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INTERVIEW

J. CALEB BOGGS

FORMER DELAWARE CONGRESSMAN AND GOVERNOR

INTERVIEWED BY REBECCA BUTTON

Transcribed by
R. Herman
January 10, 1980

B: This is an interview with J. Caleb Boggs, former congressman, governor and senator of the state of Delaware; a man who received the top national and state offices from his people. Today, former senator Boggs is working as a lawyer in Wilmington. His office is in the Market Tower Building. Today is a beautiful day in 1976. By the way, I noticed the mall and the beautiful, clean building.

Boggs: It's great isn't it?

B: Wilmington never looked better.

Boggs: Great, yeah. I think they're doing a terrific job.

B: When did they clean the library for example?

Boggs: Oh, they worked on that for the past two years I think over a period of time and it looks fine doesn't it.

B: Right. The reason I'm bringing this up is because this will be read and heard and understood by people many years from now.

Boggs: Sure. Sure.

B: Today we're in the middle of the campaign of 1976. As a Republican are you astounded by Mr. Reagan's success in tackling Ford in primaries?

Boggs: I'm not astounded. I anticipated that Mr. Reagan would make a very vigorous run. I thought he would do well in the southwest. I think how he'll do today in Nebraska is another question. It's probably a toss up. I believe Ford will win it myself. Also the Michigan primary which I understand is next week isn't it...or soon...is a very key state and I believe that President Ford should win that, that being his home state. But I always anticipated that Mr. Reagan would make a vigorous run but I still think that Mr. Ford will win the nomination.

B: When you contrast the two men, one the former governor of California and carrying the conservative banner and the other having

had experience as president, when we look at the foreign policy of the Panama Canal for example, can you account for yourself in terms of Republican popularity of this issue?

Boggs: I don't think the issue is influencing votes one way or another. That thing is a fictitious issue as far as I see it and they were going to vote for Reagan anyway. It didn't have anything to do with the vote in Texas. Don't think it had a thing to do with it.

B: That's interesting.

Boggs: Yeah, it was just newspaper stuff.

B: Right. And the way it's being used, it has been ballooned into the military conflict between the two men.

Boggs: Oh, I think so too. I think so.

B: Do you see this as serious as the Goldwater-Rocky fight in 1964?

Boggs: I think it is a...it's a serious fight but I can't compare it at all because there was a fight between a liberal, Rocky and Goldwater an extreme conservative. Well, this is not a fight between a liberal and conservative. Both Reagan and Ford are conservatives and this is just a fight on behalf of the extreme conservatives against a conservative, a strong conservative, a true conservative as a matter of fact but a realistic conservative and I think all it's going to happen to is a defeat for any candidate which is probably nominated which is the way it looks to me. I'm distressed about the way the thing's going.

B: It seems to a normal newspaper reader astounding that he keeps moving on and winning primaries.

Boggs: Well, he's in the southwest. We'll see what he does today and in Michigan.

B: Right. What do you think about the Democratic campaign of '76?

Boggs: Well, I think that Mr. Carter deserves a real, a real recognition

for the fantastic job he's done so far. He apparently has a terrific organization...must have because he's been winning the primaries. I really had thought that Senator Jackson would be the front runner because of his long experience and high recognition throughout the nation but some reason or other he didn't make it.

B: He didn't seem to have charisma...whatever it is.

Boggs: Or, I don't know what he lacked. I like him personally. I know him. I don't know Governor Carter. Yeah, I've met Governor Carter one time.

B: And you have respect for Senator Jackson.

Boggs: Oh, yes I do. Yeah, I do. But I have met Governor Carter and don't have a thing against him. He must be great. He was very personable when I met him a year ago, September in Philadelphia along with others that were there.

B: Was he beginning his campaign then?

Boggs: No, this was at the reconvening of the first Continental Congress in Philadelphia you know and were the participating thirteen original states and Governor Tribbett of our state of Delaware invited former governor Carvel, Senator Freer and myself to join him at that meeting and that's where we met Governor Carter and he was very personable.

B: Did you dress up?..

Boggs: No, no, we didn't dress up for it but it was a very wonderful, enjoyable affair and meeting all these people and certainly as Governor Carter's come along in the primaries why, makes it all the more interesting to have had the opportunity to meet him. It was just social of course but...

