on the Subcommittee on Force Account work, which I was interested in because you carried a bill having to do with force account determinations in terms of the use of services by cities with other entities. Could you explain what force account is?
- LANCASTER: Well, force account is where the entity, for example, the City of Claremont--and I forget what the limitations are now--can proceed without going to bid for the purpose of doing something. The basic concept is that there is a necessity, an emerging situation, so there is

a figure that is set by the legislature, a maximum amount of dollars, that you can just go ahead and do the job--get it done--and not have to worry about the bidding process, which is very extensive, as you know. There was--I am trying to remember examples but unfortunately I can't--but there were examples of abuse of force accounts by entities. If you are a charter city, that is an entirely different matter, but if you are a general law city, then you've got the situation where you must follow and not go around the regulations prescribed by the force account mechanism. And that was part of the process we worked out.

What was the other question?

DOUGLASS: There was a bill, and I'll have to pick it out here, . . .

LANCASTER: Yes, please What's the number?

DOUGLASS: . . . that you were involved in that had to do with force accounts. Let me find it here.

LANCASTER: Oh, I remember what it was. I remember what else I did. I don't know if this is the bill that did it.

[Interruption]

One of the things that was required if the city manager went into a force account situation and utilized a force account, whatever the limitation of use there was, then he had to get a least comparables. For example, if he were fixing a school and he had to have tomorrow or in the next ten days or something where he had to build a big project, he had to get a comparable situation, a comparable quote, just so he had it on file that, yes, he did investigate more than one place to go to. Because that danger would be if he just had this contract going all the time with one individual contractor. Not the principle of bidding in a local entity, you know. You've got to be . . .

DOUGLASS: Is it forced or force account?

LANCASTER: Force.

DOUGLASS: So why it is called force account?

LANCASTER: Well, the theory is that you need to do it because you are forced to do this without going to bid.

DOUGLASS: So it does mean forced, in that sense.

LANCASTER: Yes.

- DOUGLASS: O.K. I thought it was some other category of emergency use.
- LANCASTER: Basically, what has happened to force account. It's been utilized, even though there wasn't really any emergency need.
- DOUGLASS: The bill is A.B. 2297, passed in 1980.¹
- LANCASTER: I don't have '79 and '80.
- DOUGLASS: It simply had to do with mutual service agreements. And the force account limit of local agencies contracting to receive work not to be exceeded for municipal services. You and Priolo carried that bill.
- LANCASTER: Anyway, that's the basis of it.
- DOUGLASS: It spoke to the force account limit of a local agency that was contracting to get work done.
- LANCASTER: Yes. And it set up some guidelines.
- DOUGLASS: So you couldn't go beyond a certain value.
- LANCASTER: That figure, obviously, has changed by now. It's probably higher now. It set up some guidelines.
- DOUGLASS: So would that probably have been the product of the subcommittee?

¹ A.B. 2297. 1979-1980 Reg. Sess., Cal. Stat., ch. 398 (1980).

LANCASTER: Yes. And it was a product of information viewed via the subcommittee. And, also, there was some very strong concern on the part of the people who bid on government contracts that the force account was being utilized on things that they should have gone to bid for.

DOUGLASS: To skirt the bidding?

LANCASTER: Yes, right. There were also some scandals going around at that time, too, I think.

DOUGLASS: You were also on the speaker's Subcommittee on the Reform of Transportation.

LANCASTER: Yes.

DOUGLASS: First of all, why does a speaker appoint what is called a subcommittee? Why is it called a subcommittee?

LANCASTER: Well, I don't know what that means. Usually, it's a select committee. Perhaps we've got our words incorrectly.

DOUGLASS: I pulled that out of the committee listings.

LANCASTER: A subcommittee would be appointed of another committee. But the speaker himself has no subcommittees. So, consequently, it probably was a select [subcommittee] committee of another committee. Probably Transportation

[Committee] or it could be Local Government
[Committee].

DOUGLASS: So it is a subcommittee of a speaker's
committee?

LANCASTER: Yes, that's right.

DOUGLASS: Do you recall why that was?

LANCASTER: Yes, I do, very vividly. You think back. This
was what, the seventies?

DOUGLASS: Yes. This would be 1977-78.

