

Interview with John Ward, managing editor of the Log Cabin Democrat, former public relations director for Gov Winthrop Rockefeller, June 11, 1974, Conway, Arkansas, conducted by Jack Bass and Walter De Vries, transcribed by Linda Killen.

Jack Bass: -- campaign manager in 1968.

Ward: Yeah, I had that title. Of course I did that job in '66 pretty much because it was. . . . Generally I did the same thing in '68 as I did in '66 except in '66 another guy, a lawyer, had the title. He made some basic decisions, but I did most of the work. And then I joined him in '64 and left not too long before he died in '71.

Walter De Vries: But you started to work for him in '64.

Ward: Yeah.

W.D.V.: What were you doing before that?

Ward: Well, I was a newspaper man. I worked for the Arkansas Democrat. I was the editor of the editorial feature page and did some general assignment type feature writing.

W.D.V.: Were you with him in a staff capacity longer than anybody else?

Ward: The political staff?

W.D.V.: Yeah.

Ward: Probably I was. I hadn't thought about --

W.D.V.: You were with him when he announced and. . .

Ward: Yeah, that's right. Before he announced all the way through until after the 1970 annihilation and aftermath. Right. Seven years. He started out in '64. Of course when I joined him he had already been

engaged in trying to build what he called a two party system for a couple of years. He'd been actively involved in it. He had very little in common, really, with the Republicans that were in the party at that time. And as he got further into it, they got further out. In the process there were some real confrontations. . . very visible confrontations--

W.D.V.: The Republican party at that time, in the early '60s, was essentially a post office kind of an operation?

Ward: Yeah, it was. It was a patronage oriented. . . fairly small group, really. They never won any elections and there was a lot of opinion that they really didn't care whether they did or not. They didn't want very many other people involved with them. They sort of had a cliché--

W.D.V.: Were any of those people left after Rockefeller--

Ward: A few of them were. Wallace Townsend, primarily, was the biggest name who made the transition from the old to the new, so to speak. Pratt Trimble [?] was another. Pratt Trimble was a candidate for governor in the '60s, maybe late '50s, and served as mayor of Little Rock for several. . . . He was a Republican and he was from the old school. He moved across, with Rockefeller, into the new quote GOP. But there weren't very many who made the cut.

W.D.V.: After Rockefeller left office did some of the people who had originally been in before Rockefeller--

Ward: Have they got back?

W.D.V.: Have they gone back in?

Ward: To my knowledge, Walt, no. I don't know of any off the top of my head. And I can--

W.D.V.: So what he really did, then, is replace the leadership of

the party in that period of time.

Ward: That's right. And the leadership that he brought in with him, it in itself has gone through several changes. And most of the people. . . in fact almost all of the people that he brought in in positions of leadership in the party are gone. Either through [informants?]

W.D.V.: But who replaced--

Ward: [Pause.]

W.D.V.: Excuse me, is there anybody left?

Ward: That he. . . ?

W.D.V.: Right. That was actively involved in his administration or in the party identify with him.

Ward: There's nobody in the party now that was in the party before Rockefeller got really involved, that I know of, in really active role. Number one. Number two, the people that are in the party now in positions of leadership, some of them were in the party, but none of them were in any kind of leadership position. With the possible exception of the state chairman, Jim Conwell, who was then Republican state senator and as the one Republican in the senate was called, you know, consulted with Rockefeller and vice versa. And in a sense, he was in a leadership role that way. But nothing like he has now. Bob Scott, who is not the council, I think, for the party, was. . . he was in the party then. Frankly . . . not in a powerful party position. He had a state appointment. He was the state revenue commissioner. He was also Rockefeller's aide on prison parole matters.

W.D.V.: And that's only three years ago. What happened to all those people?

Ward: Well, one thing, Walt, many of them were appointed to federal jobs or they took positions in state government or the federal government

and they're still around. <sup>Fostie Britt</sup> ~~Fritz Britz~~, the small business administration. He was Rockefeller's lieutenant governor. ??? Cockrell, who ran for lieutenant governor with WR the last time, he's in the housing and urban development office in Little Rock. Bethall Larry who ran for Congress and was a party regular, he's got some sort of judicial post. Lynn Davis, who ran for lieutenant governor, he's the US marshall for the eastern district. They all used the party as a vehicle to get into federal positions, mainly. And that's where they went. Just as fast as they could go. They didn't. . . . The party, in my view. . . those people used the party and Rockefeller more than they performed a function within the party.

J.B.: This is something that occurred to me in several states. Did the election of the Nixon administration, by creating all sorts of patronage jobs. . . people who had been running as candidates and playing active party roles deplete the party of leadership?

Ward: Oh, very definitely. Very definitely. In Arkansas. . . I can say and document, I think, that the party--what there was of it, when Rockefeller went in office--declined while he was in office. He didn't build the party. The party was dissipated during his tenure. He abandoned the party in a sense. For one thing, he would not use patronage at the state level. I mean he would not appoint a guy because he was a Republican. Rockefeller was not Republican enough himself, although. . . . I mean he was really too objective. He would appoint guys. . . . He appointed more Democrats than Republicans. And this offended the hell out of party people. And then others, they couldn't get into state jobs, mostly. So they took the federal jobs. Or they won the federal jobs. Anyway, but the party, with the federal patronage that was available to Rockefeller--and he did have pretty good clout in

Washington.

W.D.V.: Did he appoint or recommend more Republicans at the federal level than he did at the state level?

Ward: Well, he tended to because there weren't that many. . . . I'll put it this way. He enabled, or did what he could to get into federal jobs, every really qualified Republican who asked for it. And some who may not have been so qualified. He did that. But at the state level in his own administration, he was very careful. Much more careful than he was with federal.

W.D.V.: So that result was he appointed less Republicans at the state level.

Ward: Yes. On a percentage basis. Now you've got to back off from that just a tad. The percentage of patronage jobs available at the state level was, what, ten times what was available at the federal level. And so, numerically, he would have appointed more Republicans to state jobs. But, compared to Democrats, a small percentage of his state appointments were Republicans, a very small percentage, really, very small compared to. . . . Most of his appointees were Democrats.

W.D.V.: So you say the organizational strength of the Republican party declined during his four years.

Ward: Decidedly.

W.D.V.: Because of that?

Ward: Yes, that was one reason and another reason was he. . . . In the process. . . . It's kind of complex and I won't go off into great detail on it, but Rockefeller, because he could not put these people in state positions--or wouldn't put them in--he sort of abandoned the party in a way. And they felt on the outs. And they complained. Even in print. The chairman of the party, Odell Pollard, raised hell in the

media about the fact that he could never see Rockefeller. He could never reach him on the phone. And Rockefeller's reply, which was not bad, was "Every drunk in Arkansas seems to be able to reach me after midnight at the mansion. When the phone rings, I answer it. Surely Mr Pollard can be as innovative as, you know, as the local drunks." That was his response. But the truth is, he did not want to talk party matters as much as he did before he was elected. Because he really was determined to have a good administration, or try to have. He was wanting competent people in there. And the fact of it was most of the competent people were Democrats. He didn't really blink at that. He just went on and put them in those positions and the party folks raised hell. "We won, we worked our ass--we broke our backs for you. And now you're putting these people in the jobs that we should have. Hell, if that's our reward for enduring for you all the . . . You can have it. Hell with it."

W.D.V.: One of the strange things about the Republican party in Arkansas that always occurs to us is that here you had a Republican governor in a southern state where you were starting from almost ground zero. No Republicans <sup>to speak of</sup> in the house, the senate and the Congress.

Ward: That's right.

W.D.V.: And Rockefeller spent millions of dollars. Was in office four years. Controlled the state administration. And now if you look at the state government, you got one Republican in the house, one in the senate and one in the Congress.

Ward: Yeah.

W.D.V.: You're worse off now than you were before.

Ward: That's right.

W.D.V.: So what happened? Wasn't anything done--

Ward: There was no party. See. There was no Republican party that he built or tried to build. It was really, as his detractors charge, it was a cult. A Rockefeller cult. These people were not Republicans that were voting for him. They were Rockefeller people.

J.B.: You're saying, John, that he wasn't really trying to build a Republican party.

