

This is an interview with Governor Winfield Dunn, Governor of Tennessee. The interview was conducted in Nashville, Tennessee on August 15, 1974. The interview was conducted by Jack Bass and Walter DeVries. The transcriber was Susan Hathaway.

WALTER DEVRIES: Not only do the Republicans hold a few state-wide offices but almost half the legislature, you don't have that in any other southern state.

WINFIELD DUNN: Yes. I think there are a couple things that are unique. One of them is that Tennessee, unlike many of the states associated with the old Confederacy, never went whole heartedly into the Confederate ranks during the war between the states, and the popular resistance to it is mostly in the upper east . . . the eastern part of the state. Now that is not all together true, there were some spots around the state where there was Republican sentiment, even during the war as I understand it. That is one factor, and the result of that resistance, has been that we have had a strong Republican base in Tennessee from those historic days, and it's persistent but it languished for many years. There wasn't any genuine interest in trying to unite the elements within the state. I think that Mr. Crump probably had some influence on that in these more or less contemporary times. It certainly would cover

your time frame, I think, the last 25 years. There just wasn't any real inclination to do anything but to keep a mutually beneficial relationship going between the Republican leaders of the upper east and the Democrats from other parts of the state. If the eastern part of Tennessee and Shelby County had ever been able to get together, they could have done just about anything they might have wanted to. I was the first Republican . . . Governor from my county, Shelby County, which is the largest in the state for 63 years. To go back to the question; one reason was the historic division, the fact that we had a pocket of Republicanism in the east, which gave us a real good base. Then the western part of the state such as Carroll County . . . Henderson County . . . they were pockets of Republicanism. These pockets have produced Republicans recently. Another factor, of course, is the western part of the state, Memphis, which has grown so rapidly, has been homogenized, and we have got a lot of people in there who come from states where there are two party systems and once we had the one man one vote concept made into law, then we had the opportunity to elect representatives who reflected, I think, basically Republican sentiment in historically Democrat strongholes such as Shelby County. So those are basically the two reasons why we have been able perhaps to be a little more successful at the legislative level than many of the other states. We had the basic pockets, plus we had the advantage of the influx of a lot of different

people. Of course, so does Atlanta for example. I think you can say that is true of some pockets in Alabama, but maybe it's just all coincided a little bit more dramatically in Tennessee.

W.D.: How about your rural organization. It appears to us that your state-wide organization is a four or five county organization. They have staffs that appear to be better organized in other states.

W.Dunn: It's been an evolutionary process.

W.D.: Is there any particular reason for that?

W.Dunn: The reason is that we have just seen organization as the best approach to electing candidates. I became active in the party over in Memphis in 1962, and one thing led to another, I was a candidate for the legislature just because we symbolically wanted to oppose every Democrat, and this was before the one man one vote concept. None of us would win and we knew that so we all ran, but it was just a desire to be sure that every Democrat in Shelby County was opposed by a Republican. I had fallen in with a group of Republicans in Memphis. I was born and raised in Mississippi. I was the son of a Democratic Congressman. I didn't know anything but a one party state, but practiced my profession in Memphis after finishing dental school and just liked those people and liked the idea of trying to establish competition, and that was my hobby. I was practicing dentistry and that was my goal in life, but I wanted to be active. We put together an organization over there. I became County Chairman and established a professional

in the position, and it was a local person, but we paid him to raise money to get something permanent and to get the organization going, and it has had years of growth. It has had years when it sort of subsided in significance, but it has always been a forward movement by in large there, and at the state level, since I became Governor, we've made a substantial effort to have a real professional organization. We have been able to raise enough money to support it. There was before I became Governor a State Director, but it was poorly financed. The State Chairman took on greater significance when we began to have state-wide successes such as Howard Baker's effort in 1966. That gave us the encouragement to have professional help at the state-wide level. So, Knoxville which is historically Republican had some professional help up there. Brock did a good job over in Chattanooga, they developed an organization over there. Nashville is still struggling to try to get some sort of stability, and Nashville depends on the state-wide office here, our state Republican party, and our Executive Director for most of its support. So it has been just sort of a struggling evolutionary process. We have been successful with our candidates, and fortunately we haven't had an incumbent Congressman defeated. We have had success after success, and I don't know how long it will go on, but it has gone on so far and we have had good people in office. As far as I know, we haven't had any breaks with the faith that was established between

the voters and these Congressmen and the Senators. I have had a fairly good administration. It has been a progressive one, it has been, I think, a different kind of an administration. So, I think the reason we have had organization has been because we have been able to support the performance of our elected officials and our loyalty to what we are trying to do, to keep our state a strong two party state until we can get the roots down . . . maybe to where it will sustain itself without as much effort as we continue to put into it. That's kind of a . . .