LANCASTER: O.K. Think back to the period of time in the
late seventies when inflation was up very high
and the prime rate was over 20 percent. It was
the latter part of the [President Jimmy] Carter
years, '76 to '80. The prime rate was way up
there. As you know, the gas tax dollars is a
gallonage tax, and so inflation of the price of
gasoline doesn't assist the revenue source
because, in other words, it is still a
gallonage tax.

DOUGLASS: Not the cost.

LANCASTER: In other words, you have a reduction in the
amount of gasoline sold, plus the price has
gone up way high, along with everything else,
your revenue sources are down, and your price
of fixing the road has gone up. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Pretty bad.

LANCASTER: That's right. And this was what threw our whole program off in California. Our highway program, including all the local programs in Claremont, were derailed. If that's the word to use. Consequently, everybody was falling short, and so this process led to lots of things. It led to one year of an increase in the gas tax, which I supported. It led to a total redoing of the Department of Transportation. It used to be called the Department of Public Works. Not me, but finally, that legislation came out that renamed it the Department of Transportation, set up the whole procedure. And, eventually, under Jerry Brown, down the road ways, fell together. We actually put together a program that exists today with the [California] Transportation Commission [Caltrans] and broadened the scope of the area of responsibility. In other words, they could now begin various planning stages of other things. Before they were limited basically to highways.

DOUGLASS: They couldn't speak to all transportation.

LANCASTER: Yes. And so the thrust was eventually worked out, and that was the whole thrust of the thing.

DOUGLASS: This was a pretty basic kind of concern?

LANCASTER: That's the way these things usually start.

DOUGLASS: It covered the money, the building, the ability to plan.

LANCASTER: The whole shot. Everything was under review at that time.

DOUGLASS: That must have been an interesting time to be involved?

LANCASTER: Well, it was. We had a lot of hearings, if I remember correctly, around and various. . . . Well, I also served on Transportation [Committee] for quite a while, and we were involved in developing this whole process. The chairman of the Transportation Committee that was very heavy in there. There were two of them. One went to the state senate. Then after he left the other guy that was chairman passed away. He was just a young man, too. Riverside County. But I can't think of his name either.

DOUGLASS: So this was probably why you were on the Transportation Committee?

LANCASTER: Well, that's part of it. Yes. I was interested, as always, as you know, in the Foothill Freeway. And one of the concerns I had and still have, frankly, is that there is this tendency to concentrate on one area. Right now rail is popular and subways. I have no idea why we have to have a subway. But, anyway, it was popular. It's a tendency to concentrate your resources. And that's really a mistake in California because every aspect of our transportation is critical.

DOUGLASS: You have to everything, working together?

LANCASTER: That's right.

DOUGLASS: You can't do all one and let the other . . .

LANCASTER: That was the tendency for a while. There was a big movement to get you out of your car, and they put you on the train. Well, we didn't have the place in trains to ride on. Then they said, "Well, to get you to various other things, we've got to get involved in transportation lanes on freeways and things of this nature." So, anyway, at least it has worked out that we are in a broader scope of development of transportation needs.

DOUGLASS: So that was sort of the beginning of this huge organization.

LANCASTER: Way back in '77. We also got involved later on in imposing sales tax. No, it was before that. The sales tax was imposed on gasoline, and it primarily benefited the cities and the counties. It benefited the state, too. You see, that was finally the thing that went along with the inflationary spiral. Now the reverse is true. Inflation is under control, and so, therefore, you have to think about the availability of dollars again. These things are long range. In fact, you'll notice, down the road, I carried some legislation to expand the planning time from five to ten years.

DOUGLASS: Yes. I want to talk about that. It looked significant.

LANCASTER: You had to do it. You couldn't do a five-year study. It wasn't enough time to do all the work. You know, the Foothill Freeway is a classical example of the change. When the Foothill Freeway line was drawn on the map originally back in the sixties, they didn't build freeways the same way they do now. The Foothill Freeway is literally a dam. Think

about it. You've got all the runoff coming off the mountains, all that asphalt that's being developed up in La Verne and Claremont and every place else, where people have houses and streets and things of that nature. So when they build the Foothill Freeway, they are literally putting a dam over all this. So they have got to do all the planning and water control--flood control and everything else--they have to plan for the future. So this just takes longer than five years now.