Ward: He gave it lip service, but he did nothing during his administration to build the party. He did not practice the traditional party building. He didn't seek out Republicans and put them in these state positions. As a matter of fact the patronage committees were bi-partisan. Would you believe that? He didn't even create a pure Republican patronage. He set up committees, because he was getting so damn much flack from out in the field, you know, complaints because of the people he was appointing. He set up patronage committees that had Democrats on them.

W.D.V.: You mean at the county level?

Ward: Yes. He had Republican county patronage committees. But he set up bi-partisan committees which really had the input of the people he appointed. The Democrats for Rockefeller was an organization which was mainly women which was, well, extremely effective in his behalf. And he allowed them to have a say. . . .

W.D.V.: You said he was engaged in party building activities prior to 1966 and then after he became governor he sort of lost interest?

Ward: He. . . I tell you, Walt, it wasn't--

W.D.V.: Didn't he encourage a lot of Republican candidates to run in 1966 for public office?

Ward: Yeah, that's right. He encouraged them, even helped pay the freight. Of course, it's the way you view it, but to me that laying

out dough to run Republicans was not an expression of real personal interest in developing the party. I'm not saying he was hypocritical. I'm not saying he used the party to get in office and then abandoned it. I'm just saying that he was more concerned about the quality of his administration than he was about building the Republican party. And he had a priority scale. And a Republican being appointed because he was a Republican took about third place from competence and other considerations. That's what I'm saying. He just didn't. . . he didn't set out to do anything bad or good for the party. He just set out to have a good administration. If the party benefited from it, fine; if it didn't, well, that was okay, too. He didn't sweat it, in my opinion.

W.D.V.: Let me lay this on you. It is our observation that four years of the Rockefeller administration did more to rejuvenate and rebuild the Democratic party, and straighten it out, than it did the Republican party.

Ward: Well, I've said that myself. I agree with you completely. The Democrats will tell you that. Rockefeller forced. . . . What he did, you see. . . . That's true. What he did with his prestige, with his name and with his money and with his, really, dedication to what he was trying to do. . . . He enabled the Democratic party to rid itself of the guy that had controlled and used it all through the Faubus administration, and previous administrations. He broke those guys loose from the party. He starved them, so to speak. He closed the governor's door. They couldn't get to him. They couldn't use him. And they just kind of dissipated. The Democratic party, in that interim period, was able to get some. . . . Well, Ted Boswell, an articulate, relatively young, liberal. . . . This guy would never have gotten anywhere, four or five years previous to that. But there he was, a contender in the Democratic

primary. Dale Bumpers, even, is a candidate. . . . I don't want to give Rockefeller altogether the credit for Dale Bumpers, although Dale Bumpers will do so. Had Rockefeller not been governor, Dale Bumpers would probably still be in Charleston practicing law. But Rockefeller created a climate in the Democratic party for guys like Bumpers and Ted Boswell, and other bright, articulate, young, no-connection type guys to surface.

J.B.: So basically, he created a climate for the Democratic party to renew itself.

Ward: That's right. And the Democrats will tell you that.

J.B.: He also chose not to play the role of titular head of the Republican party when he was governor.

Ward: He did not. And they let him know they knew it when he offered himself for the state chairmanship and they wouldn't have him.

J.B.: When was that?

Ward: In 1970, right after the defeat. They said thanks, governor, but no thanks, you know. We'll see you later. We want Charles Bernard. It was a horrible thing and he just literally shed tears over it and everything. He offered himself. . . . And he might have gotten it, but it was going to be damn close. Boy, they were cutting him apart. So he withdrew.

J.B.: This was after the '70 election when he lost?

Ward: After the '70 defeat. You know, and he was crushed by it. He took it personally. He was hurt by it. But you know, in a way they were just sending a message, I think. However unfair it might have seemed. And he got the message. They just didn't want him anymore. They were going to return to themselves. He allowed them to die on the vine, so to speak. And then he pulled out of the party. Really. Pulled out

all his money and said. . . . I think he's on record on this. I'd have to check, but I think he said "I'll match the largest contribution anyone else makes, but other than that, don't count on me for x dollars a year."

W.D.V.: That in '71?

Ward: He had been up to that time. He'd been paying out lots of money. But not giving leadership.

J.B.: How much money was he putting in?

Ward: I'd say overall in that ten year period it would have to be millions of dollars.

J.B.: In addition to his campaign expenditures?

Ward: Yeah, he put lots of money in the party. He helped many Republicans, as you said earlier. But he gave money and in that sense he gave leadership as we talk about it in the classical sense. When it came down to the nitty gritty he'd given his money, his name, he'd attend to appointments business or government, and the Republican party had to contend, just like everyone else did. When he got in there to the big desk they didn't have any more clout than anybody else and they resented it.

W.D.V.: It still puzzles me that with the infusion of all that money, which is the biggest you can make in politics, to the party--

Ward: Why didn't it grow?

W.D.V.: --why didn't it. . . . You know, this party is in about the worse shape of the 11 states we've been in.

Ward: Yeah.

W.D.V.: Maybe. . . Louisiana's close. But the rest of them at least have been growing in the last few years. They've got something to show

for it.

Ward: Well, if I were going to suggest a reason for that, I would have to say this. Rockefeller made it difficult for any. . . going to sound terribly disloyal, but I think it's true. . . he made it difficult for any real party leadership to develop. Because he was there. His presence was there. The money was there. When you're putting the money in, you're sort of running the show whether you want to or not and in a sense. . . . And that may sound contradictory, but it isn't. . . he was there and he had the last word in a way. If he wanted. And the guys that normally would be coming on up through. . . what they did was get far enough up in the party to get his ear and attention and go on in to one of those jobs. Really. No leadership developed during those years. Nothing.

W.D.V.: You mean his presence and his influence and his money was so overwhelming that no leadership could develop?

Ward: I don't know. That's just a theory. I don't know that it couldn't, but it didn't. And I think that had something to do with it. The Republicans claim that Rockefeller had around him a kind of a palace guard--of which I was a member--who second guessed everybody and everything and screened out everything. Just editorialized everything that he got in such a way that he didn't know what was going on in the party. And leadership had to be subservient to these palace guard types and so leadership didn't flower under such circumstances and guys moved on into those jobs and got out of it, so to speak. They got what they could and moved on. And lots of them did. [A name, unclear.]

W.D.V.: Is there any truth to that charge?

Ward: Well--

W.D.V.: Was it perceptions of reality distorted?

Ward: I think the truth is that. . . that's right, I think they were. I don't think the view of the party was accurate. I think the fact that he allowed himself to be offered as state chairman and got chopped down is a demonstration of the fact that <sup>he</sup> was not--

W.D.V.: Yeah, he didn't have a very good of reality.

Ward: Yeah. The palace guard, so to speak. . . . That's not my term. That's the term that the Republican insiders kind of had for us. Was not very Republican oriented. I know I certainly was not. Tom *Eisek* ~~Asley~~ [?] was a Republican in the national Ike Eisenhower sense.

J.B.: What was his role in the administration?

Ward: He had the top job as far as advising the governor on affairs of state. That was his job. He didn't really have a title. Not all the time, anyway. He had two or three different jobs, by title. He was the director of the state administration department first, to kind of get it off the ground and so on. He was the governor's--I think maybe he had the title of legal council at one time. But Tom was the governor's number one adviser on the business of running the state government. The other people close to Rockefeller. . . some of them were Republicans and some of them weren't. But I think the Republican party, hard core folks, I think they were justified in complaining about us. I would have to say so. Give you an example of that. In the 1968 campaign Charles Bernard, , who later served as chairman of the Republican party and wanted to run against Fulbright in '68. And I had already been named as Rockefeller's campaign director and Bernard came to see me one day and asked me about his running for the Senate. He wanted to run for the Senate. And it didn't take any brains to figure how that was not going to work to Rockefeller's advantage because many of Rockefeller's supporters

were Fulbright supporters as well and it seemed to me that if Bernard got in there and made any kind of race out of it, the Fulbright folks who were our supporters were going to have to make a decision about who they worked for. And the more money Bernard seemed to be getting from Rockefeller the more turned off they'd be likely to get about Rockefeller. I advised him very strongly not to run. Well, he went to WR and asked him about it. WR wasn't real keen on him running, but he didn't say no. He rarely did say no on such things. I mean, how could you tell a guy "Don't run as a Republican against Bill Fulbright." I mean, you know, you just really can't do that if you're. . . . So, Bernard went back to \_\_\_\_\_ and organized his campaign and I told him we weren't going to give him shit. Weren't going to give him any help. Rockefeller said he would give him only a token contribution. He ran anyway and he got progressively more angry as the campaign went along and he blew his stack when we circulated a slate of candidates which did not include him. Which was Fulbright, Humphrey and Rockefeller. He just resented the hell out of that. And after the campaign, as a Republican, he said he wanted to meet with me and he wanted it to be in Rockefeller's presence. So we went out to the mansion that afternoon and he said "You cut my throat." And he was really extremely upset at me. And Rockefeller just sat there. And I explained to him and I think it's the point of view of most of the palace guard, which brings me back to the reason I started this. I just explained to him that I was working for Winthrop Rockefeller. I was not working for Charles Bernard. I was not working for the Republican party. I was not working for anybody else. I was putting WR's interest first. And in my view it was to his best interest not to have someone running against Fulbright, on the

