

This is an interview conducted by Jack Bass and Walter DeVries with Mr. James Mann, United States Congressman from the State of South Carolina. The interview was conducted on January 30, 1974 and was transcribed by Susan Hathaway.

JACK BASS: The position had been taken by the Republicans, and the President couldn't impose quotas . . .

JAMES MANN: The bill that was coming through Mills' Committee was about ready for floor action at that time. So we had the option of either letting them send this resolution around for the President, or of going with the House action, since the White House through its spokesman seems to have taken the position with the President . . . could not, or the facts weren't such that he would take any action himself. So, it was the judgement of most of us that we should not send it around to the White House, that we should rely on the legislative action which apparently had the White House support at that time. So we said "let's don't send it down to the White House right now, and this we felt was more or less a unanimous [Interruption]

frequently meeting in John McMillan's office. Well, Albert Watson goes right outside the door, or right back to his office and releases the story to the paper, to the general effect that the South Carolina delegation was playing partisan politics . . . had been claiming that the President could do something about it, and yet they don't permit the South Carolina Textile Committee to take it around to the President, which is just a horrible . . . what interest did he have in mind when he did that. Could he have been so warped as to think we were motivated by partisan interests, I don't think so. He was, and that example and others like it, where other members of the delegation accused Senator Thurmond of going right back and issuing news releases claiming credit, say, for action that the delegation might or might not be taking. That type of partisan action caused us to . . . caused meetings to conclude, but I'll have to say that the meetings that existed even after I got here, were not designed for a general discussion for the benefit of South Carolina. We never had a meeting for just the purpose of discussing mutual problems or what we might do for the benefit of the State, or what we might do as a unit on the national scene.

WALTER DEVRIES: Is that experience typical of the other southern states?

Mann: It's hard for me to answer that. I know that some of them have regular meetings. The North Carolina delegation has regular meetings. I saw the North Carolina delegation, Democrats, and I can't say that the Republicans weren't involved because I did see Jim Broyhill walking out as I came in, and there at the table sat <sup>Rich</sup> ~~Ridge~~ Pryor, and Walter Jones, and L. H. Fountain, and for all I know they were having a North Carolina luncheon meeting. I know they do meet. I can't say positively that the others meet. The two party system, of course, has lessened the value of such meetings because you don't act if necessary.

W.D.: How about the South of the Democrats?

Mann: No.

J.B.:

Mann: No. Well, I guess you could say that we had two groups that could be said to be South wide, and they weren't well organized at all. One was the so called Informal Textile Group of which Phil <sup>Landrum</sup> ~~Anderson~~ was Chairman, and Bryan Dorn was Secretary, and we had a few meetings, a very few. You know, one a year, or something like that to talk about the problems and strategy on the Trade Bill and constituted a major effort on the Textile group during these last five years . . . you know the Trade Bill that Wilbur Mills finally . . . he was not too enchanted with it all along, but he was kind of leading the operation,

and finally, as you know, he went into unilateral dealings himself with the Japanese representatives, and irritated the White House on breaching an agreement which the bill, and then thereafter that led to what apparently was a . . . went up to the Presidential agreement, but we had very few meetings as that group. The Southern Caucus, I don't recall . . . I don't know that they had a name, if they had a name I guess that was it . . . was headed by Omar Burleson in those days, and we would meet . . . I say in those days, up until Omar . . . well for about three years, let's say from '69 to '71. We would meet in the Rules Committee Office of Bill <sup>Colmer</sup>~~Caldwell~~, the Chairman of the Rules Committee, the Congressman from the area of <sup>Beluxi</sup>~~Beluxey~~, Mississippi. We would meet there on a short notice basis when some issues directly affecting the South, or that we thought was a an anti-southern . . . that somebody thought was an anti-southern thrust. We'd meet when there was something concerning bussing coming up on the floor, and we'd meet when there was something concerning maybe minimum wage, or some very conservative measure. We'd meet on short notice, and I'd get a call that Congressman Burleson had called a meeting for 1:30, and that was the usual time, p. m. in the Rules Committee Office. So we would meet there and discuss strategy, as to what we southerners might do to scuttle the effort or to promote an effort, but mostly to scuttle, and some of

the more articulate members would express opinions and we'd usually leave the meeting without any unanimity of . . . without any vote, or anything of that sort. The consensus would perhaps develop as to what the best procedure was, and it was kind of assumed that the so called leadership, Burleson or somebody else would follow that procedure.