W.D.: Where do you see it going?

W.Dunn: Our party?

W.D.: Yeah, control of the legislature?

W.Dunn: That is our next great objective. I think it is only normal to say we would like to have the other three congressional seats, but realistically I don't know that that will happen anytime soon, and I think that if it were to happen, that we eventually got Republicans in these other seats, we might lose one in these other areas. I think these things are ending with static. I think they will continue to be dynamic. I believe the election in any particular contest will have an outcome based primarily on the candidate, rather than the *[politics]* of the area in which the candidate seeks to be elected. That is not really true yet, but it is going to be true. In this area, for example, a Republican . . . we just had a terribly difficult

getting elected to Congress, but I think that is going to change. It's changing already. We may . . . find an attractive, dynamic candidate come along over in Memphis . . . is basically conservative, who can really articulate issues, have public appeal, he may defeat a Republican at some point over there. I don't see anything stable, but I do see in the ranch of elected officials, what I do hopefully predict our dependability to maintain our strength in our party. We want control of the house. We are a long way from the Senate, but we'll get there, but I can believe that we will win the lower house, I think we can win it this year. Two years ago we won five seats, and it was predicted that we were going to lose ten or fifteen because they had reapportioned it and supposedly had drawn up some pretty tough districts for us to win in, but we did win because we made a major effort and with an incumbent Governor, that probably helped some too, because I gave it a lot of time and effort. I am going to help all I can this time. My motive will be less self serving because I won't be the Governor, and I want to control the house very much. You may or may not know that we ended this last session without a single Republican holding a official position on any standing committee in the lower house, which met that there was no Republican on the calendar committee, which is composed of the officers of the other committees, and it was a struggle to get things done. So our next

is control of the lower house.

JACK BASS: You said that this administration had been different. Would you elaborate on that?

W.Dunn: Well, I have got to say different from what because there hasn't been a Republican administration to compare it with. But I think it has been different from what a lot of people expected, and I will have to be a little subjective when I talk about it because; number one, I had no background in the government. I was an unknown source, at least I was an unknown quantity, and people just didn't know what to expect from me. One of the reasons I decided to run for Governor was because I could see the total lack of support that the opponent I might have would get from certain elements in our state and it is true, I got a quick polarization and a lot of support which helped me gain the identity I needed to finally get elected, but knowing what to expect, I was a Goldwater supporter, I was a Nixon supporter, and I suppose they thought I would be some sort of conservative, but they didn't know what that meant, and I didn't either, but I came in and began to identify with very obvious problems, one of which was revenue in our state. We just don't have a revenue system which produces in response to the economic climate. So, I had to have a tax increase. I asked for it and didn't get what I wanted but I got two-thirds of it, and it was enough with the economy expanding, and with an excellent Commissioner of Revenue to get the money on board. So, we proceeded after identifying all the short comings in

our state to take out that mental health and public health, highway expansion and development, which is rather unusual for an administration because that is what the Democratic administration did, they concentrated on the highway and road development; but in job opportunities through expanding our economic and community development programs and efforts we have reorganized state government in a number of areas. We had a business man's study of state government. We came up with five hundred plus recommendations, and we implemented more than 50% of them. This revolutionized the way state government is run based on the insights we got from these businessmen. We created a housing development corporation to give the people of low income an opportunity to get into the housing market through the free enterprise system with the help of tax exempt bond sale which gave us a little bit of an advantage. That is still on stream and we are trying to get it going, it's been part of the administration. It has been a very people oriented administration. I haven't tried to set any records for fiscal conservatism because the thing this state needed was to get on its feet and off its tail and catch up where it had neglected the people for so long, and that is what we have done, and the record is just immense. So that is what surprised the people. It has been different because it has been an outgoing administration. I have been the most traveled Governor in the history of the state. I've