Republican ticket. And that's the way I felt and I would have done it again the same way. If I were working for him, I'd think that way about him. But my loyalty was not to him or to the party. It was to Rockefeller. I think that most people in the guard felt that way. Their loyalty was not to the party. It took second place. And there was always people in the party that were just so. . . they created embarrassing situations for Rockefeller, in my opinion. Things about his campaign. For example, the Republican party had never won an election in Arkansas, I guess not since Reconstruction anyway. And we knew that the people of Arkansas knew Rockefeller was a Republican, of course, but we didn't figure we had to go down and slap them in the face with it. Maybe that was bad thinking, I don't know. But. . . we had Republican on the billboards but it was not played up, you know. As a matter of fact it was kind of cleverly and artistically done in a circle so it was kind of hard to read. But there it was. If you looked, there it was. Republican. We did that because of the fact that they raised so much hell about the fact that we didn't have it up there in three foot high letters. That he was a Republican. These are the old guard Republicans I'm calling. The pre-Rockefeller era Republicans. They felt like we played them down, see, and we did.

J.B.: Was that basically the Goldwater Republican?

Ward: Yeah. That's right. We had a big fight over that, too. Goldwater. We were going to do a survey. A little card survey of Rockefeller supporters. Make a little assessment of who they were and what they were and try to work out some organizational plans on the basis of the information we got. We asked them two or three questions. One, confirming that they were going to vote for Rockefeller or they was supporting

Rockefeller. And two or three other questions. And the Goldwater Republicans wanted us to ask about Goldwater. And we refused to do it. And hell, Tom <sup>Eisele</sup> ~~Asley~~ offered to resign over it. Wrote Rockefeller a memo to resign. It was the most unbelievable internal fight which never saw the light of day. Hasn't yet, as a matter of fact. But, tremendous fight over that. But we weren't. . . we didn't like Goldwater. I couldn't stand him and neither could <sup>Eisele</sup> ~~Asley~~ or anybody else. We weren't about to support that guy. Even that way, you know. Rockefeller finally did give him lip service, but none of the rest of us even pretended. At least I didn't and neither did <sup>Eisele,</sup> ~~Asley~~. And we kept the guy's name off the card, but it was a hell of a fight.

W.D.V.: Were there any really basically ideological differences between Rockefeller's staff and the old guard Republicans?

Ward: Yeah, I'd say quite a few differences. Rockefeller. . . he was not nearly as conservative as Goldwater, for example, on any issue, I guess, I know about. I'd say the old guard Republicans were. Rockefeller was not. . . . I don't know how to explain this, but Rockefeller. . . . Many of the old guard Republican leadership folks in Arkansas were and are wealthy people. But Rockefeller's not. . . he wasn't like your regular wealthy person. He didn't have the same attitudes about money or about what's going on or what he wants to keep suppressed or encourage. He just wasn't on the same wave length with them.

W.D.V.: So he didn't really change their attitudes at all during those four years. As soon as he was gone, they were right back.

Ward: That's right.

W.D.V.: So the party. . . it was only seen as maybe becoming more moderate but it really wasn't.

Ward: No, as I say, that was not the party. That was the Rockefeller cult. The people around him. Those people, however. . . I don't believe a lot of them have even come back into the party, really. To get back to your original question. Like Bill Spicer and some of the other real hard core dedicated Republicans that Rockefeller drove out of the party. It was either okay, join us or get the hell out of the way. That was the attitude. They got out of the way, but they never came back. A few of them stayed all the way through it. As I say, made the transition. Could agree with Rockefeller enough to see. . . .

W.D.V.: But now the same type of person that was in the party before Rockefeller is back in it. They may not be the same people, but the same. . . .

Ward: I'd say so. I'd say that's not bad. I think the chairman of the party is probably a little more bland and enlightened, perhaps, than the old party was. Jim Caldwell. But he's. . . and I think he's deliberately this way. He's kind of vanilla pudding. He's hard to pin down philosophically at all. I think he's trying to be sort of all things here, maybe. I don't know. I don't talk with him, frankly. But the other folks in the party are pretty much like they were. The Republican party, you know, voted 5,000 people in the primary. Well, during the Rockefeller days, the Republican primary I think one year it was 40 some thousand maybe. That looks like a lot, in a way, comparatively, but really that was just votes. Those weren't really Republicans. I bet the Republican party didn't have over. . . . I doubt if it has over 8% of the people in Arkansas or less thought of themselves as Republicans. Maybe fewer than that. Very small, I'd say.

I think the highest percentage we ever found may have been about 14, 15%. Something like that. People that claimed to be Republican. I really don't see any hope for any Republican party in Arkansas. I don't see anything happening that I would think would lead to anything.

J.B.: Nixon got about 30% in '68. You think that's the basic Republican strength in this state?

Ward: I think the basic Republican strength is less than that. I think a lot of Democrats in Arkansas voted for Nixon every time. I really think the basic, hard core Republican strength in Arkansas is somewhere under 20%. Probably under 15%. That would be my guess. I'd say it's not more than 15%.

W.D.V.: Why is it so low in this state?

Ward: You know, I really. . . . I don't know, Walter. I really don't know. There have been factions in the Democratic party here, of course, but there've been factions in other Democratic parties and so on. The Democratic party apparatus, so to speak, was in control up until Rockefeller. By a fairly small group of folks. But then there was an out group that was always trying to dislodge them with no success. Maybe there was enough of two sides involved in that to satisfy most people. Guess maybe there was.

J.B.: John, would there be anything to the theory that Rockefeller came along at a time when elsewhere in the South the conservatives were moving over into the Republican party after the Goldwater try. But in Arkansas Rockefeller wasn't bringing in the conservatives into the Republican party. He was bringing in blacks; he was bringing in moderates; he was bringing in young people.

Ward: That's right.

J.B.: And when he left, the Democrats then took up that moderate slack. The conservatives had remained in the Democratic party. And

after that there wasn't much for the Republican party to go to.

Ward: I think one thing you've got to do there. I guess I'm harping on this. But really, the people he brought in, Jack, he did not bring in to the party, in my view. I mean they were too temporarily there. I mean they came and went too smoothly.

Rockefeller votes. And those of them that voted Republican did so out of a sense of loyalty to him, expressing support for him. They were not Republicans in the sense that I think of. I'd say, just to sum up my own view of it, that the Republican party is not much different now than it was before Rockefeller arrived and the period of time when he was pushing the buttons and calling the plays, so to speak, was oriented more toward the business of state government and creating a quote two party system end quote more than it was a Republican party. And what was there as quote Republicans end quote were people who were loyal to Rockefeller. It was kind of a club more than it was a party. It was not really a party.

W.D.V.: What you're saying in Arkansas is largely dominated by personality politics. Even when you had a Republican governor it was personality politics.

Ward: Exactly. You are right, exactly.

W.D.V.: It was not party at all.

Ward: Absolutely. I've said this at seminars, man. It's a personality thing in Arkansas. It really is.

W.D.V.: Even when the Republican party controlled the administration, it really wasn't a party thing. It was still a personality .

Ward: Personality thing, exactly. I think that's exactly right. I certainly believe that.

