

California State Archives  
State Government Oral History Program

Volume 2

Oral History Interview

with

**MERVYN M. DYMALLY**

United States Congressman, 1981-1992  
Lieutenant Governor, 1975-1979  
California State Senator, 1967-1975  
California State Assemblyman, 1963-1967

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[Session 7, April 26, 1997]

[Begin Tape 8, Side A]

DYMALLY: Now, you've been asking me some tough questions as we go along in this interview, and I have, in part, been defensive. I don't want to give the impression that I am some saint, that all of the criticism against me was either inaccurate or racist. The fact is, I made some mistakes. They were not mistakes of a criminal nature. Neither were they a deliberate display of arrogance, although I have used arrogance as a defense against racism. Neither were they a design to be unethical. Rather, they were mistakes of the heart, and a bit of naïveté.

Let me suggest one bit of naïveté. Growing up in Trinidad, the police in my time--I don't think that's the case now--was a friend of the family, a friend of the village. There was no telephone, so it was not unusual that he would bring a wireless message to you or stop by in the rum shop and have a drink with you. I noticed

one thing they had to do when they did that, they had to take their hats off. So I trusted the law enforcement, and in Trinidad there was no such thing as conspiracy under the British law. This whole notion of conspiracy became a very strange phenomenon to me. Then when you're young, you tend to look at things differently. But my biggest mistake was my failure to say "no." I just did not know how to say "no" to anybody, and anybody who came to me with some grand scheme or was in trouble, I was quick to defend them. I may very well defend them now, but I would be more selective of the friends and issues that I pursue. I thought it was necessary to say this because I don't want to come out like Mr. Innocent in this interview. So that's my preface to today's questions and answers.

CARR: Now, this difficulty with saying "no," to what do you attribute that?

DYMALLY: I'd be damned if I know.

CARR: Cultural?

DYMALLY: Yeah. I still can't say "no." A guy walked in the other day--a doctor acquaintance--with tears in his eyes. He had borrowed some money from his wife's grandmother; she's an old woman, and she

needed her money, and could I loan him the money? I knew before I did it, it was a bad decision. As it turned out, I've just lost the loan. I've just written it off, because he doesn't return my phone calls, and I understand he has filed bankruptcy. But it has a lot to do with my village background where everybody shared, and you went to everyone's rescue, and you shared food and drinks and recreation and stories. So that's been my big, big, big mistake. I find I don't know how to turn somebody down. I feel I have a sense of guilt that I let you down. So you see that I was involved in a lot of controversies, but in each case it involved somebody else. It was never me. It was always helping somebody else.

CARR: Since we're on this topic--you mentioned this issue of conspiracy--could you tell me about a specific case during your early political experience--that is, either the assembly or, senate--in which you came face-to-face with this issue of conspiracy?

DYMALLY: Well, don't forget, under the rules of the white man, if you represent the ghetto, you were considered inconsequential. So in my assembly

DYMALLY: days I had no problems. Into the senate, not until I began to run for lieutenant governor did these stories begin creeping up. Conspiracy? [Laughter] Do you want forty stories or just one? Bob Fairbanks of the Los Angeles Times goes to an investigator in the attorney general's office and tells the investigator that he heard I was going to be indicted. The investigator writes a memo to his supervisor. He puts a PS on it [that] says, "This is a rumor only." A deputy attorney general makes a copy of the memo, erases the PS, and gives it to the wife of a broadcaster, Bill Stout of CBS, whose wife was also the campaign director of my opposition. Bill Stout broadcast it on KNX-TV, and he ends up dramatically saying, "You heard me. Dymally knows it. He's going to be indicted." Very dramatically. That's one.

Another time, the FBI went to various savings and loans to see if I had lied on my applications for real estate. In those days I used to speculate in a little real estate to make some extra income. So every savings and loan that I dealt with during the course of surrendering my records wrote me and told me about it. In one

case, [a savings and loan] in Sacramento which had financed my home, they pressured the vice president into saying that I may have lied on the form. Another time, after I was defeated, [Kenneth B.] Ken Clark, who wrote the famous sociological treatise that blacks suffer in segregated schools--and himself of West Indian heritage--hired me and my wife and a staff member to do a study of immigrant children. The FBI went to him to stop him from dealing with me, and he told them to go to hell.

CARR: Exactly what happened?

DYMALLY: He told them to go to hell.

CARR: On what grounds did the FBI suggest that he stop doing business . . .

DYMALLY: Well, in those days they were investigating me. They were all over. The other day I saw a psychiatrist friend of mine. He said, "You know, Merv, I never told you, but the FBI came to see me about you." They went everywhere.

CARR: How did that affect you emotionally to know that the FBI was . . .

DYMALLY: Oh, it was murder. My skin used to jump off my hands. I used to shake like this. I used to go to church and pray. I went to two ministers:

the Reverend E.V. Hill--he and I are still friends--and Reverend [Jim] Lawson of the Holman Methodist Church.

[Interruption]

CARR: You were mentioning Reverend E.V. Hill and Reverend Lawson.

DYMALLY: Reverend Lawson, who was head of Holman Methodist Church and a great ally of Dr. [Martin Luther] King [Jr.]. . . . I just went to them to talk. I needed to talk to somebody, you know. My son was coming up to Sacramento on PSA [Pacific Southwest Airlines], and in front of him was a friend of mine discussing my indictment. I'm chairman of the senate Democratic Caucus. I walked into the caucus, and the staff there were discussing my indictment. I had a chief of staff who hired a female lawyer, and she began doing research on the basis that I would be indicted. My own lawyer was trying to defend me from a felony charge. Everyplace I went during my second campaign--in '78--everyplace I went the only question reporters asked me was [about] my indictment. Don't forget, I had, I thought, a very good record on children's issues. I thought they would ask me something about that, but

never, never, never any question about that. Mike Curb called me a criminal. Governor Pat Brown called me and said when he was attorney general, he successfully prosecuted a man for calling somebody else a criminal, because it's a felony in California to do that. My lawyer went to the district attorney in San Bernardino. He sent two investigators to talk with me, and they began questioning me as if I were doing something wrong. "What the hell is going on here?" They left my office, went right across the street to the [Los Angeles] Times, and claimed I refused to answer questions. Curb repeated the charge in San Jose. The district attorney there arbitrarily ruled that the law was unconstitutional, that the statute that I was citing was unconstitutional without a court hearing. [Laughter] But I might add, the good news was that Curb subsequently wrote me a letter of apology.

CARR: What did that letter of apology say, and under what circumstances did that come?

DYMALLY: My campaign manager and finance manager--one of whom was a lawyer, the other one a businessman . . .

CARR: Who were they?

DYMALLY: Steve Smith, campaign manager; Hugh Pike, finance manager . . .

CARR: This is your second campaign for lieutenant governor?

DYMALLY: Yeah. [They] met with Curb after everything was done, about '80 or something like that, and they told him who they were. Steve had worked for me, and he and I were Young Democrats together, and told him that stuff he heard about me was wrong. He sent a letter of apology. I thought that was very grand. I mentioned it on the congressional floor.

CARR: Now, given the fact you were having so much difficulty with this supposed indictment during your second run for lieutenant governor, how does it affect the campaign? How does it affect your ability to raise funds?

DYMALLY: It was a disaster. It was total disaster. I couldn't raise a lot of money. I mean, the press. . . . Every story. . . . See, in '74, what I did, I went to the cow counties and visited every publisher, and what resulted was a story because nobody else had gone there. No other candidate had gone there. I had my picture in

the papers. So I won most of the cow counties. When I went back on my return visit, that's all they asked me about--the indictment. Then we made a mistake in the campaign.

CARR: So the stories that were subsequently run were about your indictment?

DYMALLY: This rumor that I would be indicted. We also made some mistakes. We chose to indulge in some mudslinging. Curb had been sued about a dozen or more times. I understand that's par for the course in the music business. The strange thing is, when we brought all these documents, the media, which had been criticizing me for going to be indicted, became very defensive of Curb. They gave me a hell of a rough time at that press conference. I was just amazed.

CARR: Now, the question is that you would think that even with this supposed indictment, as an incumbent you would have had a substantial advantage.

DYMALLY: Yeah, until the broadcast by Bill Stout. Don't forget, KNX touches all the way from Santa Barbara to San Diego, where 60 percent of the vote is located. He said he had official word from law enforcement, from the attorney general's

office, that I was going to be indicted. Don't forget, he had this memo. So you know, his defense. . . . Now, what is interesting about that, Hugh Pike, whose name was mentioned, sued, and immediately they apologized. It took me maybe four years to get, not an apology, but equal time to respond to that. Not until I was in Congress and a black manager came on board CBS did they give me a minute to respond.

CARR: We've actually jumped several years ahead, because we're in your second campaign and we haven't even begun to discuss the first one.

DYMALLY: Yeah. But I wanted to mention this question of guilt or innocence, you know. Let's go back then, start from scratch.

CARR: I would like to go back to a few issues, and then we will return to your decision and the circumstances around your decision for your first run for lieutenant governor. First of all, last time we touched on the busing issue a bit. One of the questions that occurred to me was, what was the teachers union reaction to the various busing hearings that occurred, partly in '66, '67?

DYMALLY: It was mixed. The majority prevailed and

accepted the notion of busing because it was a court order.

CARR: But only on that basis?

DYMALLY: Yeah, because it was law-abiding. Internally, there were questions about the whole situation.

CARR: What was the debate internally? What was that like?

DYMALLY: The internal debate was very personal. People would question the viability of busing kids from South Central to the Valley.

CARR: Did it break down along racial lines?

DYMALLY: Mostly, yeah. But it never became a public, contentious issue. It was always private.

CARR: Moving on from that, in 1972, in the state senate primary, you beat out Willie Herron. Do you recall that at all?

DYMALLY: Yeah, I think. Willie was a member of the Teamsters, I think. We knew each other, and we thought this was all a joke, but then it became very serious. He started asking for labor endorsement. So labor came to me and said, "I thought you said this guy was just doing this for fun." So he got kind of carried away.  
[Laughter] But it wasn't any major problem, though.

CARR: It wasn't a major issue at all?

DYMALLY: No.

CARR: There are some people you have obviously talked about. One of them whose name comes up quite a bit, not only as an early supporter in terms of a money person for Tom Bradley, but comes up with your name sometimes, is Paul Ziffren.

DYMALLY: Yeah. Paul didn't do a lot for me financially.

CARR: Really?

DYMALLY: No.

CARR: What was your . . .

DYMALLY: He was friendly, you know. He was a Democratic National Committee man. He was friendly. I think he raised some money, but not a whole lot.

CARR: Not a whole lot. So primarily, if you were to . . .

DYMALLY: He was a king maker, and he represented a large number of movie people, and subsequently left and joined the firm of Gibson, Dunn, and Crutcher.

CARR: So when you say he was a king maker, elaborate on that. In other words, if he got behind you financially, you would be able to make it?

DYMALLY: Yes. He was with the Democratic National Committee, and he was LBJ's point man out here. But you've got to remember, in those days a

little money was a lot of money. It went a long way.

CARR: Yeah. Initially, actually, he didn't support Bradley. It wasn't until later, I think, that he got behind Bradley. The first election he didn't support Bradley, but I think the second election he did.

DYMALLY: I don't recall that.

CARR: OK. How did the national conference of black elected officials come about?

DYMALLY: A very good point. First--and you must forgive my modesty--a friend of mine, Senator Clovis Campbell of Arizona, came to visit Sacramento.

CARR: This is when you were in the senate?

DYMALLY: Yes. I discovered he was the only black senator in Arizona, and I was the only black in California. We further discovered that we were fraternity brothers, so we struck a friendship, and we started talking about what we could do, and he suggested that we organize. So I started on the Los Angeles level . . .

CARR: This was about '68, '69?

DYMALLY: Yeah. And we organized the Los Angeles County black elected officials. We had as our candidate Billy Mills, who was very popular. But what we

didn't figure out. . . . There were a lot of elected officials in Compton. You had the community college, you had the school board, and you had the city council. So Tom Bradley got to them and brought them to the meeting at the Bank of Finance building where we met, and beat us to it. So he became president; we lost out. Then we organized the California conference. I became chairman of that, and then we organized the western conference. Well, at that point, some of the older politicians thought I was going too far and too fast.

CARR: Such as who?

DYMALLY: No, I can't mention. [Laughter]

CARR: [Augustus F.] Hawkins?

DYMALLY: No. I can't mention any names. [Laughter]

CARR: Did Hawkins think you had totally overstepped your bounds there?

DYMALLY: No. [Laughter] We met at the International Hotel at the airport. Again, they brought the troops. But by this time the whole notion had caught on, and so I had my state troops, and we beat them there. Then we decided, with Bill Greene's support and Julian Dixon working for me, to go national. So I sent this notice out for a

planning meeting, and Percy [E.] Sutton, who had been doing a similar thing in New York with the Puerto Ricans and the blacks, thought this was a very unique idea, and who was this guy, anyway? They thought I was a front for LBJ. Percy and I fell in love right away and became good friends, and with his support we went to Ken Clark, who went to the Ford Foundation, and we got a grant. We held our first national conference of black elected officials at the University of Chicago.

CARR: What year was that now?

DYMALLY: We're in the late sixties, early seventies.

Eddie [N.] Williams, who is now head of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, was the vice-chancellor of the University of Chicago. We got the grant from the Ford Foundation. Since we were not a tax-exempt group, the grant went to Howard University, and Frank [D.] Reeves--who was a big Kennedy supporter in the '60 [campaign], and a lawyer in Washington--became the first director. Then the joint center broke away as an independent group, and Eddie Williams took over then. They denied Percy Sutton and I a seat on the board because we were too political.

CARR: Too political meaning?

DYMALLY: Democrats. Don't forget, President [James E.] Cheek of Howard was a strong Nixon supporter and a strong Republican. In fact, at my home I have a picture of Nixon entertaining us at the White House. So Percy and I were left out. But strangely enough, Senator [Edward W.] Brooke [III] of Massachusetts--a Republican--was put on the board. It wasn't long after that that Ken Clark got Percy on the board, and Percy got me on the board.

CARR: What was the significance of that first conference?

DYMALLY: Oh my God, it was historic. It was something else. It was one hell of a great conference, yes.

CARR: How so?

DYMALLY: Well, for the first time, black elected officials from all over the country had gotten together. They had caucuses. The white groups, the white local elected officials had a little black caucus, and the school board had a little black caucus. But this was the first time we got together--members of Congress. Except [William L.] Dawson, he did not participate in Chicago, and his boys did not come. Subsequently, I met

one of them and we became friends, and I asked, "Why didn't you come?" He said, "Look, in Chicago under the Dawson-Daley machine, you got selected as the district. . . ." I forgot what they called them.

CARR: Alderman?

DYMALLY: No. The district precinct captain. The district captain. You got elected as a state representative, and you became a commissioner of public works or a hospital job. So between those three you made a decent living, and they weren't about to buck, because had they come to the meeting, the first thing Daley does is he fires you as a commissioner, and next time you run, he runs somebody against you, and you lose. So the precinct captain is the one who fixed all the tickets and made all the local appointments to the hospital and to the public works, etc. So they didn't come. One independent guy, Senator [ ] Newsome, came. He was the most visible of the Chicago [delegation], but the Chicago delegation did not participate.

CARR: From the conference you were also involved around this time with a publication called The Black Politician: [His Struggle for Power].

DYMALLY: I think I want to get you a compilation. I hope I can find it. Yeah. I had all the copies compiled together, and I don't know what the heck happened to it, but I am going to try and look for it. Maybe it's at California State University, L.A. We got funded by the Ford Foundation.

CARR: When exactly did The Black Politician start as a publication?

DYMALLY: In the late sixties. We took some of the grant money and published that. It didn't make the Ford people happy at all.

CARR: Now, this was the same money you had gotten for the conference?

DYMALLY: No. It's money for the Urban Affairs Institute.

CARR: Oh, OK, the Urban Affairs Institute--which became a larger issue later on in the seventies.

DYMALLY: Yes.

CARR: What was your vision for publishing The Black Politician?

DYMALLY: I still wish I had the money to do it. There is no publication in America now in which black elected officials can express their views of politics and programs. There is a tremendous void which still exists, because such a

publication is controversial. We published stuff from Dr. King, Farrakhan. . . . Not Farrakhan; I mean Malcolm X. What if you published something on Farrakhan today? Or Ben Chavis [Jr.]? You'd be in trouble. Well, of course we didn't have any advertisement. But I must say to you it was well-received.

CARR: Really.

DYMALLY: Yeah. Libraries, people. . . . We got an exclusive from the White House. Congressman [William] Bill Clay, who became a very dear friend of mine, at the time was unhappy that we had given Nixon a voice, because the members of the Congressional Black Caucus were fighting Nixon. We regarded it as a journalistic scoop. In fact, it was covered by CBS on the Saturday when it came out.

CARR: What did Nixon have to say in that?

DYMALLY: Oh, about his civil rights program.

CARR: Who were the people involved in getting that publication out?

DYMALLY: [Laughter] Mervyn Dymally, and a young woman from Fresno--I've forgotten her name now.

CARR: That was it? That was the staff?

DYMALLY: Yeah. All-volunteer staff.

CARR: All-volunteer staff. Moving on from there, I'd like to talk a little bit about the Bay Area for a moment. How did the decline of the [Phillip] Burton machine in the Bay Area. . . . What effect did it have on the rise of the Waxman-Berman-[Meldon E.] Levine machine?

DYMALLY: Well, they were close. The two groups were close. The decline of the Burton machine had a lot to do with the evolution of time. He left and went to Washington, and it's difficult to keep a machine going when you're away from it. The same thing happened to Waxman. Both he and Berman are in Washington. Waxman became strong because Berman was here, you know, on the day-to-day basis in the assembly. And Phil was strong because John, his brother, and Willie [Brown] were right there in the assembly and taking care of local business. Because to keep a machine going you have to be involved in the county committee, and you have to be involved in the club movement, and Burton's strength was with the club movement. When CDC declined, and he's absent from the district, you know, things change over time.

CARR: From your perspective, how did the west side

slow-growth issue create distance between the Waxman-Berman-Levine machine and Bradley's city hall?

DYMALLY: I don't think it was the slow-growth issue, really. Not really. It was a division of forces. Some of us--Billy Mills, Leon Ralph, Dymally, Frank Holoman--were with Jesse Unruh. Yvonne Burke, Tom Bradley were with the west siders. It really arose from not a black or white issue; it rose from the party factions.

CARR: But eventually, though, there was distance between Waxman and Berman and Bradley.

DYMALLY: That came in late. That came in over the environment. I don't think it was the environment as much as it was they wanted a winner. They didn't think that Bradley could win the governorship. And they used the environment to break.

CARR: Environment meaning oil drilling off . . .

DYMALLY: Oil drilling, in the Pacific Palisades.

CARR: . . . Pacific Palisades. Since we're on the subject we can touch on it anyway. Bradley made a 360-degree turn on that. He fought that for pretty much most of his political career, and then toward the end . . .

DYMALLY: I don't know what the politics was, but yes, he came out . . .

CARR: . . . supported Occidental [Petroleum Corporation]'s drilling.

DYMALLY: Yes. I don't know what the politics was.

CARR: What was your reaction to . . .

DYMALLY: Zilch. I really didn't get involved in the matter.

CARR: You didn't get involved. There are a lot of different perceptions of how political machines work. When your organization, or your allies were referred to as the "Dymally machine," what was your reaction to that?

DYMALLY: It was a big laugh. It was a big laugh because we had no machine, and our response was, "Keep the myth. Don't tell them the truth."

CARR: The truth being?

DYMALLY: We didn't have a machine. It was just hard work.

CARR: But everyone says that. Everyone says they don't have a machine when you ask them that.

DYMALLY: No, because what's a machine? A machine is when you, in my definition, is when you have jobs. . . . Like the Daley machine. You can pass out jobs, and you can maintain loyalty through these appointments. We had no appointments. We had no

DYMALLY: money. We went out and raised money. My incumbency was the biggest source of funding, and that's why I was broke all the time; I used all my money. When other people amass little fortunes in the campaign accounts, I was always broke because I used up every penny of mine to help other candidates. But we had good candidates, we were generous with our money, we worked hard, and we had Jesse Unruh's support. Jesse Unruh's support was not always cash. It was a lot of in-kind stuff, though. Everybody used to call him "Fat Guy."

My son and his ex-wife had a little problem. It reached all the way to the district attorney's office, and the woman who was prosecuting the case said to my son's lawyer, "Do you know Dymally?" because the lawyer was of foreign birth. He said, "Yes, I know him as a member of Congress." She said, "You know, he has a machine." And he says, "How do you know?" She said, "Well, he used to teach me at Claremont." [Laughter] I thought it was funny [because] here's a woman in the district attorney's office who really believed I had a machine. But we had loyal people--Bill Greene--and hard workers,

campaign pros like Ken Orduna. When you have incumbency you can raise money. I can't raise any money now, because I don't have an incumbency.

CARR: Now, the thing, though, is while you . . .

DYMALLY: I mean, we spent time organizing. We traveled, we met with people, we went to meetings, we developed coalitions with the Hispanics. Our only weak point--we did not have any support on the west side.

CARR: While you clearly make a very strong distinction between the notion of a machine here on the West Coast and . . .

DYMALLY: An organization.

CARR: . . . an organization, if you want to call it, as opposed to a "machine" like the Daley machine in Chicago, clearly, there's something to be said for the fact that for an up-and-coming black politician, he or she either came in under Dymally or under Bradley.

DYMALLY: Well, not under Bradley. I regret to tell you this. One of my criticisms of Bradley--and that was the main bone of contention--was that Bradley in his early days did not stick his neck out to help anybody. That's what caused the split, more

than anything else.

CARR: Well, there was already a perception of the split. So you're saying the chasm widened.

DYMALLY: Where I went out and did just that, just the opposite. I mean, he had ready-made candidates. We went and found candidates and helped with money. For instance, you cannot say Yvonne came from his operation.

CARR: You bring up exactly what I was just going to get to.

DYMALLY: They were friends, but he did not discover Yvonne. She was her own person.

CARR: Exactly what I was getting to in the sense that the [Los Angeles] Times reports, when Yvonne runs for Congress, that basically you didn't give her support, and that Bradley gave her support.

DYMALLY: That's correct. But she would have won without Bradley's support. I didn't give her support because Billy Mills, who was a friend of mine, ran, and I was on the spot.

CARR: Now, the thing though . . .

DYMALLY: But she didn't need my support or Bradley's support.

CARR: You were already close friends?

DYMALLY: Who?

CARR: Yvonne.

DYMALLY: No.

CARR: And Burke?

DYMALLY: With Bill, yes.

CARR: But you weren't close friends with her, you're telling me?

DYMALLY: That's correct. See, what happened there, Billy Mills thought that he was deceived by Bill Burke because he was on Billy Mills's staff when Billy was talking about running for Congress, and all of a sudden . . .

CARR: Burke leaves the staff, and then Yvonne is running for Congress. .

DYMALLY: Right. So he felt he got stabbed.

CARR: What's your opinion of that?

DYMALLY: Well, I don't know if I have an opinion about it. It just put me on the spot. Bill was my friend, he was with Yvonne now. And Billy is my fraternity brother. We determined that Billy Mills was going to run for city council in his absence. It was Hank Hodge, Doris Berryman, Willard Murray, and myself who met up at my house on Fifty-ninth Place and said we wanted to run against Kenny Hahn's brother [Gordon Hahn], and we were looking for a candidate, and Billy Mills

was the candidate. That's how Billy Mills got into politics. He wasn't even at the meeting. You talk about a machine, that's what happened. That's what we did. Then we went to Jesse Unruh to get the money, and assigned Willard Murray to run Billy's campaign. [We were] always working and organizing.

CARR: To what do you attribute Bradley's unwillingness to stick his neck out, as you say, in his early years for . . .

DYMALLY: Bradley's a very cautious man. He changed later on, you know. Later on he became very, very active. When he first started, because of the criticism we heaped upon him, when he became mayor he supported David Cunningham. But David Cunningham was really a candidate of Yvonne Burke. Yvonne Burke and Bill Burke are the ones who pushed Dave, because Dave was in Washington as a lobbyist. They're the ones who pushed. So Yvonne is the one who pushed Dave.

CARR: But everything I've read makes it seem as if Cunningham was a Bradley candidate.

DYMALLY: Yes, of course, but behind the scenes it was the Burkes. That's how he came to Bradley's attention--through Yvonne.

CARR: Interesting. Switching a bit--but we're in the same area here--what was your allegiance with Rosalind Wyman?

DYMALLY: Well, Roz was part of that whole party operation close to Pat Brown. Her husband [Gene Wyman] was close to Pat Brown. She was close to Jesse Unruh, Carmen Warschaw, Paul Ziffren. No, I don't think. . . . Paul Ziffren was with the CDC and Alan Cranston. I was Humphrey's representative in the black community, so I attended a lot of the "in" meetings with Humphrey on the West Coast. But when I decided to run for lieutenant governor, I took Alice with me, and we had dinner with Roz in that restaurant on the corner of Wilshire [Boulevard] and Westwood [Boulevard], upstairs.

CARR: Monty's, is it?

DYMALLY: It was another one. And she laughed. She said to me, "Merv, white people would never elect you in this state." So she was a nonbeliever.

CARR: She was serious?

DYMALLY: Yeah.

CARR: So by her being a nonbeliever, what did that mean for you in terms of getting financial support?

DYMALLY: Oh, she subsequently helped me. Yes. Even

though she didn't. . . . Well, you know, Jesse Unruh didn't believe I could beat Hawkins's brother for the assembly. But I was such a loyal and active young Democrat--if you call a thirty-four-year-old young. But she did help me, yeah.

[End Tape 8, Side A]

[Begin Tape 8, Side B]

DYMALLY: OK. This is 1970. The census is being taken. In 1971 a friend of mine, Alan Rosen, working on his Ph.D. at SUNY [State University of New York] Buffalo, came to Sacramento. We started talking about reapportionment. I was named chairman of the Reapportionment Committee. I talked him into staying. They were carving out a district with the thought of my running for Congress. Phil Burton and Waxman were carving out a district for Yvonne. A southern Democrat who was working for Hoffmann-La Roche [and Company] as a lobbyist--the pharmaceutical firm--and a former staff member for Governor [James E.] Carter, came to town. We had become friends. I had met him in '68 through the Humphrey campaign. I kidded him and I said, "Hey, Travis [Stuart], Alice is cooking some short ribs and greens. You good ol' southern boy, you need to come home for dinner."

So he came. That night we were having a strategy meeting about reapportionment with Dan Visnich, Alan Rosen, and somebody else, and we were talking about Congress. And Travis said, "Hey, I've been all over the country. Merv is ready for statewide office. Forget Congress." At that point, we had a way out of my ambitious staff, but more significantly, I went to Washington . . .

CARR: What do you mean by that?

DYMALLY: Because they wanted me to run for Congress. I went to Washington, and it was cold, my hayfever was bothering me, I couldn't get a cab, and I said, "To hell with it. Forget Congress." So we came back home and began planning. I looked at what office that, one, a black could run for and not have a lot of visibility--that people don't consider it to be terribly important. The staff wanted me to run for controller, and it didn't appeal to me. I didn't think it appealed to blacks, so we chose lieutenant governor, and that was the origins of the campaign.

CARR: Why lieutenant governor?

DYMALLY: Because it wasn't a significant office. I don't think that they would come after me in a racial context, you know. Nobody paid much attention to

that. Lieutenant governor who?

CARR: Right. Now, you decide to run. When you decide to run you have a huge kick-off dinner--a \$125-a-plate dinner--relatively speaking.

DYMALLY: Man, you know, a dogcatcher would not charge \$125 these days. It's \$500. [Laughter]

CARR: That's right. [Laughter] Relative to the times, right? At the Beverly Hilton [Hotel]. Speaker Bob Moretti is there.

DYMALLY: George Moscone.

CARR: George Moscone is there. Hubert Humphrey was one of the main speakers. Alan Cranston was one of the main speakers as well.

DYMALLY: I wish I had taped that speech that Humphrey gave.

CARR: And Joseph Alioto from San Francisco--the mayor of San Francisco--was also there. What are your recollections of that evening?

DYMALLY: And Judge [Lionel J.] Wilson, who became mayor of Oakland, was also there. I remember him because he was a judge and he had no reason to be there. I didn't know that I was one of his favorite people--he told me when he came. It was one hell of a speech. It was one hell of a night. I mean, it was really a big lift. It was a

tremendously successful dinner. More than the money, it was the politics of it. Let me also mention to you, another reason for running is that I got a free ride.

CARR: How so?

DYMALLY: Because I run in what, '66? Then I run in '68. Then I run in '72. So I didn't have to run until '76. So '74 was a free ride. I didn't have to give up my seat.

CARR: All right.

DYMALLY: That was a significant factor. And the reason why I got the support . . .

CARR: So it wasn't very much of a risk.

DYMALLY: No risk at all. I was a good investment, because had I lost, I would have come back to the senate.

CARR: Right.

DYMALLY: So I was a safe bet, so to speak, politically. As an investor you had nothing to lose.

CARR: Because either way. . . . Let's say you put your money on Mervyn Dymally. If in fact he doesn't get the lieutenant governorship, the seeds have still been planted in the senate when lobbying time comes around.

DYMALLY: That's correct. Don't forget, I was part of the leadership in the senate. I mean, really part of

the leadership. If I ever enjoyed a leadership role in politics, it was in the senate.

CARR: So you have your kick-off dinner. How did Humphrey present your candidacy?

DYMALLY: [Laughter] You would have thought I was a god or something like that. I mean, it was just the most eloquent speech. My only regret is that we didn't tape the damn thing.

CARR: Your allegiances with Humphrey go back to the Chicago convention, right?

DYMALLY: Before the convention. Before the convention I was supporting him here through Roz and Gene Wyman. Gene was one of the best fund-raisers in town. His modus operandi was never his money. He got you to give.

CARR: How did Alan Cranston figure into this?

DYMALLY: Well, Alan Cranston was supportive of me, yeah. Alan Cranston was the one who tipped me off that the Republicans were coming after me the second time around.

CARR: There were no hard feelings between you and Cranston from the time he was running for Senate?

DYMALLY: When we did him in. [Laughter] Well, that was a very interesting story. Bill Greene and I were walking down the hall, and we opened the door and

his secretary was white, and we said, "Let's check and see what are his appointments." He had 147 appointments as controller for tax appraisers. In those days the controller made all the appointments, and he only had two blacks, one in the north and one in the south. We went after him on that, and it really hurt him. We hurt Alan. No, no--by then it was forgiven. Alan was not a vicious guy, although one time I asked him for help, and he turned me down really cold.

CARR: Under what circumstances?

DYMALLY: He had really implemented an affirmative action program with the U.S. attorneys. He had a black in San Francisco, a Hispanic in Sacramento, a woman in Los Angeles, and a white male in San Diego. I tried to see him and they told me "no." I think I'm out of public office now, OK? I could only see him. . . . He's catching a PSA flight to San Francisco, and as luck would have it, I saw him going up the escalator. I asked him if he could check to see what was the status of my case, because this woman was his appointee, and he said he doesn't do things like that. I go to Washington, and who was defending Senator

[Harrison A.] Williams [Jr.], who was caught in Arabgate? Cranston. And this guy was caught on film. When the U.S. attorney, a Hispanic--Herman Sillas [Jr.]--in Sacramento got into trouble, who defended him but Alan Cranston. So he turned me down cold.

CARR: Jerry Brown was also at that dinner.

DYMALLY: In those days Jerry Brown came to all of my affairs, because he was not well-known in the black community, and I was the only black state senator. I had a statewide constituency. In those days we were very sensitive about history. It was during the civil rights movement, you know, when I became the first black to serve in the California senate.

CARR: How much credence did you give to that? I mean, this being the first black elected to the California State Senate. What did that mean to you?

DYMALLY: It meant more to other people than it did to me because I had a statewide constituency. I've told you this story about Mauri Goldman. We selected two quote, unquote, "white issues": women's rights and children. We had the Joint Committee on Legal Equality for women, and I had

the Select Committee on Children and Youth, and we traveled all over the state. Now, I wasn't caught up in that history because I was so mindful of Nixon being more concerned about history than anything else, so I didn't become a slave of historical significance. But it was important to a lot of people.

CARR: A little bit before you actually made your announcement and had this dinner at the Beverly Hilton--it was fairly widely understood that you would be running--you said at the time that you would need to raise \$300,000 . . .

DYMALLY: [Laughter] What a joke.

CARR: . . . in order to run the campaign right.

DYMALLY: I can't remember exactly how much we did, but we were adequately funded. If I had lost we would not have had a deficit. We had Bob Neorcis, who was the number one fund-raiser down here, and who was responsible for the success of that dinner. And up north we had Don Muir, who just passed away of a heart attack. So we had two of the best fund-raisers. But I think a significant thing about it is that I did not play the race card in my race for [lieutenant] governor. In fact my opposition, [Lieutenant Governor] John

[L.] Harmer, had my picture put in an advertisement. When the reporters came to me, I laughed. I said, "Gee, it's a damn good-looking picture. I'm glad he did it"--rather than accuse him of racism.

CARR: Now, you and Harmer had a very odd relationship.

DYMALLY: We worked very closely together.

CARR: He was a Republican. You ran against each other for lieutenant governor. During the campaign you got together on an issue to say, "Well, we want to increase the powers of the lieutenant governorship." How did that happen, because you wanted to create an office of . . .

DYMALLY: Even though Harmer was a forerunner of the far right--back in those days we called them conservatives, but he was really, really conservative--we got along OK. We worked together. We were on the same committee together. We were on Social Welfare, and we were on Reapportionment, and my politics was never personal. And we worked together on the school bill to break up the L.A. Unified School District.

CARR: Which school bill was that?

DYMALLY: Breaking up the Los Angeles school system.

CARR: Oh right. OK. Yes.

DYMALLY: And on reapportionment we were firm adversaries. But I recall a member of Congress, Clair [W.] Burgener--I almost forgot what Clair's last name was--said in Washington, "I'm here because of Dymally." This is a Republican. There were eleven districts for California, and I said to the Republicans, "You take five, we take five, and leave one up for grabs." The up-for-grabs district was Leo [J.] Ryan. That was a Republican district, which he won. So we ended up with six, and they ended up with five. So that was the kind of politics I played with the Republicans.

CARR: That's pretty funny, because what you just said is totally contrary to the perception of you as a radical, black politician.

DYMALLY: Yeah, that was the frontal impression, but behind the scenes I worked well with the Republicans.

CARR: So you and Harmer get together . . .

DYMALLY: Well, I'll give you one incident. There was a tax bill that provided money for schools, and UTLA, the United Teachers of Los Angeles, supported it. Reagan wanted one vote, called me and asked me for the vote. I said, "Well, I

can't vote for you. But UTLA is supporting the bill, and Dave Roberti is close to them." The caucus would release Dave Roberti to vote for the bill.

CARR: So even though you had come out very strongly against many of the vetoes Reagan had done in the early seventies--'71, '72--you still worked with them.

DYMALLY: Very closely. We got a medical school in Watts. I mean, that's evidence of my working. Child Growth and Development [Act], Child Abuse Prevention [Act], equal property rights--all kinds of good stuff.

CARR: When this upgrading that you and Harmer called for of the lieutenant governorship--it was the call to establish a super emergency planning and preparation office that would deal with, pretty much, the state being prepared for any kind of statewide emergencies--were you guys just blowing steam?

DYMALLY: No. Harmer did not want to come out as a racist. I did not want to make race an issue. So there was an opportunity to sort of set an example of bipartisan and nonpersonal politics, even though we disagreed ideologically.

CARR: So at the same time you both are running for an office which you both know has no power, you're calling for an increase of power for that office, which you both, I assume, know is unlikely.

DYMALLY: Well, Reagan had begun to elevate the office.

CARR: How so?

DYMALLY: He had given [Lieutenant Governor Ed] Reinecke the aerospace industry, and he had given him the Department of Commerce and created for him a Commission for Economic Development. So Reagan did more to elevate the office than any other governor. The first thing Jerry Brown did was to close down the Department of Commerce. We used to get thousands of letters. They used to come to me because that was Reinecke's big thing. Then he tried to kill the Commission for Economic Development, and he and I had a real big break at that time. Then another thing that Reagan had elevated for Reinecke was the Commission of the Californias--Baja California.

CARR: The relationship between Baja California and . . .

DYMALLY: The two Bajas, yeah. So Reagan was attempting to do something. I don't know who was behind it-- whether it was Reagan, whether it was his staff,

or whether it was Reinecke. But he had given Reinecke some responsibilities, if not some power. Don't forget, Harmer succeeded Reinecke. So we thought we could build on that. But Jerry Brown just did everything to minimize the importance of the office.

CARR: Why?

DYMALLY: I'll be damned if I know. Brown was just the opposite of Reagan, did everything [differently].

CARR: So here you are. You've announced your campaign. You're going about raising money. A significant amount of the money raised comes from UAW, is it?

DYMALLY: United Auto Workers. And don't forget, I was a member of United Auto Workers, so it was a sense of pride that one of their workers was being elevated. In those days, the UAW was very strong politically, and I used to be a member of the original UAW PAC [political action committee].

CARR: So most of your money comes from labor?

DYMALLY: Yes.

CARR: What you've already mentioned before--you went to quote, unquote "cow counties," different counties, to meet with various publishers of small newspapers.

DYMALLY: You know who was my driver? Assemblyman Robert

[M.] Hertzberg. [Laughter]

CARR: Really?

DYMALLY: Yes. He laughs. We still are very, very dear friends, loving friends.

CARR: So he drove you around to all of these places?

DYMALLY: Yeah.

CARR: George Moscone is your campaign chairman?

DYMALLY: Yes.

CARR: How did that come about, and what did he bring to that position?