been into nearly every county, and I've been to most counties many many times. We have been progressive, that is the best word to use. Our prison system has been totally revamped. We have fought some hard battles to decentralize and try to bring more concern for reformation and rehabilitation into the procedure. We have worked on criminal justice and done our best to try to improve that system. We have fought some tough battles with the Democrats over such things as the Missouri Plan. Fought tough battles over medical education. I have a medical background and I am extremely interested in it. I was trying to take an approach which I thought would be best for retention of medical people in our state, but I encountered an immense desire on the part of the upper eastern part of the state for the medical school. None of the statistics bore out the need for it. Every statistic indicated that we needed to go more toward internships and residency programs and senior medical training in the regions of the state. An expansion that is of our present University. We have three Universities teaching medicine now, Harry, which is private, Vanderbilt, which is private, the University of Tennessee, which is the second largest single producer of the medical people in the country. So, all of these things have been part of my administration. I have been a lot of bullets, have been in a lot of contests and had to oppose Republicans, had them oppose me, I have had coalitions of

Democrats on occasion with some Republicans. It has just been a peoples administration as I see it, and that has surprised a lot of people. They didn't know what to expect, and who might have been inclined to see this administration as keeping the expenditures down, having a fiscally conservative record, and this, that or the other. That isn't what the state needed, and we just tried to meet the needs of the state.

W.D.: *What would you have done differently?*

W.Dunn: I might have approached the regional prison problem with a little bit more concern, trying to educate the people before going into one particular area. I had to face up to some issues. We had to take the Highway Department, for example, out of the Governor's office and put it back over where the professionals are, and let them tell us where on the priority list we needed good roads, and how we needed to make money flow in order to get more under contract. The Highway Department had been run over here, out of the Governor's office, and I would have done very little different . . . very little as I see it right now. Maybe in another year or two after I have reflected on everything, I might be able to go back and do a few things differently, but frankly even though it has been on the job training, I have literally had to learn on the job as I went along because I didn't know what the hell I was doing when I first came. There was no way I could have known. I just knew that I could put good people to work, and I could set a

tone and a climate for absolute honesty and integrity. We could stop this old bad habit of doing business with a tight fisted group of cronies and making sure that the kick backs went back to the political party. We stopped all that. We took the State Highway Department out of politics completely and made it totally professional. It has got the highest level of morale and performance that it has ever had in its history. We upgraded state salaries. We gave state employees in this vast complex right here medical aid on a daily and hourly basis. We gave them a place to eat breakfast. We have given them a grievance system, have tried to institute a merit pay raise system which we have had trouble with, of course, for funding with this group of legislators. All of these things have gone on, and frankly we might have been more diplomatic in some instances, we might have been able to do one thing or another . . . 1967 or maybe 1969, I am not sure, Tennessee . . . it was '67 . . . we were dealing with 59 different grant programs from the federal government. Today we are dealing with 215 of them. There has been a 43% increase in the last four years in the number of federal dollars coming into the state. Four years ago, I think our total federal grant funds were around three hundred sixty three million dollars, this year it will be five hundred sixteen million dollars plus the thirty nine million dollars in revenue sharing that comes to this state. We are involved. We are deeply involved than the state has ever been in a relationship with the federal government, which is essential for us

if we are going to give educational benefits to people who need them . . . health benefits. Four categories take care of practically all of that money, Welfare, Education, Public Health, and Mental Health . . . I mean not mental health, transportation . . . take up practically all of that federal money, and Tennessee has still got a long way to go. We are really in the main stream of things now, and we are moving much faster.

W.D.: How do you respond to the charges that you could have gotten more out of your legislature . . . say for example the number of vetoes is the highest in the state's history.

W.Dunn: Right. I have vetoed 71 Bills. Of that 71 Bills, I think 17 were overridden. It takes merely a majority to override the Governor's veto in Tennessee as you may know. I could have had a better relationship with the legislature, but I don't know how. If I had been a different kind of personality, if I had taken a different kind of attack, I might have been able to . . . We had beautiful parties for the 88th general assembly and the 87th general assembly at the mansion . . . had breakfast for the legislative session trying to build that kind of rapport. As I said, I was doing on the job training, I didn't have the time to sit around and smoke cigarettes and drink coffee, drink beer with the legislators when they had the time to relax. They worked pretty hard. I didn't get a chance for that type of rapport. I had my close friends from the legislature who were able to communicate. I had a good minority