J.B.: John, there's one view that we keep hearing that although

Rockefeller was not a quote party man as governor, the fact that he was a Republican did create real problems for him in dealing with the legislature. And that he had difficulty getting programs through because of that. Is that basically correct?

Ward: I don't think it was so much. . . . Jack, most people do say that. But I'll tell you I don't believe it exactly. I think if you look at his first term you'll see that a great deal, he was able to accomplish a great deal with the legislature. In spite of the fact that they were Democrat and he was Republican. I think there were over 700 bills passed, which were positive type bills and a lot of them were part of his program. I think the problem with the legislature. . . . Everybody says it was he's a Republican, they were Democrats. But really it was. . . he had incredible ability to antagonize those guys. And vice versa. He did not understand the art of dealing, so to speak. He could not work with those people. And really I think it was more personality than it was partisanship. He couldn't understand how that process worked. He didn't understand that. He wouldn't invite them to his office. He wouldn't seek their opinion on anything. He had absolutely no rapport with those guys. And that's where I think the problem was. I don't think that it was that he was a Republican. They said so, many times. But really, I think they were substituting that for the real reason. They just could not. . . . Case in point. And we could see everything falling apart because he could not get along with these guys. He really tried at times, but he was not oriented that way. So we convinced him he needed to have them up to the farm. Bring their wives. Really try to establish some sort of . . . . Hell, he had a good program and they could be for it, kind of independent of per-

sonalities, you know. Or most of it. They weren't going to be for the tax increase but they could be for the rest of it. Have them on up to the farm and feed them a good meal and have a few drinks and talk about it that night and let them spend the night and put them up first class style and then the next morning maybe get some breakfast in them and maybe by the cold light of day maybe go for the program and really try to see what he could do about convincing them. Because he could be pretty good in a speech. He could be pretty convincing. He agreed to do it, I think a little reluctantly. And we put it all together. God, it was horrible, trying to organize it. But we did. And most of them took him up on it because they had never been there and so on. Brought their wives. They came up. Everything went pretty much as planned. The next morning he didn't make it to breakfast. You know, I mean. . . . They ate and gathered up their wives and so on and left. That afternoon he was sort of basking in the glow of having put it all together he thought, we thought. We thought it had gone well. And the housekeeper, I guess, or somebody, came to him and told him that they'd carried off about \$3,000 worth of towels and, you know, little crystal things, you know, souvenirs. You know, they thought, like at Holiday Inn or something. Man, if there was ever going to be any relationship, that destroyed it, right there. In fact we had to just physically restrain him from sending the legislature a bill. He was going to send to the legislature a bill that itemized all these towels and soap and one [Stuben egg?]. Just all kinds of stuff. Which they all just packed up and took with them. And after that it was just downhill. He was argumentative and angry and they were, too. It was a personality thing. I do not believe, as most people--

W.D.V.: But it was rationalized as a partisan thing.

Ward: Yeah, but I don't believe it was partisan. I think it was strictly personality. He just refused to compromise, really, when he should have, in my view. He did not have the art of compromise that most guys that arrive in that office have. I mean, if it was a good program, well by golly they ought to be for it. They would be for this thing and then he would say "Well, of course we need to have this much money to support it. And the only way we're going to get that is. . . ." But they didn't want to pay for it, they just wanted it. And he could never understand their logic. He didn't know how to deal with it, really. And I think that's. . . mostly just personality

W.D.V.: What do you think were the major accomplishments in that four years?

Ward: Well, I think the most major of all was he really did create a new climate in Arkansas politics.

W.D.V.: Deliberately set out to do that or was that just a function of his personality?

Ward: I think it was a function of his personality but I also know he had intentions of doing that thing. He said so, publicly. He was trying to do that very thing. I think he did do that. He broke the back of the real power structure that was around Faubus at that time. He really did. He went after the game and fish commission, which was notoriously involved in all sorts of favor peddling and what not. He just broke the back of the power structure and kept the windows and doors open, so to speak. And guys like Dale Bumpers and others have come in. The legislature. The make up of the legislature is far superior than when. . . . I mean there're some young guys, some real vigorous, intelligent, sharp guys in the legislature. And really, I think Rockefeller

deserves a great deal of credit. He really made it hard on those. . . . Of course, he could afford it. By implication, they knew if they crossed him too much, man, they knew he would make it hard on their business. I'm talking about the guys that lived off state contracts. And he would. . . . [Like on] the beverage control commission. He really tried his best to get that squared away. I think that was his major accomplishment. I think he proposed some things that have been also important. Reorganization of state government. He proposed, created a state administration department and reorganized government, made it more efficient. The process is still going on. He appointed a governmental efficiency commission and they made some studies and some of the findings were implemented immediately and some others have been implemented since. Another accomplishment was he truly did bring blacks into state government and into positions of greater respect than they had ever had before. Most blacks, responsible blacks would. . . . I don't mean the guys who were coming around before election time. But the leadership. The true black leaders. In Rockefeller they found a guy that would give them an opportunity. And he did. Sonny Walker, down at [Atlanta?Little Anna], he was just a trouble-making. . . so to speak. He really is a great guy, brilliant. But he was looked upon as a trouble-maker. Highly controversial. In the economic opportunity agency in Little Rock. Rockefeller took him, made him director of the OEO. And Walker's abilities, on his own abilities, enabled him to move right on up. He's an example of a black who Rockefeller.

. I think he really made some progress there. I think he helped Arkansas become considerably more [progressive] The prison, attempt at prison reform. I think he did get it going. It's

a long way from home, but my god the conditions there when he took over were unbelievable. Really. Just complete brutality. I mean, there were those big walls and you close those doors and you don't think about it. He went down there and really made a stab at it. Brought in Tom Murton, real fire-eater. He created a lot of problems as well as solve some. But he did get reform going. He got it going. Tom Murton and Rockefeller did. They parted company in an exchange of angry words, of course, but in the process they got the white light turned on for the first time and got people to look at it. I think that's what he did. He really did make government a real visible sort of thing. That was part of his process of breaking down the old guard. running them out of town and enabling the Democratic party to cleanse itself. And Rockefeller made government real, real visible. People knew what the hell was going on. Hell, he was in the papers. He was so colorful, really, and controversial. Almost everything he did. . . . I think people really began to read the newspapers and watch tv and listen to radio during Rockefeller's years. I mean about governmental matters. It had been pretty much rubber stamp routine before. Orval would go before the legislature and say "Here's my road program. And if you don't vote for it then I've got to assume that you don't want any roads in your county." I mean, you know, that's the way Orval ran state government. He ran everything. And he was a pretty good administrator in a way. He ran everything because he wanted to control it for whatever political advantage it would give him. So man, he had his finger on everything. And it was kind of routine, in a way, except on the race issue, Faubus was in many ways a colorless guy. You know, I mean as far as the public's concerned. He also. . . . This may seem like not much

of an accomplishment. But another major accomplishment in my view was Rockefeller led, and pushed, and worked, and financed in part the calling of the constitutional convention. And a constitution was rewritten and proposed and people turned it down. But boy, it had a lot of good effects on Arkansas and Arkansas government. And I think that. . . in the long run, will be another

[End of side of tape.]

The major weaknesses in the Rockefeller organization or the Rockefeller administration were a lack of control, enough control over what was going on in various state agencies. In the process of trying to make them independent, he made them, allowed them to become so autonomous that they set up little fiefdoms, really, and competed with each other in some respects. And as a consequence of that I'm not sure state government was as well organized, even with government reorganization, in practice as it was in principle. Now the principles. . . he installed so to speak in his reorganization efforts. . . I think are being adhered to a great deal more religiously now than they were during his administration. Another weakness was, as we talked about, his inability to get along with the legislature. And as a consequence many of the great programs, or good programs that he devised never got off the shelf. I mean the silver fish, you know, had a field day with Rockefeller's administration. Because there were lots of studies, proposals and programs that never saw the light of day because he could not get along with the legislature after that first term, or after the honeymoon was over. It was just downhill, in that respect.

J.B.: Did Bumpers pick up many of those programs?

Ward: Yes he did. He did.

J.B.: What would be some specifics?