DYMALLY: Well, George was very ambitious, and he saw in me a good ally. My number one man and his number one man. . . . It was Bernard Titlebaum-Moscone versus Dan Visnich-Dymally. Dan Visnich brought a rumor that Bernard Titlebaum was doing a number on me. I became enraged. I went to Moscone and demanded that he fire Titlebaum if what I was told was true. He talked to me, and out of that adversary situation we became very good friends--with both he and Bernard Titlebaum. Bernard told me before his death--before Bernard's death--that George considered me one of his best friends, and I was the last person to speak with George before he was shot. He was putting together for me a going away breakfast. I had just lost, and he

said to me, "Why don't you call Schorenstein?"-- Walter Schorenstein, with whom he was having some problems on a zoning matter. And I said, "Fine." [Dan] White was outside waiting for him. He said, "I've got somebody, people, I've got to meet." White was outside, and I hung up the phone. A minute after, Erick Scheck ran into the office saying George Moscone was shot.

CARR: Wow.

DYMALLY: I couldn't believe it. "What do you mean? I just talked with him. No, no." We turned on the CBS radio in San Francisco, which we received in Sacramento, and there it was.

So George wanted to be governor and felt that I was a good ally. But more significantly, he and I became very close friends and political allies. He was Democratic majority leader, and I was Democratic Caucus chairman, and we had the old guard to fight all the time within our party. They didn't care for us.

And don't forget, we overthrew the old guard to pick up the senate seat with [James R.] Jim Mills as the [president] pro tem. I told you that story because you can confirm it with Alan Rosen. Alan Rosen came to my office downtown in

the state building, which was torn down recently. I said, "Alan, look, we're going to make Jim Mills pro tem." He said, "Are you kidding?" I said, "Yeah, listen." So I called Jim Mills. I said, "Jim, you're a candidate for pro tem." He said, "Oh, no, no, Merv. The lobbyists don't like me." And for the first time I realized more than ever that the lobbyists are the ones--we used to call them the Third House because they were so powerful--who could really make that determination in the senate. So I said, "Jim, there are twenty-one of us. We've got ten votes, they've got ten votes, and the deciding vote is my seatmate, Al Song." So as caucus chairman I had the opportunity, the ability, and the power to call a meeting. We called a meeting at the International Hotel in Los Angeles at the airport, and everybody showed up. First they were going to boycott the meeting, but they were so scared that if they boycotted the meeting we would have 11 votes there. They all showed up, and we had a test vote there--11 to 10.

CARR: Why Roberti?

DYMALLY: Roberti was after my time.

CARR: OK, after your time.

DYMALLY: After my time, yes. That's a good question; I wish I knew it, because Roberti was considered a loner. In fact, people kidded--he was such a loner he walked leaning on the walls as he walked into the lobby. He was right on the wall. I don't know what the psychological significance of it was, but he walked right. . . . His shoulders almost touched the wall. Never in my wildest imagination did I think that he was going to be pro tem. But don't forget, he was a Young Democrat who came from the George Brown section of the CDC, and turned out to be a damn good pro tem.

CARR: What were his strengths?

DYMALLY: He was non-polarizing.

CARR: Really.

DYMALLY: Uh-huh. Very conciliatory. Very approachable. He wasn't in for personal power, but rather committed to doing a good job.

CARR: Now, during this period, what's very interesting . . .

DYMALLY: He overthrew Jim Mills, and Jim became very bitter about that--very, very bitter. See, what I learned in the senate is that people are concerned about small, individual things in their

determination to vote for you. Example: A member of the Democratic Caucus went to Hugh Burns, president pro tem, and wanted extra license plates for his wife's car. In the assembly we had two license plates; in the senate only one, and Burns refused it. When the time came around, he voted against Burns. Another time--I think before we achieved success--I think we had two Republicans, Howard Way. . . . I remember a senator went to Howard Way and asked him to name him vice-chairman, because there was no such thing as vice-chairman. He wanted to put it on his letterhead, and Howard didn't do it, and the time came around and we defeated Howard with Jack Schrade. Jack was a conservative, and I voted for Jack and my friends in the liberal community here went crazy. But in the senate it was who can you deal with. It wasn't a question of ideology or philosophy.

CARR: So basically you're telling me a lot of things boiled down to the personal?

DYMALLY: Yeah, because Jack was willing to share power with us, even though we were Democrats. Howard Way got too highfalutin, so to speak. But what I'm pointing to is [it was] the little things

that matter. A member could appreciate your voting against his bill and understand, but if he asked you to do him a favor which has nothing to do with your district or ideology as such, he expected you to produce that.

CARR: When you finally start to run, you're running, Moscone is running your campaign . . .

DYMALLY: Steve Smith was running the campaign.

CARR: Moscone was the chairman.

DYMALLY: Chairman, and Hugh Pike was the finance. . . . Raising the money for me.

CARR: So what role did Moscone actually play, then?

DYMALLY: He was the general chairman. You know, he gave an image. He was very, very popular with the liberals, and his endorsement was important, much as my support of him for governor was important.

CARR: Besides driving around to the cow counties, what were some of your other campaign strategies to win this office?

DYMALLY: That was the biggest one.

CARR: That was it?

DYMALLY: Yeah.

CARR: Go where no one else was going?

DYMALLY: Yes. That was the biggest one, and surprisingly I won most of the cow counties. I figured I'd do

well in Los Angeles County--I'm the natural [choice], and I had a close relationship with the Hispanic community, for reasons I explained earlier. And I got the CDC endorsement, even though some of the liberals on the west side didn't care for me because of my relationship with Unruh. We won.

CARR: See, this is one of the--we're back to Mr. Harmer--strange things that happen. You win. You have, I think, three inaugural dinners: two in L.A. and one in Sacramento. Harmer comes to your inaugural dinner in L.A. although you've just defeated him in the race for lieutenant governor and introduces you.

DYMALLY: He was running for Congress while I was in Congress, in Utah, and some newspaper guys came to me for some dirt on him, and I wouldn't indulge in that. And I think he introduced me in the senate, too. Billy Mills swore me in. In fact, when I left the senate, the two people who got up and spoke on my behalf were John [G.] Schmitz of Orange County--a member of the Birch Society--and [H.L.] Bill Richardson, who was hated by the Democrats, a member of the Birch Society and the number one pro-gun activist in

the state. In my personal relationship. . . . You see, what discouraged me about Congress was the relationship in Congress got very personal, very acrimonious, as you now witness. Guys are even having physical clashes. Not so in the senate. The senate was my happiest experience in politics. I was in the leadership, got along, with exception of a couple of the old-timers.

CARR: Like whom?

DYMALLY: Randy Collier didn't care for me. Larry Walsh, of course, because I had eased him out of his district. . . . [Ralph C.] Dills was kind of. . . . I never could figure out Dills, where he was coming from. He's always complained about me, and yet every time he ran, I supported him.

CARR: One of your platforms while you were running--in fact, one of the significant platforms while you were running--was that you believed that the state Public Utilities Commission should be given power to regulate oil.

DYMALLY: [Laughter] That was deliberate. I had a meeting at town hall, and I had a writer, Matt Goldbach, who came up with the idea, and [who] thought, "These speeches down there are bland, and the oil companies are coming in. You need to have

something to say that would stick it to them." And don't forget, [Kenneth] Ken Cory was running with billboards that said, "The man the oil companies hate most in California." So the oil companies, at the time. . . . It was during the [time] when the cars were lined up for gas.

CARR: Yeah, right--the gas crisis.

DYMALLY: Yes. And I had announced in San Francisco at a filling station. So we figured, "Look, who could get mad with you except a couple of oil companies that are not funding you anyway?"

CARR: Right. So it was a safe bet. And everyone was already angry with the oil companies because of the . . .

DYMALLY: They were making all that money, you know, and lining up and stuff.

CARR: . . . lines and the money they were paying for gas.

DYMALLY: They blamed them, although I don't think they were totally at fault. So yeah, we came out. They were very unhappy about it. In fact, at that town hall speech, this guy tried to, in a question. . . . He prefaced the question to me by saying, "Yes, Mr. Dymally, I remember you. You came to me to ask me to give your brother-in-law

a filling station." Well, my brother-in-law's family ran the Chevron-Esso station in Jamaica, in Montego Bay, and he wanted to get a station, and I introduced him to the Chevron people to tell them his background is in filling stations and oils. In those days, filling stations had the mechanical shop at the side.

CARR: Right.

DYMALLY: So after the speech I went up and said, "If you ever try to embarrass me again I'm going to let you have it." He tried to suggest that I had come to him, begging him. Now I was knocking the oil companies. But I also had blasted Chevron on the floor of the assembly on a bill having to do with discrimination. I wanted to set up sort of a commission against discrimination in education. It got on the floor. It was defeated, but in an emotional speech I said I remembered when I went to ask for a job at a Chevron station on Beverly Boulevard--close to Alvarado [Boulevard]--and they said they didn't hire colored. It was [such] a highly charged, emotional speech that Rumford felt compelled to get up and make sort of a back-handed apology. He said, "Well, you know, Dymally comes from a different country where they

don't have discrimination. That's why he's so upset."

CARR: Wow. In addition to actually calling for the companies to be regulated by the Public Utilities Commission, you went even further. You went a step further to say you opposed drilling for oil offshore.

DYMALLY: That was a big environmental issue. I had a perfect record on the environment, but the environmentalist didn't endorse me for some strange reason.

CARR: The environmentalists didn't?

DYMALLY: No. They endorsed Jerry Brown, but they didn't endorse me.

CARR: Interesting. So you've won. You are the lieutenant governor. What was your vision for this office? You went into it knowing that it wasn't a significant office, but you must have had some idea of what you wanted to do and accomplish in it.

DYMALLY: Sure. That Harmer-Dymally agreement was one of the factors to upgrade the office. What I did, I published a pictorial book on the various roles of the lieutenant governor, and it was very expansive: going to upgrade it with the

DYMALLY: Commission for Economic Development, had full staff, did a UCLA study, did a Lou Harris study on the economy. Remember, everybody was leaving California in those days, claiming it was the worst state to do business in? I was just on the opposite side of Jerry Brown on that issue. I tried to project a pro-business agenda with the commission. We had a very active Commission of the Californias with Dr. Ralph Poblano as the director. I attended all the [University of California Board of] Regents meetings, introduced the first resolution in the country on divestment, and gave the office some visibility. But inherently, constitutionally, the office. . . . There's not a lot there. The one thing I didn't do, however, was preside. I thought it was a waste of time. You preside over the senate.

Now, on the [State] Lands Commission, of which I was a member, everybody had an alternate except the lieutenant governor. And when I inquired why, they claimed that they did not give Lieutenant Governor Glenn [M.] Anderson the alternate because they wanted him to attend the meetings so they could get rid of him presiding

all the time. So I had legislation to create an alternate. I had a black female lawyer who was my alternate, Betty Smith. So I was visible in the Lands Commission. We filed suit against the oil companies, which we subsequently won. Ken Cory was the chairman. The controller usually got that spot. I wanted the spot. My staff wanted me to get the spot, but I didn't want to fight Ken Cory on that because I didn't think Jerry Brown would vote for me. Jerry Brown's nominee was. . . . There were three of us: the director of finance, the controller, and the lieutenant governor. I didn't think Jerry Brown would vote for me, so I didn't want to take on Ken.

CARR: One of the significant things you did, there was an equal rights bill--a gay rights bill--that was up before the senate, and it was tied . . .

DYMALLY: [Laughter] That's Willie Brown's bill. Consenting adults. . . . I was in Denver attending a dinner there for George Brown, another black lieutenant governor. There were only two of us at the time--lieutenant governor. And I kept getting these calls from George Moscone: "You've got to come back, you've got to

DYMALLY: come back." I think at the time the vote wasn't cast, but each side knew where they were. I finally got a call from Jim Mills, the pro tem. So I took the next flight out, and got picked up. I called the [California] Highway Patrol and . . . This is strange, strange. The Highway Patrol told me that they couldn't pick me up in the helicopter because Randy Collier had criticized them for using the helicopter for political purposes. I said, "Look, goddamnit, I'm the lieutenant governor of this state and the president [of the senate], and I am requesting you to pick me up, OK? Now, you go tell Randy Collier that." I was hollering, and people were looking at me in the Denver airport because they thought, "What the hell gives here?" So they picked me up. I walked in there very dramatically, pretending I didn't know what the vote was, and I said, "What is the count, Mr. clerk?" He said, "Twenty-twenty." I said, "[I] vote aye."

Now, that was one incident where an agency was denying me my power or privilege. Another one was the L.A. chief of police. . . . I refused to. . . .

CARR: Which one?

DYMALLY: I think it was [William H.] Parker, or his successor, I can't remember. I refused to extradite a young black man to Georgia, and they wouldn't release the guy. We had to get real, real nasty with them. And another time they wanted me to sign extradition papers to bring a guy back from New Orleans, and I wouldn't do it. The FBI got into the act to see if there was some payoff or something like that.

CARR: Wow.

DYMALLY: Now, when Jerry Brown left town his legal counsel--now Judge [Anthony] Klein--used to bring all of the pardons for me to sign, because he didn't want to pardon anybody and then have them commit a crime later on and get accused for it. So when he left, and I became governor, I would sign them.

CARR: So you're the one who . . .

DYMALLY: Did all the pardons, yeah.

CARR: Now, at this point you've already built up a significant relationship with various prisoner-rights groups all over the state. I recall while looking at your papers at Cal State L.A. that you received many wonderful letters of congrat-

ulations from various prisoner-rights groups and from prison when you became lieutenant governor.

DYMALLY: One of which was Eldridge Cleaver. Through me he organized the first Negro history club at Soledad. But in those days. . . . I'll tell you how the climate has changed--a politician advocating prisoner rights now would be dead.

CARR: Right.

DYMALLY: He would last one minute. [Laughter] Times have changed.

CARR: Exactly. That would be it.

DYMALLY: Oh, yeah, no way.

[Interruption]

As crime increased, the prisoners lost all the support they had.

CARR: What was the significance of that gay rights legislation?

DYMALLY: The gay rights people had supported me when I ran. It was supported by Willie Brown, it was supported by George Moscone. I was identified with the liberal wing of the party. I didn't have any choice. I had no strong commitment ideologically or philosophically. But it just seemed that was the only thing left for me to do.

CARR: Willie Brown was, without fail, one of your

strongest supporters.

DYMALLY: Yes. But at the same time there was an old personal rivalry there behind the scenes.

CARR: Really?

DYMALLY: Yeah, but publicly he was always supportive. During reapportionment he was very unhappy with me.

CARR: Why?

DYMALLY: I'll be damned if I know.

CARR: Why the rivalry?

DYMALLY: We were in different camps. Oh, and he accused me of not supporting him for speaker because my guys didn't support him. Bill Greene, Julian Dixon, Leon Ralph, and John [J.] Miller met at Howard Johnson's in L.A. and made a determination [that] they were not going to support Willie because he didn't put me on his slate in San Francisco. They used me to go after Willie, and Willie was very unhappy with me about that, even though I had put he and Bill Greene together. Willie was very contemptuous in his relationship with John Miller, and John never forgave him for that.

See, don't forget when Moretti became speaker, Moretti's people refused to support

Willie Brown for majority leader.

CARR: Oh.

DYMALLY: In order to show they weren't racist they named  
John Miller.

CARR: OK.

[End Tape 8, Side B]

[Session 8, June 7, 1997]

[Begin Tape 9, Side A]

CARR: Congressman Dymally, one of the controversies you were involved in very early in your tenure as lieutenant governor was a situation dealing with Howard Miller, who had just vacated the education board, and you were involved in, essentially, trying to keep someone else off that board. Could you explain that a little bit for me?

DYMALLY: That was an awful story. It was so bad. The [California] Highway Patrol [CHP]. . . . I had to clarify the position. What happened is that we went down La Cienega [Boulevard] in the area of Fairfax [Avenue], where Fairfax meets La Cienega, and I saw Ted Kimborough, a lobbyist for the L.A. city school system. I honked him and he pulled over and I got out and we had a very nice, jovial meeting, and that was it. The next thing I know, [Kathleen] Kathy Brown was complaining that I had put pressure on the board. But it is a question of my word against his word. What was an

absolute, pathological lie is that we put on the red light. The car was an undercover car assigned to the attorney general's office, without any lights. So the Highway Patrol had to come in and tell the L.A. Times that the car had no lights. The car had no lights, and therefore I could not have signaled him over. And that was the big lie. Now, the Times was going to write an editorial against me and the editorial writer used to work for Pat Brown many years ago. I called him and explained that no such thing happened. This was just a friendly meeting between Ted and myself and next thing I know. . . . Well, the board and Kathy Brown never revealed who brought the information to her, but he was the only one with whom I spoke.

CARR: Now, the thing is, Kathleen Brown also said that you personally called her, and during a conversation with her, you told her that you would do everything you could to block Howard Miller's appointment.

DYMALLY: She said that?

CARR: Yeah. I quote . . .

DYMALLY: Can you read that quote for me?

CARR: Yeah, sure. I quote, "Board member. . . ." I'll

read a bit ahead. "A spokesman for Dymally admitted the lieutenant governor has called board members and threatened to campaign against anybody who voted for Miller to fill the vacancy." Next paragraph. "Board member Kathleen Brown Rice said Dymally called her and indicated he might use his influence against the Los Angeles district in Sacramento if Miller was appointed. Dymally's spokesman denied that charge."

DYMALLY: All I have to say, it is an absolute lie. I was really surprised at Kathy.

CARR: If in fact that's a lie, what would have motivated her to lie about the situation?

DYMALLY: Well, because she was defending her position. Don't forget, she leaked the information out. I may have called her and said to her that Howard Miller was an unethical person, but I never threatened to stop the board appointment. I mean, that was just not so. That was an awful story.

CARR: What was your problem with Miller?

DYMALLY: Miller was vicious in the campaign. Yeah. Miller became very personal. He went to the district attorney to get me indicted.

CARR: You mean this is your previous campaign for . . .

DYMALLY: When I was running for lieutenant governor in '74.

What happened was this: Johnny Otis--the musician--and I became good friends. Do you know who Johnny is?

CARR: Yes.

DYMALLY: He and I became very good friends. And he lived on Harvard . . .

[Interruption]

He wanted to move into the district to run for the assembly. He had no credit because musicians are on the road, they're up and they're down. And he came to me to co-sign for a house for him, and I co-signed it. And in my financial disclosure I forgot to mention it, so Howard Miller went to the district attorney to get me indicted for omitting that. Now, Larry Stammer of the San Jose Mercury News, after the press conference in Sacramento, came to me and said, "Look, there must be another side of the story. What about this house that you did not disclose?" And then it occurred to me that I had co-signed for Johnny Otis. I just totally forgot. And why did I forget? Because Johnny Otis made his

DYMALLY: payments on time, so I never got a delinquency notice. The tax bill went to his house. So I got Johnny Otis on the phone. Thank God he was home, and he said to Larry Stammer, who is now with the L.A. Times, "Dymally's my family's hero. If it weren't for him we wouldn't have a house here, because I had no credit and I couldn't get anybody to co-sign for me." And that was the story. He [Miller] became very vicious, and Mark [Dymally] will tell you. I sent Mark to represent me at a Berkeley meeting and . . .

[Interruption]

. . . and Mark discusses his experience at Berkeley. He talks about that, how mean-spirited--I mean, he was just an eighteen-year-old kid, a freshman--how mean-spirited Howard Miller was. Howard waged a very personal campaign. And so if I called Kathy Brown and said to her, "I'm concerned about a guy like Howard Miller being on the board. . . ." And it turned out I was right, because Howard Miller, you know, eventually he became a nemesis among. . . I just may have said to her, "I'm concerned about him going on the board." He was very personal. Now, what Howard had going for him was

the anti-Dymally group in the black community, led by David Cunningham.

CARR: Now, Cunningham was an ally of Bradley as well.

DYMALLY: Yes. They had a meeting at Founders National Bank and I went and expressed my concerns. I said, "This guy's just a vicious guy." They were supporting him, and I left on my way to Sacramento. It was a Sunday. He said something very derogatory about me. It wasn't the first time that Dave did that. Once before, when I was going to run for Congress, in 1980, I went. . . . They had a group headed by [Robert] Bob Farrell, and I went to them and said, "Look, I have an office, I have some money, I have some staff, and I'd like you to join me on a [voter] registration drive." And then I left, I was in a cafeteria-- in the Ontra cafeteria on Crenshaw. And when I left, Dave came in and just denounced me. And the only person who came to my defense was Lois Hale-Hill, who worked at the time for Diane [E.] Watson. Later she was a school board member in Inglewood.

So yeah, I was concerned about this guy going on, but I never threatened them. There was no light. . . . There's a strong headlight in the

car. And that's where the CHP had called the Times and said, "We don't know what transpired." I even joke with Ted. I said, "Anybody but Miller. Why not Harmer?"--meaning I just defeated Harmer. It was just a jovial thing. Oh, it was an awful thing. It was just an absolute, total lie. I was just stunned that Kathleen would give out a story like that because I held her in high regard.

CARR: Now, with the fact that Kathleen gave out a story like that, do you feel that at all affected your relationship with Jerry [Brown]?

DYMALLY: No. We had no relationship, so there was nothing to affect.

CARR: Yeah. I correct myself. Actually, Miller was supposed to be replacing Donald [D.] Newman on the board of education.

DYMALLY: Newman had resigned?

CARR: Newman had resigned after. . . . I think he was there for ten years or so, and Miller was kind of seen as high on the list of people to go on.

Going on politically--we'll come back to a few other controversies--but one of the strange moments during your political career is that both you and Tom Bradley endorsed Jerry Brown's

campaign for the presidency in 1976.

DYMALLY: First let me say this. Not only Bradley, all the blacks. Willard Murray used that picture for years and years in his tabloid. I mean, ten years later Murray was still using that picture because a number of us were present.

CARR: You're referring to the picture of you, Bradley, and Brown standing together.

DYMALLY: Yes. A subsequent time I believe that all the black elected officials got together to support Jerry. That's the picture Willard used, not this one. I did it because I thought it was my Democratic--large "D"--duty to support the aspirations of my governor. And besides, I must tell you something very strange: I actually liked Jerry. That's what hurt me so much. I actually liked the man.

CARR: When you say you liked him, elaborate. Why did you like him?

DYMALLY: Well, he was young, he was bright. I'm freakish for intellectualism and academic pursuits and stuff like that--general reading, education. . . . You know, you're a hero. My hero is not an entertainer or athlete. My hero is an intellectual. So I like him. He's bright, and I

DYMALLY: wanted to show him that I'm on his side.

I recall one time, I was trying to get the Commission for Economic Development refinanced and reauthorized. I'm sitting down there in the front row, which is reserved for legislators and elected officials, and the sergeant-of-arms turned his back to me when the phone rang. Then he goes up and he gets [Assemblyman] Bill Lockyer, who is now pro tem of the senate. Bill Lockyer, who was not a Jerry Brown admirer, headed to the phone, turned his back to me, and goes back up to the podium and calls me and says, "The governor just called and asked me to hold the bill." So I went downstairs and Jerry was meeting with the [California] Legislative Black Caucus, and I jumped all over him. I called him all kinds of. . . . I was so mad that he had so humiliated me and had done that. And I went and said to him, "You ask Jesse Unruh. I'm the most loyal person in California politics, and for you to do that to me. . . ." So Jerry. . . . Despite all of these things. . . . And I had no aspirations to be governor, that was not the reason. I just wanted to show him--because I didn't think he was going to win the nomination--

I wanted to show him, notwithstanding my private reservations, that I am a loyal supporter.

CARR: Why didn't you think he was going to win a nomination?

DYMALLY: I think he was too elitist in his politics. I cite one example.

CARR: Elitist how?

DYMALLY: There's a young girl in the northeast who was collecting pictures of governors. She got every governor except Jerry, and Jerry would not give her the picture.

Another time. . . . The state police came to me and told me they'd been surveilling my house, and I'm a target because I have a state license and my car is very visible from the outside because the garage had no door--it's one of those tropical-type garages. I need to change it to private license plates. So I ask Nate Holden to carry the. . . . I called Herman Sillas, who was head of the DMV [California State Department of Motor Vehicles]. Herman says, "Look, I checked the record book and your car is really assigned to the attorney general's office and we have no record of it. It doesn't exist. So you have to get some legislation. I can't give you license

plates for a car that doesn't exist." So I asked Nate Holden to carry the legislation, and he carried it, and Jerry vetoed it on the grounds that it was special legislation. And that's the kind of chickenshit behavior that I didn't like. And besides that, I didn't think that the nation was ready for a kind of guy who was so elitist, wasn't traditional.

CARR: One of the political ironies for you in your relationships was that Hubert Humphrey really did not want Jimmy Carter to be president.

DYMALLY: I did not know that.

CARR: Yeah, I mean, he had . . .

DYMALLY: I was close to Humphrey in . . .

CARR: At that point?

DYMALLY: By '76 we had kind of . . .

CARR: Drifted apart?

DYMALLY: Drifted apart. Yeah, as one does from the East and West. No difference politically. That I did not know.

CARR: Yeah. I think he had a little acronym. It was like ABC: "Anything But Carter."

DYMALLY: Well, let me just say this to you. A friend of mine, my campaign finance chairman, Hugh Pike, a Georgian who knew Jimmy Carter when he was

governor and voted for him, held a dinner for him early in the game. Tell you how [Laughter] I missed the boat. I went to the dinner and Carter was just very pleased that I was there-- lieutenant governor and so on. And the next day I called him [Pike] and I said, "Man, come on, let's be serious." You know, the guy had that thick southern accent. You know, knowing the bias toward white southerners in the north. I said, "There's no way in the world this guy's going to win. You're wasting your time."

CARR: Yeah. So clearly at a moment in history, you're just coming out of a, you know, very contentious kind of civil rights movement in the late sixties, and you have this guy . . .

DYMALLY: Yeah, but I didn't know his record in Atlanta, and in Georgia either.

CARR: But at least the image was . . .

DYMALLY: Yes, I'm surprised that Humphrey did not want him.

CARR: Hmm, interesting. Now, at the time, a lot of the political pundits reasoned that your support for Jerry Brown was . . .

DYMALLY: To become governor?

CARR: Not only to become governor, but in a more

immediate sense, for you to get a better relationship and more authority in the lieutenant governor's office.

DYMALLY: Look, I had no aspirations to be governor, and I didn't think he was going to be president. I simply wanted to say, "Hey, Jerry. I'm one of your guys. I'm on your team." You asked. . . . I know about my loyalty. I said, "I supported [Unruh] over Bradley," and that wasn't an easy thing, but based on my loyalty. And so I was trying to send signals. I recruited Bill Greene to travel around the country. We got the Mitchell family, except Parren Mitchell, to support Jerry in Maryland. We also brought them out here, and we won Maryland.

CARR: And you predicted actually that he was going to win Maryland.

DYMALLY: Yeah, because I had the best political family in Maryland. And I don't know that Parren was opposed to Jerry and neither was he opposed to his family supporting Jerry. But Jerry was unresponsive. Now he goes to . . .

CARR: When you say he's [unresponsive]--you've said this several times. You run his campaign from California.

DYMALLY: Well, his black [campaign]. Who was his black campaign--I mean his outside black campaign? Myself, Bill Lee, the publisher of the Sacramento Observer--we put together, people tell us, the best piece of political literature they have seen of a white elected official. We got the pictures of everybody whom he had appointed. And black southerners were stunned. They had never seen anything like it. It was an impressive list. In fact, while the meeting was going on, people were reading the literature, totally distracted from the meeting. Now, this was a black caucus convention, sponsored by the Congressional Black Caucus, in Raleigh, North Carolina. And as I arrived there, Jerry's staff met me at the airport to tell me the governor wants to see me urgently. I go to his room and he says, "I want you to talk to Jesse about me."

CARR: Jesse?

DYMALLY: Jackson. I said, "Why?" Apparently Jesse approached him about the way he had been treating me out here, because word had got out that he was, you know, treating me badly. And I went to Jesse and said, "I'm supporting him because it's the right thing to do." Now, at the

convention . . .

CARR: What was Jesse's reaction to that?

DYMALLY: "Well, you know, I just want to be sure that the guy's [Inaudible]." What I said, basically, was, "Jesse, his relationship with me is probably not the best, but he has a good record, you know, on the question of blacks." But when you examine the record. . . .

Well, let me finish and let's come back to his record. So we're sitting up there, Lieutenant Governor Dymally, Lieutenant Governor George Brown, etc., etc. Jerry says to the crowd, "If you nominate me and if I'm elected, I will appoint him governor," which is a total lie. In California, there's no such thing. You automatically ascend to the throne. And that's when I knew that this guy would say or do anything in the public arena. I mean, I was just stunned that he would just tell such a deliberate lie to the nation--this meeting is being televised--that he will appoint me. I mean, that really shook me up that this guy would say that.

CARR: Didn't any of the California journalists catch that?

DYMALLY: No. Hey, shit, they were so anti-Dymally and so

pro-Jerry, they would never make me look good at all--no. [Laughter]

From that time I stopped trusting Jerry. That he would, you know, tell such a lie before everybody. But the piece of literature was as impressive as all hell. He came out looking good at the convention. And Gray Davis hedged on his promise to pay for the literature.

CARR: Now, Gray Davis was Jerry's executive secretary at the time, or something.

DYMALLY: He hedged on his promise to pay for it, so Bill Lee and I decided to go ahead. And he--Bill Lee, publisher of the Observer--and I picked up the tab for the literature. It was one hell of a good piece of. . . . It was a tabloid with all of these prominent appointees.

Now, about the appointees. What Jerry did, in effect, was cater to the black middle class. And the black middle class is interested in appointments, not legislation, because legislation doesn't affect them. For instance, he vetoed a major school bill by Wilson Riles. He held up the funding for Drew School at one time. Gus Hawkins and I had to spank him, publicly. So as I said, he had a spotty record

on legislation, but an excellent record on appointments. But, like most governors, he had no major black person in his inner cabinet--the people around him who make the decisions. The invisible decision-makers, he had no one. He had Percy Pinkney, but Percy was kind of a PR guy for outside.

CARR: Now, the thing is, I bring all this up because at different points--even actually when you were about to be elected as lieutenant governor--you always said that you wanted more authority as lieutenant governor. And during your tenure as lieutenant governor, you often said that as well. But I never heard you anywhere, or read anywhere, specifically saying what more authority you wanted. Very often this complaint came with criticism of how Brown ignored the California economy during his first term.

DYMALLY: See, Reagan gave Reinecke not only responsibility, he gave him authority. He gave him the Department of Commerce, he gave him the aerospace industry, he gave him tourism, he created the Commission for Economic Development for him. Reagan really extended to Reinecke a lot of responsibility and authority, and Jerry Brown,

the first thing he did, was to eliminate the Department of Commerce, try to kill the Commission for Economic Development. If it were an executive order, he would have killed it, but it was a statutory commission.

The constitution does not provide for a great deal of authority for lieutenant governor. All it does, it says in effect the president of the senate--not the lieutenant governor--shall be a member of the board of regents. That's how I got on the board of regents, not as lieutenant governor.

CARR: Now, incidentally. . . . And we'll get to the board of regents. But as politics makes strange bedfellows, one of the ironies of what you just said was that there was a time. . . . Jerry Brown had an odd, close relationship with George Deukmejian, who was a representative coming out of Long Beach at the time. At the same time, later in his first term as governor, Deukmejian publicly said that he did not feel Brown was good for the climate of business in California. But he went further to say that you had done a great deal to encourage and make a better climate for business in California. What was that all about?

DYMALLY: I wasn't aware of that, but here's what happened. I made the commission so active that the FBI zeroed in on it as if to say, well, why was he spending so much time on this nothing commission? And so the commission is very active. The vice-chairman was a Republican. We traveled around the state, we did a Harris [poll] study of the economy, we did a UCLA School of Business [Administration] survey on the economy, I supported Dow Chemical [Company], to put a plant in Contra Costa County. After years of frustration, they went to Texas and in forty-five days they put the plant together. I tried to get El Paso Gas to bring their pipeline into Long Beach--make Long Beach a terminal for Alaska oil. He opposed all of those things. So I came out very pro-business, but the irony about that is that when election time came, the same Republican businessmen who were praising me opposed me.

CARR: And went with Curb.

DYMALLY: Curb, yeah. In fact, I went to Ahmanson, whose wife was on the board of the [California] Museum of Science and Industry [now California Science Center], and said to him. . . . Not Ahmanson. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. [ ] Edgerton, head of

California Fed--Cal Fed Savings and Loan. God, I almost forgot his name, but he was very friendly. Very friendly person and I think he was on the board of the museum. Yeah. He was chairman, and Mrs. Ahmanson was there too. So I had gotten close to a couple of Republicans and I tell them, "Gee, look. I've done everything the business community has asked me, and now they're opposing me." So the moral [Laughter] of that story is that it doesn't matter how good a pro-business Democrat you are. When it comes to election time, the same people who praise you for supporting their measures also end up opposing you on a partisan basis. And that was a shocker to me. I was kind of naive to think that after having done such a good job, they wouldn't bother me.

CARR: Now, let's move on a bit. You never quite answered the question. Exactly what kind of authority did you want as lieutenant governor that you didn't have?

DYMALLY: Well, I wanted the authority that Reinecke had. For instance, I wanted Jerry Brown to say, "Well, why don't you work with the aerospace industry?" Or "Why don't you resurrect the Department of

Commerce?" Could you imagine that--the first thing a governor does, the first message he sends is that he eliminates the Department of Commerce? This is essentially what the Republicans are doing now. They're saying no government is the best government. And he was saying to them no business department in California. Or it could have been directed--what other conclusion?--at me: "I didn't want Dymally to have this department."

CARR: Often it seems like the lack of relationship you've had with Brown, and your problems with that, seem to play itself out more in the media than it actually played itself out behind closed doors.

DYMALLY: Well, that's correct, but it was worse behind closed doors than it was [in] the media. I mean, he just totally ignored the shit out of me. He didn't treat me. . . . It left a very bitter taste in my mouth, but I never complained, for this reason: I'm very fatalistic. If I had been reelected, I'd never have ended up in Congress, so I never complain. I'm saying if Jerry Brown had thrown his arm around me and got me reelected, for instance, I would have been stuck

in Sacramento.

CARR: But you did complain, though, because all these journalists from the L.A. Times, the Sacramento Bee, and the San Jose Mercury News . . .

DYMALLY: Not as much as I felt it though.

CARR: Really? So you're saying you could have complained even more.

DYMALLY: Oh more. Sure.

CARR: What didn't you say in the media that in retrospect you might say now to me?

DYMALLY: Well, I should have said that the governor has ignored me and does not involve me in his decision-making, and all he does is relegate to me controversial pardons when he leaves town. So that was my role as governor--acting governor--to give pardons to people who he was afraid might recommit crimes and then it will end up on his record.

CARR: Now, what if I said something like this--purely devil's advocate--"Hmm, boy, Mervyn Dymally is an astute politician at this point. He's been elected as lieutenant governor, but he really seems to be taking this thing between him and Brown very personally."

DYMALLY: Yes, and I would say you're correct. And I have

the urge to go out there. . . . For example, I've missed my big chance with Clinton. I was asked by Congressman Stephen [J.] Solarz to come to New York and expose Jerry, and I passed because I didn't want. . . . I had such respect for Jerry's father that I never wanted to get out there and be a critic. The things that I said about Jerry that ended up in the media were just slight things in passing. They weren't anything that reflected on his character, as a person, and one must note that very carefully. I'd never criticize him as being a flake. I simply said, "I need some more authority. I need some more activity." Because I was just. . . . A lieutenant governor, all he does. . . . He presides, and I hated presiding. Even when I was a senator I never sought to preside. [California Lieutenant Governor] Glenn [M.] Anderson occupied himself with presiding, but I never did. No, no. If I really let loose on Jerry Brown, you know. . . . I never have publicly. This is probably as strong as I have come out about my relationship with him.

CARR: Now, again, here's an example of one of those personal situations.

DYMALLY: Let me give you one before you ask that. Jerry Brown's [Department of] Corporations attempted to check into my relationship with--I don't know if he did it, but--with the doctors. And I had to go to his legal secretary, who's now on the bench, [J. Anthony] Kline, Tony Kline, and tell Tony. . . . I said, "You need to tell Jerry that my relationship with those doctors had a lot to do with raising money for him, OK?" And the whole thing dropped.

Another time [Allard K.] Lowenstein, who subsequently was shot--you know, [the] congressman and peace activist--came out here to work for Jerry in the summer and he tried to repair the relationship because he detected it. And to this day my relationship with [Gray] Davis is very ambivalent because I felt he did not play a strong role in trying to repair that relationship. In fact, when he ran for lieutenant governor he went about praising the Commission for Economic Development. I had to write him a letter and said, in effect, "You're not being honest because you sided with Jerry in trying to kill the commission. How come the commission is the hottest thing since hotcakes?"

CARR: Yeah. Well, there's also the other issue of Davis. . . . I mean, his position essentially put him in the role of Jerry's hatchet man.

DYMALLY: Well, he was both: the enforcer, and he ran the show in Jerry's absence. I remember one time I had a piece of legislation to sign because it affected some interest I had, and they wouldn't let me sign the legislation to put it into law. They found every excuse not to let me sign it while he was gone.

CARR: And on Gray Davis, I mean, there was another situation, a little situation. I think, again, you were upset by the lack of communication, this was probably about 1976, 1977. No, this would have been after Jerry failed to get the Democratic nomination. Supposedly there was a direct line between the lieutenant governor's office and the governor's office, and you threatened to just cut the line because you said, "Well, why have the line if in fact it's not being used?"

DYMALLY: Yeah.

CARR: Gray Davis stepped in, I think, and said, "That wouldn't be a good idea."

DYMALLY: Well, he tried to make peace on non-substantive

issues like the telephone, OK? [Laughter]  
That's how silly the whole damn thing was. You  
can save a telephone, but not save my . . .

CARR: Save legislation.

DYMALLY: . . . but not save my integrity, or avoid me the  
humiliation.

Now, I must tell you this, that I could be  
very bitter, although I'm not a bitter person,  
and I said, because of Jerry's father. . . . And  
it's not my style to go out there and take out  
somebody on the basis of character. On the basis  
of issues, yes. You know, "I disagree with you  
on this question of sin and motherhood, but I'm  
not going to say that you are a thief."