leadership, but I have to admit that probably my basic relationship with the legislature wasn't what it should have been. Now I can attribute that not necessarily to a bad personality on my part, but the fact that I just didn't understand how that system worked, and even in four years I haven't done it completely. If I had served in the legislature, perhaps it would have helped me have more rapport from the opposite end. Most of the legislative members supported my opponent in the primary, and I defeated him, and whether that has anything to do with it, I don't know. But when a Republican votes, I'll get back to this in a minute . . . remind me that I want to come back to the sentence I started . . . but before I do that, we submitted 539, 540, 541 pieces of proposed legislative initiatives, 541 Bills emanated from this administration. We passed 80% of them. We passed 75% of my priority legislation. That's not a bad record. We may have done better, but my greatest failures were no fault insurance. Well, I don't care, that was stopped by the lawyers. Another great failure was to revamp our workmans compensation law along with the model that was created by the national commission that was created to study workmens compensation, that was stopped by the lawyers. Another one of my great failures was the medical school, and that thing didn't pass on its merits, it passed on a swap out between Democrats who didn't want a Republican Governor to appoint three Supreme Court Justices under the Missouri Plan and upper east Tennessee Republicans who wanted the medical school out there, and who were willing to go a long with

the Democrats on the Missouri Plan in order to get what they wanted. So, the failures, and these are failures have to be attributed to a lot of things. Not necessarily to my poor rapport with the legislature, and the great volume, I think, of vetoes that came in the last year, when I was very obviously a lame duck Governor, and they came on the legislative determination in an election year to make sure that, for example, the state employees got an $8\frac{1}{2}\%$ across the board salary increase, instead of the 6% with a 1% merit raise which I recommended, a total of 7%. It came because they were determined to legislate money for school teachers that I didn't think the school teachers ought to get the quantities they got. It came in overriding my judgement about building a new school out here, Tennessee State University . . . there were many vetoes that were kind of cascaded together, mostly fiscal in nature. Just because the legislature said to hell, we are going to do these things regardless, so that . . . the vetoes didn't all come the first time. There wasn't an across the board four year equality of numbers. The veto was built up toward the end, and that is not abnormal as I see it. I wouldn't expect it to be.

W.D.: The fact that the Republicans went to override . . .

W.Dunn: I was going, oh hell . . .

J.B.: As a Republican Governor, I think . . .

W.Dunn: Right, well I will come back to it in a minute.

W.D.: What about the charge that *revenue estimator* just weren't realistic and that is why the legislature increased the appropriations?

W.Dunn: Well then you just simply have to weigh their access to that kind of knowledge as opposed to ours. They have the fiscal review committee and they have got the comptroller. We have got a fairly good system that has been used down through the years by the state through which we could access prospects for revenues. We haven't been too far off and of course we adjust down through the years. We go a long. But we feel we are more realistic than they were. They simply say "well, we predict there will be more money, the administration is being too conservative." I have to take the advice of the people here, who have been so dependable and on whom I depend, and Commissioner Wells, my Commissioner of Finance Administration, gets his information from some rather bright economists in the state who are in a position to predict properly. So, it is just an argument and only time will tell who is right. But I do believe that there would never be any acquisition that this administration was afraid to spend money. Hell, I have promoted more legislation to expand the budget in this state than any other Governor in the history, I suppose, and I didn't do so just because I wanted to see us spend money. I did so because of the obvious need that existed because the money was coming in, but now here we come to the end of my administration,

and we look into the future and predict that we are going to have a revenue short form, and we predict that if the continuation of these programs which we have begun is to be realized, and if the new Governor wants to initiate in the area of transportation through more highway development, and in the field of education, through a clearly identified \$50,000,000 need for the education of the handicapped, he's going to have to find some more revenue because these legislators just simply put to big a burden on the resources in the fiscal year as I see it.

W.D.: Won't that mean that you will have to move to an income tax?

W.Dunn: I don't think it does at this point. Our Constitution needs to be amended. It needs to be adjusted. I think it is absolutely ridiculous for a state like Tennessee to be in a position where if we, at some point of time, recognize an impending need for a tax that will reflect the vitality of our economy almost immediately, which an income tax does, that we would have to wait six years to get it. I think the Constitution should be amended so that if the occasion ever arose, the legislature could propose and the people could dispose of the idea of perhaps a state income tax without having to wait six years. Perhaps within a year, within 18 months . . . that is what I would like to see us do. We might not need a state income tax, but I think that we need to have access to the machinery through which we can get it, which we don't have now.