Ward: Well, I think mainly the governmental reorganization area. Bumpers took that and enlarged on it and polished it and made a hell of a better, more workable program out of the whole thing than Rockefeller had, ever did or ever could have really. Bumpers, in my view, originated very little during his four years. Really. Most of what he did was. . . . I hope that doesn't sound like sour grapes. It isn't. He took Rockefeller's things and made them work where Rockefeller couldn't. Just about everything with the exception of the wilderness program. He wanted to create wilderness areas in Arkansas, Bumpers did. He lost that fight in the legislature. Rockefeller had nothing to do with that. He didn't even have any there. But prison reform, Bumpers picked up where Rockefeller left off and carried on with that and made it work better than Rockefeller did. It's not fair to say just that he did that. [?] He fought the same people Rockefeller did. Sen Jones from around here in Conway and some of the other power structure guys. Bumpers, philosophically, is very close to Rockefeller. He would tell you so himself. They weren't far apart at all on just about anything. Rockefeller, if he had to give it up--and he hated like hell to give it up the way he did--but if he had to give it up, that's the guy to take it: Dale Bumpers. He couldn't have ordered a more perfect successor than Dale Bumpers. You were talking about some weaknesses a while ago and I was going to say, another weakness, I think, was Rockefeller's remoteness from the day to day job. That's kind of complicated but. . . . Faubus was a man who was there at 9 o'clock in the morning all day and the door. . . people coming in and out. . . and the business of state government was run right there in the governor's office in the capital. He was very visible. [Rockefeller liked to be at

<sup>WinRock</sup>  
~~Wind Rock~~, the mansion.?] He liked his privacy. Very shy. Could not stand crowds and lots of people crowding around. Couldn't stand that. He did not like that. He avoided it when he could. Campaigning was just awful for him. He would just sweat and tremble when he was going to speak. It just went against his grain to campaign. He hated to do it, and if you look at his campaigns, the '64 campaign, it was his best effort. Because he made his greatest physical effort. He got out here and pressed the flesh, you know. In and out of little cafes, parades, picnics. Up and down the streets of small town Arkansas. '66 campaign he backed up a step. Little more radio and tv. More airplanes between towns rather than driving. Fewer delegations that he would receive in the motel room. More of his staff he'd take with him people he was comfortable with and familiar with. work-ing on state problems. The '68 campaign still more remote. Still a step back even further than that. He just makes a few speeches. He has regional rallies. He doesn't get out there and go up and down those streets. He announces "I'm not going to campaign like I did before." And his '70 campaign, man, the big plans that he had we shot down was he wanted to campaign from a helicopter with a loud speaker. Really, that was his idea. We were to fly over a town and announced. . . . Really, I mean. . . I'm painting a more vivid picture than you. . . . But I think if you read through all the material, you would see this trend. Just stepping back, one step at a time, away from physical, sweaty handshakes. It was not his thing. And he was remote in that respect. He liked privacy. And he would surround himself with a few aides and people like that. Spend hours away from his appointments and the business of being governor. He did not like being governor in that respect at all. He liked those programs and wanted to do those things that he'd

set out to do. But the day to day, routine, nitty gritty, check list, call this person, tell him no, tell him yes--he hated it and avoided it just incredibly.

W.D.V.: Didn't that increasingly show towards the end of his administration?

Ward: Yes it did, yes it did. As a matter of fact the media would keep tabs on how many hours he was spending in the office. You know. And they would broadcast it, announce it. Whether Rockefeller spent 14 minutes 8 seconds in his office this week. You know, something like that. Oh, and he resented the hell out of that but there was nothing he could do about it. He was kind of a . . . . It's hard. I still can't figure it out. He was a very, an extremely complex man. I'm not kidding you. He really was. Just layers of complexity. Paradoxes just apparent in everything. For example, as I say, he treasured his privacy and sought for it. And on the other hand, he would talk about things in public of the most private nature. His life, his domestic life, his relationship to his wife, his liking for the hard stuff. You know, he just didn't make any bones about any of that. He tried to be . . . . I mean, his private life he laid bare, practically, to a fault. And on the other hand, he--

W.D.V.: Tried to keep his public life private.

Ward: It was unbelievable. Yes. And we never could figure out. . . . It was just some personality quirk. He was a curious man in that respect. Very, very hard to figure out.

W.D.V.: At the time, in those years when he was withdrawing more and more from the public life into private is the reverse occurring the other way? I mean is he laying more and more out of his private life when he does appear in public?

Ward: Well, I'd say that's not bad. I'd say so, yes. As a matter of fact one incident that immediately popped to mind when you said that was. . . . There was a much celebrated situation with Rockefeller

. He and his wife Jeanette were at the Warren Pick Tomato Festival and she reportedly slapped him right there in public. And they had a big confrontation in the back seat of the car before they were whisked away. And so on. Then his divorce from Jeanette, of course. That was handled privately but I mean it was a big thing to the public. They knew it was coming before the election.

In the '70 campaign he just sort of. . . . The trend that I described, the paradox in a way. I think by the '70 campaign he was beginning to just pull back everything. Real curious kind of . He had been shot down *[so many]* times in the legislature. He'd gone in there with all the damn programs. He'd spent money of his own on them. And he had experts, had them researched. He'd go in there and present them and boooooo, you know, they just turned him down on that stuff. More and more legislative *[defeats]* . And one time in particular. He had them over to the mansion for breakfast, some of them, on a particular piece of legislation. He was reluctant to do it in the first place, but we just insisted because he had to meet with these guys.

They came over and as he says this warm breakfast he thought. Two cups of coffee and so on. They went back over to the legislature, see, and he has a little *[office]* monitor. You know, you could listen to the deliberations in his office. He flicks it on and some guy said--I don't remember the words or anything--but the guy was saying "You don't let that . . . that guy, he had us over this morning. The guys were telling me, yeah, that sounds real good, boy that's

fine, yeah. I think the folks up there will like that." Then they get in the legislature and make fun of him, as they shoot him down. Man, that guy couldn't accept it. He didn't understand that. "They broke bread with me," he said. It was just a personal hurt. It was not just a cynical politician, you know, playing both ends against the middle. It was a personal insult to him. Just like when they came to the farm and took away those towels. That was a personal insult. He said "Well this is my home," see. He sees it as home. Most guys, like most other people, see it as kind of an institution. This big thing up there. It's kind of like a motel, you know. They don't think of it as a home. But he does. And that was the way it was with the legislature. The guys coming over to the mansion; they broke bread with him; and then whatever they say--a man's word, as he says, ought to be as good as his bond. And that brings me to one of the great, tremendous problems that he had in the '70 election. He had said, see, that he would not seek a third term. He published it in his statement of beliefs, which was a very popular campaign document the first three campaigns. I've forgotten which number it was. It was one of 16 principles. I will not, you know, under any circumstances seek a third term as governor. Then he ran for a third term, you see. He couldn't live with that himself. It really created problems for him.

W.D.V.: Why did he do that?

Ward: It's a curious thing. A lot of people say that we made the decision for him, or encouraged him. But that's not the truth. He made the decision. And I'll tell you why he made it. He had come in to state politics in the first place when Orval Faubus was king. Now Orval Faubus was everything Rockefeller didn't like. He was old guard. He was . . . the big money boys are around him. He was using the boards and commissions

to protect these guys, instead of the other way around. I mean it was just a classic case of a despot in power with a few guys around him he was taking care of--at least as far as Rockefeller was concerned. So he went in there against Orval Faubus. He ran against Orval Faubus in '64 and of course he really ran against him in '66, even though his opponent was somebody else. And we were all tooled up for Faubus and so on. Anyway, he finally. . . Faubus didn't run in '66 because he was going to get beat. At least our surveys showed he was. Rockefeller was going to win in '66. Almost regardless. And certainly he was going to beat Orval Faubus. Well, so we went into office and Rockefeller felt that he had won out over Orval Faubus. And he had, really. He had won out over Orval Faubus. He had forced Orval not to run again. And then Faubus got involved in his opponent's campaign in the latter stages. To no avail. But Rockefeller felt like he had defeated Faubus. Okay, he goes on and serves his four years. He is going to do these things he promised he was going to have done. And he does some of them. Then he's ready to leave office. And who should pop up on the horizon there but the symbol of everything he'd been fighting, the reason that he got in there. Orval Faubus. Here was Orval, coming back into politics. Orval . . . Orval's going to run for governor again. That's why Rockefeller ran for a third term. Because it looked then, see, that Orval was going to get the nomination. Nobody'd ever heard of Dale Bumpers. Who the hell is Dale Bumpers? I mean, he was nobody. Zero. He had no recognition rating. Nothing. You couldn't find anybody that had ever heard of Dale Bumpers. In the beginning there was no way to predict that. It was just Faubus, Mr old guard, back on the scene and WR just decided that by god he wasn't going to say "Okay, Orval, I've had my four years now here, you take it back." He just wasn't going to

