

California State Archives  
State Government Oral History Program

Oral History Interview

with

**ALVIN C. WEINGAND**

California State Senator, 1962 - 1966

August 8 and 9, 1989  
Montecito, California

By Carlos Vásquez  
Oral History Program  
University of California, Los Angeles

## RESTRICTIONS ON THIS INTERVIEW

None.

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## **PREFACE**

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

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

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

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

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

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University of California, Los Angeles

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

John F. Burns  
State Archivist

July 27, 1988

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## INTERVIEW HISTORY

### Interviewer/Editor:

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### Interview Time and Place:

August 8, 1989  
Weingand's office in Montecito, California  
Session of one-half hour

August 9, 1989  
Weingand's office in Montecito, California  
Session of one-half hour

### Editing

Vásquez checked the verbatim manuscript of the interview against the original tape recordings, edited for punctuation, paragraphing, and spellings, and verified proper names. Insertions by the editor are bracketed. The interviewer also prepared the introductory materials.

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

### Papers

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

### Tapes and Interview Records

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

## BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

Alvin C. Weingand was born in North Platte, Nebraska, in 1904. His parents brought him to California in 1920. Weingand attended Los Angeles Polytechnic High School and earned a B.A. in economics at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1927.

After finishing college, Weingand went to work in the hotel and resort business in which he remained active for most of his adult life. He was the co-owner of the San Ysidro Hotel in Montecito and also was engaged in other business ventures in the Santa Barbara area. During World War II, he served in the United States Navy as a legal officer and was stationed in New Zealand and New Caledonia.

His first wife was Beverly Hollister, and his second was Louise Ladsburgh. His third wife, now deceased, Elizabeth Weingand ran for the California Senate in 1974, but was defeated. She held a long time interest in politics. Weingand had one son, Christopher, and adopted another, Richard Hyland.

Weingand, a Democrat, was elected to the California Senate from the Thirty-first District in a special election in February 1962 upon the death of incumbent John J. Hollister, Jr., of Santa Barbara. He served until 1966 when he was defeated by Robert J. Lagomarsino. During his tenure in office, he served on the Committees on Business and Commerce and on Labor and Welfare. He sponsored legislation dealing with family planning, banking, lobbying reforms, and a code of ethics for legislators. Weingand was a twenty-year member of the Santa Barbara County Democratic Party Central Committee and was active in numerous civic and business organizations.

He is currently an associate with Santana Properties in Montecito, California.

[Session 1, August 8, 1989]

[Begin Tape 1, Side A]

VASQUEZ: Mr. Weingand, to begin this oral history tell me something about your personal background. Where you were born, when you came to California, that sort of thing.

WEINGAND: I was born in North Platte, Nebraska.

VASQUEZ: What year?

WEINGAND: In 1904. We moved to California in 1920.

VASQUEZ: What occasioned your family to come to California?

WEINGAND: My father [Claude Openlender] Weingand and mother [Augusta Tanyer Weingand] used to come out every winter for vacation. They fell in love with Southern California and decided one day that this is where they would like to live. Pop had a hotel in North Platte. He sold his hotel there and we moved to Los Angeles where he bought a hotel.

VASQUEZ: What hotel was that, sir?



WEINGAND: It was called the De Soto [Hotel]. It was a little hotel downtown in those days.

VASQUEZ: Where did you go to school?

WEINGAND: Well I went to North Platte High School and then to [Los Angeles] Polytechnic High School and then to the University of California for my undergraduate years.

VASQUEZ: At UCLA?

WEINGAND: No, Berkeley.

VASQUEZ: What did you study there?

WEINGAND: Economics.

VASQUEZ: When you were growing up, who in your family or around you had the most influence on you? That is, in terms of your social or political ideas.

WEINGAND: Well, we were a German Lutheran family, and a pretty strict one. Not too strict but medium strict. My father, being a hotel man, was a little lax on his morals. The guest is always right! That reminds me of a little story.

He had a hotel in North Platte called the McCabe [Hotel] which he and Dr. McCabe, a neighbor, had built. One day Pop called me and told me to room a man and I did. I came down furious and Pop said, "What's the matter,

Alvin?" I said, "That man I just roomed wanted me to get him a woman!" And Pop said, "Well, did you?" Being a hotel man that was number one, "Give the guest what he wants!" And we moved to Los Angeles in 1920.

VASQUEZ: What do you remember about Los Angeles in 1920?  
You were still a pretty young man.

WEINGAND: I was born in 1904 [and was] fifteen or sixteen, yes.

VASQUEZ: What do you remember about Los Angeles then?

WEINGAND: Well, to me it was a big city, being a country hick from North Platte. What do you mean?

VASQUEZ: What was most impressive to you about Los Angeles other than the size? Was it the freedom? Was it the mixtures of people, the tempo of the city?

WEINGAND: Well, I went to Polytechnic High School there. That was a downtown high school but apparently a very good one.

VASQUEZ: What was the ethnic and racial composition of it at the time? Do you remember?

WEINGAND: No. No, there were few if any blacks. We were a German Lutheran family, and my father was the president of the Californian Lutheran Hospital Society. They built that California Lutheran

Hospital, which was an outstanding hospital in the 1920s.

VASQUEZ: Are you from Los Angeles originally?

