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Contact:

Special Collections, University of Delaware Library
181 South College Avenue
Newark, DE 19717-5267
302.831.2229 / 302.831.1046 (fax)
<http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec>
askspecref@winsor.lib.udel.edu

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ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH
SENATOR MEG MANNING
LEGISLATOR IN DELAWARE
AUGUST 19, 1976

Transcribed by:

R. Herman

April 8, 1978

Interview with: Senator Meg Manning

August 19, 1976

Interviewed by: Rebecca Button

B = Rebecca Button

M = Senator Meg Manning

B: This is an interview with Senator Meg Manning, senator from the eighth senatorial district who has had twenty years of public service in Delaware and the interview is on August 19, 1976. At the moment of the Republican's convention having chosen President Ford; Meg Manning what are your thoughts when you look at politics; national, state, your own public service?

M: In the first place I have opinions of course on some national issues but they're purely a housewife's opinion because I have no inside information on anything at a national level or very few things at a national level and so that if we talk about issues, I prefer to talk about state issues where I have of necessity done some studying and done a great deal of listening to people so that any opinions at a state level would be those of a working politician but anything on a national level would be only those of any other citizen. I'm not quite sure what you want me to talk about. I assume that it should be a little discussion about why I am no longer an active candidate for elected public office in Delaware. Well, when I started twenty years ago I got started...well actually it was twenty four years ago...sort of by the backdoor method. I had just completed our family. We have four children; three girls and a boy and the youngest girl was at that point about two I think and somebody, a very attractive young lady asked my husband to do some blocking and I decided that it was a very attractive

young lady and I thought I'd better go along and find out what all this process was about. I had always been interested in self government; in self determination. I can remember as a child being very much excited about the possibility that someday I would vote for President of the United States. But in college I played an active role in student government and was very proud that the college that I went to, Connecticut, was one of the forerunners in a meaningful student government and I was one of the student government officers. But then came the period when I married Robbie after being a Girl Scout professional two years. I married Robbie and we...it was during the Second World War and we moved to a couple of places in the United States and then we started having a family and gray, cotton batting descended as far as an active interest in community affairs so it wasn't until the youngest was about two that my interest in government was reawakened on a local and practical level and as I say, I went along because I decided I better find out what all this was about that the attractive young woman had asked my husband to do and I became fascinated in the process of blocking which as you know is the process of finding out who in an area lives where and what their political leanings are and putting that down on some sort of system so that those people in your own camp can be activated on election day; get out and vote. I helped Robbie with the blocking in our own immediate area and he at that point was busy with other things like Kiwanis and Power Squadron and so forth so I sort of took over the political activity of the family and became more and more fascinated and I joined the Active Young Republicans. The Active Young Republicans then were as feisty as they are now and I think that's wholly good.

And we were so bad as a matter of fact, that at our weekly luncheon meetings in town, the senior party sent somebody each week to meet with us; to have lunch with us to find out what the young devils were up to. We have a similar situation today and now that I am well beyond the Young Republican age, I still admire and understand what they're trying to do and they know here in Delaware that one of their strongest supporters is me. At any rate, through the Active Young Republicans I began to take a part, a very minor part in party structure aside from my little local bailiwick out here and one day I was papering the old Republican headquarters because I couldn't stand the way it looked and a man who held elective office and whom I admired very much called me on the phone and said, "Meg, sit down." And I said, "I was." And he said, "Have you ever thought of running for office?" And I said, "Yes indeed." And that surprised him and he said, "I think you ought to run for the House seat." And I said, "I think so too and I plan to do it two years from now." And he said, "That's not good enough. You better do it this year." And he got very little argument. We had a family discussion and we've always done that. I know it sounds sort of sachrin and mauldin but I am not a woman's liber and I feel very strongly that the things that I do beyond being a wife and mother must take second place. I have been extremely fortunate in having a husband and family who encouraged me but not egged me on. They allowed me to do my own thing. As a matter of fact, the best way I can explain that particular point of view I think is to repeat the conversation that happened right here on this porch. Several years ago when the woman's lib movement was in the bra burning stage before it settled down to a worthwhile and sensible course and the headlines