B: Are you distressed as a former governor of our state and public servant to read for example, Mr. Kerner died on Sunday, the man who

was formally governor of Illinois who was indicted for a race track scandal and Mr. Mandell of Maryland is going to be going on trial June one and Mr. Moore of West Virginia has just been found innocent in terms of a trial which went...which happened. Does that distress you?

Boggs: Well, it distresses me that Governor Kerner passed away. I never did know him; never did have the opportunity to meet him. It distresses me too that any public official should be involved and have charges brought against him and even though he may be found innocent and acquitted as Governor Moore was acquitted. It distresses me also that in Governor Moore's case and in Governor Connelly's case there's a tendency now to be headhunters. That's the thing and whether they've got the evidence to convict him or not why they headhunt and the publicity and for all the reasons it seems to me there should be better judgement used and looking at the evidence whether they have evidence or there are grounds to try somebody because they destroy careers and families by this headhunting business they're doing now.

B: Do you feel that the grand jury is sometimes misused?

Boggs: Well, I'm not saying it's misused, no. I don't know about each individual...you can't make a general thing.

B: No, no.

Boggs: You can't make a general thing but under stress there are problems about it of course, yeah.

B: In the case of...

Boggs: Now, Mandell I won't comment on that because that's right in the courts at the present time and I don't know a thing about it.

B: Right. It was distressing to you as a Republican to watch the Watergate problem unravelling and...

Boggs: Of course

B: And Mr. Agnew, the law and order man was found to be taking money.

Boggs: Of course, of course, yeah.

B: Do you think this will change things for the better?

Boggs: I don't want to get into that business because I don't know any more about it than what I read in the newspapers. Period. And Mr. Agnew as I recall pleaded guilty to a income tax evasion thing I think. Is that correct?

B: Right.

Boggs: I'm not even sure of that and that's all. Now, any other charges against him...I can't lay myself open. I don't want to be sued by maligning a man's character and going into all that business because I don't have any facts on that.

B: I meant that he left office as a result of this and...

Boggs: You said he stole money and took money and all that sort of business. I don't know that he did it.

B: Oh excuse me, that's what they say when he...

Boggs: Well, that's another story. I don't know that he did. I have to be very careful. I can't say people stole money and did all that.

B: Right, no. Excuse me, I guess I meant that it was disheartening again...

Boggs: Well, I think the public was carried away.

B: ...to find a law and order man having problems like this when he had talked about that.

Boggs: Yeah, right, yeah, probably, yeah. But I don't know. You're getting into things that all I know is by what I read in the newspapers about it.

B: Yeah, I just meant generally in terms of his having to leave office for whatever reason.

Boggs: Yeah, well, he pleaded guilty to an income tax evasion as I recall the newspapers, yeah.

B: You know, one thing that I noticed in the newspaper a week ago... again, I'm bad too about this but it was about travel vouchers that some congressmen were using to say that they had driven home to get money for that because they are really hard up in terms of having to get back to the home district and pay the air fare...

Boggs: I read that in the paper.

B: ...and I was wondering if you don't think that that congressional salary is too low.

Boggs: It is and it isn't. It is for some and it isn't for others. It depends on the thing. I think it's adequate.

B: Oh, I was wondering about that because it seems to me...

Boggs: I think it's adequate.

B: ...having to get to your home district and if you're going to have to pay...

Boggs; I can't account for them doing like that. All I know there is by what I read in the paper and it was only the last two weeks. I don't know a specific case.

B: Right. Well, I was just thinking they would need more money to go.

Boggs: No, I don't know, no.

B: It's difficult to tell.

Boggs: I don't know and there again, again these are newspaper allegations. I haven't heard of any confirmation or anybody being found guilty of any of that and bookkeeping and so forth; I don't know what the problem is and I don't know of any congressman who's been specifically charged with any violation.

B: Oh, I don't think they were. I don't think they were. About the relationship between president and congress, do you see the congress

taking more unto itself?