W.D.: The anti-southern meant white. The more racial it was the more anti-southern it was, or couldn't you have that kind of . . . I mean, who defined what was anti-southern?

Mann: I would have to relate it to the specific issues, because there may have been something that I wasn't at all excited about or concerned about, it was something that Omar Burleson and maybe Bill Palmer and maybe Joe ~~Wagner~~<sup>Waggoner</sup>, and maybe Phil Landrum, and maybe one or two others decided it was something on which we should marshall the troupes. There was some evidence that they would . . . that they were in communication or had discussed the matter. For example, Gerald Ford, conservative coalition idea, and I am sorry that I can't specifically recall the precise issues. I know that whenever there was a bussing question, yes, we would meet. I am sure we met, for example, on the extention of the Voting Rights Act . . . attempt to remove the southern thrust of that bill. You are familiar with what the southern thrust of it was. They were formed in voting for a bill. But it is difficult and I don't have

the faculty of recall that I can say what all . . . what would trigger a meeting by us, but it was either something that, I'll have to apply the word "southern" to it, but I could, in equal legitimacy apply the word ultra-conservative to it when I mention minimum wage or matters like that.

W.D.: Well it wasn't exclusively a Democratic meeting?

Mann: Yes, now there is no particular reason for it to be. I am trying to recall any of the Republican southern members that did show at those meetings. I don't have an independent recollection, but I have the impression that people like Bill Dickinson or Jim Broyhill and the like, would have been welcome. It wasn't a Democratic exercise as such. It was more of a southern exercise.

J.B.: Would someone like Albert Watson come up?

Mann: No, I am pretty sure that Albert never was there.

W.D.: Did those meetings stop in 1971?

Mann: They kind of changed character. Some of the more articulate members were, oh, <sup>Sonny</sup> Senator ~~Montgomery~~ <sup>Waggoner</sup>, I guess, and Tom Downing, and perhaps Joe ~~Wagner~~ <sup>Waggoner</sup>, and in . . . along about '71, the old guard tried to step aside. I think we elected Tom Downing to serve for a period, and that period was not long, six months or so, and then Joe ~~Wagner~~ <sup>Waggoner</sup> kind of took over, and it took on a different flavor, and it was a very subtle difference, but there was

a difference. First, Joe tried to bring a little bit more organization into it. Secondly, it was fairly well rumored that his position, which he then promoted . . . Omar, a low key sort of fellow talked about it too, didn't try to attempt to promote a position as much as they attempted to pose problems, but Joe would try to promote a position that way, and there was a feeling that Joe was representing the White House position in most cases, and that didn't necessarily . . . that didn't substantially affect our reaction or our unity, but it was recognized that he was promoting White House positions, and some of the members, I guess, kind of developed less interest in it when they realized that it was not so much the consensus of the conservatives as it was to promote a White House position. That grew then rather rapidly until the DRO, Democratic Research Organization, with which you are probably familiar. Are you fairly familiar with it?

J.B.: Up to the point that they have a Research Staff and have what is usually referred to as conservatively oriented research.

Mann: Right. Well I would have to . . . according to my observation, given the fact that we met infrequently, that the old Southern Caucus grew into the DRO, and there has been no meeting of the Southern Caucus since the DRO started, and that is why I say it merged into the DRO, which broadened its invitation list a little bit. We have

a hundred dollar annual membership for the purpose of maintaining a staff, position papers are issued very infrequently, and they are not very effective documents. They generally posed the problem and listed the alternatives, and there was no whip or such to tell us what to do, and as I say, it was broadened a little bit, and grew, perhaps around the school issue as much as anything because people like you could                      who was anti-bussing and a fairly balanced person as far as education programs were concerned. She has attended and is perhaps a member. Norman Lint of New York, who had the anti-bussing constitutional amendment may be a member.