J.B.: What is the six year division? I'm not familiar with that.

W.Dunn: The Constitution just provides a period of six years through which the mandatory process takes place.

J.B.: It takes six years to amend the constitution?

W.Dunn: It does. You see, you start with a legislative . . .

W.D.: Another unique feature in Tennessee. I have never heard of that before. There are several unique governmental features about Tennessee and that is apparently another one.

W.Dunn: I am not sure how unique it is, although I am not conversant with the situation, but this is basically . . . the 88th general assembly proposes a Constitutional amendment and that goes through the legislative process. After that happens in that year, then it goes to the people in the next general election for their approval. After it goes to them, then it comes back to the legislature for what Griff?

Griff: I think Governor that . . . two successive legislatures.

W.Dunn: Yeah. It has got to go through both sessions . . . it has got to go through two legislative assemblies, the 88th and 89th or 89th and 90th or 90th and 91st. It has also got to go to the people.

(?) It takes four years to get on the ballot.

W.Dunn: Then it goes on the ballot.

J.B.: Then it has to come back for ratification.

W.Dunn: Then it has got to come back then the people

have to go and have to elect the delegates to the Constitutional Convention in the next general election. Then they meet the following year, and then finally I think it is ratified or I am not sure whether there is any further action after that. But it is a six year procedure. It is a little complicated but off the top of my hat I can't remember exactly how it works. You can cut it down five years by one other little process that has one or differences in it. That is as quickly as you can adjust our constitution, and I called for an Constitutional Convention, but I would certainly settle for a limited Constitutional Convention if it addressed itself to another issue, but of course once the convention is in force, the only things to which it can address itself are those things clearly mandated by the legislature and by the referendum of the people.

W.D.: What is the provision for calling a Constitutional Convention? Has anybody taken the leadership in calling one?

W.Dunn: I don't think so. I don't think . . . I think at this point that there has . . . yes, this past session a resolution was passed calling for a limited Constitutional Convention. The language of the resolution was such that there is liklihood that it will be amended by the next session to broaden its scope. In this last session it would have passed if they had opened it up enough so that any opponent could have pointed out how an income tax might have been included in it. But they left it open through their wording so it can be adjusted next year

in the upcoming legislature to broaden the call of the convention. So I would say that within another five years, we will have another Constitutional Convention, which I hope if the next legislature does broaden the call will include the succession of office, our tax structure and whatever items we will be interested in.

W.D.: Who is providing the leadership for that call?

W.Dunn: It was provided . . . I don't know the personalities . . . but it was provided by some Democrats and some Republicans in both houses.

W.D.: Do you think

W.Dunn: Yes, I do.

J.B.: Does there have to be a convention in order to amend the constitution.

W.Dunn: Yes.

J.B.: That is the only way the Constitution can be amended?

W.Dunn: No. You can amend it by the legislature, but it has never been done that way.

Griff: But it still require a convention. It has to be passed by two successive legislatures, then it goes to the voters.

W.Dunn: Oh to the people not to the convention, that's right.

Griff: But the reason it has never been done, and will never be done, the division is that it must receive an affirmative number of votes equal to half of the votes in the Governor's race, and there is never that

many votes.

W.Dunn: It has got to have an affirmative vote by half or more than 50% of the votes cast in the preceding gubernatorial race which . . .

W.D.: It has to win by 90 to 10 in order to pass . . . about 90%.

W.Dunn: Here is another problem with that procedure. That is the one I was referring to a few moments ago that you can do maybe one year quicker but it is . . . I forgot that you don't have the convention. You just go back to the people with a referendum. But to do that, the 87th general assembly would have to vote by a simple majority in both houses to have an amendment. The 88th general assembly would have to come back and when they vote to affirm the action of the 87th general assembly, that vote would be by two-thirds. So in the first instance you have to pass the resolution to amend the constitution by a majority in both houses, and the second instance, it takes two-thirds, then it goes to the people in a referendum, which requires the 50%+ of the vote of the preceding election.

W.D.: Well do you see the calling of the Constitutional Convention and perhaps writing a new Constitution or amending the old as one of the critical issues of the next four or five years?