Boggs: Well, there's a great history, a two hundred year history almost of the congress, the legislative and the executive and the great pendulum swings. You know, when Roosevelt was president for many years why, he didn't even need a congress as you know and it was simply a rubber stamp and he tried to make the Supreme Court. But, then years before and other presidents, Jackson and on down the line, the pendulum has swung and there will always be continuing debate who has the upper hand. Under the constitution there is a fine checks and balance system and I think our system works. It may not be perfect in the eyes of every person on every issue but I think it hasn't been...there's nothing come up that seems any better and of course strong personalities in presidents and war circumstances lead to the president to have more power and then other circumstances lead to the congress to take a bigger hand and so this varies with circumstances and I could spend a half a day indicating why the power went to the president. He didn't take it away from the congress. The congress gave it to him, urged it on him and properly so in a lot of instances, not always and was slow to take it back.

B: What about the new budget procedure?

Boggs: Sounds good, sounds good, yeah, it's a new...this is the first year really of its going into effect. It's a phased process so we won't be able to judge how effective it is probably until five or ten years from now but it sounds...if they really intend to make it work then it will be a good check on appropriations.

B: And this would help the balance between the legislative and executive somewhat would it not?

Boggs: It could. Yes, it could. But the president of course can only do

what the law and the congress authorizes and only carry out the expenditure of funds as appropriated by the congress. Sometimes he has authority not to spend the funds if the reason for whatever judgement he makes and sometimes the president and the congress disagree on that and in that case why the congress can then take appropriate action to see that the funds are expended for example. But I think that the congress by virtue of having the purse strings of course has a tremendous influence on policy but it can't exercise it every five minutes. It has to be wise enough to actually make a policy and appropriate the funds and have the president of the United States as provided by the constitution to carry that out. All five hundred and thirty five members of the congress can't carry this policy out and that policy out and change it's mind every five minutes about things. This is what the congress tries to do.

B: The rules of the senate were...enabled other material other than the rule itself or the law itself to be voted, is that not true compared with the house rules?

Boggs: Well, the house rules are different than the...the house rules are different than the senate rules. The senate is the great forum for debate and the rule of germaneness is there but it is very rare when a senator wishes to discuss a subject but he isn't given the opportunity to do it and unless a very strict application of rules...strict interpretation...why in one form or another... why the senate usually can consider all types of amendments to a bill. In the house they come out...a bill comes out under a rule which may allow for say four hours of debate and only one amendment or one motion to send it back to the committee and that's all. But in the senate so long as it was reasonably germane

why you could go on. That's the open debate and the senate traditionally has been that way which is probably good I think.

B: I was remembering I think Senator Williams of Delaware added the tax surcharge or a change...a tax change that was important I believe under President Johnson. I'm sorry I can't remember that...

Boggs: I don't know.

B: ...except that it was not germane to the bill itself and it was enabling legislation.

Boggs: I don't have any recollection of that.

B: By the way, again in current kinds of things that are happening now, Senator Williams, former Senator Williams is sick is he not?

Boggs: Well, I don't know. I saw the article in the Sunday paper. I don't know.

B: It was very incomplete.

Boggs: I thought it was a very misleading article.

B: Right.

Boggs: But the article I said...the last sentence said he was doing fine with whatever it is. I can't answer you on that.

B: Yes. Just putting it down since it is today. I was just going to think of this in terms of current problems and current happenings but perhaps we could talk a little bit in terms of your political career. Is it good not to be running for office now or do you miss it?

Boggs: I'm relieved that I'm not running for office because running for office is hard work and one must devote every possible second to the effort. If he's going to run he's got to do his best because it's not just a personal thing because he's out there representing a party and people and issues and things so if you're going to do it you've got to throw yourself completely into it. So, I'm re-

lieved. My time is my own now.

B: Do you remember your first campaign well?

Boggs: Well, not so well. The first campaign that I ran was for recorder of deeds in Kent County Delaware in 1928 I think and I was still a student at the University of Delaware. I didn't win that election but I went weekends around to house to house and like that I know and folks were very cordial I remember and it was a wonderful experience. I don't have any other recollection about it. I lost of course.

B: Well, I guess I was thinking about the first campaign for the congress. How did you happen to...

Boggs: That was in 19...that was in 1946. My recollection of that was...is fair. I remember working hard just going day and night seeing as many people as I could and shaking hands.

B: Who did you run against?