were full of bra burnings and all sorts of nonsense, I was on the front porch with our youngest daughter who was then I guess eighteen or twenty. She's now in law school in San Diego and is twenty six. So, I guess it must have been eight or ten years ago and I was ranting and raving about the headlines about how stupid that was; what do these women think they were doing and how ludicrous the whole business was and Katy who is about five foot two and a hundred pounds looked me up and down and she said, "Mother, you better just shut-up about that whole issue. I don't want to hear you talking about it anymore. Because the day you married Daddy, you were liberated and you haven't the slightest idea what other women go through." And I thought about that a little bit and thought it was pretty good advice. I'm not sure how we got talking about woman's lib. Well, when Jim Snowden who was then a Representative and later became a state Senator told me that that was the year, I was really ready because we had discussed it a little bit in the family and I was not adverse to doing it that year. So, indeed I went in and filed on my birthday of that year which is July 25th and that is customarily filing time. As a matter of fact I think it still is twenty years later and I was pretty excited about going in to file for a first time and the press was hanging around to see as they usually do, to see what was cooking that day at Republican headquarters and I babbled on about this was my birthday and wasn't this a great day to file and the reporter thought that was pretty interesting and he said, "How old are you?" And I said, "I'm thirty six years old." And this was in the morning and it was on a Wednesday because Wednesday was when the A.Y.R. went to lunch and I went to the normal luncheon with a friend of mine and it was our

custom at that point to go to Willie Dry after lunch once a week. There was at that time only one Willie Dry, down on lower Market Street. So, we went to lunch and went to Willie Dry and had a lovely afternoon and coming out of Willie Dry, there was a rack of newspapers on the corner and I could see the front page of the daily newspaper and I was banner headlines, thirty six year old woman admits age when she files or something like that and I was so excited that I went right up to the cop on the beat whom had almost given me a ticket about three weeks before so I felt I knew him and I said, "Look at this. It's me!" That was the beginning of my political career and at that time the Republican organization out here was not ecstatic about having a woman candidate and as a matter of fact, they bitterly fought me and they filed two people against me in the primary and then a third person also filed so we had a four way primary in my first. Actually the opposition to me as a woman and not a native Delawarean and having only moved here oh, four years before that, was a combination of things. There were those in the Republican party out here...well, they had denied me a place on the Republican committee just before that and I was furious. That lent fuel to my determination to be a Republican and furthermore to go all the way. So, the Republican committee was not enchanted with having a newcomer. They were... out here it was pretty rural at that time and they lived by the philosophy that what was good enough for my grandfather is good enough for my grandchild and there were many of us and in increasing numbers who chose to move out here to bring up our kids in a rural atmosphere but we were not going to sit still for that particularly as applied to schools and roads, that philosophy. So, that in the

first place I represented a threat to the established order. They also didn't much like the idea of a woman in government although I thought then and I think now that that is a red herring and a false label and when we get to the other end of the spectrum I'll again repeat the same philosophy. But they didn't particularly like the fact that I was not a native Delawarean. I had not lived in this house more than four years and I represented a new group of people. So, they filed two men whom I've even forgotten at this point, against me that were established party and then a maverick came along and decided the water looked pretty good. He'd jump in too. And I was so green that it never occurred to me that I could lose. I had strong support from people like us. I don't mean that I was such great shakes and I didn't think so then either, but I represented a valid point of view and those people were rallying to my support. We'd been through the chairs in the P.T.A., with four kids you can imagine. We were pretty well known in the school system and I was treasurer or secretary or something in the P.T.A. so people knew who I was and those very people in the P.T.A. were the movers, the motivaters so that they rallied to the cause and I worked very hard. I had an excellent campaign manager. We did all sorts of corny things which nobody had ever done before and at very low cost because I believe then and... For instance, we decided that since many of the people out in this area didn't know me by name but because I shopped in the grocery store and there was only one at that point, a lot of people knew me by face. So, we got a snapshot of me and sweet talked a printer into making copies of it, snapshot size and the cost was ridiculous. It was something like...I guess he charged us maybe fifteen dollars for two thousand copies and we