W.Dunn: No question about it. We have a number of issues that relate to interest rates and so forth, which are controlled by the Constitution, which are extremely punitive in these days, and they need to be adjusted.

I think we have a Constitutional Convention coming up, but it won't be here for five years.

J.B.: Is there Corporate Income Tax?

W.Dunn: Yes, there is Corporate excise tax in Tennessee. Ours is 6%, which is fairly competitive around the country. We have a corporate excise tax, we have a sales tax with a local option of 50% of what the state taxes.

J.B.: The tax is what now?

W.Dunn: The state tax is $3\frac{1}{2}\%$. I got the extra $\frac{1}{2}\%$ added on, and most of the metropolitan areas automatically come back in and adopt that extra $\frac{1}{4}\%$ for their own local consumption. The state collects it all and refunds most of it to the cities. But the one tax we don't have that many states do have, of course, is the one that reflects the vigor of the economy and that is the income tax.

J.B.: What is the basis for the opposition?

W.Dunn: To the income tax?

J.B.: Yeah.

W.Dunn: Just another tax. People don't understand it. They don't realize I believe as a tax modernization commission pointed out . . . I appointed a tax revision and modernization commission headed by Ed Bolling. Bolling was President of the Board of Trustees at UT, points out that a great deal of tax relief could be given to many people in our state . . . property tax and sales tax relief if we had an equitable tax system in our state. We don't have it, and it is very unpopular to talk about it. People don't even want to hear you say sales tax.

It is an issue that is very hard to educate the people about. If it ever comes about, it'll come about because of the stark necessity for it, and it'll come about because it'll have some leadership that will be courageous enough to carry it through regardless of public sentiment.

J.B.: Is there a Constitutional provision against a severance tax?

W.Dunn: No, we have a severance tax in Tennessee.

J.B.: There is a severance tax?

W.Dunn: We do, right.

W.D.: One of the unique things about Tennessee that we have seen politically in the South is the two party system. Most of the other southern states don't really have it. Another unique thing fundamentally is the fact that the legislature selects the Treasurer, Comptroller, the Supreme Court selects the Attorney General, which means that in some cases the Governor has the authority to appoint those officers. Is that system in any way restrict executive power, or does it enhance it? Are you a stronger Governor because of that system or are you a weaker Governor? . . . the legislature appointing the other state-wide officers.

W.Dunn: I understand exactly what you are saying, I am just trying to give you some kind of a good assessment of whether I think it strengthens or weakens the Governorship. Frankly I think it strengthens the Governorship in one sense and weakens it in another.

If the Comptroller were clearly under the domination of the Governor, I think that would be unhealthy. We walk a sensitive and narrow line because this man over here audits everything we do. I want to be sure that he doesn't find anything wrong with what we are doing or that if he finds something wrong that we correct it as soon as we can. I think there is always a danger with the Comptroller and the Administrative Branch of State Government, which depends on the Commissioner of Finance and Administration. We are all in the same pot. The danger would exist that a Governor could get sloppy, that government would be less responsive and less efficient than it should be. So, I see some real advantages, and I think that strengthens the Governor because it makes him perform better if possible, and that is always good. On the other hand, I think the Governor is somewhat weakened in political terms by have the Treasurers office completely separated from him where he has no control over it, and as long as the Democrats control legislature and the Governor is Republican, the Treasurer will be independent of the Governor because the Treasurer has unlimited authority to deposit funds for which the state has the responsibility wherever he wishes to deposit them. Well the last Treasurer did a pretty good political job of spreading the dollars around the state so that when he ran for Governor, was set to get pretty good support from the banks in the communities to get the nomination. The greatest weakness is in the Attorney

Generals office in my opinion. The Attorney General is suppose to be the Counsel to the Governor. My experience has been that the Attorney General has been very political. I am sure he is a honest man, but I have the feeling that wherever there is an opportunity to embarrass the Republican Governor, wherever there is an opportunity to exercise discretion in a way that would either enhance the Governor's image or detract from it, he took that route. I have no close relationship with him. I have had one embarrassment in the state that I wish I could have avoided and that was during the time we were trying to appoint a member to the Supreme Court. I appointed a man and because of the requirements of the Constitution about timing on the appointment, his name didn't get on the ballot and the people didn't get an opportunity to vote for him and then there became a political conflict between another man who wanted the appointment, known as the Taylor - Turley affair. It got me a lot of embarrassing publicity and a lot of criticism that I didn't handle it well, and that is still subject to a great deal of argument because of all the things that were involved. I really don't know if I would have done it much differently, I might have. Timing wise I might have insisted on appointing a man a day or so earlier than I did because we out from October and September from August to September, and it really would have made a difference

I think. What the outcome might have been if I had exercised my option earlier . . . but the Attorney General, it seems to me, ought to be subject either to appointment by the Governor or popular election, either one would be better as far as I am concerned. I just don't think the Attorney General ought to be appointed by the people who are going to pass on what he does. I think that is unhealthy.