CARR: By '76, Jackson actually enters the picture in an  
odd way. Jesse Jackson, that is, enters the  
picture in an odd way. After the well-documented  
Senate probe of the FBI, which essentially came  
out with the fact that the FBI was very much  
involved in discrediting . . .

DYMALLY: Dr. King?

CARR: . . . Dr. King, certain organizations within the  
civil rights movement, and other individuals. .  
. . . Jesse Jackson called for an independent probe  
of the FBI specifically to see whether the FBI

was actually really involved in, or how the FBI was involved in, the assassination of Dr. King. That came while you. . . . There was a special panel of Meet the Press. You were there with Jesse Jackson, Barbara Jordan, Vernon Jordan, who was then in the National Urban League, and Mayor Jay Cooper of Prichard, Alabama. Do you have any recollections of that situation?

DYMALLY: Very much so. Jay Cooper was targeted.

CARR: And what was your position of Jesse's point of view for calling for that independent . . .

DYMALLY: I don't know if I publicly supported it.

CARR: From everything I've seen, it seems as if you sidestepped the whole issue.

DYMALLY: Because I was a victim. They were after me. And I said, "All I need to [do] is to come out against them and have them just trump up some charges against me." Because they had gone and gotten Mark at our house--a young kid at the time, he was just in high school. They just came up to the house to interview him. They called my ex-wife. I mean, they just were all over me. I mean, they went over to just every place, every savings and loan I did business with. They were just driving me crazy.

CARR: If in fact you could have said something about it at that point, what would you have said and what would you have . . .

DYMALLY: Well, the thing about it. . . . I know why--it would have been self-serving.

CARR: How so?

DYMALLY: Because they were after me and it would appear, I thought, that I was trying to save my hide.

CARR: I see. Although that was your position because of how you were being investigated at the time, do you think more could have been done by either the senate or some kind of independent commission investigating the harassment of civil rights officials?

DYMALLY: But at the time, the FBI was viewed as infallible and everybody in the country was intimidated by [J. Edgar] Hoover. I mean, Jesse Jackson was too clean and too poor for them to go after him. You know, there was no tax evasion problem they could come up with because he wasn't making any money.

CARR: Right.

DYMALLY: And he had no criminal record, no indiscretions that they could publicly point to. But in King's case they surveilled King's motel. You know, I used to be King's driver out here, and I knew the

people who were close to him. They had bugs under his mattress and everything.

CARR: I assume Jesse Jackson at that time was viewed as much more radical than he is now.

DYMALLY: Yeah. Well, he's presidential now. [Laughter]

CARR: That's right. [Laughter] The Second Coming, or the second run, whatever you'd like to call it.

DYMALLY: Yeah. When you become presidential you get a little more. . . . You get less radical.

CARR: Yeah, I see. So within the whole context of your dissatisfaction with the lieutenant governor's position, your relationship with Jerry Brown, the rumors start to fly. One of the first big bombs that came was that Yvonne Burke was going to give up her congressional seat to run for something in California, and you weren't planning to run for the second term anyway, and you were just going to go straight for that congressional seat.

DYMALLY: That wasn't a rumor. That was a fact. I went to Washington and I had dinner with her--her husband and I were good friends. He volunteered not to join us so we'd have a heart-to-heart talk. And I said, "Yvonne, I really don't want to run for lieutenant governor--run for reelection. Why don't you run for this instead of attorney

general, because I don't think that California would elect a woman and a black as attorney general, and then you have access to become governor," because I figured lieutenant governor was a sleeper. She would win that and I'd run for her congressional seat.

Well, she did not like the idea for two reasons, and one I think she did not reveal. One reason is that the L.A. Times would go after her for the switch. The second reason was, I don't think her supporters wanted her to appear to be dealing with me. But the most significant reason, which was never revealed and which I came to learn afterwards, [was] that they were saving the governor's spot for Tom Bradley. Had she become lieutenant governor, you'd have had two blacks on the ticket or you would have to frustrate her aspirations to become governor, and the west side group, as they were known then, would break up. So it never happened.

CARR: I see, but she did end up running for attorney general, which she lost.

DYMALLY: To Deukmejian.

CARR: To Deukmejian, as you predicted. But a funny thing happened on the way to the forum, so to

speaking, because you guys had that conversation, supposedly your intention was to run for her seat, but then you decided to run for a second term.

DYMALLY: Very good question.

CARR: What happened?

DYMALLY: Jesse Unruh came to me and said, "Merv, if you don't hold on to that seat, I would be. . . . If you don't run for reelection, I'd be forced to run for your seat to protect my aspiration to become governor."

CARR: But let's stop there for just a moment. Even at this time, when clearly Unruh's political fortunes were going down in some ways, he still had aspirations to run for governor?

DYMALLY: Oh, absolutely. Always. That's been his life ambition. He and Pat Brown broke up because he claims that Pat Brown . . .

CARR: Had promised it to him in '66 or something.

DYMALLY: Yes, and Pat Brown wouldn't go for a third term. I don't know that. So he came to me and said, "You know, you gotta run." And I did not find anybody who did not want me to run. Nobody ever came to me and said, "No, you shouldn't run." Everybody kept saying, "You ought to run."

CARR: But this is a strange thing because on a certain level you don't want to run.

DYMALLY: No, because I wasn't happy.

CARR: You don't want to run because you're not happy. So your heart isn't really into the office . . .

DYMALLY: In it--right, right.

CARR: . . . but you're running anyway. Isn't that a recipe for disaster?

DYMALLY: Yes, and it sure does [Inaudible]. [Laughter]

CARR: And it happens.

DYMALLY: It happened.

CARR: Disaster came. [Laughter]

DYMALLY: [Laughter] The moment of truth here.

CARR: Right.

[End Tape 9, Side A]

[Begin Tape 9, Side B]

CARR: So as you were saying, we come to the moment of truth. And for the historical record, is it fair to say that Mervyn Dymally ran for his second term as lieutenant governor not necessarily caring whether he won or lost, with eyes on something else already?

DYMALLY: No, I didn't shed a tear. In fact, the night of the election, the political editor of the Sacramento Bee was at the reception. [Martin]

Marty Smith, I think. And I said, "Hey Marty, I want you to know that I'm not shedding a tear." I haven't lost, it didn't bother me; a couple of people cried. But hey, I didn't mind getting off. No, I had no ambition. I was just going to get into private life and . . .

CARR: And then run for Congress?

DYMALLY: No, no, no. Congress was an accident.

CARR: But this is what I don't understand. You say it was an accident. I don't understand how it was an accident if you had already had discussions with Burke about the possibilities of running for her seat, which you helped create when you were on the Reapportionment Committee anyway.

DYMALLY: But this was a totally different seat. I did my doctoral dissertation on the social and economic factors that determine the election in black districts. . . . The behavior of black districts with over 20 percent [black population]. The Thirty-first [Congressional] District was not 20 percent and that wasn't in there. And so after Yvonne ran, there was no seat to run for. I had no interest. That was it, there was no opportunity.

I was on my way to Trinidad and I stopped in

DYMALLY: Compton for a reception and Maxcy D. Filer came to me and said, "You should run for Congress in this district." I said, "Why?" He says. . . . "The incumbent whom [Daniel E.] Lungren defeated"--I forget his name now--"is coming back in to run against [Congressman Charles H.] Charlie Wilson because Charlie's involved in Koreagate." And I said to him, "Well, it's not a black district." He said, "Yes." I said, "No." He said, "Why do you say 'no'?" I said, "Because I did my doctoral dissertation on these districts and this wasn't in." And he said, "Well, you need to look at it."

So I went on my way to Trinidad. I got to thinking. And I'm saying to myself, "If I were in business and I went bankrupt, I would go to the SBA [United States Small Business Administration] and try to get a loan and try to recover." So I came back and I said to Mark, my son, and to Ken Orduna, my former chief of staff, "Let's look at the possibilities." And we developed a very unique method we call the Dymally survey of looking at the demographics in a district. We go and park across the street from schools that were previously white and

notice that only minority kids were coming out of the school: Hispanic and blacks and Asians. We would go to restaurants and notice that the meals had changed--serving soul food now. We'd go to white churches and notice that they were now Methodist and Baptist black churches. So we saw this change. And then I went to a friend of mine who had run in that district and who felt so strongly about the district he bought a house in that district and kept it empty, almost, while he lived in the San Gabriel Valley with the hope of running. And I went to him and he said, "Yeah." And another person who ran and told me "yes" was Muhammad Ali's photographer.

CARR: [Howard L.] Bingham?

DYMALLY: Bingham. He had run and he said, yeah, the district had changed. So we decided to run. That's how it came about. It wasn't something that was planned as a result of our conversations with Yvonne back in those days.

CARR: Now, you touch on Maxcy Filer, who I think is a fascinating local political character in the sense that, you know, when you read the newspapers his name doesn't really appear. But he's the kind of guy. . . . He's always been

there and he's always had access to a lot of people.

DYMALLY: Because he was a pillar of Compton politics and felt deeply about Compton.

CARR: He finally did get his law degree, I understand, after . . .

DYMALLY: Yes. After forty-five tries.

CARR: . . . forty-five tries.

DYMALLY: His wife wrote me and called me in tears about my trying to help. So I went to the [California] bar, and they offered to sit down with him and evaluate his exam.

CARR: What kind of person is he? I guess, I want to, I don't know, capture . . .

DYMALLY: He's a nice man. A sweet fellow, very nice, very independent. He was a no-deal maker. You can't say, "Maxcy, I want to make this deal." No, no. He just went strictly by the books.

CARR: Fascinating. While all of this is happening-- you're elected lieutenant governor, your relationship is running hot and cold, mostly cold, with Jerry Brown--the Senate, that is the U.S. Senate, still has its probe going on of you surrounding the whole UAI incident.

DYMALLY: No.

CARR: Urban Affairs Institute.

DYMALLY: No. You got it a little mixed up with the times. You got it a little mixed up. Not the Senate. The Senate had a probe going on--my relationship with the doctors. This may have been [Inaudible].

CARR: This is the independent one being done by the state attorney general then.

DYMALLY: No, no, no. Kennedy's committee, or Kennedy's subcommittee. . . . Kennedy's Government Organization Committee was looking at. . . . They came out here . . .

CARR: Oh. OK, so it was the U.S. attorney general's office.

DYMALLY: Yes. They came out here. The congressional investigators came out here, and this story's been told to me by one of the investigators when I became a congressman. It was a period, I think, when the Republicans were in power just for a couple of years. And the committee was headed by Senator [Charles H.] Percy. They came out here and they had gotten information from the LAPD that I had taken a bribe. A woman had reported that she was present when I took a bribe of \$10,000 for some medical thing. And they

showed her three pictures: Willie Brown, Willie Mays, and Dymally. And whose picture do you think she selected?

CARR: Yours.

DYMALLY: Willie Mays.

CARR: Willie Mays?

DYMALLY: And then they closed up shop. They said, "This is a waste of time," and they went back. Now, the Urban Affairs Institute was being investigated by the attorney general.

CARR: The U.S. attorney general's office.

DYMALLY: No, no, no. The California attorney general.

CARR: OK, Evelle [J.] Younger.

DYMALLY: Yes.

CARR: OK. So this is something that's been going on since the sixties, right? When you were in the senate or the assembly?

DYMALLY: Late, late . . .

CARR: Late sixties.

DYMALLY: Yes. See, I was very involved with the doctors here because they felt they were being discriminated against. But this whole investigation had to do with my relationship with Bill Burke and that doctor we talked about. That group.

CARR: Exactly. Well, let me kind of refresh your memory from just parts of this story because the lead--Los Angeles Times, 1977--reads, "Lieutenant Governor Mervyn M. Dymally has paid \$1,350 to charity as a result of an eighteen month state attorney general investigation into the alleged misuse of funds by a non-profit institute he formed to bring minority youth into government, it was disclosed Friday." I'll just add a little bit to it just to. . . . "Funded by nearly \$800,000 in grants, mostly from the Ford Foundation, the institute's primary purpose was providing grants and scholarships to minority students of all ages interested in government. But in the course of a three month investigation the Times found that Dymally, without the approval of the Ford Foundation, drew a salary in excess of \$1,000 a month for seven months. He later claimed to have repaid it, but institute records did not account for the full repayment." There are several other charges, but just to refresh your memory on that.

DYMALLY: OK. Here it is, this black senator from nowhere gets a \$500,000 grant.

CARR: From the Ford Foundation.

DYMALLY: And he's training the likes of Alatorre, Teresa Hughes, Bill Greene, Gwen Moore, Joe Serna, mayor of Sacramento, and they begin looking at this. Even Jesse Unruh had some concerns about it. The AG [attorney general] came after me and they zeroed in on my acceptance of a salary. Now, the salary is voted by the board. Terry François, a black supervisor in San Francisco, had a funded project from the Ford Foundation which was different--it had to do with cultural things. And on the board was Dr. Carlton Goodlett, publisher of the Sun-Reporter in San Francisco, who said to us, "Well, Terry is getting a salary from the fund and Dymally's spending all of this time with it. He should be getting a salary." And so the board voted the salary for me. The records didn't show that I'd made all the payments. I was discussing it with my accountant and saying, "Gee, I don't know what happened to the checks." And he said, "I have the checks." And that's . . .

CARR: Yeah.

DYMALLY: But don't forget, the attorney general's office was Republican and they saw me as a possible candidate in their way, aspiring to be governor.

CARR: Now, the thing. . . . It was actually the L.A. Times investigation that brought about the attorney general's investigation.

Now, there were some other issues that came up. Again, this is according to the Times I'm reading. One of the other charges was that \$30,000 from the Ford Foundation grant project was used . . .

DYMALLY: To set up JET.

CARR: No, for your brother and sister-in-law. They were put on payroll. Also, two of your nephews received scholarships, and also that Bill Greene-- who was the cofounder of UAI--used, about a hundred different times, money for travel from the account.

DYMALLY: Well, there were some careless administrative policies. And we did take \$30,000 and set up something called JET.

CARR: What was that?

DYMALLY: Job Education and Training, on Manchester [Boulevard] and Broadway, to train. And it was doing very well, except for the publicity. And my sister-in-law . . .

CARR: What kind of job training was it?

DYMALLY: We trained people to get into the workplace.

CARR: OK. Basic kind of clerical skills?

DYMALLY: Yes. And so this. . . . [Inaudible] my nephew really was receiving a small grant from a fund given to us by the Rockefeller Foundation for summer youth. One of the persons who came out of that is Adonis Hoffman, who subsequently became my chief of staff for the Subcommittee on Africa. And the board took the position, "Well, you know, if he's a deserving kid, why should he not get it?" Being my nephew should not disqualify him. But the fact of the matter is that I learned a great lesson from that. And I'm now head of a family foster agency and today I'm going to have a major controversy because I'm going to get the board to select the auditor, and I'm sure the administrator's going to want to do that because that's what we did last year. But I learned from that lesson and I'm very vigilant now based on this experience, because there were some sloppy procedures, sloppy accounting. Yeah, we made a lot of mistakes. And if I had to do it again I would be a little more careful. But there was no misappropriation of any funds.

CARR: So you agree that some of these things happened, but precisely how they're viewed you have trouble

with.

DYMALLY: Yeah, because that was part of the poverty program. You see, white people think that. . . . We blacks have a sense of family. We don't believe hiring family is necessarily nepotism.

CARR: Correct.

DYMALLY: Because they do it in the private sector, you know, which is all right, but. . . . We talked about the ethics thing before--a different set of standards. Right now, this foster care family, the founder has his son working there in a janitorial position, and one of the board members became very protective and defending of that position. She said, "We can't just put young black youth out in the street because their father or mother is involved with the institute." So we have a different perspective. It had to do with cultural differences, as I explained to you in our discourse on ethics. UAI had an administrator who was not very vigilant.

CARR: Who was the administrator?

DYMALLY: Chester Wright. Dr. Chester Wright. He has since passed away. Yeah, there were some mistakes made there.

CARR: What about the whole Bill Greene thing? How

actively was he involved in the institute at the time?

DYMALLY: Very active. He traveled and he did a lot of work in support of the foundation, yeah. But at that time, you know, it was a case of Dymally could do no right, but the L.A. Times, they went after me, you know, on everything practically. But one has to look at the end products, what eventually happened, you know, as a result of the program. We were producing some potential politicians, public affairs people, and that scared. . . . Even some of my friends privately wondered about all of this money at my disposal. We were publishing The Black Politician, which was not in the budget. We would take some chances and there were some excesses. We felt that it was appropriate to have this job training program.

CARR: Is that what you would consider an excess or what in your recollection at least . . .

DYMALLY: It wasn't specifically written into the proposal. You know, we felt it was important.

CARR: What were some of the other excesses you feel that . . .

DYMALLY: Well, the job training program and The Black

Politician were not in the proposal.

CARR: But no one complained about The Black Politician, oddly enough.

DYMALLY: No. Strange. But they complained about the jobs program because my nephew was [Laughter] . . .

CARR: Was employed. And finally, the Times investigation supposedly revealed that there's about \$20,000 deposited in an account that you used at your discretion for a, and I quote, "slum rehabilitation project" or something like that.

DYMALLY: Well, that was Chester. That wasn't me. That was Chester Wright. That was one of the problems. I didn't know about it.

CARR: So this was something he had going on the side.

DYMALLY: Yeah.

CARR: Now, you mentioned something a bit earlier. With all of these problems you still seem to have a very positive regard for what the Urban Affairs Institute accomplished in the end.

DYMALLY: Oh yeah. Look at the end result. Look at the end result. The first--and probably the only one now, I think--black senator in Colorado came out of the program. I went to Arizona to meet Representative Hamilton, and he got on the floor of the House and it was almost a testimonial to

Dymally--how he's there because of Dymally. I'm stunned, and my visitors are impressed as all hell. That guy got the whole House to listen to what he had to say about me and this program.

CARR: On a personal level, I'm curious . . .

DYMALLY: Out of that came the joint center. I was inspired to go to Percy Sutton and Ken Clarke to start the Joint Center for Political Studies.

CARR: So this is Percy Sutton, former Brooklyn borough president.

DYMALLY: No. Manhattan.

CARR: Was it Manhattan?

DYMALLY: Yeah.

CARR: OK, Manhattan borough president. Now he's in Mount Vernon, New York.

DYMALLY: Is he? I thought he was still in Harlem. But he's defending Shabazz.

CARR: Young Malcolm Shabazz.

DYMALLY: He's been the Malcolm X family lawyer for years and years.

CARR: With this in mind, you have these young people coming through the Urban Affairs Institute; it's an internship program. What kind of experience, in terms of preparation, did many of these young people get that made them ultimately . . .

DYMALLY: That's key. That's a key question.

CARR: . . . very successful as politicians?

DYMALLY: See, the proposal called for public affairs-- going and getting their master's. We assigned each one to a politician. Each person had a political mentor. That was the difference, and that's why we're so successful.

CARR: So they're attached personally with someone and that's how they learn the ropes.

DYMALLY: Jerry Heleva, who was aide to Senator [William] Bill Campbell in the California senate, is now a very successful lobbyist. I remember when some of the members of the selection committee, during the height of the civil rights movement, thought it was a program for blacks: "We shouldn't have a white boy in there." And Teresa Hughes and I stood up for him and he was selected and he's been grateful ever since. Then we had Hispanics who've gone into academia. We had Stephanie Lee, who was assistant secretary for human resources under Reagan; Dr. Louise Ridgle, who was in the Department of Education, etc., etc. We really did a good job in the end.

CARR: This might be a good time to stop, given our time constraints for today. What I'd like to pick up

on when we start off the next time would be The  
Black Politician.

[End Tape 9, Side B]

[Session 9, June 14, 1997]

[Begin Tape 10, Side A]

CARR: We're ready to begin. Good morning.

DYMALLY: I want to begin by going back to the Urban Affairs Institute because it's the first time that I personally felt that I was somewhat vulnerable for a number of reasons. And it's a larger issue. It has to do with those of us who had funded programs and tried to go beyond the scope of the limits of the proposal--and it happened to a number of poverty groups--where we saw a need to do certain things and a number of people got into trouble with federal programs. Not that they defrauded the government of any money, but they exercised judgment that was not encompassed in the proposal.

In my case I was vulnerable on two counts. One, I was earning a salary, and in the context of the Los Angeles Times' ethics, that was a no-no, and I suspect the public too. The second one is that we took funds not directly earmarked for

job training and put it in a job training program. I have to take the responsibility for that, but I want to put it in a larger context. I felt that this was a program funded by a foundation that benefited middle-class students, and this was an opportunity to help the poor. Now, one of the problems therein was the fact that it was run by my sister-in-law. And to a number of people, having family involved in a program is nepotism. In this case this was not a situation where she was earning any large sums of money, but rather she was doing a very, very commendable job, and the program eventually went independent and got funding from other sources. It was Job Education and Training and interestingly . . .

CARR: And this was the program that was located on Crenshaw Boulevard, you said?

DYMALLY: No, this was on Manchester and Broadway. And interestingly enough, after we left, the owner of the building took the name and made it a check cashing agency [Laughter], which became one of the most successful. So that was two parts of the vulnerability that I felt during the course of my career. Now, the attorney general came

down very hard on me and the Times will tell you they did an investigation of three months. What they didn't tell you is that . . .

CARR: No, I think the state attorney general did an investigation of eighteen months.

[Interruption]

DYMALLY: The state attorney general was actually leaking information on a daily basis to the Los Angeles Times because every time they interviewed someone on Wednesday, Thursday the Times would call the person. In one case they wanted to know why would a white woman work for me. I complained to the deputy attorney general that every time there was an interview . . .

CARR: And who was that?

DYMALLY: I forgot his name. My son Mark ended up working with him at the Metropolitan Water District, where all the deputy attorney generals usually retire.

[Interruption]

Yeah, those were nervous times. The other . . .

CARR: Nervous times. How did this affect your business as lieutenant governor?

DYMALLY: Well, it obviously didn't affect me running for lieutenant governor, but at the time, the

criticism was very, very fierce and we eventually lost the program. Now, one of the other things that we did that wasn't in the program was that we started Black Politician, but no one seemed to criticize that. I don't know if it has to do with the First Amendment. They didn't want to seem that they were encroaching on the First Amendment. But anyhow, the end result was that I was required to return the money I received as salary and I gave it to Brotherhood Crusade.

CARR: Now, according to the Times that was \$1,350.

DYMALLY: Yes, so we were not talking about a lot of money.

CARR: So how was that presented to you? Was that presented to you as what you needed to do to essentially end this investigation? Was it presented to you as a deal or in place of further investigation and perhaps conviction?

DYMALLY: Well, I retained a counsel who was formerly with the attorney general's office.

CARR: Who was that?

DYMALLY: Burns. Frank Burns. And that was the agreement he worked out: I would return the salary and bring an end to it.

CARR: But you were never indicted on any of this or anything?

DYMALLY: No, no. It was clearly on the record. This was not something that I took without paying taxes. I turned over the checks to my accountant and we paid taxes on the money, and it was approved by the board.

CARR: If you were to do it all over again, how would you have handled it, the whole situation?

DYMALLY: I would not go on salary.

CARR: OK.

DYMALLY: And if I did, I would make that known to the Ford Foundation.

CARR: But there's also the situation of using funds that went perhaps beyond the scope of the original proposal to the Ford Foundation. Would you have handled that any differently?

DYMALLY: Yeah. I would not have done it.

CARR: Really?

DYMALLY: I head an agency now, and I am circumspect. You know, I don't think the founder is very happy with me because first the county audited us, before my time, and then I ordered a special private audit. And I have been really tough on complying with the findings of the audit to the point that I know he is privately grumbling about it.

[Interruption]

CARR: OK. So after you paid or donated those funds to charity, the Brotherhood Crusade, did you feel that this was over with and done with, in a sense?

DYMALLY: Oh, I felt I was severely damaged. I felt vulnerable.

CARR: Now, how did you come to decide on the Brotherhood Crusade? Was it just because of your . . .

DYMALLY: Because it was in the neighborhood. I knew the founders. I knew Danny [J.] Bakewell [Sr.] and the guy, Walter Bremond, who founded it. They were friends of mine. And it was doing work in the black community.

CARR: Now, I know of Danny Bakewell and his involvement in the community. Walter Bremond, could you tell me a bit about him?

DYMALLY: He was the founder of the Brotherhood Crusade. He died of a heart attack. He was very active in the movement.

CARR: OK. I'd like to go into the campaign for your second term as lieutenant governor. Well, no. I'm sorry. I correct myself. Let's stop a little bit before that and go into a controversy

dealing with your appointment to the UC Board of Regents.

DYMALLY: No, I wasn't appointed.

CARR: You were . . .

DYMALLY: I inherited that position as a matter of constitutional provisions. As president of the senate, I was automatically entitled to be on the board of regents. My presence there may have been controversial, but my appointment was based on constitutional law.

CARR: When you got the position, which. . . . What year was that exactly?

DYMALLY: Nineteen seventy-five.

CARR: Nineteen seventy-five. How did you envision yourself participating on that board?

DYMALLY: It was one hell of an experience. I tell you, there was an Hispanic kid from [University of California] Davis who was a student representative, and he made a suggestion. And he got dressed down by one of the old regents. I mean it was awful.

CARR: What was his name? Do you recall who he was?

DYMALLY: No, I can't remember the kid's name. But it was just. . . . Oh, it just got to me. He was such an able person. What the regent was saying in

effect was, "Hey, you know this is our board. You don't have any business trying to make such radical suggestions." It was just a major put-down.

CARR: Were you the first black regent?

DYMALLY: I think the superintendent of public instruction. . . . Wilson Riles and I got elected at the same time, didn't we?<sup>1</sup> Boy, I don't know of any who preceded me.

CARR: Yeah. I haven't been able to find any record of anyone before you. So here you are, you're stepping into, for lack of a better phrase, almost an exclusive club.

DYMALLY: Absolutely. And in those days they had sixteen years' tenure. Vasconcellos, in legislation--in a constitutional amendment--I think reduced it to twelve.

CARR: So how did these guys perceive the presence. . . . I mean, we're in '75, just somewhat coming out of a lot of very serious student activity on campus on the part of blacks and Latinos.

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1. Wilson C. Riles was elected California state superintendent of public instruction in 1970. Mervyn M. Dymally was elected lieutenant governor in 1974.

DYMALLY: It's strange. [Laughter] I became friendly with one of the most conservative members, Smith, who became the attorney general for Reagan.

CARR: William French Smith.

DYMALLY: William French Smith. Yeah.

CARR: And how did that alliance come about?

DYMALLY: We sat next to each other and we just talked to each other and stuff like that. Mrs. [Catherine C.] Hearst was on the board at one time.

CARR: Yeah. But not while you were there.

DYMALLY: I think at the end. She resigned after the controversy with her daughter.

CARR: One of the controversies involving you was the whole issue of getting a security clearance.

DYMALLY: Well, not with [Inaudible]. . . . How did you know that?

CARR: Just research.

DYMALLY: Jerry Brown and myself.

CARR: You and Jerry Brown, for some reason, when you were placed on the board in 1975. . . . I guess somehow both you and the governor neglected to . . .

DYMALLY: Not neglected: deliberately refused to go to get the security clearance. And the reason for the security clearance [Laughter] had nothing to do

with the FBI. It was the [United States] Department of Energy.

CARR: Right, Department of Energy because it had to deal with nuclear . . .

DYMALLY: Yeah. Jerry and I resisted and resisted until the board pled with us to do it because they threatened to hold up the funds. We thought it was an intrusion of our privacy. We were elected by the people, and this was a constitutional appointment. It wasn't a political appointment.

CARR: Right. I bring that issue up now because it's somewhat connected to your decision to run again for a second term. You decided to run for a second term. First of all, what's fascinating to me is in the primary, you're opposed primarily by Latinos.

DYMALLY: Very interesting point. Not really. What happened was that a Latino activist ran--and it tells a lot about race politics. Despite my outstanding record with the Latinos--having been censured because I was pushing Latino candidates for the school board in Los Angeles; close relationship with César Chávez; Art Torres was on my staff, now chairman of the Democratic party; Councilman Alatorre was a former intern with me;

and on and on and on. . . . This activist ran. And I think MAPA [Mexican-American Political Association] endorsed him. I think that's what made it controversial. So it was strictly a race endorsement. But by and large, the Latino community supported me, but the activists went for. . . . In those days La Raza [Unida] party was a very strong, strong theme.

CARR: So the activists kind of voted along racial lines.

DYMALLY: Yeah, but the activists were really a paper tiger. MAPA was mostly a paper tiger. In fact, it eventually died.

CARR: Now, the question is, one of those people. . . . I guess she might have been married to a Latino. Her name was [Patricia E.] "Penny" Raven.

DYMALLY: Yeah, she ran, right?

CARR: She ran. She ran against you in the primary. She was not really ever considered a major force who could possibly defeat you, but an interesting thing happened with her: she spoke to the Times saying that the FBI contacted her to see if you had tried to buy her out . . .

DYMALLY: [Laughter] That surprises me.

CARR: . . . in order to withdraw from the primary race.

And also the FBI--again, this is according to Ms. Raven--contacted her to see if in fact there was any other dirty information out there on you that she would be willing to come up with.

DYMALLY: Well, the FBI was actively campaigning against me and leaking information. They went to ABC and the assignment director there--I forget his name now, but I can get it for you because he's a good friend of Joe Cerrell, [he] worked for Joe Cerrell for a little while and was at KFWB--he called me and said, "How about this company you owned?" I said, "Company I owned?" He says, "Merv, level with me. The FBI just brought the records in here." Well, the company was. . . . Harry Broussard. . . . In those days in California you had to have three signatures. Gus Hawkins had introduced me to Harry. He was on Avalon [Boulevard] and we became very friendly, socially and family-wise. And he asked me as a matter of honor, "I'd be very honored if you would go on the company with me"--Broussard Enterprises. So they dug this up and gave it to the assignment editor. The assignment editor refused to run this story on the grounds that Mike Curb's father-in-law, Jerry Dunphy, was a

broadcaster there. So they were active, leaving packages. Now, they finally got NBC [Channel] 4 in Los Angeles and NBC in Sacramento as their permanent leaks.

In one instance. . . . I think it's Republic Bank, in Gardena. A friend of mine, my campaign finance chairman, Hugh Pike, had gotten a loan of \$10,000 for me to enter into a syndication of laundromats because there was a big write-off in the laundromat business. But he deposited the money back into the bank as collateral, and he used his equity part to fund my operation. So the bank had security for the loan. I think he bought a note. They subpoenaed the records, and in an unprecedented instance they tipped off NBC. For the first time anybody knew of in California's history, a subpoenaing of records was photographed by a television station.

CARR: What strikes me is that there's so many instances recently . . .

DYMALLY: I want to get back to Raven. Raven and I became, not friends, but she turned out to be a decent person.

CARR: Really, but how did she come. . . . I'll quote her: When asked about this--what agents wanted

to know--Mrs. Raven said, and I'll just read you the last part, "Question: Did he, Dymally, mention paying you to get out of the race? Did he mention an appointment if you got out of the race?" End quote.

DYMALLY: What was her response?

CARR: No, this is what she said FBI agents . . .

DYMALLY: Asked her.

CARR: . . . asked her.

DYMALLY: But what was her response?

CARR: Her response was "no."

DYMALLY: Yeah. [Laughter]

CARR: Her response was "no."

DYMALLY: Well, I suspect their source because the FBI was tailing me. They saw us talking together in a friendly manner at some of these meetings because she turned out to be a civil person. I didn't think it was anything personal on my position. She had a right to run.

CARR: But this goes back to the theme I would like to follow through this interview: sometimes the perception of guilt is worse than being guilty itself.

DYMALLY: In politics, perception is all about reality.

[Laughter] That's the thing that killed me. The

Times stayed on my case with such regularity that eventually people. . . . And in fact. . . . I must tell you this. My son had a domestic problem with his wife--a custody problem--and he retained counsel. His ex-wife complained that he had threatened her, and he retained counsel. And the counsel went to the district attorney to work out a settlement of the case, as happens often. And the deputy DA says, "Do you know Dymally?" The lawyer says, "Yeah, I know him as a member of Congress." "No, do you know that he has a political machine?"--as if my political machine should make him very leery about taking on my son's case. So there's this perception that there was a machine there, and a machine obviously goes with corruption as corned beef goes with cabbage.

CARR: Right.

DYMALLY: This is way back, since I retired. This deputy DA--who incidentally is black--to prove to Mark's lawyer that she was credible, said, "I know: he taught me at Pomona [College]." Because we had some very dramatic victories, the perception was that you could not have won this without having a machine. And I used to kid and say, "Please do

not destroy the myth." [Laughter]

CARR: Well, so we have these things stacking up. We have these negative perceptions of you stacking up.

DYMALLY: Oh yeah.

CARR: We can go back to the whole UAI--Urban Affairs Institute--matter. We can go back before that to the whole Burke incident that involved the wine company, and later the medical company with Dr. Ruben. I want to come back to that in a moment because that rears its ugly head at a very interesting moment just before the fall final campaign for lieutenant governor in 1978.

So you have this. You were stacking these things up. Then you have this supposed FBI probe of you trying to buy off a candidate.

DYMALLY: [Laughter] I'm laughing.

CARR: Yeah. We have these things coming on. How . . .

DYMALLY: Let me interrupt you. Now first--fact: Curb's father was an FBI agent. And the rumor was that they were feeding him information and he was feeding it to his son--because he called me a criminal. Governor Pat Brown called me and said that, as attorney general, he had successfully prosecuted a man for calling another one a

criminal, and in California it's a felony. So we sent our lawyer, John Arden, to San Bernardino, and instead of pursuing the case against Curb, they put two investigators on me--to investigate me.

CARR: Now, one of the things that I find intriguing is this: we've had the discussion that somehow you were reluctantly running for the second term. But at some point everything I see tells me that this was a serious fight. I mean the stuff that was being slung back and forth between you and Curb didn't give me the sense that you were dealing with this campaign in any passive kind of way at all.

DYMALLY: Well, it's like any other fight: once you get in the race, you give it all you have. Besides, the controversy surrounding the candidacy of Curb and myself made it very active, and I think one of the mistakes we made there was to go on the attack against Curb. I recall we had a press conference and we pointed out all the lawsuits people had against him, and he got a friendly press, not a critical press. The press came to his defense.

CARR: Yeah. I've heard accounts of that and it seems

to be a very strange moment in political history. You are calling a press conference to basically. . . . I think it was either six or eight major lawsuits that actually never went to court, but they were lawsuits against Curb and they had to do with his business practices.

Then there was also an issue which I didn't quite understand, and maybe you can fill this out for me. There was an attempt by your camp to, one, say that Curb's company at some point was connected with the production of a pornographic magazine. I'd like you to tell me about that.

DYMALLY: [Laughter] Well, he had a fine voice. At one time in one of the records he sang, and the information was leaked to us, but there was lots of information leaked to us. Some of it bordered on almost having to turn into an informant. People brought stacks of stuff to us about payoffs--that he had been paying them off--and the guys who claimed that he'd been paying them off he didn't pay, so they were all mad. And this one piece we thought might have been interesting. And they harped on that a little bit, but the one that really amazed me is that after this press conference. . . . We come up

with the suits. What we were trying to show was that this guy is not very reliable, that everybody sues him. But it backfired.

CARR: Question: Who were your campaign advisers? And was this your decision to go with this information and go with this press conference, or were there a group of people at the time advising you on what to do with this information?

DYMALLY: The first time around I had Steve Smith, who's a pro, one of Jesse Unruh's guys. The second time around I didn't have . . .

CARR: Does a woman named Patty Lovespeak . . .

DYMALLY: . Yes, Lovespeak. Yeah. She was mostly a coordinator--very active. But I didn't have a strong advisory team around me.

CARR: Did you want a strong advisory team around you?

DYMALLY: I didn't have the money to pay for it. In Steve's case, the first time around, he worked for Hugh Pike part-time and he worked for me part-time, and the deal was that he would have time off to go to law school. And we had free rent and the whole bit.

CARR: So it was your decision to really go with this information on . . .

DYMALLY: I think in the final analysis, yes, I made the

decision. I also made the decision not to go with some of the information that was given to me.

CARR: Wasn't there any fear on your part that, regardless of whether you were truly guilty of some of the accusations that have been leveled at you, it would be perceived that you were throwing stones while living in a glass house?

DYMALLY: Well, it was a terrible mistake. We learned from that. First, it wasn't my style, and the one thing you learn in this business: once you start deviating. . . . I did have some young hotshots around me, you know, suggesting we go after Curb. But once you change your style and you're not comfortable with it and you can't defend it, you leave yourself vulnerable. It was never my style in campaigning to go after anyone. That was the first time we did that, and it backfired.

CARR: Now, the other aspect of this very short attack against Curb came with the notion of kind of accusing him of being very friendly with the homosexual community. The press jumped all over that because they said, "Well, Dymally has supported homosexual rights throughout his career."

DYMALLY: Well, it wasn't so much that he was friendly with the homosexual community, because I was. It was that he himself had some questionable dealings in recording and stuff like that. Look, it was a disaster.

CARR: How is this marked off? Is this marked off as the heat of battle, "Whatever mud I can find to sling, this is what I'm going to sling"?

DYMALLY: And it was a mistake. We've never done that since, and, for instance, when I ran for Congress I stayed away from attacking Charlie Wilson as being involved in Koreagate. I let the other candidate--[Mark W.] Hannaford--do it.

CARR: Question: Through this whole period you talked about having difficulty getting funding for the second campaign--Curb. There was a tremendous kind of outpouring at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel in March of '78. This is still the primary.

DYMALLY: That's when we did the stuff about his voice thing. Go ahead.

CARR: March of '78. Jane Fonda spoke. This is a whole group of women. Six hundred mostly Democratic women turned out for you on March 4, 1978, at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel to support you. How did that come about and how significant was it for

you?

DYMALLY: Well, see, I had this young woman on my staff who had shifted me into the women's movement. I had authored significant legislation, the Community Property Act, chaired the Joint Committee on Legal Equality for women, and Stella Burwick Epstein and Mauri Goldman put that together. I was very active in the women's movement, did a lot of significant legislation.

CARR: So you had these women. But there was an undercurrent of women who didn't support you.