hand mimeographed a letter as if it was a letter from me to the voters out here. Now, of course this is done now, but then it wasn't done and we enclosed a snapshot just as if it was an informal letter and here I'm sending you a picture of me and we sent it to every registered voter in the area and I sent two thousand. That's what my memory gives as a number. It may have been three thousand but certainly it wasn't much more than that and the postage at that point was either three or six cents. I can't remember but that was the expense of our campaign and a couple of pairs of shoes because I'm a firm believer in door to door. At any rate, one of the interesting experiences during that campaign...you've seen our backyard when you came up the drive-way here and we've always had a vegetable garden. It's one of the reasons we moved out here. And we grow our own corn. I haven't bought corn in twenty six years because Robbie grows it. So, I was up in an even more rural section north of Newark which at that time was just straight farm, campaigning and a little old lady who was a committee woman up there whose name I've forgotten, decided she'd look me up and down. I was asking for her support and so we got talking and she asked me leading questions as little old ladies are want to do and at one point I said something about we had our own vegetable garden. I wasn't pretending to be a farmer but I did understand some of the problems of growing food. And she said, "Well Mrs. Manning tell me, how do you cook corn?" And I said, "I put a pot of water on the stove and then I go out and pick the corn and then I come back and put it in the boiling water." And a sort of grin went over her face. That district was the first one to come in on primary day; the results of that district and I won it hand over fist because I wasn't trying

to kid anybody out in the farm area and she respected that and she was very influential. So that was the beginning of my political career really. We did it with shoe leather, enthusiasm and very little money and I've done that straight along every time now. The second time I ran...I can't remember whether it was the second time I ran for the House or the first time I ran for the State Senate. I had another primary. That was a little different. That was a guy who genuinely wanted to be what it...whether it was either representative or senator I don't remember. He was a good guy and he was pleasant to me but he thought he'd be better. He was old guard but not stupid old guard and I beat him handily. We were friends until he died so there was no animosity there at all. And since that first time there have been twenty years of real exciting, challenging activities. We've just talked about the twenty years full of challenge and excitement and I guess some of the reasons they have been full of challenge and excitement...in the first place I get excited about ideas. I suppose in today's parlance we'd call it issues but an idea as it applies to people was really the reason I was in government and it made little difference what field it was in. When I first went down there I thought now I've been through the chairs in the P.T.A. I've had it right up to here with school problems. I don't want to have anything to do with education. Let somebody else do that. But I soon got down there and found out that nobody else wanted to do it and since I'd had an active participatory role, I better do education so I did a great deal in the field of education at the beginning. Then more and more people like me got in the Legislature and I sort of got away from education matters. One of the first bills...

one of the first matters that I addressed was an increased bonus for paraplegic veterans and I don't know how I got involved with that except that one of the paraplegic veterans lived in my district behind us up here and I got to be friends with him and the amount of money that he got from the state...of course they did then and do now get a federal allotment but it was peanuts from the state and so one of the first bills I introduced was to increase that amount of money and I remember we asked him to come down and testify. I wrote the bill myself which is something I've done pretty much through the years. I was an English major in college and I get very impatient with lawyer's language so that for the most part or many times I write the bills myself. If they're complicated and technical, obviously I don't. But when it's talking about something like raising a state allotment to a paraplegic, that I cope with. As a matter of fact, before I was in the Legislature actually, just before, our son who is now a lawyer and I on our bellies on the living room floor wrote a bill and I also got that one passed. It had to do with the transportation of explosives because there was a truck out here on Kirkwood Highway that was parked off Kirkwood Highway that was a plumber's truck and it had some explosives in it and some kids started a fire and the truck blew up and we were horrified that you could allow a truck with explosives in it to be parked in an empty lot. So, Bill and I went over to the fire hall and talked to the firemen about it and came back and we wrote a small section of the code and we got our lumps because we found out we had to not only use reason and common sense in writing a bill but you also had to get clearance from...it happened in Delaware...Hercules and DuPont who were in the