Boggs: Well, I can't say the name now which distresses me. He was the incumbent. He's a dentist...a grand, grand person but I can't say the name. It escapes me for the second.

B: Well, when you went to congress...what made you think about running for the congress?

Boggs: Well, I was just out of the service, military service. I'd been in the service for about four years and ten months and this was the election right after World War II.

B: Did you serve in the Army?

Boggs: In the Army yes and the party was looking for a candidate who had had service in World War II and in looking around why I was one of them considered.

B: And you were already a lawyer?

Boggs: I was already a lawyer. I was a lawyer before I was called into the

service. Yeah, I was practicing law.

B: Right.

Boggs: In Dover.

B: And did you work with Senator Townsend just after graduation from Delaware?

Boggs: Yes. I went to law school in Washington and worked with Senator Townsend who was the United States senator then yes.

B: That might have given you your earliest thought in terms of public service.

Boggs: Well, it was a great experience and some familiarity with public service but in just getting out of the Army, I...the governor of Delaware then was Governor Bacon and he appointed me the judge of the family court, the second judge. Judge Melson was the first judge and I was the second judge and which I accepted because it was something to do once I was out of uniform and was good experience. Then the opportunity came along to run for the congress so I resigned the judgeship. You had to do that.

B: Had you known Governor Bacon before you went into the service?

Boggs: Knew him yes, casually...not...I was no personal relationship at all.

B: But he appointed you as the judge probably having known about you from other people.

Boggs: He had to have known me from other people to do that because I didn't know him that well personally.

B: When you grew up...you were a native of Kent County is that not right?

Boggs: Right. Yes, born in Kent County.

B: Where? In Clayton wasn't it?

Boggs: No. In Cheswold.

B: And how many brothers...

Boggs: Near Cheswold on a farm.

B: ...How many brothers and sisters?

Boggs: And as a matter of fact, you mentioned Kenton; it was between Cheswold and Kenton where I was born on a farm.

B: They say you can't take the country out of the boy. Is that true?

Boggs: That's true I think yeah. I love it. Yeah.

B: How many brothers and sisters?

Boggs: I had three...I had no sisters, three brothers.

B: And where were you in the list?

Boggs: I was the oldest one.

B: And your mother and father?

Boggs: They've both passed on.

B: And what were their names?

Boggs: Lettie Vaughn Boggs and my father's name was Edgar Jefferson Boggs.

B: And is your name...the J for Jefferson?

Boggs: No, that's for James. I was James Caleb Boggs and the James came from James Edward Vaughn, my mother's father and Caleb came from my father's father, Caleb Boggs.

B: And you've never used the James.

Boggs: I use J. Caleb Boggs.

B: Did you start that as a student?

Boggs: It's always been that way. I don't know when I started it. It's always been that way.

B: That's interesting.

Boggs: I have no idea when it started. But it was always J. Caleb Boggs.

B: Were your family interested in the government of Delaware living near Dover?

Boggs: Well, my mother and father were always civic minded and interested

in what was going on in the community and in later years they became...after women's suffrage my mother was a Republican committeewoman for many years. My father was never a committeeman. He ran for sheriff one time. Didn't make it. But they were always interested in community, state and like that.

B: And you planned to go to the University of Delaware. Had you planned that from your early high school time?

Boggs: No. I belonged to the Delaware National Guard and went to the national rifle matches at Camp Perry as a member of the Delaware National Guard Rifle team and on that team were quite a few members...students and graduates of the University of Delaware. There were twelve members of the team I think. There were several graduates and maybe one student and they talked to me about going to the University of Delaware and that's...and I hadn't planned that far ahead. So when I got off the train coming back from Camp Perry, why I went right on to the University of Delaware.

B: Without stopping?

Boggs: Without stopping, yeah.

B: You must have thought that the University of Delaware produced good shots.

Boggs: Well, I guess I was very fortunate that I went to the University of Delaware because I think then and now it's a great school and university. But it's the only university that I only thought about.

B: Would you tell something about the professors you remember?