DOUGLASS: You are right. I was just thinking of how the freeway will run through Claremont and the problem of where the water goes.

LANCASTER: It will have to go under the freeway some place else. And, you know, ten years was a compromise. Actually, ten years is probably not long enough. But a lot of people, and including myself, have some hesitancy to go beyond the prescribed period of time. With water development you do that. With reservoir development and water need, you do that.

DOUGLASS: But could it be, if you projected that far ahead, you would have enough people to do the work?

LANCASTER: Well, that's also a problem. You see, one of the things that happened in transportation under [Adriana] Gianturco and Jerry Brown was they dismantled the finest engineering firm in the world, Caltrans. I mean it really was. You know it's dismantled. O.K. So now you do the contracting out thing. But, you see, they never went quite that far. So I think there still is a need in Sacramento to pursue this contracting out. We called it privatization. And, of course, you say that word privatization and the immediate person that jumps up is a state employee. [Laughter] They would rather have you hire an engineer and put them on staff.

DOUGLASS: So you say, as a result of the dismantling, they really need to go more into contracting out and not try to do it both ways?

LANCASTER: But when you talk about the concept of planning over, say, twenty years, that's awfully hard to do.

DOUGLASS: Before we get to your bills for this period, you were on a Select Committee on Health Services Education, which piqued my interest. Do you remember what that was about?

LANCASTER: No. And I don't think it ever really amounted to a heck of a lot. Who was the chairman? Beverly?

DOUGLASS: I don't have that but I can get it for you.

LANCASTER: That's all right. Nothing comes to mind.

DOUGLASS: Let's then talk about your bills. You had a bill, A.B. 140, which was having to do with the Foothill Freeway right-of-way and the parcels in Upland. I have a note here that it was similar to a bill that was vetoed by Jerry Brown, which was A.B. 1946. Did this bill die, do you think?

LANCASTER: I'll be very candid with you. I always every year put a bill in that had something to do with the Foothill Freeway because I was very interested in doing it. So I don't remember whether A.B. 140 was one I put in--it is an early number--at the beginning of the session.

DOUGLASS: And later . . .

LANCASTER: Just dropped, because I did something else.

DOUGLASS: Do you remember the bill that Brown vetoed, having to do with this?

LANCASTER: Yes. [A.B.] 1946. I had a bill to actually construct the thing. Whatever the number was.

DOUGLASS: Do you think it was about this time?

LANCASTER: Yes. It was the year before, I think.

DOUGLASS: That's the one he vetoed. So were the bills addressing similar things?

LANCASTER: No. This was just a protection of the right-of-way, and I did eventually get that protected. But not that time. Brown vetoed the bill that would have required immediate construction. And I tried for an override, and it failed.

DOUGLASS: That was for immediate construction?

LANCASTER: Well, within . . .

DOUGLASS: Immediate being sooner rather than later.

LANCASTER: That's right. Every year I stuck one in. If I was there, I would do the same thing right now. I'd have something in there because, you know, that's the problem. If you don't call attention to it, then the next thing you know there is a poor little city out there trying to fight off a big subdivider.

DOUGLASS: Do you think Mountjoy is going to stick a bill in?

LANCASTER: I've not noticed him doing anything on that. And he should because the Foothill is just as important today. In fact, moreso than it was before.

DOUGLASS: You had a bill having to do with the certification of labs to service weights and measures. That was A.B. 1424.¹ Apparently, labs were certifying whether weighing was all right, accurate. But they had to be certified to be sure that they were able to do this.

LANCASTER: Yes. That's basically what it was about. I am trying to remember what caused that. That legislation came to me from the Bureau of Weights and Measures, I presume. In fact, I know it did. They were having a problem out there in getting. . . . We were concerned at that time about the weight restrictions on highways and things because they were being chewed up and everything. The problem was the truck would go out overweight, and it wasn't the trucker's fault. It was the guy whose scale was off. So, consequently, we had to come up with a certification process to make sure those who do that. . . . It is a very delicate business, I guess. You and I couldn't go down there and just simply say, "Gee, this is O.K. This scale looks fine. I weigh 149

¹ A.B. 1424, 1977-1978 Reg. Sess., Cal. Stat., ch 872 (1977).

pounds when I am standing on it." [Laughter]
That had to come from somebody. It might have
come from the CHP [California Highway Patrol].
I carried a lot of bills for them.