DYMALLY: Yes, very good. I'm glad you raised that. That was the Beverly Hills Women For, I think. That's the name. Very active. They were also anti-Unruh and very pro-CDC. I went for the endorsement and they didn't give it to me.

CARR: Simply on the basis of those political allegiances?

DYMALLY: Yes. Despite my women's record. Yes.

CARR: How did you become politically linked with Jane Fonda? Her praise of you was glowing.

DYMALLY: I defended her. I defended her when a Republican member from San Diego offered a resolution to condemn her in the senate. I came up. I went and defended her.

CARR: And since then you developed political ties.

DYMALLY: Yes.

CARR: Was she ever helpful in later years in terms of helping to fund-raise and things like that?

DYMALLY: She was there. I don't remember the specifics. I remember one time she invited Alice and myself to an exclusive party in Hollywood. But she was deeply grateful to me for coming to her defense. In those days, you know, like me she was under a lot of attack. You know, she went to Hanoi. They called Hanoi Jane or something like that.

CARR: At this point you get the support of this kind of broad-based women's group. They don't necessarily have a name, but Democratic women, if you want to say, come together. You had led in 1974--well, no, earlier; well, around the same time--the fight for the adoption of the Equal Rights Amendment.

DYMALLY: Yes. So that had helped me.

CARR: That helped you?

DYMALLY: But that was a strategy. We decided. . . .

CARR: That was a political strategy on your office's part?

DYMALLY: Yes, to do two things. To go after issues that white women were interested in: equal rights,

equal property division in times of divorce, children. We figured children appealed to all women--black, white. But that was what we call a double approach.

CARR: Well, clearly, there is a whole list of them here: Equal Rights Amendment, bills dealing with community property, child care centers, fair employment practices, and early childhood education. What particular legislation do you recall supporting or trying to push through dealing with fair employment practices for women?

DYMALLY: One piece had to do with the California Highway Patrol--the absence of women in the California [Highway Patrol]. They opposed the legislation, and it enraged women.

CARR: Was it ever passed?

DYMALLY: No, it wasn't passed, but it changed their policy.

CARR: Really.

DYMALLY: To avoid the legislation because in the senate is where a lot of that stuff got killed. It changed their policy. So it was one piece of legislation we introduced that I don't think passed, but did have some influence on the agency.

CARR: You mentioned that Stella. . . . What was her

name?

DYMALLY: Stella Epstein. Stella Burwick Epstein.

CARR: Burwick. I have her as Stella Epstein, but it's actually Stella Burwick Epstein.

DYMALLY: She was teaching. We got to know each other as AFT organizers.

CARR: OK. During your campaign, you have Yvonne Brathwaite Burke's campaign for attorney general, which is something you said earlier. You had met in Washington, D.C., and you had advised her that it wasn't a wise office to run for. Now, something happened in August of 1978. It came out--it was leaked--that Edward Kennedy had a memo, [after] a conversation with you, to stop the Senate in the investigation of your involvement with Dr. Ruben in the whole medical care issue.

DYMALLY: A reporter by the name of [ ] Jackson and Bob Fairbanks wrote that story.

CARR: Bob Fairbanks and David Rosenzweig.

DYMALLY: No, not Rosenzweig. I was actually interviewed by Kennedy's staff. I didn't send a memo to Kennedy. I don't know who did, but I was interviewed by his staff.

CARR: I'll read the lead of it to refresh your memory,

maybe: "A controversial memo from the office of U.S. Senator Edward M. Kennedy indicating that he stopped a congressional probe into a medical firm partly owned by Lieutenant Governor Mervyn M. Dymally has been released by Attorney General Evelle Younger's office to members of the state senate Rules Committee. "Committee Vice-Chairman John Stahl . . ."

DYMALLY: He was the guy who introduced the legislation against Jane Fonda. Go ahead.

CARR: ". . . asked for a copy of the document June 30 to prepare for confirmation hearings awaiting Beverlee A. Myers, Governor Brown's choice to head the new state Department of Health Services."

DYMALLY: She worked for Kennedy as I understand it.

CARR: Yeah. So according to her. . . . She had worked for Kennedy. When she worked for Kennedy--and she was involved in this investigation of your association with the medical group earlier-- Kennedy sent a memo essentially saying, "Let's stop the investigation of this." Not only did that happen--again, according to this article-- but Kennedy met with you, discussed the situation with you, felt satisfied with your explanation of

the matter, and consequently felt it didn't need to go any further.

DYMALLY: It's a longer story. Kennedy did not meet with me.

CARR: He did not meet with you. He denied meeting with you. You did not comment on any of this.

DYMALLY: Because his investigator met with me and I didn't want to leave myself open.

CARR: Open for?

DYMALLY: For questions: "If you didn't meet with Kennedy, who did you meet with?" So I said nothing. His investigator met with me. Subsequently, when I went to Congress one of the persons on the investigating staff said that the LAPD had reported that a woman said she was present when I received a graft of \$10,000 and the investigators took three pictures to her: Willie Brown, Willie Mays, and myself. And when they asked her to select a picture, she selected Willie Mays's picture. And at that point Senator Percy's staff, on the other side, thought it was a waste of time. I met with Kennedy's investigator, I think, at the Federal Building. See, understand: I had no financial interests, unlike what the paper said--no part ownership. I had no

financial interests.

CARR: Well, I mean, stock had been bought for you . . .

DYMALLY: In the wine company.

CARR: In the wine company.

DYMALLY: I had no control over the change. I tried my damndest to . . .

CARR: So by the time the merger came over, technically you also had stock options in the company.

DYMALLY: Six hundred dollars' worth. I went to the corporations commissioner to ask him to permit me to divest, because they were promotional stocks. And he claimed that if he permitted me to dispose of promotional stock then he'd have to do that for anybody else in the company or in the state. So I finally gave the stock to the Children's Home Society. I became a victim of something that happened over which I had no control. And that is the company changed from a wine company to a medical company.

CARR: But you knew Kennedy. You guys had met when you were involved in his brother's campaign earlier.

DYMALLY: Yeah, but he and I never really had a beer together. We were never friends. We worked together. He came out here and he was considered, at the time, not a heavyweight, and

he was assigned by Unruh to do the Inland Empire. And then I had worked with, yes, Bobby's campaign. We organized CORK. That's the first time. That's around the time Alice and I met--my wife. And she worked as a volunteer. She reminds me about it, reminds me that I never paid her. We organized CORK, Community Organization for Robert Kennedy. Yeah. So yes, I had worked. But this whole thing hit me by surprise because first, I didn't know Myers worked for Kennedy and second, I knew of no memo.

CARR: Did you know Myers?

DYMALLY: I knew her as a bureaucrat, but we never had tea together. So this old memo stuff about Kennedy stopping the investigation after meeting with me was all nonsense. The Times reporting was so biased at the time, so irresponsible.

CARR: We should stay on this. Because Burke's husband was deeply involved in this company . . .

DYMALLY: Yeah, and he and I were very close.

CARR: How did this affect Burke's campaign--Yvonne Brathwaite Burke's campaign?

DYMALLY: When you talk about a Teflon Reagan, there was a Teflon Brathwaite. She stayed away from that and she . . .

CARR: So the question never came up to Burke? No reporters had microphones in her face saying, well . . .

DYMALLY: No, no. The fact that she was able to stay away from that. . . . Even to this day, when the controversy arose about the Olympic [Organizing] Committee and giving money to city councilmen and being fined, etc., she never got sullied by that. She always stayed above that. She always took the position, "That's Bill Burke's affair. That's not me."

CARR: So now this is another thing that crops up. This is August; election time is coming. What was your reaction when this happened? I mean, when this came out?

DYMALLY: [Laughter] I'm saying to myself, "What did I get into here?" I mean, I tried to be helpful on this wine situation. At the suggestion of a lawyer for the wine company, from the firm of Gibson, Dunn, and Crutcher, I introduced legislation to make it possible for private persons to own medical companies. And now I'm being accused of carrying special legislation for Burke. And the Kennedy thing. Oh shit, those were some awful days. It was just tough to deal

with.

CARR: Now, if I had said, "Mr. Dymally, this is very suspicious to me. How could a congressional investigation on you just stop?"

DYMALLY: Because I think the investigator found that I wasn't involved, after I explained to him what I did: I really got involved in a wine company. I was never involved in a health care company. So he just didn't find any grounds. I received no money. You're vulnerable in politics when money's involved. You get by with damn near murder in politics if no money's involved. As soon as there's money involved you're very vulnerable. There was no money involved. They could find no checks that were paid off to me or anything like that. It was just my association with the firm through Burke.

[Interruption]

[End Tape 10, Side A]

[Begin Tape 10, Side B]

DYMALLY: What is sad about that, after all that heat I took as a result of my association with Bill Burke, he doesn't even return my phone calls now. In fact, I went to a party the other day just to see him and confront him with the fact that the

least he can do is to return my phone calls. I wasn't calling for any help. In fact, what he's done a couple of times, he's given me some T-shirts after the Olympic Games, and I take them to Trinidad and I distribute them to kids there for their football, their soccer teams. I don't see him, I don't hear from him, he doesn't return my phone calls.

CARR: And at one point you considered him a very, very close friend.

DYMALLY: Yeah. So close that Alice and I went with he and his wife to their honeymoon.

CARR: I assume as a politician getting to know a lot of people, people coming in and out of your life over the years, things like this happen very often.

DYMALLY: What?

CARR: Getting slighted or ignored by people you thought you were very close to.

DYMALLY: Oh yes. Sure. It kind of hurts a little bit. He and I had birthday parties together. We were very close. As I said, how closer can you get than going to a friend's hideaway honeymoon in Cabo San Lucas?

CARR: So you never really get used to it, get used

to . . .

DYMALLY: To those kinds of people with whom you've had such a close relationship. He and my son Mark had some dispute, some misunderstanding. I went to a dinner that Yvonne had at in the Biltmore, and I said, "Bill, I came here especially to see you." And I said, "But Bill, let's assume you and Mark had a dispute. How does it involve me? What did I do to you? Why won't you return my phone calls?" And he said, "Yes, you're right. You're right. I'm sorry." And then he never called. When I called him this last time for the T-shirts, he never returned my call. So I went to another reception, just to see him again, at the automobile museum [Peterson Automotive Museum] on Wilshire and Fairfax--a reception that his wife had for the speaker of the assembly. And I confronted him again. And he said, "Yes, you're right." And at that point I knew I had to put an end to this relationship. I just said, "I'm not going to humiliate myself by calling him because he's riding high now." Besides you know he. . . . Yeah.

CARR: One of the issues, kind of a subtext, if you will, of your campaign for second term of

lieutenant governor, was the Proposition 13 issue. One moment please. I'll pause.

[Interruption]

The Proposition 13 issue. First of all, did you have a position, a stated position on Proposition 13?

DYMALLY: I was opposed to 13.

CARR: You were opposed to 13 on what grounds?

DYMALLY: Well, I think the end result of 13 was the reason why we're denying the school districts the opportunity to raise funds. They had a special override tax which a school district would impose on taxpayers for child care centers and etc., etc. And it eliminated all of that. What's happening to cities now, and community college districts and school districts, is a result of inadequate funds. The president is responding to that by trying to get some national funds for capital improvement, for schools that are falling apart.

CARR: Question: Jerry Brown took a big leadership role in supporting Proposition 13.

DYMALLY: Supporting? He supported 13?

CARR: Yeah.

DYMALLY: Yeah. I wouldn't be surprised. When was that?

That was '74 or '78?

CARR: This is '78. The question is, he took a leadership role just about when it was about to pass. He'd remained somewhat silent on the issue up until then. You had a lot of problems with that.

DYMALLY: Yes. But what can I do? Jerry never communicated with me. And he was very political on these issues.

CARR: Could you talk to me about a kind of political trend with the election of 1978? It seems to me, correct me if I'm wrong, from my perspective, that there was a tremendous rightward shift going on. Despite the fact that Brown was narrowly reelected, you had the passage of Proposition 13, you had the election of Deukmejian as attorney general--the man who authored the state's death penalty law. What did you see happening in a broader political sense in the state?

DYMALLY: I have to skip and go all the way to '80. In '80, when we did a survey at UCLA of the voting patterns of the Thirty-first District, where I was going to run for Congress, we noticed they were liberal on every issue. Every issue. They sided with César Chávez and every liberal issue,

except 13. They voted for 13. I made a determination then that that's not all bad for me, because these are homeowners. I can appeal to their intellect and they will come out to vote.

CARR: So what about the death penalty.

DYMALLY: They voted against the death penalty. Prop. 13 is the only issue in which they became conservative, because of house ownership. And if you look at the district, it's mostly homes, not apartments.

There are two major changes in American political history in modern times. There have been others. It's Watergate, which changed the nature of politics in Washington, and 13, which changed the nature of financing for local districts in California.

Now, I benefited from Proposition 13.

CARR: In what way?

DYMALLY: Because when I was lieutenant governor we bought a beautiful home out in the suburbs and the taxes were so high. The taxes were, like, \$300 a month. Very high. The note was very, very small. So a major portion of my note was for taxes, and after 13 that was eliminated, or cut

back considerably. But even at that, if I had to do it all over again, the high tax notwithstanding, I'd vote against Proposition 13.

CARR: Given the perceived ethical problems that you were having, and many other politicians in the state were having, how much of those perceptions of politicians who may or may not have been out of control, so to speak, lead to the kind of atmosphere of people saying, "Hey, we need this kind of initiative to take control ourselves"?

DYMALLY: Well, it started in '74 when Jerry Brown ran. He supported the people's lobby effort at reforming the lobbying law and the campaign law, that was then followed by Proposition 13. So the whole nature of politics was changing in California. And Jerry Brown was very popular. He came out as this clean politician--no deals, etc., etc. So the contrast was stark. And I think it had a lot to do with Jerry Brown having an arm's length relationship with me.

CARR: How popular was Deukmejian at the time?

DYMALLY: Deukmejian wasn't that popular. He was a cold turkey. A very cold guy. His one issue was the death penalty. From the day he and I started in the sixties to. . . . But what happened is very

ironic. Deukmejian became attorney general because of Yvonne Burke, a black woman. He became governor because of Tom Bradley, a black man. That was the deciding factor. Some people voted race.

CARR: Those were the votes that put him over the top.

DYMALLY: Without those. . . . If he were running against the guy whom Yvonne defeated, he never would have won. And if he ran against somebody else-- [Assemblyman John R.] Garamendi started in the primary and dropped out--I don't think he would have won because he wasn't that popular. Besides, Bradley ran a campaign that ignored the black community.

CARR: Now, one of the other things was, just going back to financing a little bit--for you--you had the autoworkers' support. Was there anyone else? Any other major donors to your campaign?

DYMALLY: Yeah. Labor came in very big.

CARR: Labor came in big.

DYMALLY: Service Employees International Union. The [International] Machinists [Union].

CARR: Was it especially difficult to run against someone like Curb who was coming from a business background where he had finances of his own plus

connections to bring in other private finances?

DYMALLY: Well, he had lots of money, but the thing that was troubling about Curb, I kept saying to myself, "Here's a guy who has no educational background. His only background is being a successful recording studio producer, and he's out there." And I'm asking myself, "My God," you know. One newspaper man said what was significant about his visit with Curb was that in his living room there was not a single book. And I'm saying to myself, well, [Curb's] background and record. . . . No newspaper person asked me anything constructive.

[Interruption]

All the questions had to do with this perception thing which you raised, as I got interviewed. So there was Curb . . .

CARR: So the issue of Curb being qualified, at least in terms of political background or educationally, never arose.

[Interruption]

DYMALLY: It never arose.

CARR: Perhaps this would be a good time for us to stop for today and then we'll continue on.

[End Tape 10, Side B]

[Session 10, June 21, 1997]

[Begin Tape 11, Side A]

CARR: Good morning, Congressman Dymally. I wanted to talk to you a bit about [the ad hoc] national black officials caucus that was held in North Carolina--Raleigh, North Carolina, correct?--in 1976. One of the concerns, it seemed, for a lot of black political officials at the time, was this notion that the Democratic party itself was not necessarily shifting from the left, but shifting to the right. Could you talk to me a bit about the circumstances out of which those concerns grew?

DYMALLY: Before I do, Elston, I just want to put in two reminders here. I'd like to do a special session on foreign affairs and a special one on the media.

But to answer your question, one has to go back to 1968 when the first black political power conference was held in Gary, Indiana. As a result of that, a number of black elected

officials . . .

CARR: And you were involved in that at the time?

DYMALLY: Yeah. Especially the Congressional Black Caucus, they got burned because the political nationalists, not necessarily Democrats, took over the conference and began looking at all Democrats, or all black politicians, as sellout artists. So the movement died.

CARR: When you say political nationalists, could you name some people?

DYMALLY: The poet . . .

CARR: Imamu [Amiri] Baraka?

DYMALLY: Imamu Baraka. He was the leader. Yeah.

So it shifted. Then they had the conference in Barbados and they denounced the former California deputy attorney general and ambassador to Ghana, Franklin [H.] Williams--he's now passed--an African American, as being a CIA [Central Intelligence Agency] agent and accused him of being responsible for Nkrumah's overthrow. So the movement died. The black political movement as such died until I came up with Percy Sutton and the national conference of black elected officials in the late sixties, early seventies. I was still state senator at the

time, so it must have been the early seventies. But that was not a political movement. That was a movement of black elected officials. We were funded by the Ford Foundation. We had several conferences. Out of that grew the Joint Center for Political Studies. This conference in 1976 was a rebirth of that '68 failure to focus attention on the presidential election because. . . . When did McGovern run? In '68.

CARR: 'Sixty-eight.

DYMALLY: And so the black . . .

CARR: Because that was with the Chicago riots and so on and so forth.

DYMALLY: Yeah, the Black Caucus members who shifted from their historic support of Humphrey to McGovern got burned.

CARR: Why?

DYMALLY: First, there was a split with Shirley Chisholm in Miami, and she accused them of not supporting her. That's documented in her book, and in Bill Clay's book. They were trying to exercise some political power for this convention. Later on we met in Raleigh, North Carolina, and [Jimmy] Carter was there, Jerry Brown, etc., etc.

CARR: What was the opinion or attitudes toward Carter

during that. . . . I understand that Carter [and] Brown actually sat down to be interviewed by a panel from the caucus on their platforms, their political attitudes and so on and so forth. What attitude did people have about Carter at that time?

DYMALLY: Well, [Andrew J.] Andy Young broke away from the caucus and said that he was going to Florida to help Carter to stop somebody--I believe it was [George C.] Wallace, who was the southern conservative who was running. He then stayed with Carter. So Carter was viewed with some skepticism because he was a southerner and few people even knew about him, not to mention his record.

What are the other options--Jerry Brown? Who else was running? I can't recall.

CARR: There was Carter. There was Brown. In terms of the Democrats, those are really the major choices.

DYMALLY: Did McGovern surface again? No?

CARR: No.

DYMALLY: OK. So there you were.

CARR: So people were primarily leaning toward Jerry Brown?

DYMALLY: Jerry Brown's good showing was always at my expense, because every time he had a victory the attack on me increased. There was a direct correlation between his success and my failure, the feeling being that, "Gee, this guy is going to probably end up as governor."

CARR: Well, yeah. That seemed to be the standard notion then, that whoever was lieutenant governor. . . . If all went well for the governor on his next step, whatever that was--if he's running for president and so on and so forth--then that person is almost a shoe-in to become governor. And if it's an off year, he's definitely going to be governor.

DYMALLY: Of course. One would have had two years as governor.

CARR: Two years as governor without having run for it, and then you could run, technically, as an incumbent. That's an issue I'd like to bring up a little bit more as we get closer to election day with Curb in '78.

One of the two primary concerns from that caucus seemed to be the notion of whoever was going to run for president had to come up with a very serious jobs program.

DYMALLY: By the way, I did not answer your first question--of the shift. The shift was not so much from Democrats to Republican as away from minority caucuses. They believed that the black caucus, Hispanic caucus, Indian caucus, Asian caucus, gay caucus, lesbian caucus--all of these urban and far-left caucuses--was the death of the Democratic party.

CARR: When you say they, who do you mean?

DYMALLY: The center: the Democratic center, the Democratic right. They started abolishing these caucuses and minimizing the significance of minority groups within the party. That was the first shift.

The second shift was the hard hats--hard-hat Democrats--to Reagan Democrats.

CARR: Right. When you say hard hats you're talking about middle[-class], working-class Democrats.

DYMALLY: Suburban democrats. They shifted to Reagan.

CARR: And this is within the state, we're talking about now. We're not talking about the national level. Eventually it would happen on a national level.

DYMALLY: Oh, the same thing, yeah.

CARR: What was the appeal? From your perspective then, what was the appeal, and how troubling was it for

the Democratic leadership?

DYMALLY: Well, in the case of Reagan in '66, it was a matter of a popularity contest. We Californians are struck by Hollywood. A Hollywood personality could commit rape and get away with it. Not so with a politician. So that was the first evidence of that shift taking place in California. But that has to do more with popularity than ideology, because Pat Brown was a very, very successful governor. Labor and educators should kiss him on his grave because of transportation, the freeway system, the water system, and the Master Plan for Higher Education [in the State of California, 1960-1975].

But I tell you, one of the most discouraging and embarrassing experiences I have had is at a commencement exercise at [California State University] Dominguez [Hills] during the year of Prop. 13--that's '66 right?

CARR: No, '76.<sup>1</sup>

DYMALLY: 'Seventy-six. Oh yes, it's '76; I'm sorry. I confused it with Pat Brown's reelection.

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1. Proposition 13 passed in 1978.

Pat Brown went there as a commencement speaker and came out against [Proposition] 13, and he got booed by the students--by the graduating students. I am saying to myself, "Here are a bunch of students who spent four years in college and know nothing about this man's legacy." Dominguez was one of his babies.

CARR: Yes, clearly it was by his legislation . . .

DYMALLY: It was his plan for education that . . .

CARR: . . . that brought about the creation. . . .  
Dominguez didn't exist.

DYMALLY: And he got booed.

CARR: Now, the question is, not only their ignorance about his political legacy, but how many people were really ignorant to the implications of Prop. 13 itself?

DYMALLY: Well, it's a tax cut, and the anti-tax movement is beginning to take hold.

But here are these ungrateful students. Let's assume it was John Smith--or anybody who went to give the commencement speech--coming out against 13. Common decency dictates that you listen to your graduation speaker. But for Pat Brown to get booed at a state college because he came out [against] 13--it was a low for me. That

was another trend. I said, "Oh my God, we're losing the state here."

CARR: That leads to my next question: Was there any amount, from that period, of anxiety on the part of the state Democratic leadership that led people to realize, "Geez, if we don't do something in another two or three years, it may be a very, very long time"--as history has shown us--"before we can elect another Democratic governor"?

DYMALLY: That vision was perceived--that might be a redundancy--by the likes of a guy named Bill Clinton. It started back in the mid-South.

CARR: Really?

DYMALLY: Yes. California was much too liberal to begin to shift. Jesse Unruh was talking about it privately.

CARR: Really? What was Jesse Unruh saying?

DYMALLY: That the state was becoming conservative. He was grumbling about it privately, but never publicly.

CARR: And when he said the state was becoming conservative, what did he use to support that perspective?

DYMALLY: Jesse had a mother's instinct about these things. He was very seldom wrong about trends. If I

learned anything from him, it was learning about trying to decipher trends, telling what's going to happen in the future. He was very good at that.

CARR: So you have an idea that things are becoming more conservative. You have a feeling that there's a shift. And then . . .

DYMALLY: Let me go back to that. You have to keep this in mind: the Democratic elected officials in California were always liberal. Their appointees made up the official Democratic party. They appointed four people plus themselves who were members of the state [Democratic] Central Committee. So the state central committee was always to the left of the Democratic Leadership Council, which was founded by Bill Clinton. And then CDC--California Democratic Council--was to the left of them. And that little center-left produced the likes of Willie Brown and Dymally. And so the voters were still electing liberals, and that made up the Democratic party.

CARR: Now that you mention Willie Brown, another question is important in that sense. If in fact this shifting to the right is beginning with the election of the likes of a Curb . . .

DYMALLY: But not the Democratic party, at that point.

CARR: Not the Democratic party, but is there a sense . . .

DYMALLY: At least not the Democratic party in California.

CARR: Right. Right. Is there a sense still in the legislature that somehow the legislature, with the rise of Willie Brown coming on, has to begin, at the very least, to entrench itself?

DYMALLY: No, on the contrary, the young turks threw out the old leadership in the senate. Moscone, [Nicholas C.] Petris, Mills, [Alfred E.] Alquist, [Albert S.] Rodda, Dymally made up the core of the left in the senate.

CARR: And you guys were on your way out.

DYMALLY: We were on the way up. We threw out Burns, and Collier, etc., etc. We threw them out, and we took over the senate. So again you had the manifestations there, and the pragmatism of liberalism.

What is paradoxical about that period is that [Laughter] here you have a conservative governor and some of the most liberal legislation, including the Drew Medical School, coming out of that era.

CARR: What does that say about Reagan?

DYMALLY: Well, Reagan was facing a liberal legislature. By the way, I gave Reagan praise during his governorship. When one reflects, and you look at all of this liberal stuff that's coming out. . . . Well, Reagan was a pragmatist. He had certain reforms--revenue reforms, health reforms--and so he had to give in. And secondly, he didn't have the votes in the legislature.

CARR: In that sense, how would you compare the Reagan of governor of the state of California to president of the United States? Is it even possible . . .

DYMALLY: A total, absolute change. I was shocked. I sent a signal, at a Harvard seminar, in a front-page story in the Boston Globe, that Reagan was not a racist. I thought then that the White House would respond to that, respond to me and begin to work with me as they did in California.

CARR: When did you say this?

DYMALLY: In December of 1980, when they had the [congressional] freshmen seminar. And I said, "No, no, no--I have served with him; he's not a racist." A front-page story. And [Edwin] Ed Meese [III] was in the Reagan Sacramento office,

and now he's attorney general.<sup>1</sup> No, no--he was in the White House now, before he became attorney general. So I figured these guys would pick this up and maybe I'd get some things done. But what had happened--and I did not know, and I should have known--at the Harvard meeting, with the exception of Ron Brown, who was with the Urban League, and Donna [E.] Shalala, who is now Secretary of [Health and] Human Services, all the speakers dealt with defense. And I'm saying to myself, "What's going on here?" It didn't strike me that a change was taking place. The shift from urban affairs. . . . Every speaker dealt with the defense budget, except these two. So they were in a minority.

CARR: One of the things that was happening . . .

DYMALLY: Oh, another point is that what I didn't know was that the Heritage Foundation--as you know, when you're in California, you're so far removed from what's going on in Washington--had developed a blueprint for Reagan. And all the White House did was to implement the Heritage blueprint.

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1. Edwin Meese III was U.S. attorney general from 1985 to 1988.

CARR: We're jumping ahead a bit, but let's kind of stay with it just a bit more. If in fact the Heritage Foundation developed a blueprint--and much has been said about that. . . . Many other people had blueprints for Reagan to follow during his presidency . . .

DYMALLY: American Enterprise Institute being one of them.

CARR: How intelligent was Reagan really, I mean from your perspective?

DYMALLY: Well, Reagan said during the invasion of Grenada that he had liberated Grenada to preserve the British constitution. I got on the floor and said, "There's no such thing as a British constitution." And people thought I was crazy. They looked at me as if. . . . In fact, a professor from Princeton challenged me. I rechallenged him and said, "I'm prepared to come to your classroom and debate it," and he backed off. So this man had no concept about British history--talking about a British constitution. And I remember [Congressman William S.] Broomfield of Michigan coming to me and saying, "Dymally, what did you say?" And I had to explain to him that there's a series of charters and so on and so on, and documents, but there is

no . . .

CARR: No constitution.

DYMALLY: No constitution as such. And many members of Congress didn't know that. So Reagan reflected a sense of ignorance, a lack of historical perspective about historical events.

Now, Reagan was not a profound man. Way back in his GE [radio] talks--General Electric talks--following Goldwater, way back in '64, he began preaching a conservative agenda. And so he understood, if nothing else, the shift that was taking place in America, and he played on that. And don't forget that the Republicans did almost daily polling. They knew the mood of middle America was changing, and they reflected that.

CARR: Was this change, from your perspective--and this is a perspective of the seventies, or, you're almost out of the seventies, basically. . . . Was it kind of one of those standard pendulum shifts, in the sense that the pendulum had gone this far and it was just beginning to switch that way? Or were there, again, some very specific things that happened politically on the state level that made the shift even more dramatic?

DYMALLY: Well, that's a very good question, because

California is a paradox. While electing liberals like Dymally--or Brown--it was also voting against fair housing. So I think they were saying, in effect, "We'll accept you liberal Democrats, but we don't want your liberal program"--up to a point. It has changed since, but that's what was taking place then.

CARR: But then, in effect, isn't that a paradox of liberalism itself? I mean, isn't a paradox of liberalism to, on one hand, give lip service, at least to a certain kind of progressive ideas, but when those progressive ideas may affect your pocketbook, or your home ownership and so on . . .

DYMALLY: Not with the activist Democrats in California. They were always to the left. I mean the Young Democrats were voting to recognize Red China, so to speak, back in those days. So the Democratic framework here--the Young Democrats, the California Democratic Council, the state Democratic party--were always liberal.

Understand this: The party was liberal. I'm not talking about the Democrats in the state. I'm talking about the party framework--the three parts of the framework--and the county

committees.

CARR: And that's what I meant by the paradox of liberalism, in the sense that the Democrats-- people who are registered voters as Democrats, on one hand . . .

DYMALLY: But we really didn't speak for them. We thought we did. That's the problem. We thought that because they elected us that they. . . . It was the same old story: they love their congressman, but they hate the Congress. So they like you as an individual, but they don't like this welfare program, this fair housing program, and all of this stuff; it's a little too much.

CARR: We're still back at the caucus in '76, and some of these questions have arisen out of that. There were two major concerns that came from the black political officials at the time: they wanted whoever they supported for the presidency on the Democratic ticket to come up with a jobs program, and deal with the issue of illegal surveillances by the federal government.

DYMALLY: Yeah, the FBI was very active. The more visible part of that was the [Martin Luther] King [Jr.] surveillance, but there were other people who went unnoticed. I think one of the problems with

that whole concern was that they did not focus attention on the little people. I recall [Congressman] John Conyers [Jr.], who had a subcommittee and came to Sacramento. I went to him with this complaint and he just laughed in my face. He said, "Dymally, nobody's going to consider me to be credible defending you on the question of harassment." So he didn't take it. When Mary Sawyer Warner and I did the first report on harassment we couldn't get the press to. . . . We couldn't get the Congressional Black Caucus very interested in it. In fact, at the press conference that Lieutenant Governor George Brown and I had, we were going on fine until [Robert C.] Bob Maynard, who subsequently owned the Oakland Tribune and who was working for the Washington Post, took us on.

CARR: On what position did he take you on?

DYMALLY: Did we go talk to the newspapers we accused of harassment, did we go talk to Chandler? He took a very pro-newspaper position. And once a black reporter started on us, the whites just came down on us with all fours.

CARR: I know you've mentioned that you really want us to have a session in which we discuss the media,

and I do know that was the topic of your master's thesis. But just at this point let's bring up this question: From your perspective at the time--clearly you must have developed relationships with a variety of people in the media--for the black reporters, did they have to prove themselves by going after or being excessively hard on black elected officials, or the black community in general?

DYMALLY: There was no such thing. There were few black reporters on the metropolitan media.

CARR: Well, Bob Maynard.

DYMALLY: Yeah, the total exception to the rule. But they never last. Look at the Los Angeles Times. There ought to be an article in there. Black reporters cannot survive with a conscience. Look at this gal who wrote that story about the Washington Post who said it was part slavery there.

CARR: Ah, Jill Nelson.

DYMALLY: Yes.

CARR: Volunteer Slavery: [My Authentic Negro Experience], that was her book.

DYMALLY: That was a big laugh. The problem is this: you couldn't attack them because they were brothers

and they were in the media and they'd kill you. But the black reporters and the white newspapers were a big joke.

CARR: A big joke because?

DYMALLY: They were given assignments: "We want you to go kill that camel," and then they had to kill the camel. They were given assignments. The assignment editor is the one. If I had to go into journalism, I would want to be the assignment editor at the New York Times. Now there are a few exceptions. Two guys named Tom Johnson and Earl Caldwell at the New York Times. New York produced some good guys, but they didn't last, because there was a glass ceiling. They couldn't go beyond that, and they couldn't write everything that they really felt. There are a few exceptions to that. They had a greater freedom in the electronic media. I noticed Ifill.

CARR: Gwen Ifill.

DYMALLY: Gwen Ifill. She's of Trinidad heritage.

CARR: Former New York Times reporter . . .

DYMALLY: And Washington Post.

CARR: And then now she's with . . .

DYMALLY: She wrote a good story on harassment. But they

don't last. So there were very few at that time. The best thing we had going for us was the black press.

CARR: Now, within that, there was also . . .

DYMALLY: Well, look at when this black reporter finked out on Jesse Jackson.

CARR: Right.

DYMALLY: Black reporters in the metropolitan media did not defend Jesse. And look at the brother who is in. . . Mumia Abu-Jamal, who is up on death row in Philadelphia. The black media association [Black Journalists Association] refused to take a position on that.

CARR: Well, it seems to me that if you're discussing black media and the presence of blacks in media, it's very similar to black politicians, in the sense that there are difficulties in the context of a society that, on one hand your bread is buttered on one side, but your conscience may not necessarily . . .

DYMALLY: No, no. The comparison is not valid.

CARR: Why?

DYMALLY: Because the majority of black politicians were on the left. I can't say the same for the black reporters in the white media.

CARR: They were on the left, but on the left because they were elected by majority black districts?

DYMALLY: That's correct.

CARR: OK, so that's the difference, then.

DYMALLY: Well, even. . . . Well, [Ronald V.] Ron Dellums was elected by a majority white district, but that was an exceptional white constituency. They came from Berkeley, the Oakland area--anti-Vietnam, you know. But, no, there's no comparison. We do an injustice to black politicians to compare them to black reporters.

CARR: [Laughter] I wish I had a black reporter here too.

DYMALLY: Oh, he'd probably kill me. And I couldn't say that when I was in public life.

CARR: OK, switching to the media. This actually brings us to a wonderful moment in your political career. You were running against Mike Curb and an article surfaced in the New West magazine, essentially criticizing Curb on everything possible. His bad business practice. . . . He was just not a nice guy, basically. Bad business practices, he then had some difficulties at MGM [Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer] and various places he had worked.

DYMALLY: He made this funny little promo film where he was supposed to be singing like a woman.

CARR: This article appeared in New West magazine, but there were some questions about the sources of all of this information. Curb accused you and your aides of actually planting the information with the magazine.

DYMALLY: No, I wish we had. [Laughter] No, no. We didn't even know the magazine people. There were lots of people coming with information.

You see, that's a cutthroat industry. I have a friend in the industry and every now and then I identify myself as a friend of him. They say, "Wow." But that's the nature of the industry. There's very little integrity with the producers and the artists. They cut each other's throats.

So there was a lot of information coming. Some of it was so damaging that if we had used it we would have been forced to be interviewed by the FBI or grand jury, so we never played around with it.

CARR: Like?

DYMALLY: I can't recall. I didn't want to touch it. The people were too sleazy who came to us--about payoff and stuff like that. Had we gone and said

that this guy, John Smith, told us that he was paid off by Curb, we'd have had to go to court. We'd have to go to a grand jury, right? So why do we want to risk that? So we never touched it. But a magazine can. They're protected by the [New York] Times v. Sullivan decision.

CARR: Well, then that would be the question again. Maybe instead of the Dymally people bringing out these charges and having to support them, maybe they just . . .

DYMALLY: Gave it to the magazine?

CARR: . . . gave it to the magazine.

DYMALLY: No, we didn't know the people, and we would not have done that because by and large, what I discovered, if you're black you are black [Laughter] because with the exception of that magazine, the press was very favorably disposed to Curb and opposed to me. A good example: when we took all of what we call the public information from the [Los Angeles County] Superior Court at a press conference downtown, I think at the old Ambassador Hotel, I mean, the press came down on me like [Inaudible]. They just jumped all over me. [Laughter] I am stunned. I'm saying, "Look, here's all the

evidence from the court" That's all we did. And we said, "Here's the court. . . ." You know, we'd research all the court cases. And here they are [Laughter]. . . . And they said, in effect, "Oh, there's nothing to it. That happens every day in the industry."

CARR: Well, do you think, looking at it in another way, is it possible to say that because of all of your problems you had with the media previously, they had an issue with your credibility, which perhaps they already helped to create?

DYMALLY: Yeah. That's true, so [Laughter]. . . . I mean, there is just no . . .

CARR: There was no winning.

DYMALLY: I was in a no-win situation. So the fact of the matter is, they say black crime was worse than white crime. [Laughter] That was the bottom line. Black credibility wasn't as good as white credibility. So I couldn't win with Curb.

Pat Brown, the former attorney general of California, called me and said, "That is a felony in California to call someone a criminal," and he successfully prosecuted a case. One district attorney in San Bernardino put two investigators on to investigate me. The other one in San Jose--

that's were he made those charges--said that the statute was unconstitutional. He made that decision himself, not the court, and they didn't pursue it.

CARR: With Jesse Unruh's political visions, if you will, and some of the other kind of old heads in the Democratic party, was the lieutenant governor's race seen as a prelude to the governor's race in 1982?

DYMALLY: Well, let me tell you what . . .

CARR: That is, the lieutenant governor's race in 1978.

DYMALLY: [Walter F.] Mondale told me that some of the people in the party discouraged him from supporting me, and I am told that when Carter came to Sacramento, they didn't want me to appear with him.

CARR: When you say "some of the people in the party," who are you talking about?

DYMALLY: I don't know who they are. I'd never know. I didn't want to find out.

CARR: Because?

DYMALLY: Of all these charges.

CARR: Of all these charges.

DYMALLY: I mean, every day, I'm going to jail. [Laughter]  
I mean, who wants to be on a platform with a guy

like that?