WEINGAND: No, I'm not but I know a little bit about the history. I know that the 1920s and the 1930s were very exciting times in Los Angeles. There was a lot of growth, a lot of people coming in from the Midwest and other parts of the country. We did.

VASQUEZ: Did you find that you had an affinity with other people from the Midwest? Did you seek out, or were there clubs that you belonged to that also grouped people from the Midwest?

WEINGAND: No. My father was president of the California Lutheran Hospital Association, and I used to work there. I had a cousin who is a physician and he practiced medicine in downtown Los Angeles.

VASQUEZ: What was his name, your cousin?

WEINGAND: Claude Peters.

VASQUEZ: When did you become interested in politics? Do you remember? Early in your life?

WEINGAND: No.

VASQUEZ: Tell me about your experience at the University of California at Berkeley.

WEINGAND: Oh, that was a great university, very good in those days and still is. I felt I was very lucky. My freshman year I went to the University of Colorado at Boulder because we lived for a time in Denver.

VASQUEZ: Why did you decide to come to Berkeley?

WEINGAND: Well, I went to Polytechnic High School in Los Angeles and a lot of my classmates were headed for Berkeley. So I went to Berkeley.

VASQUEZ: Did you keep contact or relationships with those friends that went to Berkeley with you?

WEINGAND: No, not at all. I don't remember any of them anymore.

VASQUEZ: When you left college what did you go on to do?

WEINGAND: Went into the hotel business.

VASQUEZ: Right away?

WEINGAND: Yes, immediately.

VASQUEZ: Where did you do this? What hotel?

WEINGAND: My father had a hotel called the De Soto on West Sixth Street as I remember and so he gave me a job and I was there.

VASQUEZ: What job did he give you?

WEINGAND: Oh, bellboy, clerk, janitor.

VASQUEZ: Was the idea for you to work your way up?

WEINGAND: That's right.

VASQUEZ: How long did you work for him in that capacity?

WEINGAND: Well, I finished my high school at Polytechnic and all during my high school days I worked for him.

VASQUEZ: Did you work there during your years in college as well?

WEINGAND: Yes, at Berkeley, but not much because I moved up to Berkeley and lived on the campus.

VASQUEZ: Would you come home in the summers?

WEINGAND: Yes.

VASQUEZ: Now, when you finished Berkeley you went to work for your father. How long did you work for him after that?

WEINGAND: I don't remember.

VASQUEZ: You went into business for yourself eventually? Didn't you go to Carmel?

WEINGAND: Yes, I went to Carmel when I got out of college to the Pine Inn, as a clerk.

VASQUEZ: Who owned that hotel?

WEINGAND: A man named John Jordan. A friend of mine got me my job. Our families were close friends.

VASQUEZ: What happened with your father's hotel? Did you ever own it?

WEINGAND: No. He died about that time. He died young.

VASQUEZ: What did he die of? Do you remember?

WEINGAND: No.

VASQUEZ: What year would this be? We're talking about when you got out of school.

WEINGAND: At twenty-two I got out of school, out of Berkeley with the class of 1927.

VASQUEZ: And you worked at the Pine Inn Hotel for how long? Do you remember?

WEINGAND: Four or five years and then I was offered the job here at the Samarkand Hotel, so I left Pine Inn and came to Santa Barbara.

VASQUEZ: What did you do here?

WEINGAND: I worked at the Samarkand Hotel as clerk and assistant manager.

VASQUEZ: How long did you do that?

WEINGAND: I do not remember.

VASQUEZ: You worked also at the Moana-Surfrider in Honolulu. When was that? And at the Hollywood Roosevelt in Los Angeles. Was this after you had come up here?

WEINGAND: I'm trying to think. I was offered this job as assistant manager at the Samarkand, so I left the Pine Inn in Carmel where I was a clerk. Then I

was offered a job at the Moana-Surfrider Hotel as manager. That was my first managerial job.

Running the two hotels. A friend of mine got me my job.

VASQUEZ: Who would that be?

WEINGAND: A fellow named Leroy Linnard. His family owned the Huntington Hotel in Pasadena.

VASQUEZ: Where did you meet Linnard?

WEINGAND: He and his wife came to Pine Inn as guests and I got to know them. They said, "Well, would you like to come down to Santa Barbara?" I said, "Sure." So they offered me a job here at the Samarkand and I took it. It was a [promotion] from being a clerk to being an assistant manager.

VASQUEZ: Tell me about the Depression here in Santa Barbara.

WEINGAND: I don't remember.

VASQUEZ: In 1941 you became the original manager and owner of the Harbor Restaurant at Stearn's Wharf. How did that happen?

WEINGAND: Ronald Colman was my friend and business associate, my very close friend. We made two trips around the world together by ship, that was the only way you could go in those days.

VASQUEZ: Tell me about your military service. You were in the navy weren't you? How did that come about and in what capacity did you serve in the navy?

WEINGAND: Well, I joined the reserve and was commissioned as a lieutenant because of my age.

VASQUEZ: Do you remember what year that was?

WEINGAND: No. I'd have to get out some documents. You know that's a hell of a long time ago.

VASQUEZ: Why did you join the naval reserve and not another branch of the service?