W.D.: We have been trying to find out why this state has that provision and nobody seems to know.

W.Dunn: I don't think there is any good justification for it, and no real rational . . .

W.D; We are just curious as to how that came about.

W.Dunn: another way which may be of passing interest to you. I think we are one of two states that gives the Governor the authority to appoint the Commissioner of Education. The Governorship of Tennessee is a strong Governorship. The appointed are great. There are no confirmation requirements through the legislature.

W.D.: If you could rewrite that that Executive Article, how would you change it? In terms of the Governor?

W.Dunn: It is very well defined. The literal Constitutional requirements on the Governor are very small. Most of the responsibilities and of the Governor have derived through precedent rather than through Constitutional mandate. I like it very

much the way it is. You see the people have to focus their attention on somebody to be their man, and when they give him the responsibility, he ought to have the power to carry out the mandate they give him. If their judgement was good, they will have a good administration. If their judgement was bad, then they will have a bad administration. If they don't have much of a choice, we will have a medicore administration. I wouldn't change it. I would like to see the Governor be able to succeed himself one time. I have never grieved over that because I was fully aware of it when I came in, but I think there is a trend in that direction, and I hope it will be a part of the future, that is seven years away, however.

J.B.: What do you think was the effect of what became known as President Nixon's southern strategy insofar as building a Republican party in the South?

W.Dunn: I think it was excellent. I don't like to identify it as a clearly defined strategy . . . it may have been, but I think it was good. The President had great support in the South and helped break down some barriers in the South, which were good. One party political domination whether it's through the force of a political strong arm process or whether it is just out of bad habit is wrong, is self defeating, and therefore is bad for the people. So, to the extent that men like Strom Thurmond when he turned around to the extent that the state of Mississippi was able to elect a

Republican, to the extent that they had a Republican Governor in Arkansas over the Democratic party over there, strong grass roots Republicanism that I think you find in Arkansas. The strategy itself was good, but the Republican southern strategy I don't think has effected Tennessee too much. I think we have been coming this way a long time when people, and I take a great deal of pride, maybe more pride than I deserve in being part of changing the scene in Tennessee, which I was right here in the middle of . . . a lot of people were that don't get the recognition that I get because I was elected Governor, you know . . . a great move in the right direction. Obviously the President's strategy throughout the South helped, but I think it would have happened in Tennessee regardless.

W.D.: Well there are two views about what the southern strategy was. One is quite different from the one you have. Apparently you said that southern strategy is an orientation of the administration toward the South, making more appointments in the South and so on. Others view it as an attempt to encourage basically conservative white Democrats who might be somewhat racist to join the Republican party, that the Democratic party is no longer their home at least in the Presidential .

J.B.: An easing up of the civil rights legislation.

W.Dunn: We capitalize on the unhappiness that existed in the South because of certain strong moves in civil rights areas are concerned. I personally think that I got a lot of the vote that had become independent, sluffed away from

the Democratic party . . . The vote that supported George Wallace. I've never embraced either a policy of separatism or segregation or racism, I'm just not built that way. I didn't like a lot of the things that happened. I thought the number of liberties and freedoms were tramped upon the process beginning with where we got it, but I think where we got eminently better than where we were . . . all these influences certainly helped Republicanism to grow because it was a viable alternative. Yet, I think by in large the Republican strategy . . . the Nixon strategy was not and certainly General Eisenhower initiated this thing with such as to play those elements against one another. I don't see it that way. I think it gave us some natural benefits to the President in taking some of the stands he took. One of the best, for example, I think ^{Muskie's} ~~Muskie's~~ (?) concept is unbelievably bad, absolutely short sided and not the way to provide a better educational opportunity for citizens, which is supposed to be the basis on which it is carried out. I do think that Republican administration under President Nixon gave the South a great deal more recognition than the Presidents in recent years have given it. That was the strategy and that was a good strategy because it paid off in support to him. If something happened to Republicanism in the mid-west, and something has happened to it in other places so I am sure there is any great gain for the country and for the Republican party in general all over the South has been from that attention coming from all over and the growth that is taking place over the

South now indicates to me that we won't ever be taken for granted by anyone and certainly was taken for granted by the Democrats.