CARR: Now, the question was, did old heads in the Democratic party, or maybe even the Republican party, see winning the lieutenant governor's race as crucial? Because whoever did that, given the fact that it was known that Brown was already going to run for the presidency again, because it would be an off year, if he were elected, that that lieutenant governor would automatically become the governor.

DYMALLY: Yeah, and I suspect many of them said, "Now, if we have Curb in there, we can always defeat Curb. If Dymally gets up there, he becomes governor, we may not . . ."

CARR: When you say "many of them," are you talking about Republicans or Democrats?

DYMALLY: Democrats. I suspect some of them were saying that. I have no evidence of it.

CARR: You have no evidence of it, but you believe it strongly?

DYMALLY: Yeah, because I had difficulty raising money as compared to the first time around, when they didn't think I could win. When they really thought I could win . . .

[Interruption]

CARR: You were talking about, when no one thought you could win, it was easier to raise money, but when . . .

DYMALLY: Yeah, because then I had a free ride. The media was so anti-Dymally. If even the attorney general's office didn't leak this information, I probably would have been defeated anyway.  
[Laughter] But what was troubling to me was here I am with all of this experience, and here is Curb, who knew nothing about politics. But look, it was a no-win situation. That's the bottom line. I couldn't have won--not with that negative media. No way.

CARR: I'll come to the whole issue of money, because the whole issue of money brought up some other charges against you and your aides after the defeat, but we'll discuss that in a few questions. So Curb was seen as . . .

DYMALLY: Well, let's discuss that now, since it's on my mind, and we'll come back to that.

CARR: Good. Let's go on.

DYMALLY: Here's what happened. I've lost. . . .

CARR: You've lost.

DYMALLY: I am trying to figure out, what shall I do? Should I move back to L.A.?

CARR: I think if we're going to discuss it, we need to start a little bit before that. A month or two before the election itself, all of a sudden, Jerry Brown decides to come out in support of you.

DYMALLY: It's too late, because my supporters were complaining. My friends were complaining that he wasn't helping me.

CARR: But it's obviously too late, but . . .

DYMALLY: And then he says, "Well, look, I'd rather have Dymally there, who's not going anywhere, than Curb." But it was too late. And then he gave me some tainted money . . .

CARR: Well, and this is exactly what we're coming to in the sense that . . .

DYMALLY: . . . which caused the FBI. . . . He gave me some money from Las Vegas.

CARR: The number that was floated was that somehow Jerry Brown, through Gray Davis, was going to help raise about \$100,000 for you.

DYMALLY: Nonsense.

CARR: Right, right. But, now, supposedly . . .

DYMALLY: He raised \$10,000--that was given by a guy who was under surveillance by the FBI who owned the Stardust [Resort and Casino] Hotel--through

[Richard T.] Silberman [Inaudible] . . .

CARR: Now, was that [Allen] Glick?

DYMALLY: Glick.

CARR: Glick.

DYMALLY: Yes.

CARR: And Glick--he owned the Flamingo . . .

DYMALLY: No, the Stardust.

CARR: The Stardust, and there was another one. I can't remember the other hotel.

DYMALLY: That's the money. He wouldn't take it, so he gave it to me. But Glick and Silberman were friends. They lived in San Diego--in La Jolla.

Let me go back to this one, quick, because it's fresh in my mind and I don't want to forget it. I'm defeated and I'm trying to figure out, what should I do? I have a condo in Sacramento. I established an office in Sacramento to do some PR work. I have no clients. A friend of mine, Jack Urich, a Republican, put me on retainer. I'm spending a lot of money on PSA.

CARR: PSA?

DYMALLY: Yeah. PSA, the airline.

CARR: Oh, OK.

DYMALLY: Coming back and forth. So I went to Ed Masry, who is my lawyer, and he had his [Los Angeles]

Rams supporters. He represented Gabriel, Roman Gabriel.

CARR: Roman Gabriel, yeah, the football player.

DYMALLY: Quarterback. So he's a Rams groupie--Tank Younger, he represented him and a few other people.

So he had his groupies there, looking at football. And I say, "That's not for me." So I'm leaving. As I'm leaving, a group of people is coming in. And he said, "Oh by the way, Merv, I want you to meet some people that I represent." So we go into an anteroom and they're telling me about how the cops. . . . That's Morning-something--the Morningside group, or something like that. How the cops are harassing them in San Diego County. I forgot their little city. Escondido.

CARR: Yeah.

DYMALLY: So I said to them, "Gee, this a matter that I investigated when I was in the senate--this whole question of harassment of offbeat religions--and if I were in the senate, I would conduct an investigation."

CARR: What was the name of their group?

DYMALLY: Morningside or something like that.

CARR: The Morningside group. In the paper they were dealt with as a religious cult.

DYMALLY: Yes, that's right--a small group. Now, what I didn't know, in the group was a plant from the attorney general's office who was arrested on drug charges and turned informant and went after. . . . Ed Masry charged them \$100,000 to represent them. They were supposed to pay him in chunks of \$10,000. The informant claimed that I asked for \$10,000 among eight or ten people. If a politician is going to ask for a bribe, he's not going to do it in front of all of these people.

CARR: So this was the bribe you were supposed to have taken from a church?

DYMALLY: No. I am not defeated yet. I am still running for reelection.

CARR: So this is before.

DYMALLY: Yes. So I left. Then I had a dinner at the Beverly Wilshire, and through Masry, they came to the dinner. And I went by, table-hopping, to say "hello" to them. They claimed then that I re-solicited the \$10,000 in front . . .

[Interruption]

And that was that. The next thing I knew, Masry's office is raided by the attorney

general's office.

CARR: Is raided by the attorney general's office.  
Papers were taken . . .

DYMALLY: Now, legal scholars tell me that usually when such a crime is alleged to have been committed, the attorney general turns the information over to the district attorney . . .

CARR: In order for it to go to a grand jury.

DYMALLY: Right. This was unprecedented. They convened the grand jury themselves--the attorney general's office. And they went to a place called Vista, the headquarters of the Ku Klux Klan in California. Now, the grand jury . . .

CARR: Vista is also in San Diego County?

DYMALLY: Yes. The grand jury is convened. They invited me to come and talk to them. And naively. . . . I'm innocent, so I'm going to talk to them. But by now I'm defeated, I think. I'm defeated now. So on my way there, I was very early and I stopped by a lawyer's office--[Harrison] Hertzberg, whose son is now in the assembly and whose son served as my intern during my reelection, driving me all over the state. And he said, "What are you doing here?" I said, "Well, I'm going up next door"--the attorney

general's office was on Wilshire then--"to speak to the attorney general about this grand jury investigation." He said to me, "Merv, you're black, aren't you?" I said, "Yes." He said, "There are twelve white men and women in the grand jury, and one white man giving evidence against you in San Diego County. Who do you think they're going to believe?" He said, "Get your ass out of here and go home." So I did not go to appear. They convene a grand jury and Masry, being innocent and a lawyer, figuring he has nothing to hide, that these people are his clients. . . . I am the first person the attorney general presents to the grand jury. In the grand jury. . . . If I never believed in a God, I believed in him this time. In the grand jury, there are two people unbeknownst to the attorney general. One is the field rep for President Pro Tem Jim Mills, who said in a public banquet in San Diego, "I am pro tem today because of Mervyn Dymally." And in addition to that is his . . .

[Interruption]

[End Tape 11, Side A]

[Begin Tape 11, Side B]

DYMALLY: And in addition to that is a female friend of Jim

Mills, who I think subsequently was appointed to the Board of Equalization--quite sophisticated. And when the attorney general presented me to the grand jury, Jim Mills's field rep says, "I've known Dymally since he's been in the assembly, since before he was in the assembly, when he was running. And I have picked him up and taken him to meetings every time he comes here." In those days we made our extra money by going to interim hearings.

CARR: Right.

DYMALLY: "This is not the guy I know." And he said, "Besides, if a politician is going to solicit a bribe, he doesn't do it before ten people, and he doesn't take money in the public area. He takes it in a car, in an office, or someplace. This doesn't make sense." And the grand jury refused to indict me. This deputy attorney general now comes outside and tells the reporter--listen to this--that I was never involved. So when [John] Van De Kamp became attorney general he promoted this guy. I went to him and I said, "Look, here's the guy--here's the grand jury transcript--who went to get me indicted, and here's the press reports. In closed doors he tries to get me

indicted for taking a bribe. In the public arena, he says I am not involved, I'm innocent. This guy is a liar." And Van de Kamp says, "Well, what do you want me to do? What should he have done?" I said, "He should have gone out there and said 'I didn't get the son of a bitch this time, but I'll get him the next time,' if he had any courage of conviction." And I said, "This is a dangerous man."

CARR: But who was he? What was his name?

DYMALLY: I'll get you a name because I'm sure Masry knows it. He went after Masry. Masry was indicted, and the judge threw out the case because of jury misconduct.

CARR: Threw out the case. He wasn't Tony . . .

DYMALLY: Retried again.

CARR: Camarusi, was it?

DYMALLY: No, not Camarusi.

CARR: It was not Camarusi. I should have his name as well. Zanger?

DYMALLY: No.

CARR: Nope. OK.

DYMALLY: [ ] Zanger, I think, was the lawyer in Masry's office who turned state's evidence for reasons unheard of.

CARR: And why did he turn state's evidence?

DYMALLY: I'd be damned if I know. To this day nobody knows.

CARR: But what did he have to produce to Masry that could have been incriminating either to you or to him? Or was he in such difficult . . .

DYMALLY: He was working for Masry. If I'm working for you, I can always find something that you shouldn't have done--you know, you didn't pay for my lunch one day when you should have, or something like that.

CARR: So we're through this, but there are a lot of. . . . We should go a little bit before this.

DYMALLY: Let's go back. But anyhow, it was on my mind and it was such an important. . . . If it were not for these two people there, I would have been indicted. I'd be in San Quentin [Prison] today, because no way in the world would a jury find me innocent in Vista.

CARR: Yeah. My questions--because I had some questions around that particular topic, and since we're on it now, I'll ask my question. Deukmejian is the attorney general now, right?

DYMALLY: Yes.

CARR: He's just won against Burke. Was this just

political payback?

DYMALLY: I don't know why. In fact, he cried, he shed tears over Moscone's death. When he and I departed the senate at the same time, he got elected as attorney general.

CARR: You were elected at the same time. You were both freshmen assemblymen, wasn't it?

DYMALLY: [Inaudible] We left the senate at the same time. He's elected to attorney general, and I'm defeated. He shed a tear for Moscone, because he and Moscone were fierce adversaries. I said to him, "I'd like to come and see you," because I know this thing is going on. He said, "No problem." So when they called me, I thought this was a friendly meeting to exonerate me because I served on the Business and Professions Committee with Deukmejian. We were never adversaries, even though I always opposed his death penalty bill. I didn't know they were calling me there to incriminate me. So Hertzberg--Harrison Hertzberg, who was a great constitutional lawyer--and these two people in the grand jury are the ones . . .

CARR: Now, going back to the whole pre-bribe situation allegations, there was the situation that the

money you were supposed to have taken from. . . .  
Through Silberman . . .

DYMALLY: No, no--not supposed to have taken. No, no, no,  
no. Money that was contributed . . .

CARR: That came to you as a donation.

DYMALLY: Yes.

CARR: That came to you as a donation through Glick, and  
there was also another person. Was it Lawrence  
or something? Lawrence, Larry Lawrence, or  
someone else, who was involved in the whole  
Rancho la Costa [California] development company.  
This is the company . . .

DYMALLY: Larry Silberman.

CARR: No. Larry Silberman was Jerry Brown's aide.  
There was an intermediary between Silberman and  
Glick.

DYMALLY: I don't know.

CARR: That person was the head of the La Costa  
development company.

DYMALLY: All I know is that Silberman called me and told  
me they had a contribution for me. Ten thousand  
dollars, and you're losing? Whoa, that was a lot  
of money. So I said, "Fine." You know, coming  
from Silberman, director of finance for Jerry  
Brown . . .

CARR: Yeah.

DYMALLY: What I didn't know was that the FBI was watching this. But this thing didn't surface . . .

CARR: But let's just stop there. This is the crucial little point we're at, because Silberman said that, in terms of denying any involvement in this. . . . What happened was that Glick came back to the press and said, "Well, you know what? Yeah, maybe Silberman did call me, but a month or two before, I actually received a call from Dymally's office asking for funds, soliciting funds."

DYMALLY: No, he had that all screwed up. Now, I am out of office. I have a little two-by-four office in Sacramento. This story breaks, and part of the story is that Glick did not comply with state law because every contributor over \$10,000 or more had to file an independent statement. So I called Silberman and I said, "Look, I'm going to San Diego to visit my daughter who's at UC [University of California] San Diego, and I could drop off these FPPC forms--Fair Political Practices Commission forms--for Glick. Do you have a number for him?" He said, "Yeah." He gave me a number, and I got an answering machine

and I left word, saying, "I'm coming to San Diego. I'll bring the forms for you." What I didn't know was that both my phone and his phone were being tapped for different reasons.

CARR: By whom?

DYMALLY: By the FBI.

CARR: What reason was the FBI tapping your phone?

DYMALLY: Well, they were investigating me at that time, don't forget. They were all over me.

CARR: This is a never ending investigation. This started back at the end of the sixties didn't it?

DYMALLY: Always. Never ended, never ended. It was going on forever.

CARR: How did you find out they were tapping your phone?

DYMALLY: Well, I called a former U.S. attorney. Well, fine, let me finish the story, and you just have to come to that conclusion.

So he calls me from New York--Glick--and he says, "I got your call," and he told me later that he was calling from a public phone. "When are you coming?" "I'm coming on PSA." "I'll pick you up." He picked me up; took me to his house. I gave him the form. They drove me to Lynn's--my daughter--and then I came back. I

think Lynn drove me back to his house and he drove me back to the airport. But what happened is, I came back earlier than scheduled. I'm standing up there by the phone booth looking at the counter where the passengers are being processed. And there's nobody there, just a few people. I call for my reservation and a girl said they were sold out. I said, "I'm looking at the line and the line is empty." She says, "Wait a minute," and she goes for a long while and comes back, and I got on.

I get into Sacramento about five minutes or so, or seven minutes or so, before the hour. I get in my car and I turn on my favorite FM station, and the lead story is, "Dymally just met Glick, who is under investigation by the FBI." I damn near shit. I was so nervous, I drove straight to a staff member's house.

CARR: Now, so . . .

DYMALLY: OK, you see I . . .

CARR: Well, spell it out for the sake of the historical record here. Spell it out.

DYMALLY: Well, my conjecture is that the FBI knew what flight I was taking because my phone is tapped. In fact. . . . [Laughter] Let me digress for a

little humor.

I went to a former U.S. attorney to talk--I'm talking to everybody, you know--about this harassment. And he says to me, "Merv, every time you finish your conversation on the phone, you must say the following, 'Edgar Hoover is a homosexual.'" He says, "It drives the FBI agents crazy [Laughter]. They can't use the tape, because they can't cut out any part of the tape. You know, they have to use the whole tape."

So it was obvious they knew when I was going, and they alerted PSA about my presence. And when I changed scheduling it looks like I was manipulating the whole process. And this gal there probably saw something on the reservation and she had to go to her supervisor. And they were telling me that the flight was sold out when the flight was empty. And they leaked information, right away, to UPI [United Press International].

CARR: Isn't it possible, though, that you were being set up by Silberman and Glick in the sense that if you would call Silberman to get Glick's number in order to drop these petitions off to him while you were in San Diego, isn't it possible that

either Silberman or Glick called?

DYMALLY: Not Silberman.

CARR: Why not?

DYMALLY: No. Not Silberman.

CARR: I mean, if they're setting you up they could have just said . . .

DYMALLY: No, I don't think so. We're conjecturing here, so I have to give them the benefit of the doubt. Glick at the time was not. . . . He finally became an FBI informant.

CARR: But at the time he was pretty much being investigated by . . .

DYMALLY: Yeah. And he was claiming innocence.

CARR: It's just an alternative I thought I'd present. Now, we have the money. Then Brown steps in. Jerry Brown steps in. He says, "Hey, look. Maybe there was a mistake made, but as far as I'm concerned, as the governor, I can't find any wrongdoing from my independent investigation."

DYMALLY: Did he say that?

CARR: "I can't find anything and so that's it. "

DYMALLY: Thanks. Thanks Jerry. Thanks. You know, I'm bloodied. They knew where the money came from. They knew Glick was being investigated. Silberman didn't have the guts to tell Glick,

"No." He says, "Oh yeah"--because they're friends--"let's give it to Dymally." First he doesn't offend Glick, and then he's a big generous supporter of me.

CARR: Yeah. This is somewhat of an out-there question but I think, historically, it's interesting to ask. During this time--middle to late seventies--a lot of investigations of labor unions, Teamsters particularly, are turning up the fact that because of some connections to the Mafia, a lot of pension funds are being misused. The Teamsters, particularly.

DYMALLY: Well, that was a long, long-running investigation. The Teamster's pension funds were being used and Glick . . .

CARR: Which was involved in this.

DYMALLY: Yeah. That had been going on for years and years. It finally ended up in trusteeship. There was no question about that . . .

CARR: And the only reason I asked that is because Glick was one of those people connected to it.

DYMALLY: But don't forget now, the FBI is after me, boom, they're after Glick, and boom, they see a connection.

CARR: Well, that's my connection. The connection is

the notion that you have always been supported by labor. Straight up and down, no matter what.

DYMALLY: No, no. This isn't a labor thing. This is another conspiracy thing. Here they're after Glick. And here I am taking \$10,000 from Glick. And I'm being investigated like Glick.

[Laughter]

And the FBI. . . . There were some funny things. They were calling my ex-wife and they said to her, "Your former husband is a poor businessman, because we can't find any bank accounts with any money that he has." And she gave them a lecture--"Leave me alone." They never called her back.

CARR: So this is done . . .

DYMALLY: We need to do a special session on the FBI. Nice little stories to tell [Laughter].

CARR: Certainly. Let's go back to the defeat. We're turning to the final months, this is election night, so on and so forth. Where did you sit to take in the results? Where were you?

DYMALLY: We were in a hotel downtown. You know, everybody's crying and sad and I thought, "Hey, maybe this is a good thing for me. I'm getting out of this." I wasn't happy at all. Those were

miserable years. Between Jerry Brown and the media it was just a no-win situation.

CARR: Well, tell me this, though. After the defeat, you said you were planning to return to teaching or go into the private sector.

DYMALLY: That's correct.

CARR: Teaching part-time, you said. Was that a serious thing? Was there any particular place you were planning to teach at the time?

DYMALLY: I hate to tell you this, I never even got an offer [Laughter]. I never even got an offer from either the state university system or the University [of California]. Here's a guy with a Ph.D. and all these years of experience. I was talking to Mike Peavy, who was an appointee to the Board of Trustees [of the California State University]--a labor guy, labor appointee--and he was very upset about it, and he called the president of Sac State [California State University, Sacramento] and they offered me a [Laughter] lectureship, I think for seventy-five dollars a lecture. And I said, "Thanks, but no thanks."

CARR: Why do you think these offers didn't appear? I mean, clearly you were qualified. Plus, you had

the experience. Was this because of all the accumulated stuff?

DYMALLY: These college presidents, they have no guts. They have no guts at all. They wouldn't hire me--too controversial.

CARR: So you don't have the teaching job.

DYMALLY: This teaching job was just a total fake.

CARR: So you have the possibility of. . . . Are you going to be able to earn an income?

DYMALLY: Ken Clark--the famous Ken Clark--got a contract to study migrant labor. He gave me. . . . Because I had served as a fellow at the Metropolitan Applied Research Center and we'd become friends. The FBI went to him to intimidate him, and he told them to go to hell. He's the only guy who didn't drop me.

CARR: Yeah. And so when the FBI went to him to intimidate him, how did they do that?

DYMALLY: As long as my phone is tapped, they know what I'm doing. They knew I had a contract from him--I was a subcontractor.

CARR: Personally, what was that period of your life like?

DYMALLY: Well, my skin used to jump like a jumping bean [Laughter]. It was just a nervous, nervous,

nervous period in my life. I mean, everywhere I go, the FBI were around, someplace. I could do nothing. I didn't know they were on top of me so much. They tried their damndest to get me. You revealed the one. . . . I met Ms. Penny [Raven], and she and I turned out not to be nasty adversaries, but friendly . . .

CARR: Ms. Penny?

DYMALLY: You know, who ran for lieutenant governor.

CARR: Right.

DYMALLY: They went to her. If she were a different person, if she were a person without integrity, she could have lied on me and incriminated me. They would have leaked the information to the Times, that "Dymally bribes opponent."

CARR: So I mean, I didn't consciously set these questions up in this particular way, but what's clear about this whole line of questioning, and from the previous session as well, is that from every angle, the FBI is coming at you.

DYMALLY: We need to do a special session on that, because there's more to that than I'm telling you right now.

CARR: Yeah. So you're not elected. That night, it's a difficult night, you're having trouble. . . . You

get the research grant from Kenneth Clark. That kind of keeps you going. Now, there are two things: right in this kind of interim period it's reported that you were going to run for an assembly seat, and it's reported that you were going to run for a congressional seat. How did it even come out that you were thinking about running for an assembly seat?

DYMALLY: That's just pure speculation. I don't know who put that story out. These reporters, they'll say anything. No. Never.

CARR: Never. So the congressional seat . . .

DYMALLY: There was no assembly seat to run for.

CARR: All right. It's one of the reasons I asked the question.

DYMALLY: There's nothing to run for.

CARR: So congressionally speaking, at this point, were you already thinking about the possibility of running for this congressional seat?

DYMALLY: No, no, no. I'm going to Trinidad to negotiate a contract. When I was lieutenant governor, a steel company came to me and said, "The folks in Trinidad said, 'Go and talk to Dymally about it.'" So I was obviously praised in Trinidad. After I was elected, the government of Trinidad

DYMALLY: invited me to meet with them--the steel mill--so that I could represent them here. So I was going back to Trinidad to negotiate with them. I believe--and I'll tell you about that later on-- I believe that the FBI killed that, also, because they leaked the story in the Wall Street Journal that I was going to be indicted, and the Trinidad government just backed off. So on my way to Trinidad in October of '79, I stopped in Compton for a reception, and a councilman [Maxcy D. Filer] there. . . . An oldtimer there came to me and said, "Merv, you ought to run for Congress in this district." I said, "No way." He said, "Yeah, this is a black district." I said, "No, I did my doctoral dissertation on the influences of black congressional districts on the Congress-- districts that are 20 percent or more black--and this was not in it. This district--the Thirty-first District--was not one of those districts I studied, because it didn't have 20 percent black." And he said, "That was almost ten years ago, man. Things have changed." So I'm flying down, pondering my future, to Trinidad and I'm saying to myself, "If I were in business and I suffered a setback I'd go and get an SBA loan or

something like that. Why don't I look into this possibility?" So I came back home.

CARR: One moment please . . .

[Interruption]

. . . You were talking about the possibility of taking on an SBA loan, and such things.

DYMALLY: I come back to the states, and I talk to my son, Mark, and my former chief of staff, Ken Orduna, and I said, "Let's go for it." So we began a most unusual method of research. We'd go park in front of schools and we'd look at the population at three o'clock; it was not white. We'd go to restaurants that were white and had now changed, or they closed. Churches--white churches--had now become black churches. So we came to the conclusion, through the Dymally method of research [Laughter], that this district had changed. Then, the only scientific study we had was the UCLA patterns of voting. We got that and discovered that everything was liberal, except [Proposition] 13. So we decided to run.

No. No. Running for Congress was not something that I sat down and planned, until that happy accident took place.

CARR: But before this point, I mean, what were . . .

DYMALLY: What was I doing for a living?

CARR: No. What did you think of the notion of running for national office? Did you see possibilities there?

DYMALLY: Never thought about it. I thought about that when I was chairman of the Reapportionment Committee in '71. Then when I went to Washington, it was so cold and miserable, I just said, "Hey, this is not for me."

CARR: So now you see this as a possibility. There are a few things I'd like to touch on before we get to your congressional bid. We talked about this kind of last rallying cry that Brown gets around you toward the last month, pretty much when it's not really clear that you're going to lose, but you're still behind in the polls. From the Democratic political leadership there's kind of a rallying cry. Jesse Unruh comes out . . .

DYMALLY: Tom Bradley, former governor Pat Brown. Because I'm losing . . .

CARR: Everyone comes around and says, "We have to support Dymally." Why did this rallying cry come a month before the election--or actually less than a month?

DYMALLY: There were some people around, led by Jesse

Unruh, who thought that Jerry Brown was not coming out. . . . Don't forget, Jesse Unruh had a vested interest in my win, because by my being there I protected that seat, and I prevented anyone from getting in there to run for governor. So people began saying, hey, I'm getting a raw break. That's when Jerry Brown began having conscience and giving me some tainted money.

CARR: And beyond the tainted money, which we've just discussed, what about this notion of . . .

DYMALLY: By the way, do you know what ever happened to Silberman?

CARR: What did happen to him?

DYMALLY: He ended up in jail for laundering money two years ago. Go ahead.

CARR: You and Jerry Brown pretty much have campaigned separately up until this time. Like, you had not appeared together at all. All of a sudden, after this rallying cry, Jerry Brown comes up with this notion of a team concept. That is, the lieutenant governor and the governor should be together campaigning.

DYMALLY: I was very uncomfortable about it.

CARR: Uncomfortable . . .

DYMALLY: Because I didn't think he was sincere. I went to

take a picture with him and he didn't want me to stand on this side; he wanted me to stand on the other side. It was just total nonsense.

CARR: You were uncomfortable with it but you went along.

DYMALLY: Yeah, I'm a politician. I'm not a priest.

CARR: Deep level of sarcasm in that. One of the interesting events, when you and Mr. Brown decide on this team concept, was you met together at an Elks lodge in Modesto--this is right before the election. And the press described you as seeming to be very uncomfortable.

DYMALLY: I told you so [Laughter]. Because I didn't think Jerry was sincere, and I never felt comfortable in his presence because I knew he wasn't really supportive of my candidacy. And of course I always had good support in the Central Valley. I did very well there. I was a frequent visitor to Fresno, Modesto, Merced, Stockton, Bakersfield, Tulare.

CARR: There's a bit of a dichotomy here, because on one hand, the press presented it as you being very uncomfortable there because it was an Elks lodge, and the Elks had had a history of racism and so on and so forth. But on the other hand, as you

have said before in these interviews, you've always felt very comfortable in rural areas like that.

DYMALLY: No, that wasn't a problem. See, they misread that. They thought I was uncomfortable because I was in an institution that's not known for its diversity. I was uncomfortable because of being with Jerry.

CARR: Really. That's interesting. Now, could you tell me a little bit about why you've always felt particularly comfortable, coming from an urban constituency, in rural areas?

DYMALLY: Well, I've been going to the Valley ever since I was in the assembly through invitations by the Democratic parties down there, by county committees, NAACP, you know. They were always very warm, those rural Democrats. I know one time I went to a place where we had hot bread and hot soup for lunch. It was just real country, and really nice sorts of things. I was always comfortable and very happy to be in the rural areas. I guess it has to do with my country background, also. And I did very well, when I ran in '74, in the rural areas.

CARR: Wonderful.

DYMALLY: Another thing you've got to understand, Elston, and you will understand this. See, I had no persecution complex about race. I didn't see white people--innocent white people--as the enemy. If some rural Democratic couple wants to host a reception for me, I was very comfortable with that. I didn't see them as a bunch of racists. So I was never troubled by this question of race as an intimidating factor. It was personality with Jerry, not race.

CARR: I want to talk about the defeat one more time. It's the first time since 1894 that the governor's seat and lieutenant governor's seat is split. It's the first time that Democrats elected the governor and Republicans elected the lieutenant governor. What's the significance of it, beyond someone just going back and figuring out, "Oh, this is the first time this has happened since whatever."

DYMALLY: Well, I think there were two lessons there. One, that race became a factor. Two . . .

CARR: How?

DYMALLY: Race.

CARR: Race. Yeah, I know, but could you elaborate on that?

DYMALLY: Well, I think a lot of white people voted for Mike Curb. The media and the criticism of me were major factors. Two, the absence of strong support. Third, the expectation that I was going to win. You see, nobody thought I was going to win four years before that. So a lot of factors were involved; the absence of strong support until the last minute.

CARR: Now, you were saying the second thing.

DYMALLY: I don't know. I have no proof of it, but I think race may have played some factor in it. I hate to holler race when I don't have the facts.

CARR: Politically, how significant was it? Again, I ask that question in a vein that . . .

DYMALLY: My defeat?

CARR: In a vein that we're talking--going back to the shift from . . .

DYMALLY: In a historical context, it was not terribly important, because nobody cares too much about the lieutenant governor. It's not a big thing.

CARR: Nobody cares too much about the lieutenant governor, but isn't there the perception that, "Oh boy, these Democrats aren't even able to hold this together, which is something that everyone's been able to do. The party's in trouble."

DYMALLY: Look, a lot of people took escape from the fact that I was severely damaged in the media. When you have a major media on your case every day like the Los Angeles Times and the large 60 percent of the state population in this county, it's hard to survive. Now, when I ran for the Congress, they recognized that on a district level, they couldn't touch me. See, they've never been able to touch me on a district level. So it was get-even time. It seemed like a day didn't go by that there wasn't a critical story about me in the Times. I couldn't survive that.

CARR: The other question I have is . . .

DYMALLY: And that's factual. The race thing, I don't know.

CARR: Through all of this stuff--the allegations of bribery that were never proved and weren't true--what kind of reaction were you getting from your constituents in the district?

DYMALLY: Well, I could tell you about the media, as I indicated earlier. My specialty in '74 was going in to visit these rural newspapers, leaving my resumé and a picture and getting an interview by virtue of my showing up, because the other guy didn't show up. Now, this time around, all they

were asking me was about my pending indictment: "Dymally, who it is believed will be indicted, stopped by Main Street Times today." That was the story. So what was a positive in '74 was a negative in '78. The visits were counterproductive.

CARR: Yeah. So your constituents were basically engrossed in what was being produced by . . .

DYMALLY: Reading negative stuff. Larry Stangler, who did a good story on me when he was with the San Jose Mercury News, drove with me to Stockton against the advice of my staff--because they didn't figure a news reporter from the Times could give me a friendly story. And sure enough, he wrote a bad story.

CARR: So you lose. You're a lame duck. You have a few months before Curb takes over. Jerry Brown is out of town in Phoenix, and you decide to do three quick pieces of legislation and sign them into law, essentially decreasing the powers of the lieutenant governor's position. Do you recall that?

DYMALLY: Vaguely. Decreasing the powers?

CARR: Yeah. Basically, remember, there was the [Southwest] Border [Regional] Commission, the

employment development commission, was it?

DYMALLY: Commission for Economic Development.

CARR: Commission for Economic Development. And also there was the commission dealing with youth [Advisory Commission on Youth].

DYMALLY: Yeah. That's right. That was established by Reagan.

CARR: Those were three commissions that basically you had go over to the power of the governor.

DYMALLY: Right, right, right.

CARR: Within that context, also, you were very concerned that three of your staff people were going to be unemployed.

DYMALLY: That's right.

CARR: You got one person a position with the Border Commission.

DYMALLY: One with the Economic Commission.

CARR: And the third I don't recall.

DYMALLY: I can't remember what.

CARR: So you got all of those people. . . . Now, of course, bloody murder is screamed by that. What are your recollections of that?

DYMALLY: I didn't give a shit.

CARR: Really?

DYMALLY: I knew the Times. . . . I went to. . . .

CARR: I mean, you did all of this just before Jerry Brown's plane landed back in California.

DYMALLY: As co-chair of the Commission on the Californias, I went to Mexicali and I took the staff down there. My driver--CHP driver--was spying for Curb, and he leaked the information about that visit to Larry Stammer of the Los Angeles Times. It said I went fishing, which I did. Big story. And I took the staff down there at state expense for a party. Big story. I mean, I'm dead, you know. What can I do? [Laughter] I can't win. I mean, this guy's driving me--he's a cop--he claims Curb is gay and he's anti-Curb, and the guy ends up going to work for Curb, leaking this information to the Times, after I'm defeated. The Times wouldn't give me a break. Yeah, I took the staff down there because it was official business.

CARR: Yeah, but I wasn't talking about the staff, that trip . . .

DYMALLY: The legislation, yeah: because I felt that Curb was going to follow up on these things.

CARR: But that's one opinion. But there's the perception that "Boy, this is just sour grapes," because you lost and you were just trying

to . . .

DYMALLY: All of the above [Laughter].

CARR: "Let's try to make his [Curb's] life . . ."

DYMALLY: Nice guy didn't work out, OK? For four years, nice guy didn't work out, so what the hell? [Laughter] Ah! That's funny, funny, funny.

CARR: So this was political retribution?

DYMALLY: Yeah, yeah, a little humor involved, a little stick-it-to-him, you know. All of the above.

CARR: But I ask the question not very lightly because it's one of those other things that, to me, reveals not only the character of your relationship with Jerry Brown, but the character of Jerry Brown. Because while Gray Davis presented it as though you had gone behind Jerry Brown's back and written this legislation, what came out was that you had actually met with Jerry Brown a month before and discussed everything you did with him.

DYMALLY: That's right.

CARR: And pretty much, he gave you his blessing.

DYMALLY: That's correct.

CARR: Now, after you did this, Gray Davis presented it as, "Oh well, you went behind Jerry Brown's back."

DYMALLY: But more significantly, they fought the Commission for Economic Development. They didn't want Curb to have anything. And after that, I'm having a farewell retirement dinner; Jerry comes with Gray Davis to ask Ken Orduna to resign--at my dinner--from the commission so Curb could get the appointment.

CARR: But because it was a state appointment, no one could have forced him out really, could they?

DYMALLY: No. That's what I'm saying. I made the appointment. The acting governor made the appointment. Oh yeah, it wasn't the commission. . . . It was to give the appointment to the governor.

CARR: Right.

DYMALLY: Because the lieutenant governor had that appointment. And they came and asked him to resign at my party so that Curb would get the appointment.

CARR: Did he?

DYMALLY: Subsequently, yeah. So that was the change: giving the governor the appointment.

CARR: But what was interesting about it was when the press found out that Brown actually knew about all of these changes way beforehand. It wasn't

like you were doing these by yourself. When Brown was confronted with it he said, "Well, I'm really unhappy with the way these things were done, and I don't know why he. . . ." He didn't totally deny that he knew, but he didn't actually own up to the fact that he supported them.

DYMALLY: I don't know where you're doing your research, but you're so damn accurate on these things that it far exceeds my mental capacity to remember these things. But yes, we did meet, as I recall, about it and I told him what I was going to do. They didn't want Curb to have any power. And then when the press came down on their side, came down on Curb's side, then they finked out. You're right.

CARR: But he never changed any of the changes you made.

DYMALLY: No. But he did attempt to make up to Curb for what I had done by giving Curb the appointment-- Ken's position--because he could not have changed it. Because that appointment was not his to give at the time, you see.

CARR: Because you made the final appointment as lieutenant governor, and then if that position opened again, then it would be the governor's . . .

DYMALLY: Let me see. See, it was a state commission and the lieutenant governor made that. It was the only appointment I think he had, so it would have been difficult to undo it. You'd have had to fire Ken, and Ken would have sued, or could have sued.

CARR: Because he had civil service protection under that position.

DYMALLY: I don't know. It was not civil service. Yeah. He had some protection--you're right--by virtue of the appointment.

CARR: It was appointed but it was civil service.

DYMALLY: Yes. But the guy comes to my party and asks Ken to resign. And went back--after having tried to kill the commission when I had it--and funded the commission for Curb. I mean, you see what I'm talking about? How one could really get unhappy with these people?

Let's change subjects. Let's talk about some more pleasant things.

CARR: It would be good to stop for today and end the tape.

DYMALLY: Fine.

[End Tape 11, Side B]

[Session 11, June 24, 1997]

[Begin Tape 12, Side A]

CARR: Good afternoon, Congressman Dymally. As you mentioned earlier, there are some follow-up questions we have from our previous session. You wanted to discuss certain not legislation, but executive orders, as you clarified for me, which you undertook as a lame-duck lieutenant governor.

DYMALLY: Yeah. You were posing the question of my having introduced legislation in the lame-duck period, and actually it was executive orders, which I had discussed with the governor and Gray Davis. But what was interesting about it, when it came time to issue the executive order, I had no stationery, so we had to go print up my own stationery.

CARR: Normally you didn't have stationery because you didn't do executive orders?

DYMALLY: The executive orders came from the governor, and I had never issued one, so I had no stationery. So we had to go print up stationery to do that.

That was a little anecdote I thought you might be interested in.

CARR: So even when, for instance, the governor was out of town and you had to sign certain executive orders, that's because they had already been . . .

DYMALLY: No, no, no. You're making a wrong assumption. I signed no executive orders. [Laughter]

CARR: Not even pardons?

DYMALLY: Well, yes, the pardons. I did the pardons. But it was all prepared for me, and I just signed, like rote. But I did sign a significant piece of legislation. I forgot what it was doing, but the author of the legislation was an assemblyman from Sacramento, and he subsequently became a judge. And that was my first act as governor. But all that stuff was prescribed. You didn't have any discretionary powers.

CARR: So there were three executive orders, basically, as I mentioned a bit earlier. One was to curtail the powers of the lieutenant governor to have any control over the California office of the Southwest Border Commission.

DYMALLY: In the first place it was a governor's prerogative, and we wanted to be sure that that

took place. The governor subsequently appointed Hayden . . .

CARR: Tom Hayden.

DYMALLY: Tom Hayden.

CARR: To that position. What was your reaction when he appointed Hayden? Did you feel Hayden was the right person?

DYMALLY: No, because Tom wasn't into that sort of stuff.

CARR: What do you mean "that sort of stuff"?

DYMALLY: This had to do with border relationships, and Tom was into economic development--in fact, that was the name of his organization--and the environment. This was a more pragmatic approach to border problems, along with Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas.

CARR: From your perspective, looking back on your tenure as lieutenant governor, what do you feel were the pressing concerns of that particular commission and what did you bring to the table?

DYMALLY: Well, it was a federal act so there was some significance and I . . . The governor had . . .