WEINGAND: Well, I like ships and they have a good unit in the naval reserve and I had some friends in it. They got me to come along and join. So I did. I was in, I think, [for] about four years.

VASQUEZ: Were you in action or did you serve here in the States?

WEINGAND: No. I was stationed in New Zealand and New Caledonia.

VASQUEZ: When did you get married and what was your wife's name?

WEINGAND: Well, I have had three wives.

VASQUEZ: Okay, let's start with the first one.

WEINGAND: Beverly Hollister.

VASQUEZ: When was this?



WEINGAND: I don't know.

VASQUEZ: Was she a Hollister from here in Santa Barbara?

WEINGAND: No, no relation.

VASQUEZ: What year was that, do you remember more or less?

WEINGAND: No, I'd have to refresh my memory.

VASQUEZ: Did you have any children?

WEINGAND: I have one son.

VASQUEZ: What's his name?

WEINGAND: Christopher [Weingand]. He lives in Iowa at the moment.

VASQUEZ: What does he do?

WEINGAND: He's with a nationwide trucking service, the headquarters are in Iowa. He was a truck driver, you know the big eighteen-wheelers, and then he was put in the office a couple of years ago. The company headquarters are in Iowa and that's where he is. Still in the trucking business.

VASQUEZ: He's the only child you ever had.

WEINGAND: Yes.

VASQUEZ: Who was your second wife?

WEINGAND: The second one was Louise Landsburgh.

VASQUEZ: Was that here in Santa Barbara also?

WEINGAND: Yes. We lived here. See, I own San Ysidro Ranch.

VASQUEZ: Tell me about that San Ysidro Ranch. When did you become owner of that and what was it?

WEINGAND: I can't remember. Nineteen thirty five.

VASQUEZ: Was it a hotel?

WEINGAND: Oh, yes. A resort hotel.

VASQUEZ: Was this in conjunction with Ronald Colman?

WEINGAND: Yes, he was my partner.

VASQUEZ: Were you very involved, as a hotel owner, in community and social activities here in Santa Barbara?

WEINGAND: Oh, yes.

VASQUEZ: Tell me about some of them. You were a member of the California State Hotel and Motel Association, is that correct?

WEINGAND: I'm a lifetime director.

VASQUEZ: When did you join them?

WEINGAND: Oh Christ, I don't know.

VASQUEZ: What is the function of that organization?

WEINGAND: Oh, it's like any business association.

VASQUEZ: Did it ever involve itself at all with political matters?

WEINGAND: Oh, very very little.

VASQUEZ: You were also president of the Montecito Association. What is that?

WEINGAND: Well, that's a little community association [that deals] with matters of zoning.

VASQUEZ: That's more recent I would imagine.

WEINGAND: Yes, that's much more recent.

VASQUEZ: You were a member of the National Defense Executive Reserve appointed by President [Dwight D.] Eisenhower. Is that correct?

WEINGAND: That's right. After the [Second World] War the government got together an organization of former officers and I was appointed by the president at that time to be a member of it.

VASQUEZ: What did this reserve do?

WEINGAND: Nothing! Like any reserve it has functions when there's a need. But otherwise, we all sat on our fat asses and that was that.

VASQUEZ: What kind of people were members of this? I know ex-officers, but socially and in business.

WEINGAND: Oh, they were a cross section of the community in those days.

VASQUEZ: You were also a founder of the Santa Barbara Council on Alcoholism. When did that take place?

WEINGAND: I'd say around 1935-40, around there.

VASQUEZ: What was the purpose for that, how did that happen?

WEINGAND: Well, somebody got me interested in the problem of alcoholism.

VASQUEZ: Was it a serious problem here in Santa Barbara at the time?

WEINGAND: Fair sized.

VASQUEZ: Did it have anything to do with the Depression do you think?

WEINGAND: I don't remember.

VASQUEZ: When you founded this association, what was the purpose? What were you trying to do? Was it sort of an Alcoholics Anonymous?

WEINGAND: Sort of.

VASQUEZ: Did it involve people of different walks of life? Different social classes?

WEINGAND: Well, mostly upper social classes living in Montecito. That is my recollection.

VASQUEZ: There's another association that I find interesting. You were at one point the director of the Center for Planned Parenthood. When was this?

WEINGAND: What do I say [in my vitae]?

VASQUEZ: You don't have a date on your vitae. You just say you were director of the Santa Barbara Planned Parenthood.

WEINGAND: I don't know.

VASQUEZ: You were also a member of the Santa Barbara County Tax Appeals Board. When would that be?

WEINGAND: I'd say about ten years ago.

VASQUEZ: Was this as a result of your being on the [Santa Barbara County] Planning Commission?

WEINGAND: Yes. And [the county] supervisors here appointed me.

VASQUEZ: This would be in the 1970s.

WEINGAND: I don't know, sorry but I can't remember all these goddammed dates!

VASQUEZ: There's something that I find really interesting. You were a founding director of KEYT-TV here in Santa Barbara with Harry Butcher, is that correct?

WEINGAND: Harry Butcher, yes. Colin Selph and I organized a group that built KEYT-TV up in the hill.

VASQUEZ: Why did you go into television?

WEINGAND: Well, it was an opportunity, it sounded good.

VASQUEZ: Did you do well?

WEINGAND: Yes.