W.D.: Are you going to stay active in Republican politics?

W.Dunn: Yes, perhaps not as a candidate, but active if I can. I want to continue to be a contributor to what I think is a good movement . . . if it ever gets to the point where it is sluggish, if it ever gets to the point where we support a fellow who boozes it up most of the time just because he happens to be a Republican. If we ever reach a point where we get so sloppy, so callus, because they are so top heavy with strength, then I don't think I will want to be a part of it. I still feel very idealistic, I think about my affiliation with Republicanism. I think it is good. If it ever starts getting bad, I might have to change parties, but I don't think that is going to happen in the near future because we are still to healthy. We still have too good a people associated with it, we are still able to produce excellent candidates. I'm not sure whether I will ever run for public office again, I may. In fact we have a problem right now if Senator Baker is selected for the Vice-President . . . I might be considered to be the only Republican who . . . (tape flipped - End of side 1) . . . I think that is a very possible prospect because I find an immense amount of personal satisfaction from the things we have been able to do. I've had to get tough and tough to the procedure and have had to get

tough to the procedure, I've had to get used to the combative nature of politics where I am the direct object of others by or criticism or whatever, but I am getting used to that. But I have done all this against my own personal interest in having a happy life and being comfortable in my own material pursuits. There is no way to do that in government. So, I have to remember that I have got three youngsters, all of whom are in college or getting ready to go to college. Two are in and one is on the way. That is all part of the concern. Now a little bit later on, I'll have all those pressures off of me. I've got the most wonderful wife in the world as far as I am concerned, and so she would be the one to say to me "we can go fishing every so often as long as we can get away by ourselves, you do whatever you want to, I'm going to help you". . . that's her. So, I am very fortunate there.

W.D.: Can we ask you a question we ask other Republicans? What would happen if there were a primary contest between you and Bill Brock?

W.Dunn: I don't know. Senator Brock might win that. I just don't know.

W.D.: Are there two wings to the party?

W.Dunn: Not two wings but there are two personalities maybe split personalities. We stay together. Now you watch this next election for the Governorship. We will

all be right in there together, I believe. I hope so, and I must tell you that I am awfully proud of our having built a party, I don't want to see it torn down, and I think a contest between Senator Brock and me might be extremely devastating and that is one basic reason why I would hesitate to engage in that kind of a race.

W.D.: Any regrets?

W.Dunn: About being Governor?

W.D.: Yeah.

W.Dunn: Absolutely not. I am the luckiest man who ever lived. I could give you a personal testimonial of the fact that I am the most fortunate human that ever lived. I have touched a lot of lives. I can't tell you how many lives I have touched because I don't even know. But here I am just one person who has been able to influence families by signing commutation after studying them half the night to make sure I was making the right decision. I appointed a permanent pardon and parole board so we wouldn't fritter away somebodies chance for freedom, reclaiming his life like they used to do with with this part time citizens board. We have got professionals now who are looking in depth. So, there is no way for me to measure what has happened without saying for me it has been a plus, and I believe to Tennessee it has been a plus, and I think for a lot of people, I will never know. I don't know of anybody we have hurt except for a few we bounced out of their jobs because they were not doing their jobs. It has

been a happy experience, I wouldn't take anything for it. But I don't know that I want it again. I'll just have to wait and access that. I am like the drunk falling down the stairs, at least I said that when I got into this business, it may have changed a little bit because I have developed a certain pride as a political figure, but the point is when I started I was a little like a drunk, I said if I fall, what the hell, it's not going to hurt me, I'll just get up and go home because I had a profession to go back to. I have that security. I am not wealthy enough, I don't have any personal wealth at all, so that is no cushion for me, but I have the comfort of my profession. So, I am one of those lucky ones. I am not going to have any bitterness, I believe I am right about the big issues that I have faced in my administration, and I believe I will always feel that way. So, I am one of the lucky ones.

(End interview with Governor Winfield Dunn.)