CARR: Federal act to create the commission?

DYMALLY: The commission, yes. The governor had no interest in it and so I . . .

CARR: The governor you're referring to is Governor

Brown.

DYMALLY: Yeah, so I had the opportunity to meet with the governors from the other states. And we were trying to do something with it, but time was not on our side. After I left, Tom took it over and then it was not funded by the Congress.

CARR: So it was initially funded, I assume.

DYMALLY: By the Congress, yes.

CARR: At that time, what were the pressing concerns of the border states?

DYMALLY: Well, immigration was a problem, of course. That was a big thing. Water--saline water--was another problem. Traffic. So these were some practical things that we were dealing with.

CARR: Was the federal government, by creating this commission, simply avoiding dealing with some of the harder issues?

DYMALLY: On the contrary--they were trying to resolve some of the problems. It came out of the same legislation that created the Appalachian [Regional] Commission. The Appalachian Commission was kept. This one was not funded.

CARR: Now, from your perspective, as a politician from north of the border, what was the reaction of Mexican officials to some of these common issues?

DYMALLY: Well, they were not part of the border commission, but they were part of the Commission of the Californias.

CARR: Of the Californias. Which you were also very involved in.

DYMALLY: I was chair of that. There were keen interests: we got the Scripps Institution [of Oceanography] involved in some fisheries project, and we had a full-time director. We had an office in San Diego and we had a very active full-time director, Dr. Ralph Poblano, who was deeply involved in it. We got President [Gerald R.] Ford [Jr.], for the first time, to send foreign aid to La Paz, Baja California, when there was a major storm down there. We flew down in a big Lockheed C[argo] transport. So we did a lot of interesting things.

CARR: If you could isolate one or two things that struck you about the interest of Mexican officials that you didn't know about before, what would some of those things be?

DYMALLY: Well, their friendliness, their anxiety to work with us.

CARR: Anxiety? How so?

DYMALLY: To work with us, because here was a legal

instrumentality by which they could communicate with us. So they were very, very receptive and threw very warm receptions for us in the various cities in which we met in the two Bajas.

CARR: I'm assuming that without that commission, the only other diplomatic channels between those areas would be on a national political level, right?

DYMALLY: Yeah. They had their relationship with the [United States] State Department, but this was a strictly regional approach to problem solving.

CARR: Going back to the executive orders we were discussing: one of the other offices you wanted to curtail the powers of--so the incoming lieutenant governor, that is Lieutenant Governor Curb, wouldn't have [power over them]--dealt with the California [State] Commission on Food and Nutrition.

DYMALLY: Well, it was one of my creations.

CARR: OK, you created that. How did that come about?

DYMALLY: Well, I created that by executive order. No, no. I just exercised the power of the lieutenant governor's office, and created that. I had some friends who were deeply involved in food and

nutrition. It was very, very well received because no one was talking about food and nutrition. All you knew was Weight Watchers-- that was the big thing then.

CARR: Who were some of these friends?

DYMALLY: They were people who started Weight Watchers in San Francisco and they were very keen on food and nutrition.

CARR: Do you recall some of their names?

DYMALLY: No, but I can get it for you.

CARR: So the purpose of this was to educate the public at large?

DYMALLY: Yes, because we Americans were not eating well, still are not eating well. It was for me a new challenge, to do something that was different. That was the whole idea. We also had the Council on Inter-Group Relations. That was some legislation where we got some small amount of money--not much. We brought groups from all parts of California to begin to talk together. One of the things you recognize about this type of legislation is that Californians, on an individual basis, are most anxious for reconciliation. So if Governor Pete Wilson had

taken [Proposition] 209<sup>1</sup> and said in a statewide broadcast, "Folks, we've got some problems. There's some polarization on this question of affirmative action, but let us try and resolve it in a number of ways that are conciliatory rather than polarizing". . . . People tend to follow leadership on these matters. So all of these commissions that we developed--the youth intergroup, food and nutrition--developed and serviced . . .

CARR: You're referring to the Rural Youth Employment Project?

DYMALLY: No, no. Not that, not yet. The Youth Commission was started by Reagan, and Bob Hertzberg, who is now assemblyman, was chairman of it. The food and nutrition project; Committee of the Californias; Commission for Economic Development--they received wide support.

Now, the rural project was the result of my having contact with the White House.

CARR: Sorry to interrupt you. How did the California

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1. Proposition 209 (November 1996), prohibition against discrimination or preferential treatment by state and other public entities.

Commission on Food and Nutrition actually go about educating people? Was this a school-based . . .

DYMALLY: We had conferences. We had one in northern California and one in southern California. I remember the one here was at the Museum of Science and Industry, which was always available to us because it was state funded, and had good facilities.

CARR: Sorry, you were going on to the . . .

DYMALLY: The rural youth project . . .

CARR: . . . Rural Youth Employment Project.

DYMALLY: I was in New Orleans at the lieutenant governors' conference, and one of. . . . It just goes to show, when the bureaucracy wants to loosen up and help you. . . . I met a White House aide there and I said, "Look, I am running for reelection. I need some help in the rural areas. I've got a lot of projects that are identified with urban problems. We need to do something." And he said, "Fine." He called the. . . . Oh, gee, what was his. . . . [Ernest G.] Ernie Green, who was in the Department of Labor, and with, now the Secretary of Labor. Alexis [M.] Herman . . .

CARR: OK, yes.

DYMALLY: [He] called Ernie Green and instructed me to have someone there represent me. Ken Orduna went there. The two of them got together, wrote a proposal, and we got, I think, half a million dollars.

CARR: And the purpose of the Rural Employment Project was to get young people from . . .

DYMALLY: The rural areas, because all of the attention was focused on the urban areas, urban poor. The idea was to give me some identification with rural areas, because of my urban interests--and at the same time provide some employment opportunities, and some jobs.

CARR: What are your recollections of any young people or situations that came out of this particular project that were particularly successful?

DYMALLY: I can't identify. . . . Except to provide opportunities for some young people to get jobs and provide jobs for the people who ran the project.

CARR: Now, you had always developed good relationships with a lot of rural assemblymen and senators over the years.

DYMALLY: Because I traveled through the Valley with some frequency, and I was always available to go to

their receptions and their banquets and their meetings. So I was one of the few urban legislators who had a rural twist. In fact, I recall Senator [Howard] Way one time, when I was expressing some concerns about the farmer. . . . I was saying in effect, "Those of us in the urban cities ought to have an interest in farming because we buy their products. If we don't show an interest and the prices go up, we have to pay, as urban consumers." And Senator Howard Way, who came from Tulare County, said, "Merv, I'm very impressed with your approach on this matter, because there are not very many urban legislators who look after these matters." As a result, I was invited to go to the Kellogg [West Conference] Center at [California] State [Polytechnic University] Pomona to participate in a conference with farmers there, as an urban person.

CARR: Now, there was another assembly Democrat, John [E.] Thurman [Jr.]. Do you recall him?

DYMALLY: Very much so. John was one of the nicest persons I've ever met, and John was helpful in this whole problem of educating about rural problems. How did you get John Thurman's name? Where did he

surface?

CARR: During your last leg in your reelection bid as lieutenant governor, he happened to be present at that Elks lodge conference with Brown. One of the things that was very clear was that you already knew Thurman, and as you pointed out to reporters at the time, you got along very well, so it wasn't very strange at all for you to be in that kind of rural setting. I just made note of it, and I was just wondering how did you get to know each other and how you got along over the years?

DYMALLY: It was a personal relationship. He was just a nice, sweet man from the rural area who . . .

CARR: What district did he represent, do you recall?

DYMALLY: He was somewhere in the Valley--not Tulare--I think Modesto.

CARR: Yeah, it would be Modesto.

DYMALLY: Yeah, OK. And so we became good friends. Don't forget, in each one of these counties, unbeknownst to a lot of us--and the reason why I got interested in them politically--in all of these counties there were pockets of blacks. And McGovern maximized the endorsement of Willie Brown and Leon Ralph, when they traveled through

the Valley, picking up these votes, and he defeated Humphrey. So I became very sensitive about this strength of black votes in the Valley.

CARR: Now, are you talking about, historically, blacks who lived in rural areas, or maybe blacks who had, at some point, been part of the farm labor areas?

DYMALLY: No, no, no. These are blacks in Modesto, Tulare, Fresno, Bakersfield, Stockton, Madera. They were kind of the silent black people, and that's why I was in the Valley so often. Because of my interest, they'd always invite me to NAACP banquets and whatever conferences they had, and I would always go, because I enjoyed it. Not only that, I saw them as a source of strength for a state or national candidate, because McGovern--as I said, with Leon and Willie--made this tour and then was very successful.

CARR: So even while you were doing that and thinking much beyond yourself, clearly you were also building a statewide network for yourself.

DYMALLY: Not consciously.

CARR: Not consciously?

DYMALLY: I had no interest in statewide office when I was doing that. I was just enjoying it, and seeing

this as a potential source of strength for statewide and national candidates, because I saw that McGovern did so very well with it.

CARR: I guess you would also include blacks in the Bakersfield area, as well, in that kind of rural . . .

DYMALLY: Yeah, from Bakersfield all the way up to Sacramento. There weren't very many in Chico.

CARR: You had the Rural Youth Employment Project. These were executive orders to try to take power away from Curb.

DYMALLY: Look, I tried to take a lemon--the lieutenant governor's office--and make a lemonade out of it.  
[Laughter]

CARR: And these were the things that you, during that . . .

DYMALLY: Yeah, it was an experience. I also published a booklet describing to people that there were some things that the lieutenant governor could do other than just presiding in the senate.

CARR: When you went to try to get these things accomplished, you enlisted the help of two legislators. One was William Lockyer and the other one was [Assemblyman] Bruce [E.] Young.

DYMALLY: Well, Bill Lockyer was chairman of the committee

that handled the Commission for Economic Development. He was in the assembly. He was not exactly a Brown supporter, so it seemed to me a very logical ally. Bruce Young just happened to be there, and was responsive. He came from the Norwalk area.

CARR: Right, Norwalk. So you actually made calls to these guys and said, "Hey, look. I need your support in legislation."

DYMALLY: Absolutely. The Republicans, too. The Republicans were disposed to the commission because it was a Reagan creation, and Reinecke was chairman of it, and the vice chairman was a very strong Republican.

CARR: One of the things that came out of that short period before you actually left the office of lieutenant governor is that there was a bid by Lockyer for legislation to make it necessary for the lieutenant governor and the governor to be elected together.

DYMALLY: Yeah. Was it Lockyer? I thought it was somebody else. Anyhow, they wanted to do it as it is in New York, and I'm not so sure I liked the idea.

CARR: Yeah, I have it here: Lockyer introduced a constitutional amendment providing for the joint

election of the governor and the lieutenant governor.

DYMALLY: Yeah. I think it was fashioned after New York.

CARR: What was the point of that? Was this more sour grapes, or was this more a general party concern that people really didn't want to see the ticket split again in the way it was?

DYMALLY: Yeah. That was the reason.

CARR: Was Jesse Unruh behind any of this at all?

DYMALLY: No, he was out of the legislature by then.

CARR: I know, but did he . . .

DYMALLY: No, no, not that I know of.

CARR: How much a role did you play in at least suggesting that such legislation . . .

DYMALLY: Not very much, because I was kind of ambivalent about it.

CARR: Why were you ambivalent?

DYMALLY: I figured it didn't give you the independence that one needed to campaign, and you actually were a surrogate of the governor. And even at the risk of losing it, I felt that this took away that initiative on your part. You know, you could stay home and not even go anyplace and get elected.

CARR: Right, because basically you were riding on the

governor's coattails, not the other way around.

DYMALLY: Yeah.

CARR: So despite your misgivings and difficulties with Governor Brown, you would have preferred the kind of division of power, if you will, between the two offices rather than having the two offices intimately linked together.

DYMALLY: Yes.

CARR: Immediately after your loss, you were concerned about certain people on your staff. There are two people whose names come up. One was Wilfred Harris and the other one was--correct me if I'm mispronouncing this name--Mrs. Leone Shymoniack.

DYMALLY: Isn't that interesting? Why was I so interested in Leone? She was my administrative assistant.

CARR: Right.

DYMALLY: A very good woman; Australian. And Wilfred Harris . . .

CARR: How did she come to be on your staff?

DYMALLY: Oh, just off-the-street hire. Then, while on my staff, she went and got a B.A. and she got a master's in international trade. She was just a good, able person.

Wilfred Harris had, I think, twin children who had some deformity, and we were concerned

about his employment. But I don't know why I would be concerned with Leone Shymoniack. It had nothing to do with the economics of it. But I was concerned about all the staff, most of whom got placed in jobs.

CARR: Yeah. Ms. Shymoniack--you were able to get her placed as executive director of the Border Commission, and Wilfred Harris was named a deputy director.

DYMALLY: Yeah.

CARR: Were they helpful to you in any particular way, politically, that made you feel . . .

DYMALLY: Wilfred was part of a young group of people. I think he was brought into the operation by Ken Orduna. He subsequently became a Republican.

CARR: Harris?

DYMALLY: Yeah. Much to our surprise. Leone Shymoniack ended up as a CARE [Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere] international worker. I visited her in Guatemala. She was in the Dominican Republic. She was in Vietnam. Now she's in Australia teaching.

CARR: So you're finished with this. There's one issue that comes up: Did you ask Governor Brown to appoint you, as a private citizen, to the

Commission of the Californias?

DYMALLY: No. No. No.

CARR: Because this would have basically put you on the same board with Curb.

DYMALLY: No. The Commission of the Californias did have appointees. No, no, no. That wasn't an important thing because. . . . No.

CARR: No.

DYMALLY: All these stories are inaccurate, you know. No. It was a nothing commission. I mean, I made something out of it, but that's not something I'd use up a blue chip on. I don't think Brown would have appointed me to anything. So I would not have humiliated myself asking him for something. He did appoint my wife to some affirmative action committee on the [California] State Board of Education.

CARR: Affirmative action is a topic that we'll be coming back to a bit later because I think it's an important one.

During the final days of your campaign, there's also the Deukmejian-Burke campaign going on. Deukmejian attacked Burke on the issue of . . .

DYMALLY: Death penalty.

- CARR: For finances. Death penalty, but also finances. That is, the Burkes were, I suppose, worth a little bit under a million dollars at the time. And [Deukmejian] really wanted to find out how a public official could be worth this much, and wanted to have her, especially her husband's, finances opened up to the public. Do you think this particular attack had anything to do with some of the previous problems Burke had had dealing with the medical company, and Dr. Ruben?
- DYMALLY: Yes, but you talk about a Teflon Reagan? There's a Teflon Yvonne Burke. I mean, somehow, whatever her husband did never spilled over onto her. For one reason, the L.A. Times liked her. And even when Bill had some problems with the Fair Political Practices Commission, that didn't spill over to her at all.
- CARR: This comes to a point where there seem to be two kinds of political tracks a black person could take. It seems to me, that is if one looks at the careers of a Tom Bradley, an Yvonne Burke, that is, coming out of old, semi-middle-class, black, west side, Central Avenue . . .
- DYMALLY: No, no, no. Take out Central Avenue. No.
- CARR: Moving to the west side.

DYMALLY: That was sort of my problem with the west side because I looked at Central Avenue as my turf, and they kind of resented that because they had this paternalistic approach. And that was part of the Bill Greene-Kenny Washington fight, and we won by a narrow vote.

CARR: Because Kenny Washington was supported by Bradley . . .

DYMALLY: The west side bourgeoisie. And I wouldn't call them semi-middle-class. No, middle-class.

CARR: OK.

DYMALLY: And I wouldn't put them in with the Central Avenue stuff.

CARR: When I say semi-middle-class, I'm cautious to say that. Bradley himself didn't come from a middle-class background, but by dint of education . . .

DYMALLY: But they merged into. . . . If you look at the criteria for what makes one middle-class, I think they got into it. The only one they did not get high marks on was cash in the bank. But they did everything else. They had the education, the house, the family--all the criteria that make one middle-class, except cash, assets.

Now, with reference to Yvonne and her assets, Yvonne was always a very thrifty woman and saved

her money well, invested in real estate. Bill was more of a speculator type, and he made good money.

CARR: But this whole line. . . . I mean, did you feel like an outsider?

DYMALLY: Yes, very much so. Very much so.

CARR: In the sense that . . .

DYMALLY: I didn't feel I was part of the black, middle-class, west side operation. I don't know if I suffered from an inferiority complex, or lack of acceptance. [Laughter] I can remember one time at the UAW Hall, 8501 South San Pedro, there was the UCRC, the United Civil Rights Committee. They were having a meeting and someone saw my field rep--administrative aide--Louise Ridgle-White, coming up the steps, and they made an assumption I was coming. They said, "Dymally's coming," and they closed the door. See, the movement in Los Angeles was this NAACP, Urban League, civil rights movement . . .

CARR: And which church. . . . It would have been Second Baptist Church that would have been the powerful church back then.

DYMALLY: But it was still middle-class, although the Second Baptist Church people had since moved to

the west side.

CARR: Although the church itself was still located . . .

DYMALLY: It was on the east side, but the leadership came from the west side. And one of the criteria for gaining middle-class status was to move on the west side. And there was, in some circles, a lack of acceptance of my own political agenda and, I suspect, because of a couple reasons. I was a foreigner. I was a Jesse Unruh lieutenant; I beat the civil rights candidate. So there was some kind of resentment.

In fact, I told this story, and it's worth repeating. The night Bill Greene defeated Kenny Washington, one of the prominent lawyers in the city said, "That West Indian son of a bitch won again." And I never felt the West Indian thing emerging, although one candidate who ran against me one time referred to him as "us," versus "him," as if I were something different. But no one knew what the whole strategy was because they didn't come out and say, "He's a foreigner." It was an implication there which I think was too profound for the voters to understand. So it never surfaced as an issue, but I think deep down it was there. In fact, the reason for hiring

Julian Dixon when I was in the senate is because my staff felt I was weak on the west side for the same reason, and I hired Julian to strengthen my west side connection because . . .

CARR: What was your relationship with Dixon like?

DYMALLY: Julian was very busy going to law school, and very into the west side crowd, and I wasn't. So he was a good link, so to speak. We became friends over time. But at first, it took a little time to grow because he wasn't part of my operation.

CARR: Yeah. Now, the West Indian situation also becomes interesting in the sense that, was there enough of a West Indian community who were voters in southern California?

DYMALLY: The answer is no. You started to make a point and we strayed away. You were saying there were two kinds of blacks who can succeed in politics, and I have a definition because that's part of my theory. But I'd like to hear what you were leading up to in your question because I have an answer for it.

CARR: I think, specifically speaking, if one studies the careers of particularly Tom Bradley, but also Yvonne Burke and other people, it is clear that

Bradley and Burke came out of a kind of social political machinery. That social political machinery being made up of the parts of the NAACP, the Urban League, black church . . .

DYMALLY: FAME.

CARR: First AME [African Methodist Episcopal].

DYMALLY: [Reverend H.H.] Brookins.

CARR: Although Bradley wasn't initially a Methodist, but he became a Methodist.

DYMALLY: But he always had Brookins's support from the word "go." Don't forget, I was some kind of a stranger.

CARR: That's what I'm saying.

DYMALLY: I came from a rural area . . .

CARR: You are a black politician, though West Indian, but you didn't come out of any of those kinds of institutions.

DYMALLY: No. I was a teacher. Nobody knew me. I wasn't involved in the civil rights movement. I mean, where did this guy come from? So there was that resentment.

CARR: But would that have contributed to the level of discomfort, say, the L.A. Times or other quote, unquote, "white institutions" might have with you?

DYMALLY: Look, my discomfort with the black middle class goes all the way back to Bonasse Village, Cedros, when we were assigned plots to grow crops. When my okras and tomatoes became ripe the schoolmaster took it and gave it to the doctor's son to take home. And I've always had some misgivings about the middle class, so I had my bias. And I was very comfortable with the welfare rights movement. Johnnie Mae Tillmon, Caffie Greene--I gave them their first contribution for their first office. So I did not come out from that mold, and I never felt comfortable, even to this day, I must confess. I was very, very comfortable on the east side, very comfortable going to the Baptist churches on the east side. And the little old ladies liked me, and the minister liked me, and even to this day. . . . Yesterday I went to a reception, and the guy said, "Oh my God, Dymally. Where have you been?" It was just a warm greeting by this minister. Two of them, in fact.

Now, I have another theory. I believe that if a black politician were conservative enough, he can succeed in a white district. But it goes against the grain, because the problems that a

DYMALLY: black politician champions are so overwhelming and so rooted deeply in poverty and discrimination, I don't know how you could become a conservative in the ghetto. But if you were to come out for the death penalty, for [Proposition] 209 and for [Proposition] 187,<sup>1</sup> I think the right will embrace you.

A good example is J.C. Watts [Jr.]. J.C. Watts represents a white district. He comes from the Christian far right, and he talks that talk. The other one was Gary [A.] Franks, a Republican from Connecticut. But I don't know what happened. Franks got into a dispute with the Speaker, I understand, and he got hijacked on the way. . . . Something hit him and they didn't expect it, because I think he was undermining his own position by being so out-front on public television against affirmative action and against welfare. You know, he was out there. He was not just a conservative member; he was out there pioneering in a state that is not exactly far

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1. Proposition 187 (November 1994), illegal aliens, ineligibility for public services, verification, and reporting.

right. You look at [Lowell P.] Weicker [Jr.], who was governor, etc., etc. Connecticut is not a right-wing state.

CARR: Yeah. It's moderate to conservative, but not right-wing.

DYMALLY: Yes, not right-wing. And here's this guy--he was going beyond the necessary. I mean, had he been just conservative. . . . But he felt it necessary to get on the floor, to compare welfare with slavery, and on CNN, on Crossfire. Very, very visible; writing a book and all this sort of stuff. He was merchandising his conservatism, and so he finally got wiped out by his own rhetoric.

CARR: But given the fact that the traditional black church in the United States is a fairly socially conservative institution anyway . . .

DYMALLY: I'm glad to hear that. I don't think many people will agree with you, but I'm absolutely convinced: the people in the church are conservative in behavior.

CARR: Socially conservative.

DYMALLY: Yes, right. They're liberal on matters affecting their constituents: jobs, education, civil rights, you know. You can go and make a good

case, but now I noticed that one major change that took place within that context was their switch from being critical of the police at all costs to embracing the police for protection because of the rise of crime.

CARR: Yeah. Well, one could make the argument that that attitude has always been there, but it's just that a climate arose in society for that to be expressed by . . .

DYMALLY: Well, the climate was that the police were so brutal that they had to fight brutality. But when crime rose above the brutality, they had to change their position. So now you find blacks are very, very anti-crime, very pro-police. That's the one basic change I've noticed.

But on housing, on civil rights matters, they're very liberal. I suspect there are some blacks now who support the death penalty.

CARR: Yeah. If one were to make [Inaudible].

DYMALLY: This is a very interesting point you raise, and some day, I'll have a long dissertation on this whole question of middle-class. No, I didn't come out of that mold, and I wasn't part of that group. I didn't go to school here, I didn't go to high school here, I was not a member of the NAACP, I

wasn't on the west side, etc., etc. "Where the hell did this guy come from?" you know.

CARR: The reason I'm taking this line of questioning is, again, trying to understand your conflictive relationship with the L.A. Times. If you're coming out of these kinds of institutions, if you're a Burke, if you're a Bradley, and you're coming out of these kinds of institutions, by the time you're running for office, you will have already developed some kind of relationship . . .

DYMALLY: You're very insightful about it, and I'm glad you raised that because it was on my mind after we last talked. I am told by one of my few friends at the L.A. Times that a small delegation went down there and during the course of talking about civil rights and stuff like that--a combination of a couple of groups--they allowed to the Times that I did not represent the black community. So the Times had that over my head--that if they attacked me, I did not have these people's support. And, indeed, there were very few people who took on the Times on my behalf, and the only two that I know of were Senator Bill Greene and Dr. Al Cannon, who subsequently was one of the founders of the Drew Medical School, and died in

Africa.

CARR: Yeah, but Bill Greene remained your loyal supporter . . .

DYMALLY: To the end.

CARR: Through everything.

DYMALLY: Everything.

CARR: From the assembly, he worked for you in your office . . .

DYMALLY: The senate and the Congress.

CARR: State senate. Regardless of what happened . . .

DYMALLY: He was there.

CARR: He supported you. And to what do you attribute that kind of loyalty? I mean, he was always there. If there was anything that went wrong with your career you could always . . .

DYMALLY: Find Bill Greene there.

The lobbyist for Los Angeles County went to Bill Greene and warned him to stay away from me because I was a communist, a Muslim, anti-police. Bill says, "Not only am I supporting him, but I agree with him." And that was the end of that relationship with that guy.

Bill's been a champion. He and I had one break. [Laughter] We were putting together a dinner for him, and it wasn't going well, and I

called upon him to make some calls. And I don't know what got into him. One morning he called around two o'clock in Washington and just jumped all over me and told me he doesn't make phone calls for anybody. And so we called off the dinner. And he was unhappy with my person who was running the dinner, so we called off the dinner. And guess what? He put on the dinner himself. [Laughter] We made more money without the dinner, with our letter, than he made at the dinner himself. And he subsequently called me and apologized and paid the young woman whom he had bawled out about it. That's the kind of person Bill Greene is. He said he was wrong. Great guy.

CARR: Very interesting. What were your relationships with some of the other people who were running for reelection at the time, such as Ken Cory and March Fong Eu?

DYMALLY: Well, March Fong and I were very good friends in the assembly, and I supported her when she ran. Ken Cory was a staff member when I was in the assembly and he and I became good friends. But March Fong got a little conservative, and I think after that very serious attack on her by a black

man, that may have changed her position. So she kind of drifted away from. . . . And even some of the Asians thought that she had become kind of what they call a "banana." But Ken Cory and I, to this day, are still friends. Don't forget, Ken was part of the Unruh operation.

CARR: Right, exactly. Because he was controller.

DYMALLY: Well, he was a product of the Unruh movement.

CARR: During all the difficult times with the state investigation, the federal government investigations, who were your best supporters? Who were the people who politically were really there for you, besides Bill Greene?

DYMALLY: Are you talking about public officials?

CARR: Public officials, also personally as well.

DYMALLY: Well, one is Edward Masry, attorney; still friends. Another one is a Republican friend of mine--still friends--Jack Urich.

CARR: A Republican friend?

DYMALLY: Yes. To this day we are friends. We just flew up to Las Vegas the other day on a business proposal.

God, Nick Petris. Ah. You say something bad about me and his microphone just went up. Nick Petris, George Moscone, Jim Mills, [Alfred E.] Al

Alquist, Al Rodda. I mean these were true, true champions.

CARR: Many of these people you knew since you were a freshman assemblyman?

DYMALLY: Yes. So they knew me on a personal basis. And they knew I never compromised them. I never went to them with any deal. So when they hear about these deals, they say, "Well, this is not the Dymally I know." Usually if a guy is corrupt, he involves his friends in the corruption. "Hey, can I get you to do this, do that?" And they knew that was not the case with me. Bernard Teitelbaum, who was George Moscone's administrative assistant in Sacramento and in San Francisco when he was mayor, told me, before he passed away, that George considered me one of his best friends.

CARR: And so it was with a circle of friends like these you felt that you were able to get through some of these difficult times?

DYMALLY: Well, the senate is the one time in my life I felt a sense of equality.

[End Tape 12, Side A]

[Begin Tape 12, Side B]

CARR: You were talking about the senate.

DYMALLY: If someone was doing a book and they wanted me to make some referrals, I would send them to a guy named Mike Peavey. Mike was president of Southern California Edison [Company]. He's now president of one of these new emerging energy companies, new ventures. And Mike. . . . It's typical of what I did. He was running for the senate, and he was having some difficulty in Vallejo. He went to meet with the ministers and they were kind of ambivalent. I went in there. When I came out, they were all supporting him. [Laughter] He tells that story all the time. He and I are still friends.

So San Diego, Vallejo, Bakersfield, Fresno, where there were blacks. . . . I was the only black state senator and I was there helping other Democrats. It paid off when I ran for lieutenant governor.

CARR: Moving on . . .

DYMALLY: But let me come back. I did cultivate some friends on the west side. And that's not to say everybody didn't care for me. The activists. . . . You know, the activists.

CARR: Such as?

DYMALLY: Judge Vaino Spencer, Judge Xenophoan Lang, Judge

Sherman Smith. The people who were part of the Community Groups for Kennedy in 1960, who knew me on a personal basis. People who know me on a personal basis sing my praises. I was just talking to a Republican at a wedding last Saturday--[Crispus A.] Chris Wright, who is the number one Republican, and he's made the largest contribution of a black man to any school, USC School of Law. And he was telling a friend, he said, "You know, this is the guy who introduced Chuck Mannatt to a lot of people in California." And he's a staunch Republican. So the people who knew me, and with whom I worked, are still friends: Celes King, Republican; Harold Washington, Republican.

CARR: Moving on just a bit: there seemed to be, at the end of the election with Curb, kind of a bitter taste left in the mouth of the black community. There seemed to be a sense, at least from the perspective of the NAACP crowd, that somehow Burke, Dymally were really badly treated during these campaigns. And not only were they badly treated, but it's an indication of a kind of racial climate that's developing in the state.

DYMALLY: Well, one of the misunderstandings of the

grassroots blacks is that . . .

CARR: When you say grassroots, would you include the NAACP in that?

DYMALLY: Yeah, and beyond that. They always thought, and mistakenly so, that the Democratic party supported candidates. See, the Democratic party in my days couldn't support candidates in a primary. And in the general election, because your district was so strong, they didn't support you, because they felt it was a waste of money.

CARR: Right.

DYMALLY: So all the way up to Congress, there are few blacks who get strong support from the Democratic party, and from labor. The money goes to marginal districts. So they saw the Democrats as having abandoned us because they didn't see any strong effort on the part of the Democratic party coming to the rescue. You said it was a flurry of that effort . . .

CARR: Toward the end.

DYMALLY: . . . toward the end. It was too late.

[Laughter]

CARR: Pat Brown stepped in, Alan Cranston stepped in, Mondale stepped in, Carter stepped in.

DYMALLY: Tom Bradley.

- CARR: Tom Bradley stepped in.
- DYMALLY: But I don't know that they were the official members of the Democratic party in California. They were prominent Democrats who saw the need to help me, but the Democratic party per se--the machinery--either lacked the will or the money to say, "We are going to do this."
- CARR: So here comes a cynical question: If these prominent Democrats--these Democrats with names, with national connections, like Mondale, like Carter--if they hadn't stepped in, would Jerry Brown have supported you?
- DYMALLY: No. That was part of the pressure.
- CARR: Because clearly, Brown is already looking to build his national network if he's going to run . . .
- DYMALLY: Well, once his father came on board, he had no choice, although he disagreed with his father at times. He told his father publicly, "You almost caused me to lose the election." I don't know why he said that.
- CARR: Were you familiar with the woman who ran the NAACP southwestern region at the time? Her name was Virna . . .
- DYMALLY: Virna Canson.

CARR: Canson.

DYMALLY: My dear friend. She and I just had one disagreement. She worked out of my office. Very supportive. She led the fight to get the nominee for director of finance by Deukmejian, who had apparently leaked the information on me. . . . Franchetti. She led the fight in the senate to stop his nomination. That's how close she was to me, and how strongly she felt about it. And she single-handedly led that fight. And for the first time in modern history, or the first time in the history of California, a nominee for director of finance was stopped. She and Roberti . . .

CARR: Led that fight.

DYMALLY: Roberti got a lot of heat from . . .

CARR: What year was that?

DYMALLY: When did Deukmejian win? 'Eighty?

CARR: For governor?

DYMALLY: Yeah. Not '80.

CARR: In '82.

DYMALLY: 'Eighty-two, yeah. She lead the fight in '83, and Roberti--he was most courageous--gave one of the most eloquent speeches I've ever heard, and he got a lot of heat from the Italian community.

CARR: Why?

DYMALLY: Because the guy he was opposing was Italian.

CARR: OK. Hey, but wait a minute here. Here's Canson. She's NAACP. She's a big ally of yours. How did that happen?

DYMALLY: Over years. I first met her, I think, in 1958 when they were putting in the FEPC, the statewide FEPC. There was a statewide FEPC and I was a labor delegate.

CARR: FEPC?

DYMALLY: Fair Employment Practices Commission, that preceded the law. There was a statewide committee.

CARR: And you sat on that commission when you were in the senate, correct?

DYMALLY: No. I want to go back. I was very active in the United Auto Workers, and I went to Fresno as a delegate, and that's where I met her.

Now, she and I have had one disagreement which has come to pass. I supported the breaking up of the Los Angeles city school system and the legislation actually passed the assembly by forty-one votes, and Reagan vetoed it. Now even blacks are thinking about breaking up the district. When Roberti did it, everybody accused

him of being a racist. But Virna and I disagreed, but we were not disagreeable. And every Christmas she sends me a memo on what she's been doing for that year.

CARR: The breakup of the school district: There was no concern on your part in this pre-Proposition 13 time that, if the district did in fact break up--especially if the San Fernando Valley broke away from LAUSD [Los Angeles Unified School District], the center of the city proper--there would be an incredible vacuum of cash due to the loss of property taxes?

DYMALLY: There were two issues here. One was that a Stanford Research Institute study stated that better learning takes place in small districts and small classes, and the Los Angeles city school district was too large. That was the philosophical basis upon which a lot of people called for the breakup. In my case, there was a lot of discrimination in the district. And having taught in the district, I knew of the difficulty blacks had in becoming administrators. So I was a little angry with the district and I wanted to, kind of, teach them a lesson, so to speak. Roy Wilkins came out. They brought him

out here to oppose the bill.

CARR: During this time, again this is right after you lost to Curb, had there been or had you been involved in any major voter registration drives targeted toward blacks?

DYMALLY: During the course of the campaign?

CARR: Yeah.

DYMALLY: Well, the Democratic party at the time was always very active. They have since given up that; I don't know why. There was always a strong voter registration drive. In fact, there was a time when Jesse Unruh had the Brinks truck come into South Central with the money. [Laughter] We paid GOTV people--Get-Out-the-Vote people--cash to go and get out the vote. In those days that was acceptable, and we had a very active voter registration drive always. But since, that sort of effort has died.

The last major one was run by Alan Cranston and his son, and they [investigators] claim the money came from [Charles H.] Keating, so I've always defended Alan because I said the money he got from Keating was really used to help registration. See, Alan Cranston became concerned that the United States is the only

major industrial democracy in which there's a decline in voter participation. No other democracy experiences that phenomenon. He wanted to reverse that trend, and went about raising money for that cause. So I've always defended Alan because I knew what he did with the money. It wasn't for any personal gain.

CARR: Now, you and Cranston have known each other probably since the mid to late sixties?

DYMALLY: Since CDC times. Yes, since the Kennedy days; the sixties.

CARR: His political career got off to a bit of a shaky start in terms of getting elected the first time, I think to state senate, correct?

DYMALLY: No, he became controller in the Pat Brown sweep in 1958. And he was one of the founders of the California Democratic Council. But Cranston was a very civil man. A lot of people in the California Democratic Council took differences very personally. Not Alan. And that was the difference with him. Whereas Unruh might be personal in his response to your membership or ideology, not so with Alan Cranston.

CARR: Could you have predicted that Cranston would have gone on to the kind of career he had?

DYMALLY: Yeah, because he was a consummate politician. He was the best fund-raiser in the country. He used to travel with three-by-five cards and wherever he was he'd stop and make phone calls.

CARR: Phone calls to people he knew?

DYMALLY: Uh-huh.

CARR: So we're done with this election. Cranston, oddly enough, was one of those people who came out toward the end to really try to help Jerry Brown to support you.

DYMALLY: Well, he was the first person who tipped me off that I was targeted.

CARR: He called you up and . . .

DYMALLY: Yes. I guess, in the senate . . .

CARR: Targeted by the FBI?

DYMALLY: No, by the Republicans. In the senate there's a lot of sharing of information, because in those days it was a club; it wasn't Democrats versus Republicans, as it is now. And I suspect he may have picked that up from some senator who must have said, "Hey, by the way, they targeted your boy out there." Something like that.

CARR: So you lose a seat, you leave.

DYMALLY: Now, I can't prove this, but I'm sure, based on the modus operandi of Republicans, they probably

figured, "Here's a black guy, here's a Democrat, here's a liberal, here's a guy who's beaten up in the media. We can get him." And Alan brought that to my attention. Before that I was just sailing around thinking, "This is a piece of cake."

CARR: So you're done, and up until this time you still say that it's really not on your mind to run for Congress; it's really not.

First of all, Governor Brown appoints you to the California college commission?

DYMALLY: The coordinating council--[California] Coordinating Council of Higher Education [now the California Postsecondary Education Commission].

CARR: OK. How did that come about? That's an appointment from Brown. You said you probably wouldn't have taken an appointment from him if you . . .

DYMALLY: No, I said I wouldn't have taken an insignificant one like the Commission of the Californias.

CARR: Why did you take this particular . . .

DYMALLY: Education is my life. And it gave me something to do. And it was a face saving. Face saving for him, and face saving for me.

CARR: Face saving for him in the sense that he still

supported you, kind of?

DYMALLY: Yeah, because he could say, "I appointed him to this very important commission." And for me--I had a certain experience. Don't forget, I was a member of the UC board of regents and the California State University board of trustees. I had a lot to do with higher education in the legislature.

CARR: Especially since we're discussing the higher education topic, I'd like to go back to the board of regents for a moment. The whole issue of affirmative action became an issue while you sat on the board of regents.

DYMALLY: Well, before that. It was a constructive, positive issue.

CARR: In what way?

DYMALLY: A guy by the name of [Frederick James] Jim Bear and I introduced--he in the assembly, and I co-authored in the senate--the resolution urging UC to have a set-aside for disadvantaged students. So in those days, that was quite appropriate, quite acceptable.

CARR: Now, disadvantaged students--regardless of race?

DYMALLY: Well, regardless of race, but it was focused on minority students.

CARR: Minorities. OK, I wasn't quite sure.

Tell me about your philosophy toward disadvantaged students, affirmative action.