WEINGAND: Was it one of the first stations here in Santa Barbara?

WEINGAND: The first.

VASQUEZ: Did having access to public opinion interest you in bringing about political change or social change, or put across social ideas? Or did you see this strictly as a business arrangement?

WEINGAND: Primarily it was a business venture. Harry Butcher and. . . . Oh, I've forgot who was even on the board. But Harry Butcher was a prominent man, you know.

VASQUEZ: What was his background?

WEINGAND: He had a distinguished military background but beyond that I've forgotten.

VASQUEZ: What was he noted for here in Santa Barbara?

WEINGAND: I don't know.

VASQUEZ: You're a Democrat, is that right?

WEINGAND: Right.

VASQUEZ: A life-long Democrat?

WEINGAND: Well, since I was old enough to vote, yes.

VASQUEZ: Was your family traditionally [Democratic]?

WEINGAND: Oh Christ, no.

VASQUEZ: They were Republicans. How did you make that break?

WEINGAND: I got smart!

VASQUEZ: Here in Santa Barbara, Democrats often seem to do as well as Republicans when running for office if

they have the same kind of. . . .

WEINGAND: Yes, we didn't do badly and the registration was always [predominantly] Republican.

VASQUEZ: Tell me, did you hold office other than being on the county planning commission? That's an appointed office, right?

WEINGAND: Right.

VASQUEZ: Did you ever hold office before you ran for the California State Senate?

WEINGAND: No, just on the little local things, president of the Montecito Protective and Improvement Association and the committee on alcoholism, I was involved in that.

VASQUEZ: Now, in 1962 you ran in a special election for the Senate seat held by [John J.] J. J. Hollister, Jr., who died in office.

WEINGAND: That's right.

VASQUEZ: What made you decide to run for office?

WEINGAND: Well, I always enjoyed politics and there was a golden opportunity to get in.

VASQUEZ: Were you involved very much in the Democratic party here in Santa Barbara?

WEINGAND: Oh, always on the central committee as a Democrat, yes.

VASQUEZ: What was your participation in the party? Was it limited to the Democratic Central Committee here. Was it an active central committee?

WEINGAND: Yes, it was a good committee.

VASQUEZ: Was it a powerful committee?

WEINGAND: I'd say so.

VASQUEZ: What kinds of things did you do?

WEINGAND: Oh, whatever central committees do. Look after the Democratic politics of the area. Raise money, get speakers, get an involvement from the community on the Democratic causes.

VASQUEZ: What were some of the Democratic causes of the time?

WEINGAND: You're asking questions that I don't know.

VASQUEZ: Well, I don't want to ask unfair questions but I'll ask questions some of which will come to you and some won't. Do you remember who approached you to run for Hollister's seat or do you remember the campaign at all?

WEINGAND: Not at all.

VASQUEZ: Do you remember having an idea of what you wanted to accomplish in the California Senate when you went up there?

WEINGAND: Well, the Democrats espoused the so-called



liberal causes. I've always been a liberal as compared to a conservative or a reactionary.

VASQUEZ: What kinds of issues do you think traditionally have been and should be called "liberal issues"?

WEINGAND: I'd have to refresh my memory.

VASQUEZ: Well, among your legislation you have some early work on birth control and making the education thereof available to the public. You were also very active legislating lobbyist reforms at a time when there was a movement away from the [Arthur H.] Artie Samish type of lobbying.

WEINGAND: That's right, you've got it.

VASQUEZ: Are those things you consider liberal Democrats have traditionally been concerned about?

WEINGAND: Yes.

VASQUEZ: Let me ask you something else. You were elected to office during the second term of [Governor Edmund G.] Pat Brown [Sr.]'s administration. What is your assessment of Pat Brown's first administration, 1959 to 1962.

WEINGAND: I thought he was a hell of a good governor.

VASQUEZ: Why?

WEINGAND: Well, look at his legislation.

VASQUEZ: Give me some examples of what you think were

major contributions of the Pat Brown administration that first term.

WEINGAND: Well, I don't know.

VASQUEZ: What was it that attracted you about Pat Brown or his program, do you remember?

WEINGAND: No. He was a very personable guy and a friend of mine in the legislature.

VASQUEZ: Did you know him before, when he was in law enforcement?

WEINGAND: No.

VASQUEZ: You met him as governor?

WEINGAND: Yes.

VASQUEZ: You developed a personal relationship with him, did you?

WEINGAND: With him and his family.

VASQUEZ: What were your impressions of the senate and the legislature [in general] when you first got up there as a freshman legislator. You were not a young man anymore.

WEINGAND: Actually, I was very much impressed. We had some wonderful people in the legislature then--both in the assembly and in the senate. As a Democrat I was part of a so-called liberal group.

VASQUEZ: Who were some of your cohorts?

WEINGAND: I'll get my records.

VASQUEZ: You were telling me about some of your impressions of the senators.

WEINGAND: There were some great guys: [James A.] Cobey, for example; Fred [J.] Farr; Stephen [P.] Teal; George Miller [Jr.]; Glenn [M.] Anderson; my seat mate, [Randolph] Randy Collier; and Vernon [L.] Sturgeon. There were some outstanding guys there.

VASQUEZ: What was outstanding about them?