explosives business and they put us in touch with the National Manufacturers Explosive...whatever it was. So, we learned the hard way. We got that bill passed though. But, back to the paraplegic, that was one of the first bills that I introduced down there and we wanted...my friend Gary Steele to come and testify and discovered that it was impossible for him to get into Legislative Hall. He drove a car. He was wheelchair bound but he could get himself from the wheelchair into the car and he had special controls on the car but it was an absolute impossibility for him to get into Legislative Hall. Now we solved the problem by having four men pick up the wheelchair and carry him in but that was degrading and that particular interest has lasted the twenty years; my interest in handicapped people as people rather than as special object of attention. Gary is a good example of a perfectly reasonable, intelligent citizen who should have every right to participate in government just like anybody else. That beginning twenty years ago or eighteen years ago has led me to my current and ongoing interest in handicapped people and I am on the White House Conference on Handicapped Planning Committee. There are twenty five people all over the United States appointed to this. We have our conference next May in Washington. We have our state conference next month here in Delaware and it's been an extremely fascinating experience. My initial interest was as I say Gary Steele, but it's carried over the years and one of the major pieces of legislation that I was responsible for was our states effort about five years ago to remove architectural barriers from publicly funded buildings. We passed our state law before the federal government passed theirs and I'm very proud of that. Our effort to date have been to say

that any building built in whole or in part with state tax money must be accessible to all citizens. There are a couple of funny stories along those lines. Right after we passed ours the federal government passed a similar law and so federal funds also must be used for wholly accessible building and right after the federal law was passed, the new Federal Building downtown was built and it's magnificent as far as having telephones at wheelchair level; having proper accommodations in the ladies room or mens room for people in wheelchairs; having visually lighted signs clearly discernable for people with poor eyesight and so forth. But, after it was built and dedicated, there was a big flap and it came to my attention through the Mancus Club here in Delaware and I'm on the Board of Directors now of the Mancus Club but I haven't done much because I've just been appointed. The Mancus Club was furious because they...there were no curb cuts; they couldn't get in. Now, it happens that the Federal Building is on Kings Street which is a state maintained road. State tax money goes into the road. The building itself was built with federal funds, also controlled by a similar law and yet people couldn't get in and I raised hell but I did it through Pete duPont's office. He was a Congressman as he still is until he becomes Governor in November and so I called Pete's office and raised hell about it and got a good note back from Pete immediately and the note said that he had taken it up with the GSA and the city of Wilmington and something would be done by I think the letter said by the end of September and this was in mid-summer I guess, two summers ago and I thought a likely story! Because, my experience with the federal government has been that they talk a lot and don't do a damn thing. However, I

was in town in mid-September and it's always something of a challenge to go into Wilmington because they keep changing the traffic flow and I never know where I'm going so, I decided well, I had a couple of few minutes extra and I'd just drive around by the new Federal Building after I determined which way the traffic went and see about the curb cuts and by the great lord Harry they did have new curb cuts and I was so excited. It must have been last summer because Pete was already starting to campaign for governor. Last summer, how well I remember and one of the first meetings that he and I both went to when I was campaigning for lieutenant governor and he had announced for governor, I was so excited about it that I said....Pete had told about why he wanted to be governor...and I said, "And I want you to know something else." And I got right up and told the audience what a good job Pete had done to get the curb cuts for the handicapped. At any rate, this whole process is an ongoing thing and will require tremendous effort even after the White House Conference. That's just the bringing together of our deficiencies in the whole field and what little we've accomplished but it has to be an ongoing thing and I'm going to be very much interested to continue to work on that. Another one of my interests over the years has been giving attention to the problems of groups that are not organized and one of those rather large groups is Senior Citizens. It was my bill originally that allowed a tax relief for senior citizens on fixed incomes as far as their property tax goes and that was about oh, it must have been twelve-fifteen years ago that I started and it took me three or four years to get the thing passed. It had already gone through in New Jersey and gone to the Supreme Court of

the United States so we knew it was constitutional but I had a tough time persuading the counties to give up the income and we had figures proving they weren't getting an income anyway because you can't get blood out of a turnip. But at any rate we were finally successful in getting that passed and then it became statewide and now it's back to the counties because they're the taxing agent and they should have the right of determining how much tax relief for senior citizens but it was my bill originally that started the whole process and I'm very proud of that. I have spent a relatively small amount of time fighting for causes where the proponents or detractors are organized because they need me less I think I think I was saying but old people until very recently weren't organized at all. They are more or less organized now in several different groups but it's not very effective organization yet. By nature of their age it never will be an effective strong lobby like the teachers for instance. So, most of the time I have fought for lost causes is not the right word because they're not lost but causes that are not formalized and with strong lobby pressure. Another example of that and this is...I didn't win darn it but our divorce laws in Delaware although they were revamped four years ago and are for the most part very good; there's one very sad defficiency and I cannot get the attention of the General Assembly or the legal profession. Now in Delaware somebody who files for a divorce can never be awarded alimony. Only the person who is filed against and if you think that through only in two cases out of the four grounds for divorce can that happen, can alimony be awarded anyway. I have no argument with that