Boggs: Well, I'm sure that I will miss a lot of very good ones because I can't all of a sudden recall. But Dr. Hullihen was the president. I thought was one of the greatest presidents that the university has ever had. Dr. Conover taught ancient languages. I took Latin with Dr. Conover and he was grand. I think I took three or four

years of Latin. Dr. Harter who was a former president of the college taught some mathematics and statistics and astronomy. I took some courses with him. He was grand. Dr. Eastman, who was head of the chemistry department. I took chemistry with him. They were all grand. And Dr. Squires was there. He came new...history. Dr. Ryden was history, was great. I took all the history courses I could. Dr. Cypherd was probably the most renowned. I took all the English courses...English language courses I could; writing, essay and so forth in Cypherd's courses. I'm sure I'm missing somebody.

B: Were they hard do you think? Hard teachers, test masters?

Boggs: They expected a lot of the students. Yes, they did. I was not an A student. I was lucky...I was always happy to get B's and sometimes if I made a C I thought I was lucky. I was not an A student. I made **As** in some things but I wasn't an across the board A student.

B: And when did you go down to Washington with Senator Townsend?

Boggs: Well, when I graduated from the University of Delaware in the class of '31 I went to work with General Motors. It was very difficult to get a job in that depression time but I fortunately got one with General Motors; went to work in Baltimore; got married and then had my name in with Senator Townsend for if and any opportunity came up that I could work in the daytime and go to law school and late in '31 an opportunity came up and I started in law school in February of '32.

B: And who did you marry?

Boggs: Married Elizabeth Muir of Dover. I was the class of '27 at Dover High School and she was the class of '28. I'd known her and her family, yes.

B: Then how long were you working in Washington and going to law school?

Boggs: Well, the law school's a four year program but because of the work requirements with Senator Townsend I had to miss some of the semesters so it actually took me five years.

B: And then...

Boggs: I went to night school.

B: And then after that what did you do?

Boggs: Then I went to Dover and served my apprenticeship with Mr. John B. Hutton, a lawyer...senior member of the bar and took my bar and started practicing law in Dover. I was admitted to the bar in 1938.

B: And then the next step was going into the Army?

Boggs: The next step I moved to Wilmington to practice law up here and it...

B: Did you open your own office?

Boggs: No, no. Down in Dover I did but then I came up here with Logan and Duffy, a new law firm. It's just formed and I practiced there...I came up in early '40 and I was called into military service in February of 1941 so I didn't really get to...I was just getting going good when I was called into service.

B: Well, were you particularly...your new firm...was it working with family problems? Was that one of the reasons you were made judge of the family court?

Boggs: No, no, no, it had nothing to do with it. The family court wasn't even thought of in those times.

B: Oh, I see.

Boggs: The family court...

B: Judge Melson was the first judge of family court.

Boggs: The senior Judge Melson. His son is one of the several judges of family court now but the senior Judge Melson was the...along with the family society and childrens society and many other organizations joined together to develop the legislation that created the family

court and that legislation was just enacted and I think the family court came into existence in about...the beginning of 1945 and so it was just a new court.

B: Well, when you had your experience of...you were a young man and back from the Army. The world was really blooming. After all, the war had been won. There was a great surge towards the future wasn't there in people's minds? Was it very exciting to go to congress at that time?

Boggs: Well, I was elected in November of '46 and I went to congress in January, sworn in in '47, the 80th congress and there was optimistic tone in the world for peace of course. The war was just over but there were many, many problems involved domestically and internationally. Domestically, because of the war, things had been held back. The community development, the building of schools and churches and industrial renovation and new requirements, new buildings...capacity, capital improvements, plumbing...everything you could name had been held back during the war years so there was this surge to get it all done right away and so that put a terrific burden upon...housing was involved, especially housing and housing for veterans, a demand on everybody and everything to get the job done. Well, that was the domestic picture and the congressmen of course had to enter into all those things and you had to...because of the housing shortage there was a rent problem and so there was a control issue and a veteran's housing issue and internationally it...why it all sounded great with a great victory but there was a devastation of the war of course and there was the falling apart of the allies so to speak, the Russian Communist threat began to be recognized and as you recall because of the devastation why, President Truman came up with the Marshall Plan.

John Marshall suggested that which probably saved Europe from being overrun by the communist and helped to rebuild Europe and save lives and...

B: That had no problem going through Congress?

Boggs: It had a big problem.