WEINGAND: Well, they were able men, intelligent men, well educated, devoted to their duties as senators.

VASQUEZ: This was also at a time when many people serving in the legislature were part-time legislators. That is to say, they had full-time positions in businesses and what have you.

WEINGAND: [We were] just breaking that barrier and people were making a career out of it. In other words, they were devoting full-time to their legislative duties.

VASQUEZ: Now, you've had an opportunity to see twenty years or so of the professional legislator. Which do you think serves our state better and gives our state better law?

WEINGAND: I don't know how you could serve it better than the representative that are here [in this photograph]. There are really some outstanding. . . .

VASQUEZ: You were in an especially capable class.

WEINGAND: Oh, you bet. These were great guys not only socially and as friends but very able. There was some splendid legislation passed in those days.

VASQUEZ: Why do you think that happened at that time? Did these people have greater vision, a greater optimism of what California could do?

WEINGAND: I think so. That's well put. Yes, these are some really outstanding men, capable, able, dedicated.

VASQUEZ: I notice as we look at the roster and look at the photograph here, there are no women senators. Now we have women senators! Is that for the better?

WEINGAND: There were no women in the senate, and I don't think there were any in the assembly either.

VASQUEZ: At that time there was only one or two.

WEINGAND: One.

VASQUEZ: What was your impression of the difference, if there was any, between the senate and the assembly, other than the size obviously?

WEINGAND: Well, there was a little snobbery there.

VASQUEZ: On whose part?

WEINGAND: On the senators' part. They were the elitists.

VASQUEZ: What was your impression of the assemblymen? As opposed to yourselves say. Let me focus the question a little bit. Los Angeles County had one freshman senator when you served, and that was [Thomas M.] Tom Rees who had come up from the assembly. Do you remember him?

WEINGAND: Oh yes, from Los Angeles.

VASQUEZ: He's somebody that went from the assembly to the senate. How was he received?

WEINGAND: Oh, a lot of these people did.

VASQUEZ: Was it considered that when you came to the senate from the assembly that you moved up in the world?

WEINGAND: Oh, yes. That was the elitist group.

VASQUEZ: What do you remember was the relationship between the senate and Pat Brown's administration? Did they have a good working relationship? Do you remember?

WEINGAND: I don't remember.

VASQUEZ: Did partisanship play any role in that at all?

WEINGAND: It always does. Partisanship is part of

politics, and these are all partisan officeholders.

VASQUEZ: Did they act in partisan ways?

WEINGAND: Well, when the issues were drawn, yes, they did.

VASQUEZ: Some people have said that partisanship has become more pronounced in the last twenty years than it was say, in the early sixties. Or was partisanship already showing its face in 1962?

WEINGAND: Oh, you bet.

VASQUEZ: Was there a Republican reaction to the fact that you had not only won all the constitutional but control of both houses?

WEINGAND: Oh, they didn't like it.

VASQUEZ: What did they try to do about it?

WEINGAND: Turn us out.

VASQUEZ: When you ran in 1964 for your first full term, what were the issues do you remember?

WEINGAND: No, not at all. See, a lot of water has passed under the bridge.

WEINGAND: Yes, it has. Let me ask you if you remember your opponents at all. In the 1962 special election, your opponent was William [D.] McKillop. Do you remember him at all?

WEINGAND: No.

VASQUEZ: How about James [L.] Holmes?

WEINGAND: Yes.

VASQUEZ: What do you remember about him?

WEINGAND: Oh, he was a modest guy but not very bright.

VASQUEZ: Tell me about Tom Halde whom you ran against in 1964. He was the Republican candidate.

WEINGAND: Oh, that rat fink!

VASQUEZ: Why do you say that?

WEINGAND: No, no, I'm joking. Tom was my opponent.

VASQUEZ: Do you remember that campaign at all?

WEINGAND: Oh, you bet I do. It was a nasty one.

VASQUEZ: There was a good showing on the Republican side, but you beat him handily.

WEINGAND: Oh, he crept up on us.

VASQUEZ: What kind of attacks would he make?

WEINGAND: I don't recall.

[End Tape 1, Side A]

[Session 2, August 9, 1989]

[Begin Tape 1, Side B]

VASQUEZ: Mr. Weingand, let me clear up some personal items that we might not have completed yesterday. One has to do with your children. The California Blue Book lists you as having two sons, Christopher [Weingand] and Ricky.

WEINGAND: Ricky is a stepson.

VASQUEZ: What is his name, please?

WEINGAND: His name is Richard Hyland.

VASQUEZ: Yesterday we were talking about your first term in office which coincided withn Governor [Edmund G.] Brown [Sr.]'s second administration. Some of the committees that you served on were Business and Professions; Fish and Game; Legislative Representation; Labor and Welfare; Natural Resources; and Public Health and Safety, of which you were vice chairman. Do you remember any of the committees or any of the members or any of the issues that those committees took up?



WEINGAND: Well, we'll start with the first.

VASQUEZ: Business and Professions.

WEINGAND: Principally having to do with the Ethics committees.

VASQUEZ: Which of the committees did you find most gratifying? On which do you think you made the greatest advances?

WEINGAND: Ethics.

VASQUEZ: Why?

WEINGAND: Because I had a zeal to make politics clean.