J.B.: Let me ask you a question about bussing. You represent a district, and your home town as bussing planned was the first in the nation basically bussing with racial balance involved . . . divided locally, ordered by Circuit Court Judge Clement Haynesworth also from your home town, and the plan once imposed and implemented seemed to work reasonably well, with a reasonable degree of acceptance; at least one point of view was that it resulted in a considerably less amount of disruption insofar as the schools were concerned than almost any other kind of plan. You didn't have people moving and selling house, moving to a different kind of neighborhood. You didn't have low-income white neighborhoods that would have schools 50 - 50 in upper income white neighborhoods. Schools would



be 100% white, the problems that would have gone to, and about two weeks, as well as I recall, two or three weeks after Greenville implemented its plan, and President Nixon first came out with his first anti-bussing statements. Do you think he made it an issue and just not spoken out against it or would it never have become an issue?

Mann: I think he [created] the problem, and then didn't deliver, that's what it amounted to. So I don't think . . .

J.B.: Did he create bussing as a political . . .

Mann: No, no.

J.B.: Was it one before that?

Mann: It was one before that. He held out false promises and Strom Thurmond and the others whooped it up in the South based on those promises, and then when those promises weren't delivered, then the position was taken by Strom Thurmond, Now I am using him as the spokesman because he is the one I read, who said it's those bureaucratic Democrats that are left over that he can't get rid of that are still causing problems. Of course, as things developed nothing ever changed the threats to the approach of HEW to the problem. Well, it did change a little bit, they shifted their attack to other areas of the country, but you are so right about the plan in Greenville being . . . it's been very very successful in

my judgement and practical solution. It does not overcome my basic Constitutional beliefs that discrimination works both ways, and that . . . and I tend to agree with the Charlotte - Mecklenberg decision, which holds out the promise that when you have overcome the vestiges of the ~~de jury~~<sup>e</sup> segregation system, that you should then allow people to open governments and school systems and people to return to a non-discriminatory plan working both ways actually meaning, of course, the neighborhood school plan, free of any discrimination at all. So while holding on to that basic Constitutional belief, which I'll never overcome, I nevertheless approve of the practical effects of the Greenville School System, and for that reason have personally not attacked it, not demagogued the issue, and in fact the last opportunity that I had to vote, I voted against the bussing amendment, which made me gain your attention, and got a little static in Spartanburg from George D. Johnson, Jr., with the Spartanburg Paper editorially. ✓

And the philosophical position that I take is based on the knowledge that Greenville had the ideal population mix and so forth to be able to successfully carry out the plan. But it is never the less an artificial plan, and that is why I stop by saying "yes, this is a satisfactory solution, it's a practical solution." It has many side benefits. You know the theory being that the 80 to 20 or anything up to 30% can be amalgamated without holding

back one group, and bring the other group in rather rapidly. Other benefits are that it breaks up the growth and development of black core city areas, and people no longer have to don't have to pick a residence because of where their child is going to school because he's not going there, and that causes, it all comes to city problems I would say primarily, and of course the blacks objected to it. It destroyed their identity, and in a lot of areas caused them some problems too, but that's a unique situation . . . not unique, but certainly not universal.

nine or ten in the other direction or other problems that could cause other social and side effects that weren't practical disadvantaged them. The resegregation problems, but your recollection is right. It came about under pressure from HEW, which was proposing a system and all that, and the school board, based on its . . . under some coercion, no doubt, nevertheless based on what one hoped was an independent evaluation of what was best, and based on a study that had been made by Coleman, I think, the former chief officer of education decided that that was the best plan for Greenville, and so they proposed it as a challenge proposal to the HEW program and they accepted it and incorporated it in an order. The part of that order that was appealed, the primary part of that order was appealed, was the part which required a quota system for teachers, because I don't

believe in the system to teachers. Now the Democratic Research Organization has not drawn, I don't know what the membership is now, but it's not a very powerful outfit. In the meantime, another group a middle group has organized . . . let me tell you right now before I forget it again . . . what they were like like a moderate group composed of some of the same people in the DRO, and . . . <sup>d</sup> Edith Green cornered me the other day and said that she had been asked to find out if I was going to join because I had gone to a couple meetings, and I told her yes, and I told her I would send in my dues. It's composed of moderate group . . . some southerners, mid-westerners, some Pennsylvania and up-state New York people and they . . . so now we have three groups . . . the Democratic <sup>k</sup> Study Group still by far the stronger and seems to have a good staff and does pretty good studies on legislation.

W.D.: Was the central issue, why was the southern caucus mobilized bussing or racially related.

Mann: I'd say it was, historically.