B: Oh, it did?

Boggs: Had a big problem going through Congress. I voted for it.

Many people were strongly against that. I voted for it because I had just come from Europe; a relatively short time. I had served in the European area. I saw the devastation there and I sensed the problem. As a matter of fact I sensed the problem even before I came home...left Europe. It was perfectly... it seemed so obvious. But...

B: In other words you knew that they had to be helped.

Boggs: Something had to be done. I didn't have the knowledge to know how or what to do but I thought that something had to be done. I couldn't help but feel that but I didn't know how or what. So, I couldn't do anything but vote for it but many people thought that we had enough problems here without taking on the problem of Europe. So it was actually a very hard fought battle to get the Marshall Plan in.

B: Well that's interesting.

Boggs: Yeah. It wasn't close in the final vote but the battle for it was pretty hard fought. Well, and...which it should have been. Which it should have been open discussion and all the points of view. It should have been.

B: What about the United Nations and the Congress during that first.. first term?

Boggs: Well, the United Nations wasn't in effect you know at that time.

It was nonexistent after the...the United Nations was a World War II...I matter you know. We're talking about World War II.

B: No, I meant the United Nations not the League of Nations.

When the United Nations...

Boggs: Well, the United Nations came along later in...it didn't have a...
When did the United Nations come along...in May of...

B: I think it was '48. Excuse me, I think that was the end of your first term.

Boggs: It came along later.

B: Toward the end of your first term.

Boggs: Yes, yes. It came along later but at the time of the Marshall Plan it didn't play a big part. It was a...the Marshall Plan was a unilateral effort on the part of the United States.

B: Yeah. I was just thinking in terms of things that were happening then. It was a climatic first term that you had. It was a very important term.

Boggs: Yes it was a session...Congress was an important session.

B: What about Mr. Truman after he came back...after winning in '48?

Boggs: Well, I always an admirer of Mr. Trumans' and as the days go by become more and more an admirer of his and had the honor and pleasure of meeting him on several occasions even after he was president and so...which are little personal treasures. Well, he was a fighter no question about it and he won the election on his merits and a close election against Dewey you know and the division...sharp division between the Executive and the 80th Congress was so pronounced and he...election...won the election battle on the thing.

B: The whistle stop thing...famous whistle stop...

Boggs: Yeah, the famous...I guess that's the last time we've had whistle

stop campaigning.

B: That's one last thing a campaigner has to do.

Boggs: Yeah, oh sure...important.

B: But your admiration for him is that when you were a young Congressman, you saw him as a man of action and respected him.

Boggs: Yes, I did. I didn't always agree of course on everything but one little personal experience...We...you know the war came to the end...the PJ Day suddenly and it left the packing houses like canning tomatoes and pumpkin and sweet potatoe and all the things that you pack to feed a great army and feed allies with a heavy storage and heavy pack of things...So, here on the Eastern Shore where we grow a lot and have canning houses, they all had this stuff left on their hands and the question was how to get rid of it so that they could pack something that the farmers could grow for the coming years. So, the canners met with their Congressmen including the Congressman from the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia and myself from Delaware and wanted us to see if the administration...the government couldn't buy some to send to the...help feed the starving people in areas of need in the world. So, we made an appointment with the president and Mr. Truman saw us and he was grand and he walked over...talked to... a big globe in the White House...in his office, Oval Office; pointed to us where there was this devastation of the war and starvation and so forth and he thought it was a good idea and Mr. Harriman was Secretary of Commerce at the time in his cabinet and he said to...he thanked us for coming to see him and bringing this to his attention and said, now I'm going to get Mr. Harriman to see what can be done about this. We'll try to do something about it. It ought to be used. We don't want it to go to waste.

So, that was a very pleasant experience and as it finally worked out a lot of it was bought by the government and used for that purpose and we thought we had a little hand in it.

B: Wasn't that a good feeling for you?

Boggs: Yes, that was very good. So, that was my first personal acquaintance with President Truman and it was a very pleasant one.

B: Was that your first personal feeling of accomplishing something directly as a Congressman?

Boggs: Well, I can't truly answer that. It was a feeling that...a good feeling as I say. I didn't know how much we had accomplished until sometime later but it was a pleasant feeling.