DOUGLASS: So we can thank you for the fact that now we
can count on those trucks being weighed.

LANCASTER: I hope so. It's like the old guy with his
thumb on the butcher's [scale], some of them.
[Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Then there was A.B. 1888, which amended the
Education Code, in regard to declining
enrollment of schools and the transferring of
A.D.A. [Average Daily Attendance]. I wonder if
you could speak to that because that's a local
government matter.

LANCASTER: What happened was that, again, the period of
time when we had a very sharp decrease in
enrollment in our elementary schools, K-6.
Here sits a school district with A.D.A. of 100,
and so the next year the A.D.A. is only ninety.
So, under the law, they only should get
reimbursed for ninety. But you needed a grace
period in there. Dixon Arnett was heavily
involved with this, too. What we did, we came
up with some sort of a sliding scale--I forget

the formula--where the A.D.A. decline was gradual over a period of time, not just immediate. All this is prior to lots of things, including Prop. 13.

DOUGLASS: Another thing you spoke to in that bill was something to help compensate local government for revenues lost by the \$7,000 homeowner's exemption. That was in the same bill. I double checked that. I don't quite know what the connection would be.

LANCASTER: They had to reimburse the school district for the loss. Remember, this is all prior to '78.

DOUGLASS: I guess it was just school districts and not necessarily the cities?

LANCASTER: That's right. Because the school districts were dramatically affected along with declining enrollment and also with exemptions from the property tax revenue.

DOUGLASS: Was it around then that that \$7,000 exemption was put into effect"

LANCASTER: No. It had been in effect for a while.

DOUGLASS: That's what I thought. But the negative impact was beginning to show?

LANCASTER: It showed up because they were losing revenue on their A.D.A.

DOUGLASS: Losing students. Which points up a basic question. Do you have any particular thoughts about whether A.D.A. is an appropriate way to compensate schools?

LANCASTER: There are two ways you can count A.D.A. You can count A.D.A. on a daily basis or you can count it on a class basis, class period. In other words, you go to a high school and you have six classes. You must take enrollment in each class. If you don't show up for the fifth class, then the school district loses its A.D.A., that percentage of the total A.D.A. for the day. And that's one of the things, by the way, that is coming.

DOUGLASS: In other words, it's either all or nothing on the A.D.A. But if it's just one class that's missed . . .

LANCASTER: No. Right now they take roll once a day and count the A.D.A., whatever it is.

DOUGLASS: Isn't that the first period?

LANCASTER: Yes, probably. Now the change would be the state maintains they are being shafted because they are having to pay a total day and the student is not there the whole day. So, consequently, that's one thing. They are maybe

working on that as a ballot. . . . And, of course, it is being fought by the school districts and everybody else because they don't want to count noses six times a day. Frankly, if they lose one class a day, it adds up over a period.

On A.D.A. I am not too sure that method is the way to go now. I don't have a better solution at this point, Enid. You know, everything dramatically changed in 1978, and it occurred to me that just because we used to do that in the old days, maybe we ought to look at a different way to do it.

DOUGLASS: I think people are really looking at that.

LANCASTER: With more certainty in funding for the locals.

DOUGLASS: In other words, some way to help the local schools and not make it such a frenetic process.

LANCASTER: And more certainty in what the state's commitment is. Because, prior to '78, the state's commitment was a small percentage of the total commitment to education. Most of it was local. When I was in the legislature, the state's commitment on the average school budget was about 82 percent. Anyway, that legislation

dealt with a problem that was developing that year with the inflationary spiral, the cut in A.D.A., because that was the year everybody was talking about zero-population type thing, plus the \$7,000 they were affected by. They were affected at the same time by that other big issue that became very important in local government, and that's the redevelopment.

[Interruption]

DOUGLASS: Then there was a bill [A.B. 2991] on Route 39.¹ You added requirements for Route 39. Again, was that something you were putting on the table?