do that. That's the way he felt about it and that's why he ran. It was a great mistake for him personally. Because what it did to him, to break his own word. . . . Hell, he was on record, it was in print. It wasn't just. . . . And I gave him, before he made that final decision, Walter, I went through all my files and I gave him a list of every time he said he would not run for a third term. I documented place and date. That was about 50 times. And I gave it to him. Three pages, single spaced. You know, I just wanted him to know that he had said it all that many times. But it didn't matter. There was old Orval over there. He wasn't going to hand it back to him. And really, it looked to, like to everyone that Orval was going to have it easily. Cause he'd never been defeated then. See, he still had that mystique. He still had that clout, everyone thought. That's what did it more than anything else. Because he did not enjoy being governor. He did not enjoy [the office]. He had not finished his job, he says, and there was Orval.

W.D.V.: Have you seen this book?

Ward: No I have not. Dale mentioned that book to me.

J.B.: He's talking in here about Faubus and the Little Rock crisis. He says Faubus had been adequately warned about the dangers of physically resisting orders of the federal court--a step no governor had taken since the Civil War. Winthrop Rockefeller, then on good terms with Faubus, head of the state industrial development effort had spent two and a half hours with the governor. Quote I reasoned with him, argued with him, almost pled with him close quote not to intervene and told him quote the local situation was none of his business, Rockefeller said later. Rockefeller also insisted, though Faubus denied, that Faubus had told him quote I'm sorry, but I'm already committed. I'm going to run for a third term and if I don't do this Jim Johnson and Bruce Bennett

will tear me to shreds.

Ward: I know Rockefeller met with Orval. I don't recall it being anything like two and a half hours. He did meet with him and he did encourage him not to take the step he did. Brooks Hayes one of the other people who did the same thing. Rockefeller was one of several who did that. And of course I don't know what Faubus told him. But I can imagine Faubus seeing it. . . . I give him credit for being just that cynical, myself. He may not have been. But I see him doping it all out. And Faubus tried, was great at doing what I'm sure you all have heard in every state of finding where the people are going and leading them there. [Something about how good Faubus was at this--back in those days.]

J.B.: You accept the interpretation then of Faubus acting in a cynical, political move?

Ward: Yes I do. I certainly do. I think he was just that.

J.B.: There's another interpretation. That Faubus really thought there was going to be violence and sort of was pushed into a corner and--

Ward: Well, that may be true, but I don't myself, but I don't have any real knowledge. I can only make the observation as

been working on one of the state newspapers at the time that sort of involved, in that respect. But hell, I don't know. I just read it.

J.B.: Let me ask you this question, John. Knowing Rockefeller very closely as you did and intimately, as you did, if Rockefeller in an interview said Faubus told him this would you have absolute faith in his recollection on something like that?

Ward: I wouldn't have faith in his quoting me exactly. But I certainly. . . yes, I would. I'd have faith that he recalled it. Rockefeller had a pretty good memory for that sort of thing. Because he couldn't read and he had a hell of a good memory for what you told him.

He really did.

J.B.: What do you mean he couldn't read?

Ward: He couldn't read. He could not read at all. He could read, but it was slow and painful. As a matter of fact he had a case of dyslexia to a mild degree. And he would read numbers all wrong, all the time.

W.D.V.: Doesn't Nelson have the same problem?

Ward: He may, I don't know. But Rockefeller definitely had it. He hated to read. You wrote him a memo. . . you know, really, it took two or three years to figure this out. But you'd write him this memo, and god, it just was critical and everything was and he had to do this thing and take action. He'd put it in his briefcase and you wouldn't hear back on it. And you would call him and go over it on the phone and he would be just so cooperative and helpful. Yes, all right, fine, that's a good idea. Or no, that isn't. Or whatever. You'd work it out over the phone, see. And what he did, he'd keep putting those things in his briefcase and once his secretary discovered he had nine briefcases under his desk full of those memos. He just wouldn't read them. And I asked him about it, you know, kidding him about it. And he said "You'd be amazed how few of those things ever amount to a god damn thing." [Laughter.] He did not like to read and he had great trouble. . . . At first, when we'd write his speeches. . . . I started out writing his speeches. . . and then. . .

W.D.V.: Is that why he had a problem reading speeches?

Ward: Oh yeah. . . . At first I thought that I wasn't getting his phraseology right and I'd interview him and tape him so I could get his phraseology, you know. I'd take those phrases out and glue them into that thing and give it back to him and he still. . . . So I went to larger

size type. I had started off with just regular pica type. Then I went to executive all caps, you know, which is pretty good size type. Gave him that. Same problem. So I remembered that at Williamsburg they had a speech typewriter that had pretty good size type. So I called over to Don over there and he told me where to get one of those things and I got one of those typewriters. And we put the speech on it. Same problem. So hell, we got a teleprompter typewriter. Bought the damn thing. I've forgotten how much it cost, but it was a lot. We were going to try to borrow one from the tv stations but it got to involved so we bought one. Put the damn stuff on that--you can imagine--he still couldn't handle it. Well, we figured out he just couldn't read. It was not the size of the type, although he wouldn't wear glasses and he was supposed to. He didn't wear them. And he rarely--he was very vain about those glasses. He'd just wear them in private. When he got those glasses out and put them on, you were in. I'm here to tell you. If he put those glasses on in your presence you were with the inside man, because he sure hated to wear them. But he couldn't read.

W.D.V.: Well, some interpreted the fact that he couldn't read his speeches to the fact that he'd usually been drinking too much.

Ward: That's not true. Sometimes he had been drinking quite a bit.

W.D.V.: Was it because of that eye problem?

Ward: Yeah. It wasn't. . . . he was loosed up [?] And as a matter of fact he was given credit for being drunk or drinking heavily really a lot of times when he wasn't. I'm not defending him. I mean he drank in public. Or he appeared in public having had some drinks when he shouldn't have on many occasions. But many times he was given credit for being loaded when he wasn't. And I'll tell you why he was given credit for being. Because he was a very emotional man. He really was. He

would choke up. He would even cry in public. He was a curious guy. Speech to the legislature. I've seen him really choke up. And they say "Boy, the guy's really bombed." But he wasn't. He had not had one drink. I know. He just was emotional. And very much and shy and choked up and he would give the impression of being loaded, and he wasn't really. But his problem with those speeches. . . . Now some of them were poorly done speeches. I'll be frank to tell you and I'll take the responsibility for that. They weren't what he should have had, because he didn't want to work on them, for one thing. He didn't want to worry with them. He just wanted you to hand him something that was just what he wanted to say. And you couldn't do that. And you'd say "Chief, we've got to get together here" and so on. And he would put it off and postpone it and you'd talk about it over the phone and so on. And the clock keeps ticking up and finally, hell, you've got to get something on paper. But later a guy came on the staff, a guy named Charlie Albright, who did a real fine. . . . He was really good at picking out of WR the things that he wanted to say and getting them on paper. He was much, much better than anybody else was. But even at that, Rockefeller. . . . One occasion I know of. . . . great scene to me. Albright. . . I don't know if you all have met him. He's a great guy. Works for the Gazette now. He's gone back to the Gazette. Excellent writer, really. Sharp as hell. He worked on this damn speech. It was a big fund raising dinner. It was a Republican fund raising dinner and Everett Dirkson was there as I recall. Mark coliseum. Hell, there was going to be all kind of action there, supposedly. And all the Rockefeller folks were going to be there, paying their dues, out of loyalty to WR so to speak. And Albright worked on this speech. And it was terrific. It was great. It really was. Really had some good