W.D.: When you remove that, is there any need for such a thing as a Democratic or Southern Caucus. Is the moderate group more likely to replace that in terms of the new members coming up in the Democratic party in the

South?

Mann: I think it will be slow. I think there will still be this hard core of DRO's or Southern oriented people.

W.D.: Now what issues will they . . .

Mann: I'll have to describe it as just being ultra conservative. The anti-labor, moderate, I think moderate is the proper word, moderate in Civil Rights matters. They have all come around to some realization that there are a lot of good things about it, but moderate in reference to say that they still have objections. The fact that the South has picked out by formula, an historical formula for monitoring the election laws, and that won't come up very often, you know. Just about every five years. If I had thought a little faster I might have caught somebody out front to bring me the file which I probably have that might contain the issues that they have issued a little study on in the last year. There were some fairly outspoken young ones who . . . well, you know there is a new geographical make-up of anti-bussing people. The Dingle Amendment to the Energy Act never would have passed without the support of the Michigan, California, Colorado, people who have felt the effects of certain bussing proposals. So there is a new mix. Now some of the

Side Two of the MANN Tape . . . This interview began on Tape 44 and was continued on Tape 50. A good portion of the first tape was inaudible due to a malfunction in the dictating equipment.

Mann: I had kind of a tough race last time. It wasn't tough from the standpoint of being too much concerned about getting re-elected. It was just tough from the fact that my wife didn't like being criticized, and I didn't either, and smeared, or attempted to be smeared, and so I came out of the race somewhat tired and exhausted, and here we were it was time to start thinking about the Governor's race. Lord knows two years is not too much time to think about being Governor, and at that time it was obvious to me from the maneuverings of Bryan Dorn and his wife, that they didn't want me, that they weren't concerned about me as a candidate and Earl Morris reached his low point somewhere along in the early . . . early last year, and an announcement or strong signals from me at that point barring some unusual twist would have practically ended the whole thing. I'm not telling you what I think now, I'm telling you what I thought then, but what I know now, of course, that position of Bryan Dorn has not caught on, as you know, has not caught fire. Earl is on the way back and it is going to be a

heck of a tough race between those two, and I have got my own ideas about who will probably merge triumphant, but it was the opportunity for me to run, but shortly after I came up here last year, I became very much involved in some, what I thought were very important activities trying to reorganizing the Judiciary Committee. One of my most satisfying efforts . . . at least I really sank my teeth into something I thought, it didn't produce a whole lot of results, but I was still satisfied with what it did do

select committee on crime,

and a couple other jobs I got as a result of the Judiciary Committee work, the federal rules of evidence that are being layed on the floor of the house today. It was a very challenging job. We would meet two or three times a week on it, and just a personal reluctance to get that much involved in a tough, expensive, all consuming political effort, and what I am saying to you is that I didn't want to be Governor bad enough to break myself out of this momentum that I am in, or inertia, if you want to call it in other words, and that is not very flattering conclusion to come to, but I am basically . . . I don't make political plans. I enjoy the opportunity of participating in public service, but I don't too much enjoy the process of getting there, and so it just wasn't the power and glory of being the number one hero of South Carolina, it just didn't appeal

to me that much.

J.B.: It appealed to Bryon Dorn.

Mann: Well it has appealed to him though ever since 1948, and he has all kind of personal reasons to do it. He's been up here 26 years, and he had his military, he has got 30 years in time, he'll net as much as he is making now. He's tired. The VA Committee, I am sure, was not as challenging, but it wasn't tremendously challenging job, committee job. The fact that he is always had that state wide interest and the Governor turn to one one side next term. Was in a position to go to the Senate. All that is there.

J.B.: That is in theory, but traditionally in South Carolina the Governor running for the Senate at the end of his term gets beat. Strom Thurmond and Fritz Hollings are the two best cases.

Mann: It's hard to believe though that he can't use that platform to build rather than to get yourself into trouble. Fritz, of course, did a great job as Governor, he was against [Interruption]

J.B.: Why did you turn them down . . . the chance to run as a Republican candidate?

Mann: Basically because of my loyalty to the people, who have given their lives to public service in South Carolina as Democrats . . . not to the party as such, but to the people who under the, what I call the no-party



system have served South Carolina, and now to put myself  
in opposition . . .