VASQUEZ: And where did this zeal come from?

WEINGAND: Oh, that was just one of my principles. See, I was completely independent. I was not a politician in those days. I just got started and I had the zeal of a freshman, a new man, "I'm going to clean this goddamn place up."

VASQUEZ: Do you feel that in 1962 there was a lapse in ethical behavior in the legislature?

WEINGAND: Well, there was a suspicion of it, yes.

VASQUEZ: Is there anything in particular that you can remember?

WEINGAND: No, I can't at this point. If it comes to me I will.

VASQUEZ: You said yesterday that you ran in 1962 because

the position opened up [because of] the death of Senator [John J.] Hollister, Jr., and it was a good opportunity. Did the Democratic Central Committee or any group of Democrats come to you and ask you to run?

WEINGAND: Yes, the Central Committee.

VASQUEZ: Why did they think you'd make a good candidate?

WEINGAND: Oh, because I was!

VASQUEZ: What is it that they saw in you do you think? What had you shown as part of your work at the Democratic Central Committee that made you an attractive candidate?

WEINGAND: Yes, I was a prominent Democrat and professed to be.

VASQUEZ: You commented on some of the personalities that were involved [in the senate] and you were saying there was a very high quality of individuals, some of whom were on committees with you. Whom do you remember, what committee chairman might you remember that especially impressed you with the way he conducted his business?

WEINGAND: I should get my photographs out.

VASQUEZ: Who amongst your colleagues do you think was the most effective committee chairman.

WEINGAND: [Joseph A.] Rattigan, for one.

VASQUEZ: Why would that be?

WEINGAND: Well, because he was an outstanding legislator.

VASQUEZ: He was the chairman of the [Committee on] Local Government.

WEINGAND: Yes. [Frank S.] Peterson was a very outstanding man too, progressive.

VASQUEZ: He was the vice chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

WEINGAND: Fred Farr; Jim Cobey; and my seatmate, Randy Collier, whom I never had much to do with.

VASQUEZ: Why was that?

WEINGAND: Well, he was very conservative, very reactionary. I wasn't. I'm a liberal and was then.

VASQUEZ: You were also appointed to a commission that I believe was established by Governor Brown who had anticipated the changes that were going to take place in California's industry and technological needs. It was called Commission on Automation and Technological Developments.

WEINGAND: I don't remember that.

VASQUEZ: Let me ask you another question about the senate when you served there. The president pro tem was Hugh [M.] Burns. What can you tell me about Hugh

Burns?

WEINGAND: Well, he was the old type of politician and legislator.

VASQUEZ: What do you mean by that?

WEINGAND: Well, he looked after his friends, regardless.

VASQUEZ: He was one of the "cow county" senators I think they used to call it in those days.

WEINGAND: That's right. In his own way he was ethical, but I think he stretched it a little bit.

VASQUEZ: Was he an effective leader of the senate?

WEINGAND: Yes, he was.

VASQUEZ: What made him effective?

WEINGAND: Well, he had the power to make appointments in the districts of his colleagues.

VASQUEZ: Did he know how to balance everyone's needs?

WEINGAND: Oh, sure. Or otherwise they would have thrown him out.

VASQUEZ: Did you have any personal dealings with him, positive or negative? He was a Democrat but a pretty conservative one, wasn't he?

WEINGAND: Yes, he was very conservative.

VASQUEZ: Did you have any direct dealings with him?

WEINGAND: Oh, I probably did but I don't recall.

VASQUEZ: In the lower house a fellow Democrat was in the

leadership, Jesse [M.] Unruh. Tell me what you remember about him.

WEINGAND: I remember the president [pro tem] of the senate threw him out of the senate chambers.

VASQUEZ: Why was that?

WEINGAND: Well, he was interfering.

VASQUEZ: Do you remember what the issue was?

WEINGAND: No.

VASQUEZ: He was sometimes accused of aspiring to control not only the assembly but the senate as well.

WEINGAND: This is correct.

VASQUEZ: Did he?

WEINGAND: Yes. That's when we threw him out.

VASQUEZ: How so?

WEINGAND: Well, he was power mad.

VASQUEZ: Was he?

WEINGAND: Yes.

VASQUEZ: Did he make any contribution at all to California legislative politics?

WEINGAND: No.

VASQUEZ: What kinds of things do you think he contributed?

WEINGAND: I wouldn't recall specifically. You know, that's a big body [the assembly].

VASQUEZ: Yes, it is. What do you feel your greatest

accomplishments were in the senate?

WEINGAND: I didn't have any. Well, that isn't quite true.

VASQUEZ: No, it isn't. Do you feel your legislation on birth control or on lobbying reforms were important?

WEINGAND: Yes, that's right. Those are two that I featured.

VASQUEZ: You were also involved in conservation measures. Was that a result of Santa Barbara being so close to the water and being such a tourist attraction?

WEINGAND: And we have a long history of conservation interest in this county, long before I got there.

VASQUEZ: Why is that?

WEINGAND: Well, people were enlightened in this county. They chose the right representative.

VASQUEZ: Tell me a little bit about Montecito, which is the area that you represented, where you live, and that you do business in.

WEINGAND: Yes, I have been here since 1935.