DYMALLY: A very good question. I think that most white administrators erred by being so strict in the interpretation of the resolution or the law or the program. Example: I had a poor white student who was an intern with me and I could not get him in at [California State University], Humboldt, as a disadvantaged student because he wasn't a minority. And I think that's part of the backlash that was created. There were enough isolated white people who got rejected to make enough noise that killed the program eventually.

Davis. . . . What was the famous . . .

CARR: Bakke?

DYMALLY: Bakke.

CARR: [Allan] Bakke, the medical student.

DYMALLY: Yeah, had they not been so strict in the enforcement, had they accepted a few white students who were disadvantaged. . . . I was very upset that they didn't accept this white student-- I think they finally did, after I raised so much hell about it--because here was a deserving white student.

Now, don't forget, when we got the Ford grant, Teresa and I and Bill Greene insisted with the selection committee that we accept Hispanics, because in those days the civil rights movement was black, and this was seen as a civil rights project. And I think if white administrators had been a little flexible, this backlash would not have occurred.

CARR: Why do you think white administrators were inflexible?

DYMALLY: Because they're stupid. [Laughter]

CARR: And why do you think white administrators are stupid? [Laughter]

DYMALLY: Look, I took my daughter to UC San Diego. She had finished high school a semester before, and the vice-chancellor there was so abusive, so insulting, that I had to get up. He said, "She's not going to make it. She needs to go to a junior college." I had to get up and leave the room. And I said to myself, "She is young enough to absorb these insults." As a grown-up, I couldn't. I had to leave the room; it was so bad. And it turns out that she ended up graduating in less than four years. That's the example that I'm talking about.

CARR: I see.

DYMALLY: They were inflexible. They want to be purists. They didn't exercise any good judgment, any discretion at all.

CARR: Did you notice a difference between how public institutions and private institutions approached the issue?

DYMALLY: Well, the private institutions were great at that time. I was a lecturer at Pomona, in Claremont. They had a black recruiter there--Hammond, Burt Hammond. One day I was at Dulles [International] Airport and this young woman tapped me on the shoulder and handed me a card. She was assistant U.S. attorney in the Baltimore district. She said, "You taught me at Pomona." I told you that the deputy district attorney told my son's lawyer that Dymally has a machine, and he asked, "How do you know that?" And she said, "He taught me at Pomona." Those were the exciting days. I taught at Whittier [College]. So all of these conservative schools sought out [minority students]. The black students, I am told, are the ones who selected me at Whittier. I taught there for maybe a couple of years. I taught in Claremont at Pomona. I taught at the graduate

school at Claremont [the Claremont Graduate School]. And in those days, I didn't even have a master's. I lectured at [UC] Davis; lectured at Golden State University; Pepperdine [University]. The private schools were reaching out.

Now, some state colleges did. L.A. State had a program where you taught one semester and you went to graduate school another semester. A product of that, among others, is Teresa Hughes. Her semester off, she went to Claremont [Graduate School].

CARR: To finish . . .

DYMALLY: Get, not a master's--she got a master's in New York--to get a Ph.D.

CARR: So there was a sense of inflexibility on one hand, you're saying, in the public schools, but the private schools seemed to be a bit more aggressive in terms of this.

DYMALLY: Yeah. Their program was voluntary, whereas state administrators looked at the system as being a legal entity without flexibility, and that was not correct.

CARR: So they became, kind of, strict interpreters of the law rather . . .

DYMALLY: Yes, which eventually killed the program. How

much would it have hurt in Texas, where they had the problem, or here at Davis, to just accept the guy in? It was politically relevant. If he's qualified, why are we going to make a big issue of this? They were so high in principle that they killed the program eventually. Had they accepted Bakke, no one would have known that he was or was not qualified, he was white, or whatever he was, or pink, or whatever.

CARR: So should affirmative action be something that is dealt with on the basis of race, basis of class, basis of gender, or a combination thereof?

DYMALLY: All of the above.

CARR: A combination thereof.

DYMALLY: If there's a deserving white student, by all means, he should be in. If there's a poor white student who is able, bring him in, in the operation.

CARR: There are two problems with that. The current backlash against affirmative action in the University of California system, oddly enough, isn't necessarily being driven by disenfranchised people. That is, it's not necessarily being driven by . . .

DYMALLY: No, no; that is correct. It is driven by right-

wingers who use this as a political tool. Don't forget, there was a national agenda, orchestrated during the eighties, to do away with these programs. One hears about these things in Washington, in the formation, because people talk. I knew that they were coming on the immigration thing many years ago.

When they lose a battle in the legislature, they resort to the referendum, and the referendum is always highly emotionally charged. They raise large sums of money through that system.

CARR: This is 1980 we're on right now, really, though we just stepped back a bit to the affirmative active issue, when you were a regent.

Right about 1980, after you left office, the city of San Diego indicted two people who basically tried to set you up on the whole bribe issue of the church in, was it Escondido?

DYMALLY: Yes.

CARR: Was that vindication for you?

DYMALLY: Well, subsequently? I didn't know that.

CARR: Yeah. Subsequently, they indicted two people who . . .

DYMALLY: [Inaudible]

CARR: Yeah. I'm not quite sure if they were with the

church, or if they were with the state government, but these are people who essentially went about trying to . . .

DYMALLY: I don't know if it was a vindication, because I didn't follow the case up because it was so weird. You know, I tell you something, I was in a state of perpetual shock that law enforcement officers could just conspire to get innocent people. I come from a society in which there is no such thing as conspiracy law. Law enforcement agencies don't sit down and plan to get someone because of race or ideology. And that was the case with me. I mean, they tried every which way to get me. The only person who didn't try to investigate me was the city attorney. [Los Angeles City Attorney] Burt Pines was a friend of mine, and I never spat on the sidewalk. [Laughter] But everyone took their shot at me.

The [United States Department of Justice] Office of Public Integrity came out here in November of '79. There were a lot of rumors that Gus [Hawkins] was going to retire, and we had lodged a complaint with them. They came to interview me at a little company. I forget. . . . It was National Computer [Systems]. They

went to the U.S. attorney's office in Los Angeles here, and all they could find on me was a whole bunch of L.A. Times articles. And the head of the office--I'm being told this, now I'm in Congress, and he comes to visit me; he did tell me that in November when he was out here--he said to the U.S. attorney, "You can't indict people on the basis of newspaper articles. You must have evidence." So I said to him, "What if Gus retires? What should I do?" He says, "Go ahead and run." So I knew then. Now, I was thinking about Gus's vacancy, not Charlie Wilson, because I didn't think I had a ghost of a chance with Charlie Wilson's district.

CARR: Right. So it's the Thirty-first [Congressional District], right?

DYMALLY: I knew then that they had no information of substance. Besides, everyone they called into the grand jury who was a friend of mine--most of them would come back and tell me. . . . Of course, I don't know of any person who went there with whom I had any deals, because I had none--to testify. So they tried their damndest, but they had no information, nothing of any criminal nature.

CARR: Now, an odd thing happens: Curb ends up supporting you for your congressional race. He endorses you.

DYMALLY: [Laughter] Well, he started to do business with my campaign finance chairman and my campaign manager, who subsequently . . .

CARR: Who was?

DYMALLY: Hugh Pike, and Steve Smith, who was one of the Dymally law graduates. [Laughter] He went to school while working for me.

They were doing a business with him, and they start telling him about me, what a "great guy" I am, quote, unquote. [Laughter] And he sent me a letter of apology and I thought that was rather nice. I mentioned it on the congressional floor. Franchetti was the candidate for . . .

CARR: Finance?

DYMALLY: Finance director that Virna Canson and Roberti killed.

CARR: Curb supports you; you've already talked about the Dymally method of . . .

DYMALLY: Research. [Laughter]

CARR: The Dymally method of research--basically assessing your chances in the Thirty-first Congressional District.

DYMALLY: Let me tell you a little story about our Dymally methodology. The San Jose Mercury News called a few of us to a seminar in the Bay Area. One of the persons included there, I remember, was Art Torres; a Republican woman who was in Jerry Brown's cabinet; and an author in San Francisco, whom I had not known. And I said to them, "You know, you guys are not writing stories for the new Californian." They said, "What do you mean by that?" I said, "Well, you're writing stories for white, male conservatives, and this state is becoming a Third World state." "How do you know that?" It was a challenge.

I couldn't prove it, so I came back to the office, and I said to a young intern, who subsequently became a lawyer and is still in touch with my son, Mark, "I want you to do a survey on the ethnic groups in California." "How do I do that?" I said, "Well, just contact the heads of all groups: the Filipino association, the Cuban-Americans, the Mexicans, the Chinese, etc., etc." And he did a very good job of contacting these heads. And they always, in my judgment, have a better estimate than the census. So we came up with 40 percent. I said, "There's

a factor of minus 5, plus 5. Why don't we take the plus 5. That gives you 45 percent." He said, "We still don't have 50 percent." I said, "Do a projection of 5 percent." So we have 50 percent, and we issued this, and the newspaper guys--I was stunned--came down on me for injecting race into politics. I said, "What's new here?"

So we held a conference at [UC] Irvine. I went to the most conservative county and campus, and invited Norm Minetta, who was then mayor of San Francisco, and invited Mervyn Field, and the U.S. Census Bureau.

CARR: Field--the polling people.

DYMALLY: Mervyn Field and the Census Bureau said, "We don't know about Dymally's methodology, but we agree with his conclusion." [Laughter]

Now, Jerry Brown picked up the theme. I was denounced for it, right? Jerry Brown picked it up and I haven't heard about Dymally since, on that theory, and Jerry became a man of vision.

CARR: And what year was this?

DYMALLY: It was in the seventies, while I was lieutenant governor.

CARR: One could say you were a troublemaker.

DYMALLY: [Laughter] Yeah, but Jerry was a man of vision for stealing my thing, right?

CARR: Yeah.

DYMALLY: OK, let's go on. Let's proceed. [Laughter]

CARR: I went back to the Dymally method of research, and this is good. So you've already talked about going to schools, to churches, and so on and so forth, to figure out, "This district is changing. There is a possibility that I as a black candidate could win in this district. It's not the white district I had thought it was."

DYMALLY: And there's another factor. The incumbent, Charlie Wilson, was being opposed by a former congressman who was defeated by [Dan] Lungren in '76. He was running, and I knew, for him to defeat Charlie Wilson, he had to attack Charlie Wilson. Charlie Wilson was a friend of mine, and I called Charlie and I said, "Charlie, if he were not running, I would not get into the race, but I think he's going to defeat you, so I might as well get in." And he said, "If anybody's going to defeat me, I'd rather that person be you." So I just reminded people in the eastern portion of the district, "You remember me? State senator, lieutenant governor?" And on the west side of

the district, I got a letter from, of all people, the police.

CARR: Really?

DYMALLY: Uh-huh.

CARR: And what did they have to say?

DYMALLY: Because, see, in the senate, when I became part of the leadership--they thought I was a communist in the assembly--I said, "Look, the Republicans are giving you guns. We're giving you bread and butter. We're giving you uniforms. We're giving you scholarships. We're giving insurance for your wife when you're shot. You know, you need to have a double vision on this, not a one-tunnel vision." And so they began seeing me in a different light. I said, "Look, we're talking about your family. These guys are talking about your guns." And so my whole thing, my whole image began changing with them. They said, "Well, this guy's got a point here. When we are shot and gone, our wives are left with no support for the children." So anyhow, I got a letter, and I used that on the west side.

CARR: What did they have to say in the letter? They just said, "You're our man"?

DYMALLY: Yeah. I forget the contents, but it was one of

those endorsement letters that was very, very helpful.

CARR: That's excellent. So you get this letter. What do you think, that is, from your perspective, of sizing up the district?

DYMALLY: Well, the district had changed, and it had changed right under my nose. I didn't know it. Because, understand this, when you land at the LAX airport, and you live in Los Angeles, you don't go through Compton. You don't go through Hawthorne. You don't go through Gardena. You don't go through Carson, Lynwood, Bellflower, Paramount. You bypass that. Your whole thing is Los Angeles. Now, this change is taking place there, and we don't know it. In fact, it happened so fast, we lost an assembly district in the last census. Teresa Hughes's district shifted over to Carson; we subsequently lost it.

So I didn't know this dynamic was taking place. So we went and began saying, "Hey, yeah." I figured the folks in Compton and Lynwood, etc., Athens--which nobody pays much attention--would remember me. I used to represent Athens in the senate.

CARR: That's an interesting gray little area.

DYMALLY: Yes.

CARR: It's [Los Angeles] County . . .

DYMALLY: Yes, but it's very stable.

CARR: Very stable, a very middle-class area.

DYMALLY: If you see some of the lawns there, it's like a carpet laid down--in Athens.

CARR: Athens, if you're west of Western [Avenue] . . .

DYMALLY: Correct.

CARR: Going out toward Crenshaw.

DYMALLY: No, no, no. Come back east.

CARR: It can come further east?

DYMALLY: Yeah, it comes east all the way to Broadway or something like that.

CARR: It's changed a little. I'm thinking about it in recent years.

DYMALLY: It's one section there, around 120th [Street] and Broadway--if you see those lawns, it's like an artificial lawn, it's so well kept.

CARR: Yeah, they're beautiful homes. They're all individual homes.

DYMALLY: So all of these strengths were there that nobody realized, except the people in the district, one of whom was. . . . He did not run, but. . . . Maxcy Filer, councilman from Compton; Muhammad Ali's photographer--Howard Bingham; and another

friend of mine who taught at Mount SAC [Mount San Antonio College] and was so convinced that eventually a black was going to win in that district, he bought a house in Lynwood, and he ran. His son had also received a grant from the UAI.

CARR: Who is this?

DYMALLY: I forget his name now. He rented me his house in Lynwood, and I registered there.

CARR: This brings up an issue. During your political career, were you ever accused of being a carpetbagger?

DYMALLY: Affectionately so. Gus Hawkins called me carpetbagger, but in an affectionate way.

CARR: I ask the question within the context of, very interestingly, every time you decide to run for either assembly, the senate, or the Congress, you moved into the district.

DYMALLY: I moved into the district. In the case of the assembly, I gambled and I mortgaged the house on the west side and bought a house on the east side. So where others just rented apartments-- don't ask me their names, I'm not going to tell you--I actually moved into the district, and bought property in a district.

CARR: Whether one actually lived in the district or not, I'm assuming, wasn't as scrutinized back then as it is now.

DYMALLY: Even now it's not a big issue.

CARR: Really?

DYMALLY: Bob Farrell got clobbered by Marguerite Archie-Hudson for that because he had registered in the district before he even got a house in the district. He somehow got it all screwed up, and she went and had press conferences in front of an empty house, and stuff like that.

CARR: Yeah, but then it came back to Marguerite Archie-Hudson because then the press started to camp out on her lawn and figured out that no one was living in her house, either.

DYMALLY: [Laughter] I don't think it's a big issue. The courts have been reluctant. . . . Well, a good example is Walters.

CARR: Rita Walters.

DYMALLY: She moved into the district a few days before filing and took the matter all the way up to the federal court, and the federal court ruled in her favor. It's not a political issue. It's a legal issue, not a political issue.

CARR: But even in that sense--let's just say it's not a

political issue, let's just say it's not a legal issue. Is it a moral, social issue to be as close to your constituents as possible?

DYMALLY: I felt so, but a lot of people don't. You know, a lot of people don't even care.

CARR: I mean, is that a big issue?

DYMALLY: It's not a big issue to the constituents.

CARR: Isn't it fair to the people you represent to be . . .

DYMALLY: Well, I suppose it's a big moral issue in theory, up in the air there, but it's obvious that the people don't pay much attention to it.

CARR: As long as you're delivering something.

DYMALLY: Well, even before you deliver. As a candidate, you haven't delivered anything, and it's still not a big issue. In a white district it's a big issue.

CARR: Where did you get your house in the Thirty-first District?

DYMALLY: God, I forget the . . .

CARR: Was it still L.A. proper?

DYMALLY: No, no, no--in Compton. I bought a duplex in Compton.

CARR: So you're gathering all this information. Where are you getting your money from for this

campaign?

DYMALLY: Don't ask me. I don't know where the hell it came from, to tell you the truth. It came in small pieces.

CARR: From?

DYMALLY: Different people. Friends came to us.

CARR: You know, I hear a lot of stories about. . . . One, when you decided to run for Congress, you were dealing with one thing--the perception that your political career was over, and . . .

DYMALLY: Yeah. People were shocked that I won.

CARR: And there were many people who have said, "I went to a little private fund-raising dinner for Mr. Dymally, and I left ten dollars," or "I left a hundred dollars. I remember doing that and . . ."

DYMALLY: I knew I was going to win. When I went in the markets, in the parking lots, the little old ladies squeezed my hand in ways that were saying, "I knew you got screwed, Dymally, and I'm supporting you." See, there was a feeling in the black community that I got screwed, and so I knew, then, I was going to win.

CARR: And this goes back to that kind of perception that people felt after you and Yvonne lost?

DYMALLY: Yeah. I knew I was going to win now. Now, the money: we got some help from the Waxman operation--Waxman-Berman operation--and from friends. But it was really a nickel-and-dime operation.

CARR: Why weren't you getting money from the kind of foundation sources--labor, the party? Was it seen as too much of a gamble to run in this district?

DYMALLY: No, no. See, labor that year--1979--had an early endorsement in December. So Charlie Wilson was endorsed in '79.

CARR: So he already had his support.

DYMALLY: He had the endorsement of labor. And the only union that broke away from Charlie was the Machinists. They came through with \$5,000. I don't know why they were unhappy with Charlie, but that was the exception to the rule.

CARR: Yeah. So UAW didn't come through for you that year?

DYMALLY: Because they had already endorsed him, and Charlie had a good labor record. So I wasn't upset with labor. Usually you get angry about your old friends not supporting you, but they had already made a commitment. I didn't announce

until January of 1980, and he had been endorsed in December. So that was the problem.

CARR: So it was just bits and pieces of money here and there. Did the teachers support you?

DYMALLY: I can't recall. I can't recall because, don't forget, UTLA is part of the [Los Angeles] County Federation of Labor and they may have felt obligated to live up to that endorsement. They weren't unhappy with me. They did not support me but they did not oppose me. They didn't support me because they had an early commitment.

CARR: If this is the case--you're climbing up the hill against the incumbent, you don't have the kind of money that he has--do you have a campaign organization? Do you have a campaign manager?

DYMALLY: Oh yes. We had a good campaign organization. We had Ken Orduna running the campaign. We had Mary Sawyer doing the research and the writing. And Gwen Moore came out and walked; Diane [E.] Watson came out and walked. So there were old friendships surfacing, but by and large I don't think people thought I was going to defeat this man in this strange district. Because nobody, including myself, knew the changes that had taken place in that district. And so there was a solid

group there, Latinos and blacks, and we played up the old relationships.

CARR: The Waxman-Berman people, were they just kind of speculating in the sense that the money they did give you as support, they were just saying, "Well maybe"? Or did you make a good case to them: "Hey look, this thing can be taken"?

DYMALLY: Mike Berman is a good reader, OK? Julian Dixon and Howard Berman were best of friends. Tony Beilenson helped.

CARR: You mean Howard Berman.

DYMALLY: No. Mike, the brother of Howard. Tony Beilenson, old friend of mine from the senate and the assembly, also helped.

CARR: You said Mike Berman.

DYMALLY: Yeah, I'm coming to that. Tony Beilenson helped. He was not part of the Waxman operation when he helped me. There were two other incumbents who helped. Julian Dixon and Howard Berman, they are very close friends, to this day. Mike probably read that because of Charlie's problems, and because of the change in the district.

CARR: I'm getting confused. Is it Mike Berman or Howard Berman?

DYMALLY: Howard is his brother. Howard is the incumbent, Mike is the operator.

CARR: OK.

DYMALLY: Mike is a good reader, and he probably figured that with Charlie's difficulty, and with an incumbent--a former incumbent--running against him, that there was a chance. So they helped.

CARR: Yeah, because you weren't an unknown. You already had a name. So the incumbency power, the power of incumbency . . .

DYMALLY: And I was very pro-Israel.

CARR: So you have that going for you.

What set your campaigning apart? What, with your staff, with your people, made you different?

DYMALLY: Well, Charlie was in Washington. That's always a disadvantage. He never had a grassroots movement. When he ran in '60, he was with the Unruh movement, and Unruh was close to the Kennedys at that time. So he got elected on that basis. He beat Jerry Pacht, who was a CDC candidate. Steve Smith, my campaign manager, was his campaign manager.

CARR: So Steve Smith already had some background in this district.

DYMALLY: Oh yeah. He and I are the ones who invented the  
sample ballot and introduced the tabloid . . .

[End Tape 12, Side B]

[Session 11, June 24, 1997]

[Begin Tape 13, Side A]

DYMALLY: . . . When I ran for the Assembly.

CARR: Yeah.

DYMALLY: It should just tell you how weird this stuff is.  
You just had to figure it out.

CARR: So Masry was indicted and Patricia Sri--head of  
the Morningside group--was indicted.

DYMALLY: Masry went to the grand jury because of his  
position: he was their lawyer and he was on  
retainer, and as such, he was immune from any  
charges of conspiracy or any attempts to bribe.

CARR: Now, did he actually ever go to trial?

DYMALLY: Went to trial, found guilty, the judge . . .

CARR: Masry was found guilty?

DYMALLY: Yes. The judge vacated the verdict because of  
jury misconduct. It went up to the state  
[district courts of] appeals, came back to the  
lower courts, and I think it was dismissed then.

CARR: Do you think Masry had anything to do with  
actually taking money from the cult?

DYMALLY: Of course. He was on retainer; he was their lawyer.

CARR: Yeah, but what I'm saying is, taking money with the notion that he could influence you.

DYMALLY: Look, he didn't have to take money to influence me. We're personal friends. I used to stay at his house. We had a good relationship. He'd never take money to influence me. He'd influence me without money, but he never tried to influence me on anything; there was nothing to influence me about. They had a complaint about police brutality. And you know, I started off my career on the brutality question in 1962, so there's nothing to this.

CARR: How did Masry become your lawyer? How did you get to know each other?

DYMALLY: Senator Al Song and I were seatmates in the senate, and he and Masry were partners. I think he was in the Masry law firm before coming to the legislature. He introduced me to Masry. By the way, Masry and I are still friends, and he's still my lawyer.

CARR: So Masry was a personal friend and became your personal lawyer?

DYMALLY: Yes, still is.

CARR: Moving on to the 1980 vote, the vote that you referred to earlier as the Reagan swing. How much of the 1980 vote had to do with Reagan's victory, or did California voters turn against Carter?

DYMALLY: Well, the whole country did, but the Thirty-first District voted for Carter.

CARR: It did?

DYMALLY: As I indicated earlier in our discussions, the Thirty-first District was liberal on every issue except Prop. 13, and it depends on what side. If you're a homeowner, it was a liberal issue. And the district is an early L.A. suburban district. It's almost urban now, but the suburbs started off in these areas. And there were a lot of homeowners, so they voted for Prop. 13 because everybody was hard hit with taxes.

CARR: Why the animosity against Carter?

DYMALLY: I have a notion, no evidence, that there's an anti-southern sentiment among the eastern media. And let me. . . . Follow me.

CARR: OK.

DYMALLY: [Harry S] Truman had a bad time with them; Johnson, Carter, Clinton. If you look at them, they're all Democrats, all southerners, all had a

bad time. Now everybody's rediscovering Truman and Carter. And I suspect ten years, fifteen, twenty years from now, they may rediscover Clinton. In fact, they're rediscovering Johnson's role in urban affairs and civil rights because when you look at what the Supreme Court is doing now, you can see he was a man with vision. The Supreme Court destroyed the Voting Rights Act, destroyed the instrument of reapportionment to increase black representation.

CARR: Let's say I agree with you on the issue of the southern bias. There are some other things people had trouble with. It wasn't like people were running around, "Oh, this Carter is a southerner."

DYMALLY: Well, I understand from my colleagues in Washington, he had a holier-than-thou attitude. He had an apolitical view. [House Speaker Thomas P.] Tip O'Neill [Jr.] told me that he had only met his [Carter's] chief of staff twice, once when he complained about it, and the second time when he came to visit him. But there was no relationship between the White House and the Congress. In fact, I recall I used to hear this young congressman from Connecticut [Anthony J.

Moffett Jr.], who was defeated by [Gary] Franks, almost every day he was on the air attacking Carter. So the Democrats went after him, too. By the way, the Congressional Black Caucus was unhappy with him because he was not in full support of the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment [and Balanced Growth] Act. And they were unhappy with him. And I think his demise started in the black community when Vernon Jordan criticized him, as head of the Urban League, and things started going down.

CARR: Later on, wasn't there also the issue with Andrew Young, because didn't Andrew Young . . .

DYMALLY: Andrew Young. Yes.

CARR: . . . step down from his post?

DYMALLY: Yeah. But Andrew Young didn't criticize him. They just forced Andy into a resignation and everybody was outraged about that, but Jordan's criticism was very, very detrimental. So that's on the black community's side, but even at that, blacks voted for him in large numbers over Reagan. The hostage crisis, the ill-fated rescue attempt, all kinds of things; the oil crisis, inflation, high interest rates--all kinds of things were happening. But he was a decent and

good man.

CARR: Was he, by some, seen as an ineffective administrator? You've kind of touched on it . . .

DYMALLY: He was idealistic about everything. He wasn't pragmatic, they tell me.

CARR: When you say idealistic, there's a certain kind of negative connotation that goes along with that word "idealistic." Could you explain that?

DYMALLY: Yes, because in Washington you've got to be pragmatic. You just can't be on an ideal all the time. You've got to come down to earth sometimes. Some people thought he went to extremes on a good issue: conservation. Some people got unhappy with him about his conservation methods, his oil conservation, energy conservation. But you've got to be very pragmatic, and that's what made Reagan survive.

Reagan used to call southern Democrats to Camp David on Sunday for a barbecue, and Monday they'd come just dripping all over about Reagan. [Laughter] But Reagan used to do that in Sacramento, also. He used to have big parties for the Democrats. It's funny how politicians are vain beings. So Reagan won the southern

Democrats over.

CARR: Back to California. Which of these particular weaknesses of Carter transferred directly into dissatisfaction with the California voters, particularly the California voters who . . .

DYMALLY: Don't forget, Reagan was a popular governor here for eight years. Before that he was a popular movie star. And we had not won California since '48. Even Kennedy lost California. Oh yeah, Johnson won it in '64 against Goldwater. So what? No, California is always a tough nut to crack.

CARR: So you're saying Carter not only would have had to have had an excellent first term, he would have had to have something special about him to go beyond.

DYMALLY: They didn't see that special thing about him. There was a special thing about Kennedy--the mystique, Camelot, "Do what you can for your country," and all of this stuff. Now, that was an idealistic approach, but it was bought.

CARR: It was packaged.

DYMALLY: It was packaged very nicely--young guy, very humorous. When they asked him, "How do you justify appointing your brother as attorney

general?" He said, "He needed a job."

[Laughter] That's a great response for the press. And rather than get involved in explaining nepotism, and his qualifications, and boom, boom, boom, and "There's nothing wrong with that" and instead of a long speech, he said, "He needed a job," and dismissed it.

CARR: I'd like to switch over to some of the particularly close races in California during your 1980 election bid. You had already won the primary against [Charles H.] Wilson and you were pretty much a shoo-in against [Don] Grimshaw, was it?

DYMALLY: Grimshaw, yeah.

CARR: But there are other races that are very interesting. Particularly I'd like to go take a look at the Bobbi Fiedler-John Carston race.

DYMALLY: Corman.

CARR: Corman, sorry.

DYMALLY: Corman lost that race . . .

CARR: [Congressman] James [C.] Corman, sorry.

DYMALLY: Corman lost the race because Carter conceded before the polls were closed here.

CARR: Yes. Now, Mickey Kantor was one of Carter's campaign aides in California. Carter

conceded . . .

DYMALLY: Too early.

CARR: He had heard a rumor that Carter was going to concede. He tried to call Carter in Washington, no one answered the phone, Carter conceded, and Bobbi Fiedler supposedly won by eight hundred and . . .

DYMALLY: It is believed that a number of voters, Democratic voters, didn't go out after the presidency was lost.

CARR: That's kind of unheard of for a presidential candidate, any candidate, to concede so quickly. Why? Could anyone even understand . . .

DYMALLY: The results were coming early and they were so overwhelming. I mean, it would have taken. . . . Even Ray Charles could've seen through that. So he figured, "What the hell, why drag it on?"-- without thinking about California. I don't think it was any deliberate attempt to do California in. It was just one of those things.

CARR: How much of a tragedy was it that James Corman lost?

DYMALLY: Well, he was a very valuable member of the Ways and Means Committee, but he went on to make a lot of money. [Laughter] He had a successful law

practice. Subsequently he joined [Charles T.] Manatt's firm, and then he went on in his own--he had part of Universal Studios. He didn't do too badly. He lost public office, but he ended up making some money, and I don't think he's ever wished to come back.

CARR: How much of Bobbi Fiedler's anti-busing platform contributed to the kind of pretty heated rhetoric that went on in that San Fernando Valley race?

DYMALLY: That was the issue. That was it.

CARR: That was it.

DYMALLY: Very popular. The Valley was opposed to busing from day one.

CARR: So it came down to that. What was your opinion of Fiedler's platform?

DYMALLY: I didn't pay much attention to it. I was consumed with my district, and I didn't think she could beat Corman, he was so strong.

CARR: So when she won, what was your reaction?

DYMALLY: Surprise. Everybody was surprised, and every Democrat in California, active Democrat, was just shook that we had lost such a valuable man.

CARR: There are some other people who were involved in tight races. Albert Rodda?

DYMALLY: Oh, that was a heartbreaker. More so than

Corman.

CARR: Can you tell me a little bit about that?

DYMALLY: How could Al Rodda lose? Al Rodda was Sacramento. Al Rodda was the most decent man in the senate. Al Rodda was the father of every significant piece of education legislation. Al Rodda's brother was on the Sacramento Bee, and Al Rodda and the community college and on and on. I mean, Al Rodda was a saint to us. How could this guy lose?

That was the beginning of a trend. It was Bill Richardson who introduced in Sacramento the concept of targeting, something that the Israeli PAC [political action committee] has used from time to time. They used it against Senator [Charles H.] Percy [of Illinois].

So here's Al Rodda . . .

CARR: Is this like the way you were targeted as lieutenant governor, in a certain way?

DYMALLY: Yeah, the concept of targeting. Here was Al Rodda just coasting along. He's been reelected every time, no problems, and they just went after him. They believe very strongly that anybody could be defeated with an adequate supply of funds and propaganda. You can defeat anybody.

And Al Rodda was just. . . . This was a shocker. When Al Rodda was defeated, then people began to ask some serious questions. Not so much with Corman, because that was a freak accident, but Rodda was steady. Al Rodda was Mr. Sacramento.

CARR: Now, who defeated Rodda? Do you recall?

DYMALLY: [John T.] Doolittle.

CARR: Doolittle.

DYMALLY: He's in Congress right now. No one could believe it. That was a shocker. That's when Democrats really began waking up.

CARR: So you have Rodda. Then you have the [Los Angeles County] supervisorial race--Burke and [Deane] Dana.

DYMALLY: Dana just had one billboard: "Death penalty. Burke, no. Dana, yes. Busing. Dana, no. Burke, yes." That was it. That was the campaign.

CARR: . That was the campaign.

DYMALLY: Yeah. It had nothing to do with the board of supervisors. Again the concept of targeting. You see, every prominent Republican in the county--Alphonzo [E.] Bell [Jr.], former congressman; Paul Priolo, minority leader from Santa Monica in the assembly, etc., etc. . . .

Nobody would run against her [Burke] because she was so popular and so well liked in the district. But keep in mind that when she was first in a difficult district, labor told Jerry Brown that she couldn't win in that district. The California delegation told Jerry she couldn't win. They wanted Glenn Anderson to be appointed to that district. But Jerry had to make a point, it is said, because of me, because he had treated me so badly, that he wanted to show, "Hey, I'm not all that bad. Here I'm appointing a black woman in a very upscale district."

CARR: Now, what's your opinion of that?

DYMALLY: Well, that's true. That's true. He wanted to show that. . . . He's running for president, and all these other nice things.

CARR: But was it the politically smart thing to do?

DYMALLY: Yes. Had he asked me about it, I would not have objected.

CARR: You would have still recommended . . .

DYMALLY: Yes, because he'd go out and say, "Dymally objected." I would never have objected.

But there was a feeling among the California delegation that she couldn't win that district. That district had never accommodated a Democrat.

It's been historically, from day one, a Republican district.

CARR: So here you have Burke running for supervisor, and you running for Congress after she ran for attorney general and you for second term as lieutenant governor. How much do you think she recovered from those two defeats? Because she kind of stayed out of the political . . .

DYMALLY: Well, she went into the private practice, and she's a very charming woman. She got on the board of Nestlé [Corporation] and Carnation [Company], and she got on the [University of California] board of regents, and the board of USC and a few corporate boards. She ended up at a big law firm, and she was doing just fine. Most of us were surprised that she decided to run again.

CARR: Really? Why?

DYMALLY: Well, she was doing so well in the private sector. And after two defeats you figure, "Hey, well, I've had it." But Kenny Hahn was big for her. He put his entire machinery behind her.

CARR: You mean the second time around.

DYMALLY: When she ran for Kenny Hahn's seat, yes.

CARR: The second time around he put his machinery and

he got behind her.

DYMALLY: Yeah.

CARR: Was he behind her at all the first time around?  
What did she run for?

DYMALLY: She was an incumbent. She didn't need that kind  
of sponsorship, such as she did later on.

CARR: Another close race, interesting race, was that  
having to do with [Robert K.] Dornan--Dornan  
running against Carey Peck, Gregory Peck's son.  
Heated race . . .

DYMALLY: No, no, no.

CARR: Did anyone follow that?

DYMALLY: No, no. That wasn't close. The one that was  
close was [Jerry M.] Patterson. He [Dornan] went  
to Orange County and defeated Patterson, the  
incumbent. Yeah, that was a big loss for us.

CARR: So he moved down to Orange County.

DYMALLY: He got reapportioned out of Los Angeles County  
and he moved to Orange County and defeated the  
incumbent.

CARR: There's a certain character that's always existed  
about Bob Dornan, to me, that seems to have  
characterized the tenacity of the Republicans  
back then, in the sense that not only was there  
targeting, but there was a kind of almost

evangelical zeal about . . .

DYMALLY: There's a guy named Richard Viguire in Washington who was one of the architects of targeting and Dornan was close to him. Viguire was the big money-raiser in those days and raised lots of money for Dornan, and ran Dornan's campaign. Viguire was the guy, much as you hear about [Ralph E.] Reed [Jr.] now.

CARR: Right.

DYMALLY: It was Viguire in those days.

CARR: So it's no accident that Dornan really embodied that kind of characteristic that . . .

DYMALLY: Don't forget, he was a talk show host. By the way, he and I had a good relationship.

CARR: Really?

DYMALLY: In Congress.

CARR: What kind of person was he?

DYMALLY: Most of those conservatives--most of them, not all of them--in person they're pleasant people. They're very obnoxious in the public arena. But I recall when Mark [Dymally] had some difficulty, we went to Dornan.

CARR: Difficulty how?

DYMALLY: With the law. Dornan gave us a letter. You know why? His brother was Mark's teacher, and I used

to go on his show and do battle with him all the time when he was on Channel 9. So we developed a friendly adversarial relationship. Same with [Dana] Rohrabacher. Rohrabacher used to cover me when he was working for City News Service, and we developed a relationship there. Rohrabacher served on my Subcommittee on Judiciary and Education of the District of Columbia Committee. Yeah, but Dornan was a fighter.

CARR: How was Cranston. . . . I mean all of these people are falling left and right through this whole thing. Cranston was able to hang on. He won against [Paul] Gann. I think it was 57 to 37 percent. He won very well against Gann. What was Cranston's recipe?

DYMALLY: Cranston's downfall was his commitment to rebuilding the Democratic party. He and his son had done a considerable amount of studies, which showed that, of all the industrial democracies in the world, the United States had the lowest voter turnout. And he started this registration drive to turn that around. So his registration was not just getting Democrats. It was very visionary, it would strengthen the democratic society, not just the Democratic party as such. So he went

out to raise money. When you're raising money in politics, you don't have any notion that the money that is coming from a particular source is corrupt. So Cranston didn't go out to corrupt himself and neither was he a corrupt man. It was just one of those things that happened in his life.

CARR: But clearly, by 1980, when he was running against Gann, he seemed invincible.

DYMALLY: The trend was changing in California. Things were beginning to happen. Reagan was. . . . Reagan won, but we didn't know that Reagan had started a revolution. We just thought it was an isolated victory.

CARR: Was there a certain sense of California still thinking of itself as an isolated place, as a kind of place where national political trends didn't start?

DYMALLY: Well, we didn't think that California was a state that would give rise to the right, although if we read closely, with the Fair Housing Act, and these were . . .

CARR: Proposition 13.

DYMALLY: Proposition 13. These were all signals which we ignored.

CARR: Busing.

DYMALLY: Busing. The Californian problem is sort of a contradiction. You have a black lieutenant governor, a black superintendent of education, subsequently a black speaker, which hasn't happened in any other state in the union. At the same time you have an anti-housing initiative, Prop. 13. But Prop. 13 wasn't racial, so a lot of blacks with property voted for it.

CARR: Within this bid, another strange thing happens. We have Fiedler winning, but in the primary, back in June of '80, Tom Metzger gets the Democratic ticket.

DYMALLY: Against [Clair W.] Burgener was it?

CARR: Burgener.

DYMALLY: Burgener said something that was very flattering. He told a group of people in Washington, "I'm here because of Dymally." Because during reapportionment, we made a deal: there were thirteen seats in California. I said to the Republicans, "You guys take six, we take six, and there'll be one up for grabs." Burgener was one of the six, and Leo [J.] Ryan was the odd man who won in a district that was previously Republican. He won that thirteenth seat, which was [Paul N.]

McCloskey [Jr.]'s old seat. McCloskey moved south and Ryan, who was representing San Mateo County, won that seat.