B: Many times it doesn't work that way.

Boggs: No, that's right. But, no, I'd worked on other small things of less world-wide significance that I had felt good about but this was a good one. Yeah, because it finally turned out. Of course, I was just one of three Congressmen who went up there and so I can't claim any credit for it particularly but it was a happy... to be associated with the effort.

B: What about your second congressional time?

Boggs: My second term? I was re-elected that November of '48.

B: You were elected when Truman was not...I mean when Dewey was not. As a Republican you managed.

Boggs: I always managed to come through. It was very close as a matter of fact, very close. Well, my second term...it was pretty routine, '48 to '50. The biggest problem that took our time was that... catching up with domestic problems; the needs for steel, the needs for materials, the need for housing and adjustments after the war. The big adjustment after the war was still under way and it was a real adjustment problem. We had many veterans problems and

I was active...having been a veteran why...much of that came to my office and I was concerned about...well, almost every individual case you know. Many of them I knew because I belonged to the American Legion and the VFW and tried to help on those things. They were the big problems at that time. More serious and you know, time makes you forget those things but they were serious problems.

B: You had to work as really solving those case problems. Would you be able to estimate...would that take oh say, maybe a quarter of a Congressman or Senator's time or more?

Boggs: Back in those days I would say that most Congressmen gave at least a quarter of their time to problems related to veterans and their families and their readjustment and the needs of the time. I would say so. The agencies of the government were all very cooperative about it and the Congress was cooperative and they had a liaison man down there from the veterans administration. I always had a person in my office who spent practically her full time working on these problems.

B: I guess that continues. That continued up to the end of your career in Washington didn't it?

Boggs: No, I didn't...we always had...

B: I didn't mean just the veteran. I meant the problems of people that did their government.

Boggs: Oh, yes. The problems...you had the career matter, then the Vietnam and then you had social security and people, individual family and people's immigration problems. Individual problems are not always solved by the system. The system can't cope with some problems and so many of those problems end up in a Congressman or Senator's office and he has people on his staff who've become

expert in those things and acquainted with the agencies involved and the people who do contact and sometimes they may require individual bills, private bills to put in to correct individual situations.

B: I was just wondering whether this time...first of all, you would feel the Congressman's time needs to be spent here. You're not in favor of the ombudsman idea.

Boggs: Well, I considered it but I don't think it would meet the individual problems. I think it would just be part of another big system and the big system is fine. The agencies do fine but there are always...for every rule there is a tiny exception and among our many two hundred million citizens there are a tiny exceptions to all the rules and systems and fortunately our representative government system both state and local and national can meet those...are flexible enough to meet those individual tiny exceptions and makes a person feel that after all, his government whether it was as I say, local, state or national is caring about the individual and can do something about the individual and does do something about the individual case.

B: And still is very open.

Boggs: Oh, sure.

B: A man can be reached by his constituents.

Boggs: Oh, sure. No problems.

B: Senator Boggs, the reason I asked that is because people might not know this so many years from now. We might be able to tell them with two hundred million this is the angle. What about... you had one more term is that not correct?

Boggs: I had three terms in the House.

B: Before you became governor?

Boggs: I had six years in the House. Right.

B: And had you decided that you wanted the state governorship?

Was this your idea or did the party leaders want you to become governor?

Boggs: No, no. Very briefly, as I approached the end of my third term I decided that it was too expensive for me to continue in Congress with a family and I hadn't had the opportunity to get my law practice going and get any reserve funds and I...the salary I think was twelve thousand dollars a year. I was running in the hole on it. I couldn't do it so I decided not to run again and go back to the practice of law and so, sort of announced to the party leaders so they could find somebody else to run. That was my plan and that's when the party leaders then suggested to me that I might consider running for governor. Well the governor's pay wasn't any better but at least I was home. I didn't have to have two places to live and all that. At least I could be home and I indicated that well, if the party saw fit to nominate me why I would take a try at it. That's how I ran for governor.

B: Did you find that your eight years as governor just as exciting?

Boggs: Oh, yes. I enjoyed that experience. It was a tremendous experience. I enjoyed...I enjoyed...excuse me.

The Boggs tape ends quite unexpectedly here.