LANCASTER: Route 39, which is basically Azusa Avenue here. What I did once. There were two things on Route 39. The first thing I did on Route 39 was make it a state highway, all the way. In other words, it was a fragmented state highway. And 39, which is in Azusa goes all the way to the beach, it's Beach Boulevard. So, consequently, I made it a state highway.

DOUGLASS: It is the same as what when you hit the freeway?

¹ A.B. 2991, 1977-1978 Reg. Sess. Cal. Stat., ch. 1043 (1978).

LANCASTER: South of it. It is Azusa Avenue all the way down. Then you get down further into Buena Park and it is called Beach Boulevard.

DOUGLASS: So you were interested in the routing requirements for it?

LANCASTER: Yes. I made it a state highway, which meant the state came in and helped the locals in maintenance of what is really a state highway. It's a main transportation corridor of north-south in this area and all the way to the beach. I also was protecting the Route 39 right-of-way through the San Gabriel Mountains

DOUGLASS: This is interesting. This is the last bill I will bring up in this period. This was A.B. 3791, which spoke to the counties all having to have elected sheriffs.¹ I have a question here. How did this relate to Proposition 6 in the primary of '78, a constitutional amendment by [State] Senator Robert Presley? I think there had been a problem in the counties where there wasn't an elected sheriff.

LANCASTER: I am not aware, frankly, of any counties where there is not an elected sheriff.

¹ A.B. 3791, 1977-1978 Reg. Sess., Cal. Stat., ch. 703 (1978).

DOUGLASS: At that time. I'll send you the bill list. But Presley also had something in the '78 primary. So it must have been some kind of topic of concern.¹

DOUGLASS: Then comes the June primary of 1978. There were two competing measures on there: Proposition 13 and Proposition 8. I wonder if you could speak to your perception, as a member of the assembly, of the events that led up to Prop. 13 getting on the ballot and being passed.

LANCASTER: What happened was the legislature and the executive branch failed to recognize something that was happening in California. Remember this is that period of time, again, when the prime rate was up there and inflation was running rampant in the United States. In the property assessment practices in California, the assessor wasn't required to reassess except once every five years. So when he came around to this section, or whatever section, and reassessed, he would do a five-year reassessment. That meant a huge inflationary

¹ Some Charter counties did not provide for an elected sheriff. A.B. 3791 required all counties to have an elected sheriff.

spiral jump in the property value added. People were starting to lose their house. Things like Proposition 13 had been on the ballot before and lost.

DOUGLASS: [Howard] Jarvis and [Paul] Gann, working separately had tried before.

LANCASTER: It was back in the early seventies, it was on the ballot before. At any rate, something like it. Some limitation. Anyway, so what led to the development of Proposition 8 was Proposition 13. Because immediately the legislature, after we got hit between the eyes with a two-by-four, realized what would happen under Proposition 13. One of the classic things that can be done, and we can do it very easily, is to reassess every year. And we should have ordered that done, and we didn't. Have the assessors, and paid for it, and done it. Then people would have gotten an increase, incrementally, rather than five years in one whack. Which led directly to the passage of Proposition 13. By the way, Proposition 8 would have done it, but it put limitations on it and increased exemptions and things of that nature. Which I supported.

DOUGLASS: Didn't Prop. 8 also separate the commercial and the . . .

LANCASTER: No. It didn't. They have never done that. There had been a lot of talk about doing that. There had been a lot of legislation to do that.

DOUGLASS: I know that is still one of the proposed suggestions here. There is an interrelationship between Prop. 8 and Peter Behr's bill, S.B. 1, which you supported and Jerry Brown actually supported.

LANCASTER: What was S.B. 1?

DOUGLASS: In order to implement S.B. 1, you had to pass Proposition 8. Here are the provisions: allow the legislature to permit taxation of owner-occupied dwellings at lower rates than other types of property.

LANCASTER: Oh, O.K., yes.

DOUGLASS: I guess it wasn't a total change but this was considered. To continue: but they cannot shift the tax burden to other types of property; tax relief is possible if it uses surplus funds to make up the difference.