CARR: Now, what did this Metzger thing mean? I mean, you have not only a Klansman but a rabid, outspoken member of the Klan, who's actively preaching white supremacy.

DYMALLY: I may be contradicted. History may fault me in this, but I think it was a regional blip on the screen.

CARR: OK, let's say it was a regional blip on the screen. Then how do you take a Metzger running in 1980--openly a member of the Klan, openly preaching an odd kind of political white supremacy--unapologetically? And then you have, later on, a David Duke, who was far more sophisticated in severing his ties to the Klan and . . .

DYMALLY: David Duke was a trend in the South, in Louisiana, and not surprisingly. Nobody expected. . . . The whole of Louisiana was going David Duke, even though he'd never won anything of any significance. But I still think Metzger was sort of a blip on the screen.

CARR: But a blip on the screen that must have given a

lot of people a headache, at the time, within the state.

DYMALLY: It was seen as a nuisance. I don't think we took him seriously. Kind of a nuisance: "This guy's not going to win, so why are you wasting your time?"

CARR: Yeah.

DYMALLY: Whereas Duke did have a chance of winning.

CARR: John Burton almost lost in San Francisco.

DYMALLY: Very interesting.

CARR: Another one . . .

DYMALLY: You think so? You'd say that? I think Moscone almost lost. You see, what happened is that it's hard to maintain a political organization. And I cite you two examples from Congress: so Phil Burton was not there on the scene and neither was Waxman and Berman. When they both went to Washington their organization crumbled, because it was difficult to raise money on the congressional level with \$1,000 per contribution, whereas in the state, you didn't have that limit. And John was part of the organization, but he was not part of the working force of the organization, so he just got a ride in it. But he was a hell of a good legislator--last of the

liberals.

CARR: Speaking of money, in your opinion, you feel you didn't raise a whole lot of money.

DYMALLY: I didn't?

CARR: You feel you didn't, but you actually raised almost \$300,000.

DYMALLY: For Congress? That much, yeah? That surprised the hell out of me. I raised \$350. . . . Hanes Walton [Jr.], who was a professor at Savannah State [College], and now he's at [University of] Michigan, and with whom I've done some work, said up to that time, I had raised more money than any other black candidate running for Congress. God, I didn't know we raised that much and I can't tell you where it came from.

CARR: So to me that figure . . .

DYMALLY: I think a lot of it was sympathy money.

CARR: Sympathy money?

DYMALLY: [Laughter] Yeah, "Dymally got screwed. I'm going to help him."

CARR: But somewhere out there someone must have been making a smart bet.

DYMALLY: I don't know, because don't forget, in Congress, there's no big chunk of money coming in. Don't forget that. So it had to be a lot of little

contributions. All a person could do was \$1,000, right? And yet we raised \$300,000.

CARR: Yeah, \$250,000. . . .

DYMALLY: I was just as surprised, yeah. This researcher told me that up until then, I had raised more than any other black candidate running for Congress. Up until '80.

CARR: And who raised more than you?

DYMALLY: Since then? I don't know. And I suspect they have gone up, because everything has changed.

CARR: Now, what kind of support did you get from Tom Bradley and other black politicians?

DYMALLY: Well, Tom did not support me, I don't think. He didn't oppose me. Maxine [Waters] did not support me. She did not oppose me. The others supported me, including Willie Brown. Elihu [M.] Harris had a fund-raiser for me, and Willie Brown was there and Diane Watson, Gwen Moore.

CARR: How do you feel about Tom. . . . When a politician doesn't support you. . . . I mean, silence is not necessarily golden in politics.

DYMALLY: No, no.

CARR: What's going on here?

DYMALLY: We didn't think. . . . We thought we were out of the city. We didn't want to put Tom on the spot.

We didn't have time to go begging for endorsements because they were coming in. I had everybody. I had all the folks in Compton except the mayor. [Walter R.] Tucker [Sr.] was unhappy with me because he claimed when he ran against Charlie Wilson I didn't support him. I don't know that he ever asked me. He claims he called me and I. . . . I know he never approached me or called me or wrote me or sat down with me. My position is this: because you're black, it doesn't mean that people are going to automatically support you. You have to go and ask people for support. And so he said he was unhappy with me, so he didn't support me, but I got the support from everybody else.

CARR: I'd like to read you a bit from that particular. . . . How Bradley worded his choice not to support anyone. And also a bit on Orduna's response to that, because it seemed to me that your campaign was a bit more upset about that than . . .

DYMALLY: I'd like to be refreshed. It would be interesting.

CARR: We'll start here: "Orduna released a May 30 letter from Curb to Dymally in which the

Republican ventured the opinion that, 'In my judgment, the people of your district could not hope for a more experienced and devoted advocate than you.' The Curb letter went on to laud Dymally's service as lieutenant governor and to express great regret for ill-founded allegations of criminality Curb had repeated against Dymally in their lieutenant governor's race. Orduna contrasted such unexpected friendship across party lines to Bradley's cold position on Dymally's comeback."

DYMALLY: Yeah, I think it's an accurate assessment of the situation. But we didn't go to Tom and ask him, because Tom was not very forthcoming on the questions of endorsements, and we didn't want to have a situation where anybody said no to us.

Understand, the Curb endorsement was not solicited by me, but rather by my former finance chairman, so I didn't put much stock into it. I guess the campaign folks around us were upset, but Cunningham, to whom I went for support on registration--David Cunningham, city councilman close to Bradley--refused to participate in a registration drive on the grounds that he didn't want to offend Charlie Wilson. But I said,

"Dave, this is registration. This is neutral."  
He may have reflected a mood at city hall. And then some people didn't think I could win though, Elston.

CARR: So now we come back to this thing. In situations like that, it's difficult for me to believe that there wasn't a certain amount of animosity between you and Bradley.

DYMALLY: Well, let's talk about that, because in the closing days of Bradley's career, in my congressional years, we became very close. There were factors other than the two personalities that got involved in this relationship--and that is what we call the west side. Bradley got his big start, his first start on what we call the black west side. His big majority for mayor started on the white west side, and I was not close to those people. They didn't care for me. I was too brash. I was close to Unruh and all that nonsense. The Times played that up. If there were differences between two white legislators, it was just a difference. If there were differences between Bradley and me, it was played to the hilt.

And understand, the difference with Bradley

DYMALLY: and myself had nothing to do with issues. We were all for motherhood and against sin. It always had to do with a candidate, which is what happens all over America. Everybody doesn't support the same white candidate in the same white district, but that's no big thing. In the case of the black community, when he and I were on different sides--and we were geographically different: he was on the west side; I was on the east side--it was always played up.

But what people forgot or did not know is that Bradley and I were fraternity brothers. When I first came to Los Angeles, I needed someone to cosign a small loan for me to go to L.A. State. I think it was \$240, and Bradley cosigned it. And he was polemarch of my fraternity, regional polemarch while I was a treasurer of the UCLA Epsilon chapter. So there was no personal antagonism there, and we were always greeting each other warmly.

After I went to Congress, and that was no longer an issue, he and I became very close. I got a congressional resolution for him, and his fraternity honored him again, and we became very close. What happened is, I guess he began

getting a taste of what I went through when the Times went after him on his campaign financing. You know, the series of attacks every day--"U.S. grand jury investigation," and "legal fees being paid." They all began to understand that I wasn't quite as crooked as the Times said. So I became one of his big supporters and his great big defenders, because I knew what he was going through.

CARR: Did he discuss any of that with you?

DYMALLY: He never did. Tom was a very, very introverted, very secretive person about his personal affairs. He was not a guy who was forthcoming. But he had a great sense of humor.

CARR: Really?

DYMALLY: Oh yeah. He could tell a joke, and take one, and laughed with a rather robustness.

CARR: Yeah, that seems to be a part of him that many people don't see.

DYMALLY: Oh yeah, yeah. He has a great sense of humor--down-home jokes and stuff like that. So the Times played up that division far more than it really existed. But the point about that, the interesting thing about it--I addressed this in my master's thesis--the very people who dislike

the Times believe everything they write.

[Laughter] That's what my whole thesis was about.

CARR: The very people who dislike the Times believe everything they write?

DYMALLY: Yeah.

CARR: Now, going just back a little bit to Bradley, there seems to be kind of a factual misunderstanding that happens in the media when you and Bradley are compared.

DYMALLY: Here's what happened: after I got elected, we wanted to work out a coalition with Bradley, but soon discovered we were in different camps. In fact . . .

CARR: Meaning CDC Dymally?

DYMALLY: CDC Unruh.

CARR: Unruh, sorry.

DYMALLY: When the police beat up on those demonstrators at Century Plaza . . .

CARR: Century Plaza Hotel.

DYMALLY: They had a big rally in East Los Angeles. His deputy--God, I forget his name--Bradley's deputy, asked me to go to East Los Angeles and represent Bradley. So you see, the personal relationship was far different from the public perception.

But I went for him and represented him. I suspect he didn't want to be identified as being against the police, as a former police officer, but they called upon me to go. And then he and I would meet at fraternity meetings and stuff like that, and chat. So there was nothing personal. It was really factional. And we were together on all the issues.

CARR: But one of the factual things that seems to get lost in all of this, from a historical, political point of view, is you were a legislator. Bradley was never a legislator.

DYMALLY: Well, in a city sense he was. He ran against [Joe] Hollingsworth and lost. And then. . . . Gil Lindsay was appointed [to the Los Angeles City Council], so Gil Lindsay became the first one [the first black on the city council], but Gil was appointed. Then Tom was elected subsequently, and I supported his campaigns.

CARR: No, what I mean by that is this . . .

DYMALLY: Oh I know, I know. Here is why. Here it is. See, when Unruh and Bradley ran, I supported Unruh. And that's when the division seemed to have escalated, or was revealed in the public arena.

CARR: OK, but more specifically than that, Bradley is mayor in a city in which the mayor really doesn't have as much power as the city council--a very unique kind of balance of power.

DYMALLY: But he was such a strong, big symbol nationally.

CARR: Even with having a very limited power?

DYMALLY: But he was so strong symbolically that no one paid much attention to the weak mayor position.

CARR: It seems to me that you were able to get more accomplished in terms of actually writing legislation, to influence certain things . . .

DYMALLY: I just went to a luncheon today of the consular corps and this councilman, Richard Alarcon, announced that he's leaving the city council and going to run for the senate, because he can do more in the senate in terms of education and so on, because you can't legislate any issue here in the city.

CARR: That was my point. You were a legislator. There was no point in Bradley's political career that one could say he was--in terms of writing the kind of legislation of the consequence one could write on the state or national level. . . .

DYMALLY: More significantly, we were not in conflict with each other. Our paths did not collide. But

Bradley was such a strong symbol. He was such a popular man in the city among whites--and blacks. It was tough to touch him politically. I mean, you would be committing suicide. And I went on that path when I supported Unruh because of loyalty, friendship.

CARR: One moment. Let me just turn this over.

[End Tape 13, Side A]

[Begin Tape 13, Side B]

DYMALLY: Sometimes you are deceived into thinking that what you're doing there is really helping your constituents. If you look at the legislation that I offered, a lot had to do with, not with the district, a lot had to do with the state. For instance, the Early Childhood Education Act: How much of it really got into Watts? How many children were saved? How many parents got jobs? So don't forget that the mayor was the number one symbol in the South, politically. He's the guy who passed out the turkeys and the chickens. And so the mayor, with southern blacks--that symbol has always been very strong. Not the legislators. They had no legislators. And the legislation we were passing, issuing press releases and beating our chest about, didn't

affect them. They got no jobs out of that legislation. They got no housing out of that legislation.

CARR: I've never really quite heard it put that way before.

DYMALLY: Now, Kenny Hahn got them a hospital. You could see the hospital. You could see . . .

CARR: You could go to the hospital.

DYMALLY: OK? Now, I helped them with the [Drew] School, but the school is only for a small group of elitist educators, young educators. The school didn't bring in any jobs. Well, it brought some jobs, yeah, but it was all middle-class jobs. The difficulty is that the city was there, and Tom was an important symbol. It far overshadowed what we were doing in the legislature. People like to touch the flesh, and he was there every day to touch the flesh and be seen on television. He was a very stately, very urbane, handsome guy. Spoke softly and carried a big stick--quietly. So the important thing is this, Elston, you must remember: this legislation may be important to you and to me, but ask the guy on the street. What has it done for him? What did the Child Abuse Prevention [Act] do for the poor guy,

unemployed, who's not abusing his child?

CARR: Yeah, but you also had legislation dealing with . . .

DYMALLY: Child care centers.

CARR: Right, the child care center, but also job training.

DYMALLY: Yes, but limited. Unemployment was still high. You know, I've always tried to see what I could do to increase the job situation. That's why I had such a large staff, because that was my big thing in politics and in life: How can I find you a job? And that was the thing that motivated me. Jobs. Finding opportunities for people. You look around, they say, "Oh yeah, Dymally helped me do this. Dymally helped me do that." That was my thing.

CARR: So at this point could you. . . . You win the congressional seat in the Thirty-first District. Before we get to that, you openly discussed the fact that you ran for the second term as lieutenant governor, but you really didn't have your heart into it. You openly discussed that with reporters. That's exactly what I'm coming to, the vindication part.

DYMALLY: I said at my press conference that I'm being

harassed by the FBI. It's a Tuesday here. If they want, they could indict. We will fight it out in the public arena. Let the voters decide if I'm that crooked. I go up Wednesday--this is Tuesday here in L.A. . . . I go up Wednesday to Sacramento, the guy who has been their leak--I'll get you his name--at the Sacramento Bee, comes to me and says. . . . Because one week, they would leak that I would be indicted; the next week, another reporter would get another story from another source that says I'm not. But most of it was directed in Sacramento. He says to me. . . . Berthelsen. Berthelsen. John Berthelsen says to me, "Have you heard from the U.S. attorney's office?" I said, "No." He said, "Well, your lawyer needs to call them because they're going to say that they have no evidence to indict you." What they said was "insufficient evidence," as if they did have some. So that's Wednesday. I call Masry. He called them Thursday. Friday they sent out a letter, and we got it Saturday. So my position was vindicated.

CARR: Vindication against your reputation having been smeared by these FBI leaks. But how did you respond to the approach or the perception of you

that you were washed up? After you lost lieutenant governor, the perception everywhere was that you were washed up and . . .

DYMALLY: I'll tell you my low point. Let me tell you when I really felt washed up, my low point. Ontra. Ontra Cafeteria on Crenshaw. There was a meeting being chaired by Bob Farrell. Lois Hall-Hale, Diane [Watson]'s rep, was present; and Dave Cunningham was coming to the meeting. I made a presentation: "I have an office in the Thirty-first District. I have some money left over from my campaign, which I cannot use for Congress. I can only use it for registration. I've got a staff. I've got Mary Sawyer and Ken [Orduna] and Mary Gaddis. You're meeting here for registration, and I'd like to join with you, or have you join with me, because I have everything going." I left, and when Dave Cunningham came, he just dumped cold water on it. And Lois Hale came to my defense. To this day, I'm grateful to that woman. She's the only one who spoke up on my behalf about the way they treated me.

CARR: What happened?

DYMALLY: They turned down my request for registration. So I went to Dave Cunningham, subsequently, and

talked to him about it, and he turned me down again.

CARR: On what grounds?

DYMALLY: He didn't want to offend Charlie Wilson. But it was more than that. That was a downer. So that group didn't support me for Congress, and they represented the skeptical people.

CARR: So it seems like the low points for you, or the lowest points for you, were situations in which you . . .

DYMALLY: Not when I lost, no.

CARR: No, but in which you were disconnected from . . .

DYMALLY: The very people I worked for.

CARR: Your colleagues.

DYMALLY: Disconnected from the people whom I spent all my life working for, and whom I have helped. Zilch. But when I started running, many of them--not those who turned me down; the others who were not there--came through: Diane Watson, Gwen Moore, Willie Brown, Elihu Harris.

CARR: After you lost the second term to Curb, would it really have been possible for you to stay out of politics?

DYMALLY: Where would I go? There was no place to go. Where would I go? I'm in Sacramento, broke,

retirement--about \$1,400 a month, my airfare to Los Angeles. I went to the Philippines trying to put something together. I went to Trinidad. No, I was optimistic, but not politically. I figured I was going to go into the consulting business, make some money. There was nothing open in Los Angeles County for me. Go back to the assembly? There wasn't even a spot. All my friends had succeeded me. So this was a gift from heaven. Run for city council? I never had any feel for the city council race. I don't think that transfer would have worked, and I didn't think I would have gotten Bradley's support, and I don't think the Times. . . . The Times would have gone after me. So I was very pragmatic.

CARR: How would you compare being lieutenant governor to being a congressman?

DYMALLY: Well, being lieutenant governor was the most miserable years of my political life. Congress was very exciting. However, I've had some mixed emotions about my assignment. I suspect if a young black person came to me and asked me about Congress, I would suggest they not go on the Foreign Affairs Committee.

CARR: Why?

- DYMALLY: Because you can't produce anything for your district. It's a personal ambition. It has nothing to do with your district.
- CARR: But right after you were elected, this was one of your criticisms of Wilson. You said, "Well, Charlie Wilson--I'm not going to make the same mistake Charlie Wilson made. He spent a lot of time on foreign affairs and that didn't do anything for his district."
- DYMALLY: Overseas. He did a lot of travel. He wasn't on Foreign Affairs.
- CARR: But didn't do a lot of things for the district. "And I have those interests, but I want to make sure that I focus on domestic issues."
- DYMALLY: In retrospect, if I said that, I was in error, because Charlie was big on the aerospace company. And the thing that broke his heart is that when he was defeated, they wouldn't even return his phone calls.
- ' In fact, I'm going to tell you a little story. Someone came to me and told me that Charlie lacks six months of state service to get his retirement. Would I help him get on somebody's staff? I got Bill Greene to put him on his staff. Then the city of Gardena came to

DYMALLY: me and said, "We want to hire Charlie as a consultant. Do you have any objections?" And I said, "No." Charlie was ever grateful for that because he had, I think, withdrawn his retirement money, or he needed a little more time to qualify, and I helped him. So it was nothing personal. If I said that about Charlie, it may have been political.

But in order to make up for my presence. . . . In the first place, Foreign Affairs was something I wanted to do. Why? I'll tell you why. I'm foreign born. I see the commitment of the Jews to Israel on the Foreign Affairs Committee, and I felt if I went on Foreign Affairs I could pay the country of my birth, the region of my birth. But they never used me. The Africans did. One of these days when you come to the house, you'd see all the decorations I got from Africans.

So what I did, I compensated for that by coming home with some regularity and justifying my presence on the Foreign Affairs Committee on the grounds that I needed to help the aerospace industry sell its products overseas, thus keeping the jobs and creating the jobs in the district.

And Northrop [Corporation] helped me very much with that.

CARR: Yeah, and I'll go over this. Your four platforms in the congressional elections were education, health, crime, and aerospace.

DYMALLY: It's an aerospace district. The number one aerospace district.

CARR: Let's talk about aerospace. What was your relationship, and how did it build, with the aerospace industry?

DYMALLY: Well, it wasn't in a black district, to start off with. But aerospace was the biggest employer in the district. So I covered every base. I came out for jobs in the aerospace. My white constituents were happy about that, and a few blacks within aerospace companies. . . . The unions were happy about that. So I went on the Science and Technology Committee to make up for my being on Foreign Affairs.

CARR: In terms of the job creation, was it pretty stable or did it start to decline after the mid-eighties?

DYMALLY: It started to decline, but the other thing is. . . . I think, the Speaker came to me. He said he wanted to see me . . .

CARR: This is O'Neill?

DYMALLY: Yeah, and he told me they needed somebody strong on the Post Office Committee because of the pay raise, and asked me to go on the Post Office Committee, and I left the Science and Technology Committee. But that was a big plus, because there were a lot of postal workers in the district and they were happy about that. So that's how I was able to save myself from criticism of my many trips. But I traveled. I was the second most prolific traveler in the Congress.

CARR: And you were criticized for that.

DYMALLY: Not too much. If the criticism came, it was outside of the district. No one in the district. . . . Because I used to have these meetings. Every month I had a forum in one of the seven cities. So for seven months I was around, and I held it in city hall, so there was no mistaking who I was or where I was.

And I'd have these seminars. I'd send out notices to. . . . On September 13 [1997] I'm going to UCLA to participate in a review of the Japanese Reparations Act. It was at one of those seminars in Gardena that a young woman by the

name of Miya Iwataki came to me and asked me if I knew anything about reparations and I said no. As a result of her friendship, I introduced the first major piece of legislation on reparation for Japanese Americans late in the session, knowing fully well it wasn't going to pass, but it was going to educate the public. And so they're calling me to talk about that. So at these seminars, people saw me. And if you didn't see me, you got the notice. So you knew I was around.

CARR: You were there.

DYMALLY: . . . in your community.

CARR: What was your setup like? Where was your field office?

DYMALLY: I had one in Hawthorne, one in Carson, and one in Compton. It became very cumbersome having three offices, and we consolidated into one in Compton.

CARR: Who were your staff people?

DYMALLY: Ken Orduna was my chief of staff. I thought you were going to ask me about Compton. If I had to do it all over again, I wouldn't go into Compton.

CARR: Where would you have put it?

DYMALLY: Hawthorne, or . . .

CARR: Why wouldn't you put it in Compton again?

- DYMALLY: I went there because I thought the people needed me, but Compton is the most difficult city. It suffers from schizophrenia.
- CARR: How so? What do you mean by that?
- DYMALLY: You almost have to have a questionable background to be accepted in Compton. You've got to be one of the hoods, a boy from the hood, and I wasn't a boy from the hood. And so it was a case where "no good deed went unpunished." Some of the worst people in political life get elected in Compton. The result of which . . .
- CARR: Could you elaborate please?
- DYMALLY: You look at the city council. Two people got indicted. You look at the board of education. They lost--the state took over the board. It's a place where the good do not survive.
- CARR: And why does this peculiar situation exist in Compton?
- DYMALLY: Let me cite you an example. Bill Boyarsky, who writes for the Times, wrote a column. For the first time, I felt compelled to call a reporter and tell him that he wrote my story. A young woman was shot in a bus--a drive-by shooting. The board [of education] decided to graduate her posthumously. One member objected. An educator

objected--an educator in the Los Angeles city school system. It wasn't enough for him to object, but he sends out a press release about his objection to this young girl being graduated because she didn't complete the senior year. This is an educator. What difference does it make, for God's sake, if she did not finish the semester, or if she were mentally retarded or what? She's dead. He made a big issue out of that, but he wasn't satisfied with not voting for her, he sent a press release to the Los Angeles Times and others. I don't need to say any more about Compton. That tells the story.

CARR: Yeah, but I think I want you to say more, not necessarily about that story, but. . . . Compton is a unique place.

DYMALLY: No, it's a difficult place.

CARR: It's a unique place. It's not Watts, it's not Los Angeles, it's not Gardena, it's not Hawthorne. It's a unique place. From your experience, why do you think Compton has developed politically the way it has?

DYMALLY: That's a good question, and it deserves a master's thesis study, or a dissertation study.

CARR: Just from your experience.

DYMALLY: I wish I had the answer. Most of the good people left Compton and went to Carson, or to Lynwood. I wish I had the answer. Let me reflect on that, because it was a source of great puzzlement to me and great grief. I cite you another example, and I have to cite you examples because I don't know, I'm not a psychologist. I think it's a city that needs a massive study on the psychology of the city.

I go to the mayor of the city. I'm elected. The mayor of the city announces that he's going to put an initiative on the ballot. No, he's going to make a move for a pay raise for the city council. I sent out a press release that I'm in support of his effort. A Times reporter goes to him and he [the mayor] says, "We don't need Dymally to tell us what to do in Compton." I'm elected in Compton, I'm headquartered in Compton, I'm supporting the pay raise for you. So guess what? When he put it on the ballot, I opposed it. It was defeated, just to teach him a lesson. His son . . .

CARR: Who is this legislator? Who is this?

DYMALLY: Tucker. Walter Tucker. His son is elected. . . His son was going to run against me, by the way.

CARR: Curtis [R.] Tucker.

DYMALLY: No, Walter Tucker Jr. Not Curtis Tucker; Walter. His son, by the way, was going to run. . . . Before he knew I was going to retire, he was going to run against me as an incumbent anyway. But his son wants a pay raise, and I called him in and I said, "Look, here's how you do it: You appoint a Committee of the Future with the president of [California State University] Dominguez [Hills], Compton Community College, some aerospace people, and etc. And they come back and say that the future of Compton is mixed: looks bright, but there are serious problems, and what we need is a full-time mayor. And with that goes a full-time salary." He never follows it up.

But listen to this one: He gets indicted. I'm the first person to call him, and I said, "Walter, whatever I can do, let me know." "Thank you." I sent him the first contribution to his legal defense fund, go to Washington, express my support for him. The city council, the mayor, the city attorney, the city manager call a press conference to separate themselves from him when he's indicted. We wrote an editorial in our

Community Democrat saying that they were totally out of line, that he has to be judged to be innocent until proven guilty. So guess what? He goes to court and his whole strategy in the court is against me, as if I were indicted. They focused their defense strategy saying that I was really the target, and I was really the crooked guy, and he just happened to be walking down the street and got caught, but I was the guy that they should have gone after.

CARR: And then within that context there were also allegations that it was well known in the past that you had always taken bribes, and so on and so forth.

DYMALLY: No, no, it was specific. The guy said that I had asked him for \$50,000. Someone who was in a meeting--a member of the planning commission--because he was trying to put in this waste energy plant, at the meeting in the Cuckatoo Hotel, testified in the federal court that no such thing happened. But you never read about. . . . It was not reported. The allegation of that bribe. . . . But the guy is a total liar. He was a total liar. But, how stupid can you be? I'm not indicted. You were indicted. I'm willing to

come and testify on your behalf, and you center your defense around me, that I was the crooked one and I was the guy they were after and he was just an innocent bystander. That just gives you an example of the schizophrenia that exists in that city. Politically, a very, very sick city.

CARR: Do you think if you had located your field office and those resources in another city in your district, you would have had a stronger power base?

DYMALLY: Absolutely.

CARR: Yes?

DYMALLY: Absolutely. The staff hated it, being in Compton. It was a mistake. If I had to do it again, I would not go to Compton.

CARR: Tell me, on a day-to-day basis, what kinds of things. . . . How did your staff develop a relationship with the district to get started?

DYMALLY: Well, first thing we did, we had a jobs program. We got some money from the aerospace industry. We developed a jobs program.

CARR: What kind of jobs?

DYMALLY: On-the-job training. We located people, put them on the job to be trained and we got them hired. We helped the community college. . . . They

turned out to be friends of mine because they know I helped them get money.

I'll give you another example. There's a crossing, an overpass, on Rosecrans and Alameda [Street]. I went to Glenn Anderson to amend the bill--the transportation bill--to put the money in there. And when they got ready to dedicate the overpass, they didn't invite me. They invited Glenn Anderson. He used to kid me about it all the time. We used to laugh about it. It wasn't in his bill. I went to him and pled to put the money in, and they didn't invite me.

CARR: Your involvement with Foreign Affairs. . . . I assume you were placed on that committee after you were elected, as a freshman.

DYMALLY: You bid. Just like you bid. You bid for committees and I bid for Foreign Affairs and Science and Technology, and I got them both. You bid through your representative. Every region has a representative, but California's so big it has its own region. Phil Burton was the rep.

CARR: OK. Good. What were your primary concerns in foreign affairs?

DYMALLY: I wanted to do something for the Caribbean. I never had a chance to, because they never used

me. When I was Census Subcommittee chairman I went to visit CARICOM [Caribbean Community]. I sent a staff member to CARICOM in Guyana. I went to Trinidad. I went to a CARICOM meeting in Antigua, had lunch with the chairman of the CARICOM, Prime Minister [John] Compton, ate lunch with him, walked across the lawn--so we were very visible--went up there. In the meeting I sat next to the observer from the Dominican Republic. He introduced the observer from the Dominican Republic and never introduced me. In the first place, I had difficulty even getting notice where the meeting was going to be held.

I subsequently tried. . . . The secretary general of the OAU [Organization of African Unity] had come to the Congressional Black Caucus and invited us. I went to Addis Ababa [Ethiopia] and they seated me right in front. A VIP--you would have thought I was a member. And they had a reception for me. Totally different than the Caribbean. They never used me.

CARR: Well, does the Caribbean suffer from its own peculiar kind of schizophrenia?

DYMALLY: Yes, like Compton. [Laughter] Yeah, put it in the same category with Compton.

CARR: Talk about that a bit. Here you are, you're not even of Caribbean descent; you were from there.

DYMALLY: The first Caribbean-born to serve in the Congress. Shirley Chisholm was of Caribbean heritage, but she was born in Brooklyn. During the Depression, West Indians used to send their children back home to be with their grandparents, and send them postal money orders.

What can I tell you? They honored some visiting dignitary, I think a Mexican, and a racy tabloid criticized the government for not ever recognizing my presence as lieutenant governor. So one day, I think a Thursday, Eroll Mahabir, minister of labor, called me and said they want to honor me, to give me an award. Can I come down? They will pay my way. So I went ahead and got the ticket and I went down and got the Chaconia Award. And that year I had to report my activity and I reported a visit to Trinidad to be paid by the Trinidad government. I don't know how they got that information. But immediately he called me and told me how upset the prime minister, Eric Williams, was that I had stated that they were going to pay for the trip and they never committed to paying for the trip. So I

just ate it up and said it was a staff error. They never paid for it. And then they never used me.

CARR: What do think your successes, your early successes, were on Foreign Affairs?

DYMALLY: Well, I was just interviewed today by a Houston newspaper. I helped the black Hebrews in Israel get their status stabilized in Israel. I introduced the . . .

CARR: Now, were you involved in the airlift from Ethiopia to . . .

DYMALLY: No, no. That's separate. These were black Hebrews from Chicago. American black Hebrews.

I brought the budget, the highest in the history of Congress--a billion dollars. . . . I introduced legislation for the conflict resolution, which has been adopted. It took a number of initiatives to strengthen ties; made a lot of visits.

CARR: One thing. I still kind of want to stick to this early eighties period, '80, '81, '82. Aside from the shift from Democrat to Republican, the Reagan swing if you will, another strange thing is happening: there was a meeting Reagan held, several meetings. One he held, I think, with

black elected officials, right after he was elected, and I think he wanted to say, "I'm not such a bad guy . . ."

DYMALLY: No, no, no. What happened is, Walter [E.] Fauntroy was chairman of the caucus. He and Thad Garrett, who was the vice president's aide. . . . He arranged a meeting for us to go meet Reagan. Reagan didn't invite us. No. And it was an arranged meeting.

CARR: What was that meeting like? What are your recollections of it?

DYMALLY: He told his little jokes about welfare. He told his one that talked about welfare, how some welfare mothers are making more money than a secretary in GSA [General Services Administration]. And he says, "Ask Merv. Merv knows what I'm talking about." [Laughter] As if we had had conversations about it. And what surprised me is that some of the staunchest liberals, they came out all gaga about him, how charming he was. I was just amazed. And there was a second meeting where they . . .

CARR: That was considered a palatable joke for this crowd?

DYMALLY: Well, he was suggesting to them that I knew what

he was talking about from California, as if I were one of his bosom buddies.

CARR: That you were in on the joke.

DYMALLY: Yes. Then there was a second meeting and I didn't go to it because I figured it was a waste of time.

CARR: Now, the thing that was about to happen was this. . . .

DYMALLY: The Congressional Black Caucus had no relationship with the White House after that.

CARR: Beginning with Reagan's inaugural address and through his eight years, there's a considerable shift of federal funds to cities that just totally dwindles.

DYMALLY: It partly just dried up. That was the plan. There's a theory among some people in Washington . . .

CARR: Was anyone aware of that?

DYMALLY: . . . that this budget deficit was deliberate. It wasn't accidental. It was designed so to bankrupt you, that when the Democrats took over the White House, or took over the government, there was nothing there. That it was no accident at all they left us with such a large deficit. That is so you'd never rise. And one of the

reasons why I left Congress was because there was no money to bring home. There was always. . . . Anytime you introduce something they claim you're budget busting: "No, you can't do that. You have to go to the budget committee to get approval." You couldn't amend on the floor, and all kinds of stuff. Yeah, they killed it. They killed everything--housing, jobs, economic development.

CARR: But this is crucial, in the sense that, by doing this, by drying up the pot from the federal side, it's also happening at a time with all these local tax revolts happening. So you're not having the local tax . . .

DYMALLY: Base.

CARR: . . . base that you usually had.

DYMALLY: That's right. Legislation was changed about creating bonds and all kinds of local initiatives. Then one of the guys who led the Reagan tax reform measure was [Daniel D.] Rostenkowski, who considered himself close to the White House--ended up in the can. That was to leave the cities in bankruptcy so that they could never have any liberal programs anymore.

CARR: When was this trend clear to you? When did you

start to notice this trend?

DYMALLY: The first session, at the Harvard orientation in December of 1980.

CARR: Why then? What happened there?

DYMALLY: Well, all the emphasis was on the military, with the exception of a speech by Donna Shalala and Ron Brown, that we had to have all these resources because the Russians were in Mexico and they were going to enter into Texas any given day.

CARR: Let's talk about some of your fellow freshmen. David Dreier?

DYMALLY: David surprised me. He was the best fund-raiser in California; had over a million dollars. He surprised me in that I thought he was going to run for the Senate. But he became part of the leadership, and one of the bright stars in the Republican party. He and I developed a good relationship because he knew of my presence at Claremont.

CARR: Right, because he represented La Verne.

DYMALLY: And Claremont.

CARR: And Claremont. Eugene [A.] Chapie?

DYMALLY: Eugene was just a fun guy. He lived in Cool, California, and used to have these annual

festivals for legislators and lobbyists. We had a big taste of wine and champagne and barbecue and pasta and the whole bit. So he and I maintained that friendship. But he wasn't into right-wing politics. He was just a good ol' rural representative.

CARR: Yeah, it seems like an interesting time because you keep bringing up these Republican elected officials that you had very good personal relationships with who. . . . It was possible back then to make this distinction between . . .

DYMALLY: Not now. Then, you could have a personal friendship. Now, you can't. There's no having a Republican friend. For instance, Jack Fields and [George T.] "Mickey" Leland were close, close friends. The whole relationship is polarized now.

CARR: So it's not possible anymore.

DYMALLY: No, no.

CARR: To what do you attribute that?

DYMALLY: The style of these new dinosaurs who are going up there now, and the strident style of [Congressman Newton L.] Gingrich.

Now, Gingrich is dangerous because he's very bright. That's what makes him dangerous. He

deals in non-facts in a very eloquent manner that comes out as if it's truth. He has historical background to his analogies. He's the profound thinker in the Republican caucus. [Richard K.] Armev is very strident, very personal, very partisan--although he's an economist, but not a nice personality as such.

CARR: Back to your freshman class: Duncan [L.] Hunter.

DYMALLY: I didn't get close to Duncan. Oh yeah, I did know Duncan. Duncan defeated a liberal, [Lionel] Van Deerlin. And why? Because he had a pro bono legal service in the ghetto and barrio that made him popular. But he turned out to be very conservative on a number of issues. But he wasn't an unpleasant person. In those days, the conservatives were not unpleasant, with a few exceptions. As I said, Rohrabacher and I got along well.

CARR: What kind of person, legislator did Bobbi Fiedler . . .

DYMALLY: Well, Bobbi Fiedler was running for the Senate from the first day she got there, and they spotted her as a potential candidate for the Senate. And they started pushing her and she became very strident on budgetary matters and she

was on the floor all the time. She was not a charming person.

CARR: Really? No? What was she like?

DYMALLY: She was very uptight. She still thinks. . . . She acted as if she was still opposing busing. You know.

CARR: Right. That was her issue.

And Dymally? How would you contrast yourself from Dymally the freshman to Dymally . . .

DYMALLY: I was in awe. It was like an Ivy League campus.

CARR: Well, yes. You went to Harvard for . . .

DYMALLY: Country boy on an Ivy League campus. Here's all of this information. I was overwhelmed--with the Library of Congress, and all of this stuff coming down, reading about. . . . The real stuff. That's where it's at in Congress. So I was overwhelmed with this new assignment, and enjoyed every bit of it.

CARR: Who were your lead people in D.C.?

DYMALLY: In D.C.? Well, the persons with whom I worked very closely were Ron Dellums--he was chairman of the D.C. committee--Gus Hawkins, Bill Clay, who was senior member, Democrat, on the Post Office Committee.

CARR: If there's anyone you could think of on a

political level that really helped you to get along during those first few years, who would it be?

DYMALLY: I did it myself.

CARR: Really, now?

DYMALLY: I didn't have any coach.

CARR: Really? No one?

DYMALLY: Well, I came with a catalog of experience. I wasn't exactly a freshman in the context of the California delegation. I knew them all. I had served with them in the legislature. They knew me. So I wasn't exactly new. Learning the rules was the most difficult thing; very complicated rules. Every bill has a new rule. It's not like in California, where one set of rules for any bill . . .

CARR: Applies to all.

DYMALLY: Every bill has a new rule. You have to be on top of it, and I was stretched out trying to save the world--trying to save Africa, trying to save the Caribbean, without success. I was too stretched out. You've got to be focused.

CARR: Who were your staff people in D.C.?

DYMALLY: D.C.? David [H.] Johnson was a key guy. Marwan [W.] Urgan. Mary [F.] Twitty, who came from Gus

Hawkins's office. I had a good staff, and probably had too many staff people. But that was always my thing. Adonis Hoffman. [Randall E.] Randy Echols, who's now Chief [Moshood] Abiola's front man in Washington. Getting people jobs. Anybody who came across, had ability, I put them on the staff. If I had to do it all over again, I'd have a small, mean, lean staff.

CARR: Anyone who particularly stood out as competent, able?

DYMALLY: David Johnson. Very able. Well, there were several: Dr. Stanley Smith, Adonis Hoffman, Faye Williams, Bernadette Palo.

CARR: David Johnson.

DYMALLY: Marwan Urgan. There were many others.

CARR: It might be a good idea to stop here for today.

[End Tape 13, Side B]