particular phase but if you think the business through, if a wife has been mistreated and I don't mean physically because there are laws about abuse and so forth but if her life has been made miserable for many, many years; if she files for divorce, she never can be awarded alimony and it's particularly sad in the case of a woman who has been a wife and mother for many years and has come to the age where she can no longer get meaningful employment with pension benefits. She's too old to accrue pension credits. That particular battle I lost in Dover this year and I'm not going back of course as an elected official but I know a lot of the guys down there and they're going to pass that sooner or later. Some of the other things that I have been interested in over the years for instance; a peculiar one having to do with shoring up ditches for ditch diggers. We used to have at least one death a year when a trench caved in. I got interested in that; I don't even remember how and we got some labor people working on it. We got some engineers working on it and passed a law which required that ditches be inspected before men were asked to work in them. Certain precautions had to be taken and that was...it must have been twelve or fourteen years ago that we got the law passed and we have had to my knowledge two deaths since then instead of one a year. So, that was a victory. A small matter but nevertheless a victory. I was the grandmother or the mother or whatever of the statewide family court system. That took a lot of blood, sweat and tears. We had three separate county systems and actually it was Russ Peterson before he was elected Governor that got me interested in the problem. I can remember standing down on Eleventh and Market Street in the pouring rain while Russ persuaded me that this was something

I ought to be interested in and Russ was that kind of guy; you didn't even know it was raining when he was talking to you. So, I got involved in the rewrite of the family court law and it took three or four years to get it done. Russ in the meantime had been elected Governor. The process again was bucking the legal establishment and that was difficult. One of the other major problems was that Muffin duPont and I had a difference in point of view about one aspect of the new family court law and I don't know whether you know Muffin duPont or not but she is an extremely interesting, very dynamic woman. This is sort of an interesting side light because I respect Muffin duPont tremendously. We disagreed on this one small thing. It wasn't so small but it was only a part of the whole law and she did everything she could to defeat the law and I did everything I could to get it passed and finally Russ who was then Governor realized that we were getting nowhere so he called the whole thing off and put both of us on a committee along with a lot of other people; lawyers and family court judges and lay people and so forth and gave us a year to quit messing around and come up with a compromise. If Muffin and I had done it we could have come to a compromise in a couple of weeks but you had to go through the trappings with the legal profession so it took us a year but we did come up with a compromise and we have an excellent family court law now. The people who administer the family court, the judges and so forth, clerks, are incredibly poor so we have not a very good family court and I'm just saying it straight out. I have said it on the floor of the Senate so it's no secret. It's heartbreaking because we put so much effort into rewriting the law. Frankly we have a very poor family court because

we have a Governor who for the past four years has appointed political hacks in both parties and it's a crying damn shame. I cannot tell you the...well, Hiram Warner, Republican, was on the periphery of family court for at least a hundred years I guess. He's a jerk and incompetent. He didn't even get the backing of the Bar Association when he wanted to be a family court judge but by the great lord Harry his name came down and the stupid damn Democrats confirmed him. Now is that's the caliber of family court judge we have, no wonder it goes to pot. We had when we first started up the statewide family court; we had Bill Gordon who was a lawyer for Hercules, was before and is back now and he was made Chief Judge. Unfortunately he wasn't allowed to do what he knew was right because there were carry-over judges who could not be removed from office who made life absolutely miserable for Bill Gordon and he stuck it for two good years and then he said, "Who needs this grief?" The old carry-over judges...for instance, he is no longer a judge but it's typical, we had a law many years ago, still on the books, that anybody under sixteen could not carry any kind of a gun unless he was accompanied by an adult. The police would pick up kids with B-B guns; take them to family court because they were under eighteen so it went to family court and the family court judge said, "When I was a boy growing up in Sussex County, I had my own gun and I went hunting and I am not gonna charge these kids with any wrongdoing." In spite of the fact that it's in the law, pure and simple. Now that's typical of the kind of people that we have in the family court besides total incompetence like Hiram Warner. So, until we get a Governor who can make enough appointments to family court