VASQUEZ: Tell me about it how it's changed over time, why it produces so many of the representatives that go to the state legislature.

WEINGAND: Well, it's an intellectual community. Montecito

always has been. There is a lot of wealth here but a lot of brains, too, and principles.

VASQUEZ: Why is it that Santa Barbara, which is pretty conservative, has elected some pretty liberal Democrats?

WEINGAND: I've wondered that myself.

VASQUEZ: Have you ever come up with an answer?

WEINGAND: No, no.

VASQUEZ: Your [third] wife, Elizabeth Weingand, ran in 1974 for Senator [Robert J.] Lagomarsino's seat. Were you involved in that campaign at all?

WEINGAND: Oh, yes.

VASQUEZ: Tell me about that.

WEINGAND: My wife is dead [now], but she got sort of fired up on politics and I guess it whipped up her interest.

VASQUEZ: She ran against the man that defeated you for reelection is that correct?

WEINGAND: That's right the son-of-a-bitch! He happens to be a friend of mine.

VASQUEZ: You are good friends now?

WEINGAND: Oh, yes.

VASQUEZ: Did she feel she had some kind of mandate or some kind of program she wanted to advance that

perhaps you didn't finish when you were in office?

WEINGAND: Well, she was a liberal.

VASQUEZ: Was that the motivating factor?

WEINGAND: Yes, it's a conservative area. I was an anomaly being a liberal.

VASQUEZ: You were defeated in 1966, why do you think that was?

WEINGAND: Well, my opponent got more votes! No, I'll tell you why it was. Ventura County has always been a conservative county, and when they combined the district and included Ventura that was my death. He did much better with conservatives in Santa Barbara County than I did with liberals in Ventura County.

VASQUEZ: Is this because you were not as well known in Ventura County?

WEINGAND: Well, he wasn't either but he was stronger. He appealed to the conservatives in both counties and of course I appealed to the conservatives in neither county, I being a liberal.

VASQUEZ: In redistricting, you were there to see the results of Baker v. Carr<sup>1</sup> and the impact it had

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1. Baker v. Carr, 369 U.S. 186 (1962).



on the state senate. The senate was apportioned according to the number of voters in a district rather than by county. How did that change the senate do you think?

WEINGAND: Well, I got tossed out! It wasn't good for me.

VASQUEZ: How much did Ronald Reagan's election in 1966 have to do with your defeat do you think?

WEINGAND: Well, there was a conservative turn and Ventura County is conservative. I carried my county but I couldn't carry Ventura County.

VASQUEZ: Do you think that some of the social protests both on the college campuses and in some of the [ethnic] minority areas had anything to do with this turn toward a more conservative attitude toward California politics in 1966?

WEINGAND: I would think so.

VASQUEZ: Do you think the quality of our state legislatures has gone up or down as a result of the professionalization of politics?

WEINGAND: I don't think so.

VASQUEZ: Why not?

WEINGAND: Well, I don't know. The amateurs probably had less knowledge than they should have had but they had higher standards. People like Farr and Cobey

were high-quality men.

VASQUEZ: How much do you think it cost you to run for office?

WEINGAND: I have no idea any longer.

VASQUEZ: Do you think money has changed California politics? The cost of running for office, the cost of staying in office?

WEINGAND: Well, I think it has kept a lot of very good people out, because it is a terribly expensive proposition these days. Particularly since they combined the counties into one district.

VASQUEZ: It's a larger district.

WEINGAND: To have to drag ass down to Ventura County all the time to meetings. That's expensive and very time consuming.

VASQUEZ: What impact has the student body and the votes they represent at the University of California at Santa Barbara had on the district?

WEINGAND: That was no factor when I was running. It is just in the last few years it has become important segment of our voting population. It wasn't then, it was just getting started.

VASQUEZ: When you were in office how important was the off-shore drilling as an issue?

WEINGAND: Very important.

VASQUEZ: Did you get involved in that at all?

WEINGAND: Did I! I formed the organization called "GOO," I named it, "Get Oil Out."

VASQUEZ: What was your program, to stop all drilling?

WEINGAND: All drilling in the channel. The aesthetic effects on our coastline were damaging and that far outweighed any benefits we'd get from oil. I still believe it. Look out here, the goddamn spill we had the other day [in Valdez, Alaska]. The oil companies then didn't have a way of preventing spills or cleaning up after and they still don't. They claim to but they haven't and we're subject to any failures of their drilling techniques. We're going to have a whole goddamn beach area covered with oil one of these days again, unless it's stopped.

VASQUEZ: Why do you think that either "GOO" or any other efforts have been unable to stop the drilling?

VASQUEZ: They have just not been strong enough.

VASQUEZ: Are the oil companies that powerful in Santa Barbara?

WEINGAND: Yes, you bet. They're powerful everywhere.

VASQUEZ: How do they manifest their power here in Santa

Barbara?

WEINGAND: By continuing to drill. We had a major failure just the other day off the shore of Santa Barbara. I remember talking to [United States Secretary of the Interior] Stewart Udall going out in a little boat and I said to him, "Are you concerned about what's going to happen to this coastline if we continue allowing the oil companies to explore and develop?" He said, "No, they have failsafe methods not only of preventing spills, but if one occurred, of cleaning up." Of course they didn't have. Never have had.