stuff in it. He had dug out. . . oh, he had gone back through ten years of vital speeches and had stolen stuff from there and gathered up a lot of good original stuff, too. But you know, when you put the thing altogether, boy, it was a dandy speech. And WR had a couple of drinks, you know, before the thing. Dirkson, I guess, he was wanting to imbibe himself a tad. And WR walked out on the floor with all these people. The lights were on and reached to his inside coat pocket and he pulled out this speech and tore it in half. Said "My speech writers prepared this one for you!" You can imagine the little speech he made on the front end, you know. "But I want to speak tonight. . . ." It was just awful. And then he launched into this speech. It was just terrible. It was just rambling and so on. He did the same thing at Williamsburg. The big Washington Press Club were having the meeting in Williamsburg. And he wanted me to go up with him and I did. Hell, Williamsburg sent down [A name--unclear] and the guy that writes the books for Williamsburg came down. He's a hell of a good speech writer. Forgot his name. Came down and they. . . . The speeches had to be just right, as you probably know. Lyndon Johnson was there. Dean Rusk. Everybody was there. I mean, man, it was, you know, if they'd dropped a bomb there, man it would have wiped out the federal government. I mean the big guys were there, including the president. And they, you know, dutifully read their little speeches. Two and a half or three minutes worth of real ripe, crisp stuff, you know. That was the whole idea of it. And they worked with WR and they had a beauty. Boy, it was about three minutes worth of great stuff. He got up there. . . . Lyndon preceded him and did his just right. Earl Warren was on the thing. You know, hell, it was just terrific. WR got up there and he never referred to them. He made about a 20 minute speech on Faubus. Off into various directions and so on. He

was hard sometimes to tell the truth to. I always tried to and sometimes I didn't. But most of the time I did, I think. We were flying back on his plane and he said--and I could tell he knew, but he asked me--"Well, how was my speech?" I said it was a bomb. He said "I thought that. I was afraid of that." It was. He just. . . he just wouldn't read or something. I don't know. He just never did read speeches. The only ones he delivered with any real good. . . were speeches that he sort of memorized, gone over several times so he sort of had it. That's true. Otherwise he just. . . .

J.B.: In other words, when he was drinking enough to be effected by it, that compounded with his natural proclivity--

Ward: Yeah, that was worse.

J.B.:--he came off really bad. Is that right?

Ward: That's right. If he would try to tell jokes. . . . He had a great sense of humor but he didn't have a sense of humor most people have. And his jokes would just. . . . You know, they wouldn't even know he was at the end of it. It wouldn't make sense. And they wouldn't know whether to laugh or not and then he would cue them, you know. "Now for a bit of levity." He finally learned to do that. Then he would go into this whole thing and everybody knew that they were supposed to laugh. [Unclear.]

W.D.V.: How important was his money a) in his elections and b) in the administration?

Ward: Well, that's a real good question. His money was vital to his election, I think, even though you can win elections with not much dough maybe. Dale Bumpers by comparison to Fulbright certainly did that I think. I think Rockefeller was able to assemble an organization, because

of his money. I think his organization had a lot to do with winning it for him. And in his administration he spent hundreds of thousands of dollars right out of his own pocket for the state of Arkansas. Unbelievable, really. That story alone. . . if that story. . . . There's a hell of a good story right there. I don't know what it means exactly, but the guy was extremely generous to the state. You don't give money to a state! I mean, what the hell? You know, you don't see the light in somebody's eyes in gratitude when you hand them a ten spot. I mean it's just like throwing it off in the Grand Canyon almost, to me. But man, he spent hundreds of thousands of dollars for the state. And not to make himself look good. I don't mean that. I mean just on things, programs, studies, that he wasn't really going to get much thanks, credit for.

J.B.: What are some examples?

Ward: Actually, the constitutional convention is one thing. God almighty, he spent a ton of dough on that thing.

J.B.: Did he finance that himself?

Ward: Yes, he did. He financed a study of state government before he took office. A tremendous study of state government by Pete Mark Mitchell and Co. [?] It was under the auspices of the committee for the two party system, but WR picked up the tab on that thing, man, and it was a ton of money.

J.B.: How much is a ton?

Ward: Oh, back then, I imagine that study cost \$35- 40,000. It was a lot. Back then. That was in '63, you know. Be about 60 now, probably. You know, that figure would be available, but it was a lot of dough. He did that many times over, many different things. Studies. He would hire. . . for example. . . . He would hire, and did hire, a

staff--if you want to call it that--of lawyers to help prepare, really do a good job on legislation for him to propose. I mean he would tell them what he wanted and they would go to work on it. And man, they'd send him bills that would choke a horse, you know. Retainer stuff. On the game and fish commission investigation alone, Rockefeller hired an attorney who in turn got some staff folks together. I'll bet you he spent \$100,000 on that. Really. Of his own money. To benefit nobody except he believed in that and there was no other way to do it. So he went after it. To clean up the game and fish commission.

W.D.V.: So it was critical.

Ward: I think it was.

J.B.: What did your polls in 1970 show was the reason that the new constitution failed?

Ward: I really am ashamed that the polls are not more definitive than they are. [Something about having pulled the poll results out of the archives.]

J.B.: Did you know at the time of the election it wasn't going to pass?

Ward: Yeah, pretty much. We thought it was a toss up. It turns out it wasn't much of a toss up. The reason is, in my view, and just kind of generalizing over what the polls showed. . . . As a matter of fact people gave it lip service even right up to the last. Yeah, they thought a new constitution would be a thing. The truth is, they did not understand it. They did not know really what it was going to do for them. And we couldn't explain--you know, it takes 10,000 words to explain one thing. And then one detractor, the people that were against the right to work, or whatever, could shoot it down in just a few words. And it had enemies who did not like certain provisions,

certain limited provisions. And the selling of it. . . . It was just never sold in a way that people could believe that their life was going to be improved by passing this thing, by okaying it. And because they didn't know for sure what damage it might do and because they couldn't really see how it was going to help them personally, they weren't for it. I mean Rockefeller had this problem in his own campaign. I often used it as an example; I think correctly so. He would be out there with his foot on the fence talking to a farmer and WR would be explaining his road program for Arkansas in answer to the farmer's question about what Rockefeller was going to do about that chuck hole out there that was tearing up his pick up. I mean, Rockefeller would give him this--and he was right--he'd give him this overall program and here's all this. And that guy didn't give a damn about that. What are you going to do for me right now, here, right out there, three feet from me? And that's the way it was with the constitution. We did not sell it in a way that people could see the advantage for themselves. Just looking back on it, that's what I--

J.B.: Was there a failure in selling it?

Ward: Yeah, I don't think it was sold well. We made a great effort. And I think the people that were right at the forefront and visible on the constitution would validate what I'm saying. We made a great effort for Rockefeller to stay away from it to a great extent. Because we felt that that would create problems for it. If he were too much involved with it. Because all our polls. . . it looked very grim for Rockefeller after Bumpers won the run off, of course. I think the people in Arkansas, I guess, to sum up about that--maybe they're this way in every other state. If they can't see any advantage, they're against it.

They really are. They just don't want to make a change unless they can see some direct benefit. I don't know if they're that way in other states or not. But that's what the people in Arkansas. . . they're selfish.

W.D.V.: Then why did they vote for Bumpers and not Rockefeller?

Ward: Rockefeller represented far too many negatives. He was embarrassing to them. They had decided that he drank too much.

W.D.V.: This come up in your polls?

Ward: Yeah. One of the problems. . . . When I was talking about this earlier, he turned the light on, as I say, and made people look at government. They didn't really want to look all that much. And they didn't want all that controversy between him and the legislature. They were sick and tired of that. They didn't want to pick up the paper everyday. . . . Because they had to kind of think about it. They had to kind of make a decision about it. You know, if it's there every day you've got to do something about it. And they didn't want to think about it. They didn't want to think about the prisons, really. They didn't want to know what was going on down there. They just wanted to forget all about that. And he represented controversy, constant controversy and turmoil. Which he did. And they just got up to here with all that. And Bumpers they thought, Mr Bland, would gloss it all over. He turned out to be far more vigorous and effective, I think, than they probably thought he would. But Rockefeller was just controversy and he did force people to think. And I think things were considerably better because of that, but they . . . that didn't mean they liked it.