judgeships so that the majority of judges would be competent, responsible judges, we're going to have a lousy system in spite of the fact that the law itself is very good. We have been talking about the rewrite of the statewide family court law. That was one of the fields that I got very much interested in. I am still interested in it but I am refusing to get in an uproar personally because of the very poor staffing at the moment. Another large project and I lost this one but it was close, was a rewrite of the State Constitution and that was a seven year effort. It took a long time. I was on the original commission that rewrote it. I was on the legislative committee that had hearings and passed it a first time. The General Assembly passed it. It was not advertised properly through...I'm not sure whose fault it was either the Secretary of the State or the Chairman of the legislative committee. At any rate it was not advertised. We had to start all over again. We passed it a first leg and the second leg was up for passage and one of my own Republican cohorts in the House changed his vote out of pique on another matter and defeated the seven year effort. That is sort of a heart breaker but it's also the way things happen. The whole effort was an extremely interesting one; rather academic and one would have to believe that the effort worthwhile and I do just because of a strong belief on my part that a constitution is only a framework, a statement of principle and statutory law is what's used to flesh it out and our whole effort in rewriting the Constitution was to make it a document that could be used and understood by every citizen and the statutory law has the detail which is not always understandable by every citizen. So, although we lost that effort and I have some...not

bitterness really because you only have bitterness if you don't understand. I have some regrets but it still was a very worthwhile seven year effort. I think that sort of...there were a lot of funny smaller efforts over the years and one of my biggest problems is that whatever bill is being discussed on the floor is of paramount interest to me for the most part. I get involved in almost everything and as a matter of fact I was paid a supreme compliment the other day when I was a guest speaker at a retired group down in Dover and one of the clerks was a member in the audience, one of the podium staff in the Senate and I told him something about Dover and got him laughing and so forth and the man said at the end of my speech, "We'll miss Mrs. Manning down there very much because whatever was going on, you better believe she knew what they were talking about and she usually had a comment of her own." When I first went to Dover Governor Boggs had just been re-elected for his second term. I found Governor Boggs completely, absolutely charming; a lot of fun; a very caring man but not particularly a good administrator and I think Cale would even agree with that himself. He knew everybody he talked to by first name; how many children they had and their color preference. He could remember that and still does twenty years later. But he was not a very strong guy. You have to have a streak of indominability and he does not have that. Then Carvel was re-elected for his second term and I found him...I didn't like him much when he was Governor probably because at that point we were in such a minority as Republicans that we felt stomped on. We had no voice in the government. Over the years since his governorship I have found out that he is probably one of the most conscientious guys that we ever had as

Governor. It sounds funny but when he gets his something going, you better believe it's going to get done. I have a lot of respect for him now and I really didn't when he was Governor although he was always pleasant to us. I don't mean that. But he sort of over looked us because there weren't enough of us to make much of a ripple. And then came Terry and Terry was an entirely different kind of guy. He had been Supreme Court...head of the Supreme Court in Delaware. He was a lawyer's lawyer. They tell me he was easy going as a lawyer and I have no way of evaluating that but I found him as Governor absolutely accessible. You could go up and talk to Terry no matter what he was doing. He found time to talk to you and he took life easy. He enjoyed the finer things. He was a charming Southern gentleman with a great deal of legal background and I liked him tremendously. Effective as a Governor, I don't know. He got things done for individual people and he didn't care whether they were Republicans or Democrats. Obviously he had to rely on Democrats to get elected but he would serve Republicans just as ardently as Democrats once he was in office. And then came Peterson and Peterson was again entirely different. He was a high powered, extremely intelligent member from industry. He had never been in a Legislative position and I have a firm belief and it applies to the President of the United States all the way down; you don't start at the top. You must be in order to go... to move up you have to start at the very bottom. If Russ had started, had had some service in the General Assembly before he was elected Governor, he would still be Governor today for another three months. But he had tremendous ideas; enthusiasm overflowing; worked twenty four hours out of every twenty four but he had not had