LANCASTER: Let me explain what that was. Now, I remember. What we had, in order to give relief to homeowners. . . . You see, in California law

we can't go in and say, "Enid, your address will get relief and, Bill, your address won't," on land use. In other words, if you went for a 25 percent reduction, you had to go across the board and give an exemption for a deduction. What this would have allowed us to do was give immediate relief to the homeowner by using the surplus at that time estimated at--it turned out to be several hundred million dollars--we didn't know exactly what it was. So, consequently, we could have given immediate homeowner relief legislatively and not had to reimburse the entity for its loss necessarily, but we would have, because that was what the surplus was for, but also didn't have to shift from homeowners to commercial. So it was just reversed, basically.

DOUGLASS: It made more sense, but, by that time people were so inflamed.

LANCASTER: Yes. People were losing their houses and the rhetoric was out there. I opposed Proposition 13, publicly.

DOUGLASS: I heard one . . .

LANCASTER: I'll tell you why, too.

DOUGLASS: Go ahead.

LANCASTER: Go ahead and finish.

DOUGLASS: I was going to say that I had heard another thing happened. [Philip] Watson, the county assessor [of Los Angeles County], had tried to get something through earlier speaking to this. But I also heard that somebody in his office, or someone else, leaked what the actual tax changes would be on homes, and that got out and really got people exercised.

LANCASTER: Maybe so. Phil Watson was very active, he was the assessor, and he was trying to--what he was trying to do personally, I don't know--create better assessment practices. It just didn't dawn on us as we went along, and, all of a sudden, we had this big spiral hit us. And the boards of supervisors and various other entities like that, including city councils, really weren't too interested in changing the procedure. Because they benefited greatly by that.

DOUGLASS: So they were willing to wait the five years for the assessment?

LANCASTER: Well, you see, what happened was they could balance their budget and say, "Gee, we didn't raise your taxes." But, of course, taxes went

up [in] the federal system. Now it doesn't work that way any more.

DOUGLASS: Did you begin to have concern, in early '78 or leading up to it, that there was too big a surplus in the state treasury?

LANCASTER: Yes, yes. And we could never pin it down under Jerry Brown. I don't mean to be critical in a partisan sense, but his people would never, in a sense, 'fess up to the legislature the surplus. It was a very huge surplus, and it was bigger than we thought it was. It was, it was very big. And that was the bailout. So, in effect, S.B. 1 became reality when [Prop.] 13 passed. But a lot of other things went along with it at once.

DOUGLASS: In your consideration, was it just too late to educate the voters as to the implications of Prop. 13?

LANCASTER: Yes. Enid, that's right. I have to blame the legislature--and will accept my responsibility as a member of the legislature--but there were some of us who were trying to do something about it, including Deukmejian, by the way, when he was a state senator. And the executive branch, not just Jerry Brown, even before that,

there was this head-in-the sand thing. Like I say, by the time we were hit in the face by a two-by-four it was too late to change it because it had already hit us hard.

[Interruption]

DOUGLASS: I guess suddenly you were confronted with the situation in which all the data could be brought out that was used by Jarvis, et al, in terms of this?

LANCASTER: He was correct when he said we had a surplus. He didn't know how much it was.

DOUGLASS: Yes. When anybody began to look at it well enough to know that it was bigger probably?

LANCASTER: Somebody knew, but they didn't tell us. Because, you see, Enid, it's a philosophy. There are people who believe in centralized theory, and their philosophy in government is if you've got a coffee can full of money, we hold it because we may need it. I don't necessarily agree with that philosophy. I really believe that it is better--I am not saying you shouldn't have a reserve, you should--but if it gets too big a reserve, it really becomes kind of obscene, I think.

DOUGLASS: You get a very angry response.

LANCASTER: And you get a problem. You have a real problem because you are not really being fair with the taxpayer. So it is better to come back and say, "This is where we need this." So, anyway, we had this surplus that was more than it ought to have been. We all knew it, but we never knew how much. Nobody would talk to us. Somebody knew.

DOUGLASS: So it was really that much of an unknown?

LANCASTER: Yes. To us it was, but not the executive.

DOUGLASS: As an assemblyman, you didn't know. You knew there was an adequate, or more than adequate
. . .

LANCASTER: At least this assemblyman. I don't know about the rest of them.

DOUGLASS: . . . and whether some of the Democrat leaders did know or not.

[End Tape 4, Side B]