VASQUEZ: How has politics changed here in Santa Barbara County from the time that you first arrived in the 1930s?

WEINGAND: Oh, I think it's gotten more conservative, I think so.

VASQUEZ: Do you have any idea why that is?

WEINGAND: No. Just a turn in the nature of the voter.

VASQUEZ: How does someone like [Assemblyman] Gary [K.] Hart get elected in this area?

WEINGAND: Well, I think a couple of reasons. One, he's a very personable young man and very bright and he comes across beautifully as an officeholder.

He's very able, he's a smart young man, and it comes across.

VASQUEZ: Do you think how a politician projects an image is as important as what his legislative program is nowadays?

WEINGAND: I think so.

VASQUEZ: Was that the case in your day?

WEINGAND: I think so. People are much more interested in personalities than issues.

VASQUEZ: Has that always been the case do you think?

WEINGAND: As far as I know.

VASQUEZ: When you were an officeholder, the voters liked your personality, not your program?

WEINGAND: Yes! I'm sure of it. I was a good drinking companion.

VASQUEZ: Were you? Let me ask you another question that I alluded to earlier and that has to do with the nature of partisan politics in California. A lot of people I've interviewed tell me that in the fifties, even in the early sixties, friendship and geniality played a great role in getting things done in the assembly and in the senate. But around 1966 or thereabouts, to pick a date, partisanship has played a greater role in what

motivates people to agree or not agree, to compromise or not compromise on political issues. What's your feeling on that?

WEINGAND: Oh, I don't think that's changed. Of course I haven't been up there for twenty years.

VASQUEZ: But I'm sure you've kept abreast of politics here in Santa Barbara, kept up with some things. Do you think that we've gotten more partisan in California than we used to be?

WEINGAND: That's a hard one to answer, I don't know.

VASQUEZ: Right now we're going through a crisis in the state legislature with an FBI sting operation going on and a number of senators, at least one senator, under indictment for conflict of interests.

WEINGAND: Who is that?

VASQUEZ: [Senator Joseph B.] Joe Montoya from Montebello. He was indicted recently.<sup>1</sup> The question is: Was legislative ethics, conflict of interest, and corruption as much of an issue when you were in office as it is today?

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1. Senator Montoya was indicted on charges of racketeering, extortion, and money laundering on May 17, 1989.

WEINGAND: Yes. It's always been there.

VASQUEZ: Do you find it is cyclical? That it comes and goes? Or is it always there? Isn't there any way to resolve it?

WEINGAND: Apparently not. Conflict of interest is a terrible drag on the political process.

VASQUEZ: In what way?

WEINGAND: Well, it's a people's legislature. There are no professionals in it, but they sort of become so after a while. I'm just looking over the faces [of those who were in the senate when I was]. As I told you, there were conflicts of interest amongst a number of them. But by and large, they were primarily interested in what was best for the state. My impression was there always [were] some sons-of-bitches that weren't principled people who were elected and served.

VASQUEZ: In that last twenty-five years we've had the Fair Political Practices Commission as a result of the Fair Political Practices Act. Do you think it has been very effective at curbing some of this?

WEINGAND: I wouldn't know. I don't know anything about it, actually.

VASQUEZ: Are you optimistic about the course of California

politics today?

WEINGAND: Yes. I think the people have a better handle on it, more influence and more power. In my time and before, there were a few people who completely dominated the legislature. People like Hugh Burns for example and others who were very effective. But they ruled the land with an iron hand and I don't think you have that.

VASQUEZ: Why do you think that's changed? Do you have any idea?

WEINGAND: Oh, I think people threw the old guard out. They got on to them in the various districts, and young men, fresh people, came along and discredited the old-timers and so they were tossed out. We got a set of apparently higher-principled legislators in many cases. Not all, believe me.

VASQUEZ: What did you learn about government and about people as a result of serving in the state senate?

WEINGAND: Oh, I learned that there are sons-of-bitches in the legislature! As there are in my business! Actually I don't like to see the legislature discredited because I don't believe they deserve



it. The majority of people serving up there are principled people. There's some bastards and sons-of-bitches, of course, but they are very much in the minority. You can go over this senate in those days (1963) and I can point out men of principle. Or most of them. A few were renegades.

VASQUEZ: But I think you will admit that today in 1989 the state legislature as well as the national legislature are at a pretty low ebb in public opinion.

WEINGAND: Yes, I detect that.

VASQUEZ: Is it deserved?

WEINGAND: Yes. I think so. Anytime a legislator puts his personal interests above the public interest, we're in trouble. They have got to stick within ethical rules. If not, and then they are dominated by special interest groups, it's a lousy legislature.

VASQUEZ: Right now, before the state legislature there are bills that would toughen or make more strict the rules of ethics [governing] legislators. Do you think that might help?

WEINGAND: Oh, I worked on that all the time I was there.

That was one of my major platforms: Clean up the ethics of the legislature.

VASQUEZ: Let me ask you one more question, what advice would you give to a young man or woman that wanted to be a state legislator in California today?

WEINGAND: Get himself or herself elected! Individuals don't change very much whether they are in or out [of office]. If they're ethical, they remain ethical. If they're not, it carries on into the legislature.

VASQUEZ: Thank you very much for this interview.