enough political experience at the grassroot level to really be able to put his ideas in such a fashion...he got them passed but he built up a lot of animosity in the process because he didn't know the right way to get them passed and to get the public with him and we still find pockets of animosity and it's a real shame because he was one of the best Governors as far as ideas that we have had in my memory and then we have Tribbett and Tribbett is in my estimation...when he was first elected and we started together in the General Assembly so I've known him for twenty years...when he was first elected I thought well, he's going to be a nice, easy going, exact opposite of Peterson and maybe that's what the people want; not many ideas but he'll just hold the fort until something else happens and that is true. He has not had idea one either of his own or his own staffs. I used to think that he was a pleasant enough guy. I am now convinced that he has a mean streak in him. He finds people's Achilles heel; their one weakness and plays on that. He did it to me. I've seen him do it to other people and he has no sense of humor and by the great lord Harry if you're in politics you've got to have a sense of humor or you might as well just throw in the towel. We're now going to briefly outline my candidacy for Lieutenant Governor. About two years ago now or maybe it was twenty months ago I decided that twenty years in one field was enough and I publicly stated that I would not be running for Legislative seat again and I have thought for several years about being Lieutenant Governor. As a matter of fact I was almost nominated ten years ago or twelve years ago but the time was not right and so I was not. But I had been thinking about it so first I decided that I did not want a Legislative seat again and

decided that after to talking to a lot of people personally that I would try for Lieutenant Governor and the family of course we discussed it thoroughly as we had twenty years ago. My first step was to write to all the party leaders that I could think of in and out of office and tell them what I wanted to do. Then I got a campaign team together. I was fortunate in getting a campaign manager who was without a doubt the most capable guy in the state of Delaware and not only do I think so but I have letters from the opposing camp who agree with me. Ken managed this whole thing. We're friends. He's a very close friend with our kids and he's only twenty seven or twenty eight but we knew each other well enough so there was no problem with sense of values. We knew how the other guy felt so our discussions were how to further those aims rather than what our aims were. We touched base with all the they, whoever they are. We laid...worked on a budget. We got specialists together, mostly lay people, each with something to contribute to the team. We never had a campaign committee because that's such a pompous name but we did have a team and we met regularly. We outlined a time table for what we were going to do when and so forth and took it from there and my first effort was to go up and down the state talking to John Q. Republican because that's where the strength of a nomination lies. At that point and I started in March a year ago...at that point we didn't...had Jeannie Bookhammer had declared for Governor and nobody else. Then at the end of June Pete duPont said he wanted to be Governor and that put a different complexion on things. I did talk to Pete in July of last year and he said that he would state his preference for Lieutenant Governor. I would be on the list but beyond that it he would not say and he had

discouraged some other people from even being on the list. Se, I... knew right off that Pete was not for me and that did not diminish my efforts. It rather strengthened them and I worked like a Trojan with my team then we got some politicians aboard and we called them tacticians. They joined...well, they had a separate group and they occasionally met with the team who were specialists in allied fields but not politicians and we just worked a week, four days before the convention in June. Pete came out with his letter endorsing Andy Falls who is a very good friend of mine and there is absolutely no animosity and I said so in the beginning when Andy was quite obviously Pete's running mate. There was no problem between Andy and me. I like Andy and his wife and they like Robbie and me; no problem which in itself was unique. We swore that we would show that we could have a primary fight or convention fight without dividing the party and I think we've done that partly. At least there's no personal animosity. Anyway, Pete came out with his letter endorsing Andy and even then when we left this house Friday at three o'clock in the afternoon the day before the convention, I had more than fifty percent of the delegates but the steam-roller tactics and not necessarily by Pete himself but by Pete's enthusiastic supporters, the steam-roller tactics were absolutely incredible and unless you had been there you wouldn't believe it. I wouldn't have believed it and I had for thirty seconds as you will remember enough to go to a primary. There were people standing to change their vote one way or the other and no political party particularly as personal as we are in Delaware needs that kind of divisiveness so I cut it off and as I said earlier any politician is part ham and I thoroughly enjoyed my moment in the sun and my