J.B.: How about on industrial development, John? Two questions. One, did industrial development really slow down in Arkansas after Little

Rock in '57? And did it really turn around after Rockefeller became governor?

Ward: I think. . . yes. As a matter of fact the record is clear that it slowed down tremendously after the Little Rock racial crisis. Hell, the figures are there boy. I mean it just dipped to nothing, practically. You could confirm that with the AIDC figures, matter of fact, and they'd be glad to share those with you. Rockefeller, prior to that time, of course, had been the chairman of the AIDC. He was elected, really, by the commissioners as I recall. I don't think Faibus really appointed him chairman. He appointed him to the commission. Lot of people think he appointed him chairman. He didn't. I think the commissioners elected him chairman although I think Faibus was favorable to it. During that first four or five years Rockefeller built that thing like crazy. He really did. He worked his ass off. There again, he got money out of his own pocket and poured in to that damn thing. He brought in people. He brought in old Bill [Eawash?] from Washington who's a development consultant type guy. He brought in Bill Rock [?] who was with Con Edison who was a development type guy. And between those two and some other professionals, they really put it together. They really did create all these 90,000 new jobs that we put in our campaign literature. It's true. They did. And then <sup>Rockefeller</sup>~~Faibus~~ resigned in '64, early '64, when he knew he was going to run for Governor. They had tried to get him before that and they'd failed. Because he was very popular. A move started in the legislature, which Faibus fed and allowed to develop, to shoot Rockefeller down. What they wanted to do was dissolve the thing and reappoint it without Rockefeller. Because the legislators could see Rockefeller becoming powerful. You know, they could see him as using that thing for his own personal political ambition and they

didn't want him to get any stronger. But public reaction was overwhelming. Telegrams and stuff. There was a little organized campaign, I think, although I wasn't involved at the time. Anyway, in '64 Rockefeller's out of the AIDC. I really don't believe that the program slowed down very much when Rockefeller was no longer chairman. I don't recall exactly, but I don't think it slowed down that much. I think it has continued to grow ever since it made its recovery after the racial thing. I think the trend has been pretty good. I think while Rockefeller was governor it was great. It did fine. New plants came in and so on. They continued to do so under Bumpers. I don't think . . . I don't know that Rockefeller's being governor speeded up the process all that much. I know it certainly didn't hurt it. Probably helped some. But so has Bumpers helped. Rockefeller and Bumpers both have been positive, I'd say, generally positive influences and both have. . . . I think Rockefeller in particular gave Arkansas. . . I think he helped Arkansas' image quite a bit, financially. I think people in Arkansas think that and felt that way at the time. And I think Bumpers has done the same thing. But Rockefeller always, ever since I've known him, was always oriented toward industrial development. He liked that. Industrial economy. He talked about it a lot. And he really worked. He probably worked harder at that than he ever has anything in his life. [Unclear.]

W.D.V.: What about his son?

Ward: Winthrop Paul is back. He's out of school. He spent a year, or nine months really, I guess, at TCU, at TCU, I guess, . . . . no, where was that. Anyway, a program in animal husbandry kind of crash course for management type personnel. He's back at the farm now and he's somewhat interested in politics although he's not ready to get involved yet, I don't think. He's going to be a Republican. He's not good for. . . the

party. . . . Some of the party folks I know eye him as a source--

W.D.V.: Yeah, one of the scenerios five, ten years down the road. That he lends his name and his wealth and prestige and all that for another candidacy and we bring back the Camelot 2A.

Ward: Yeah, a lot of folks are counting on that. They really think that's going to happen.

W.D.V.: Is that realistic?

Ward: I think it might be possible. I talked to him about it. I went up there his last birthday party here not too long ago. I haven't been around him too much since I left. Couple of times and then this time. We had a chance to talk for oh, maybe an hour. And I asked him about all that stuff. Well, he's really careful about committing himself on anything. He's not sure just exactly when or how he might get involved politically. He is interested in it. I'm not sure. . . I don't think it's just because his father. . . although he's tried to do some things his father had started. . . . I'm not sure his interest would not be just, you know, his own personal interest. I don't think it's bringing back something his father was trying to put together. I'd say it's possible that five, six, seven years he might get involved.

W.D.V.: Should we try to interview him?

[Interruption on tape.]

Ward: We were sitting back in the public relations office once and I had never commented to him or never did about how happy or unhappy his life might be, but sometimes he would talk about his life. His wife and child. His life and family. I'd read all the correspondence between he and his family. His father always signed his letters 'father,' you know. They were more memos than they were letters. You know, you could see on both sides of that thing. But Win would say, and

he's say, and he meant this. His life, he said, was just a matter of, just a process of balancing the headaches. And that's just the way he viewed it. It was problems you were dealing with all the time. It was not. . . . He'd get enthused for very, very short periods of time about things. But mainly he was dealing with problems. People would come to him with problems. Financial, personal, otherwise. He would try to help them. He saw government as a series of problems. Party as problems. All. . . it was problems that he dealt with. The positive? He had no hobbies really, see, if you think about it. He played gin and he liked to play cards, but his hobbies were really wrestling with problems and talking about problems. He didn't fish or hunt or. . . . I don't know. Some how those things are positive hobbies. The one hobby he had in that vein was to be looked at negatively, too. He's trim limbs off of trees and stuff like that, and improve. . . and that in itself is a problem he was solving. I don't know, it was just. . . . He enjoyed very few things, in my opinion. Very few things. And he had trouble with most people because he could not. . . he had very, very few friends. What I would call friends. Because everyone came to him, they had motives and and he was never sure, he could never be sure, you know, whether it was friendship or whether he had something they wanted, so to speak. The latter was mostly the case, too, you know. Few friends. Wealthy guys that didn't need Winthrop Rockefeller and didn't mind telling him so and vice versa. Very few of them. I guess he got more satisfaction and pleasure out of maintaining. . . . Well, he got more pleasure out of Win Rock Farms than anything else. Cause he kind of built that thing and it was kind of a produce of his own ideas and imagination. Quite a bit. Kind of grew as he wanted it to grow. He

would build this building there and do this thing there. It's kind of  
a . . . .

W.D.V.: How did he feel after all the money, work, resources and  
time and so on that he put into Arkansas. He came here from outside.  
In that first ten years and then the second ten years. And then in 1970,  
after he'd done all this, he's rejected.

Ward: Yeah. I asked him about that. He really didn't give me an  
honest answer. He kind of fuzzed it over and gave me kind of a platitude  
about it.

W.D.V.: Did that contribute to his death?

Ward: Well, I don't think so. I mean he died of cancer. I don't  
know what degree quote heartbreak end quote. But he did take it per-  
sonally. It was a slap in the face. He didn't look at it in terms of  
a popular guy, Dale Bumpers. He saw the people seeing him, as I think  
they did see him. They didn't like him, all of a sudden. They didn't  
want him as governor. He took it personally. As I think they probably  
intended. You know, 65% or whatever. That's a pretty heavy .

J.B.: John, how do you explain Dale Bumpers? I mean here's a guy. . . .  
The three biggest names in Arkansas politics in the last 30 years is  
Orval Faubus, Winthrop Rockefeller and William Fulbright. And he just  
cropped all of them.

Ward: It is the most amazing guy that you've ever been around.  
Have you been around him yet?

J.B.: No.

Ward: Have you talked to him some? First of all, he is a tremen-  
dous guy. He really is. He's a great guy. He's sharp as hell. He's  
a country lawyer, but boy, he's got lots of polish, lot of charm. He says

absolutely nothing. Walter, you would be amazed at how little that guy gets away with saying. He says nothing! That's. . . . He's not controversial. Hell, nobody can get a handle on him. They keep trying. Fulbright just worked like hell picking holes in him, or trying to. Could never get him unplugged. He's just Mr Bland. Lots of smiles. "Mr Fulbright, I have a great deal of respect for him. Sen Fulbright, I've agreed with him far more often than I've disagreed. I'm just offering you a choice. Here I am and here he is. If you want Mr Fulbright you'll re-elect him." It's just that kind of stuff. Three cheers for Charlie all over again. . He's a media man. I'll tell you. . . I'm going to give you a little philosophy of my own about that--

[End of tape. End of interview.]