dramatics. The only time during the convention that I was close to tears was when Nathan led the demonstration right the hell down the middle of the aisle with a sign supporting me and he was right at the head of the demonstration and I peeked in through the side door and that almost made me cry and that was pride and joy not sorrow. So, it was a good experience and I think every politician I know...every person has to have a little bitter with the sweet. That was my bitter. I don't regret it. You can't go through life skimming the cream and I've had a fascinating time. Pete...I have talked to Pete since then. I still think he made a mistake because Andy is a very capable guy; he's not a very dramatic campaigner. You need a little pizzazz when you're campaigning. You have to turn people on. Evidently our candidacy did because Pete still is getting letters. His commercials endorsing Andy have made an awful lot of people mad and I've been going around trying to put out the fires. This has rekindled them and there are a lot of people who are still upset. Now mind you, I have very warm friends personally and they're part of that group but there are a lot of citizens who are not particularly my friends who are very much disturbed at the strong arm methods. That is not the kind of government they want and for that reason the unhappiness still smoulders partly out of personal loyalty but partly because of the methodology and for that reason it's very difficult. However back to...I have talked to Pete. He asked me to talk to him when both of us were about to go on vacation the end of June. We had to postpone it until I guess it was during July and I did go in and talk to him in his office. He asked for my help in the campaign and when I walked in I said, "You have my undying support because

another four years of Tribbett and we might as well all move to Mars." Aside from that I like Pete personally. I admire his abilities. I think he made a mistake but boy we're all entitled to at least one. But I'm working hard to get him elected and also working for Andy but beyond that he did say to me that he wanted me to be part of his administration after he was elected and my position there was I am not looking for a job. I also though cannot turn off twenty years of interest in government and if there is a job that I would like to do in your administration I will certainly be interested. So, that's where the matter lies at the moment. We often hear that the bonded indebtedness for citizens in Delaware is higher than any other state. Statistically it is in the top half for sure but I would point out that that is a false and misleading statement because we in Delaware do all of our capital improvement at a state level. Very little at a local school level or county level. We have no county road systems. It's all state. The school system is state not county not school district except for a small supplement so if you say that the bonded indebtedness for each citizen in Delaware is higher here than most states you're right but the bonded indebtedness of each citizen statewide and locally in other states in many cases far outshadows Delaware's. I think actually after twenty years of experience that Delaware has been extremely prudent. Partly by necessity because if you have a state as small as Delaware everybody knows everything. You don't push something under the rug. Now we were able to push The Farmer's Bank under the rug but it came out a lot faster than it would have in a large state like New York for instance. Incidentally I was born in Rochester. So that one of the reasons that our

budget has grown in Delaware is just number of people. One is cost of everything and a third is this stupid, damn federal system which says I will give you a carrot today if tomorrow you furnish your own carrot and the carrot is desirable enough as far as human services so that states do comply and you get a program started with federal funds and then all of a sudden federal funds run out and the state has to take over. In some cases we've actually turned down some of those federal projects for that reason and that to me is prudent. If we can't afford to pay them on a pay as you go basis then we shouldn't even start them. Unfortunately we've started a lot of nonsense too. I can think of a couple of federal programs that we never should have gotten involved in either at a federal level or at a local level and I'd just as soon we'd cut them out completely. But each person, each member of the Legislature has his own cause select so I'm not unique in that by any means. I really think that the state of Delaware although we have gloom and doom and every year we can't decide whether we're in the black or the red, that's a book keeping problem and I could solve it if I were Governor in short order but nobody will listen to me and I'm not Governor so it's alright. But it's an academic discussion. We surely are in debt but we're not in the size debt that's not manageable and I think over the twenty years we have been prudent and done a fairly good job in serving the people. We're discussing briefly the Watergate and Nixon. As a citizen I regret it that it happened. Any government goes through something like this I'm sure. Its effect on local government in Delaware has been much less than in some other places partly because Delaware electorate are extremely sophisticated people. They will

choose a Democrat at one position on the slate and immediately cross over and choose a Republican down the slate or up the slate. We have mastered the voting machine in Delaware and I'm proud of that capacity of ours to choose whom we want. Surely the Watergate was damaging nationally and in some degree it was damaging locally last time. I think the effects are wearing off. I have no patience with the Republicans who are trying to stir up a hornet's nest among the Democrats. I think that's tit for tat and it's stupid. We should be pushing the things that we do right as a Republican party and not fall into this trap of recriminations. I think that there's a great future for the Republican party both nationally and locally based on people's desire to run their own affairs. That is a valid difference between Republicans and Democrats. The "great white father" in Washington has proved ineffective and expensive. The "great white father" in Dover because we're much closer to that "great white father", does a better job and I would hope that the trend toward local government strength continues.