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This is an interview with Don Pride, the press secretary for Governor Reuben Askew of Florida. It was conducted in Tallahassee, Florida on May 15, 1974 by Jack Bass and Walter De Vries and was transcribed by Joe Jaros.

Jack Bass: Well, I get the impression that political reporting is fairly aggressive in Florida.

Don Pride: Yeah, I think that it is.

J.B.: Is this something fairly new, or not?

Pride: No, it's really sort of traditional. It started at least in the early '60s. Frank Trippet with the St. Pete Times, who later went with Newsweek and then Look Magazine, and then Martin Waldren with the, started out with the Tampa Tribune and switched to the St. Pete Times after Trippet left. And there were some before then, but those are the ones that really stood out, I think. And I think that it is a larger press corps, maybe the second largest, I think, California may be the largest. And I think that it is unusual, the number of really good daily newspapers in the state. All those factors have combined to make it a pretty competitive situation for investigative reporting up here.

J.B.: So, it's pretty aggressive, and how much influence has that been on this, what I suppose should be called just exposure

of corruption in state government?

Pride: It has been a tremendous influence. Not only in exposure, but in getting good laws passed.

J.B.: Such as?

Pride: One of the earlier ones was the "Who gave it, who got it contributions law" which they are just now catching up with on the national level, to require reporting of contributions.

J.B.: Which goes back how long in Florida?

Pride: I guess at least as early as the mid-sixties. I'm not sure when that passed, I think sometime then, it could have been '62 or '64. Probably in '64. It's been a good law and it has enabled reporters, although it has been weak as far as enforcement, it has enabled the press to point out where the money has been coming from and to expose false twisting of names and whatnot. For example, when I was with the St. Pete Times, and Hayden Burns was running for re-election, he was backed by the Winn Dixie chain, the grocery chain based in Jacksonville and using their Convair airplane. And there was a big controversy, because I found that the state department of transportation was paying for the engine and things like that that became campaign issues and also directly relating to the election laws. It turned out that when you checked the names in the contribution reports against city directories, it turned out that a lot of the people were clerks and bag boys for Winn Dixie, you know. And you would call them up and they'd say, "I didn't give any money, I don't know why my name is on the list." And that sort of thing that the law has been effective in exposing. And then just now, in the last year, they finally have created an elections

commission to begin enforcing it and investigate violations. Up to now, it has just been exposure by the press and what effect that would have on the election, and I think that it has had an effect. Burns was defeated.

W.D.V.: You have the largest state press corps, next to California, in the country?

Pride: I think that's true, yes.

W.D.V.: Well, why is that?

Pride: I don't know, I think that you've got an unusual amount of papers ranging from what you might consider fair to good to very good in Florida, when you compare them to other states. When you think about the Miami Herald and the St. Pete Times, the Tampa Tribune and even some of the smaller ones, like the Gainesville Sun and the Miami News, and the Palm Beach Post, the Lakeland Ledger, . . . the Gainesville Sun and the Lakeland Ledger are owned by the New York Times now. But there is just interest in that kind of reporting. And I think that it has been a strong factor. There are others besides

W.D.V.: Is there a focus on reporting on the state government administration? There can't be much on the legislature, because that only meets for sixty days.

Pride: Yeah, but there is a lot more on the sixty day session than you see in other states, I think.

W.D.V.: There is?

Pride: Yeah, if you look at the Tampa Tribune for example, they will have a two page spread on the session.

J.B.: Every day?

Pride: Every day.

J.B.: How about the other papers?

Pride: And major stories, they start out front. Other papers, it's closer to one page, but again, the major stories start out front and they devote a page inside to the session. The Herald does that and the St. Pete Times and the Times-Union, it's got a state section that carries a lot of it. There just seems to be more interest in state government, I think, in Florida than in most states. I don't know why that is. It's a competitive situation between the papers. But others, besides the election reforms that began in the mid-sixties, you have the "Government in the Sunshine Law", which resulted from years of really pressing by the press corps here for open meetings and was finally passed in 1967, requiring all collective bodies to meet in the open and to give proper notice. You've got a very strong public records law, which has very few exceptions to what is public record and what isn't. And then, I think, in more recent years it has gone into progressive legislation in the way of the environment, things like that.

W.D.V.: The press corps itself lobbies these things?

Pride: Well, they don't lobby them directly, but in effect through the combination of reporting and editorials, it has.

W.D.V.: This is atypical for the country?

Pride: I think so. Certainly to the extent that it is done in Florida. I was really amazed, I went up to one of those seminars at Columbia where you go through all the papers from the various states and the difference between what the Florida press does and what they do in

other states is pretty dramatic when you look at it that way. So, it certainly has been a strong force in Florida.

W.D.V.: And this started in the early sixties?

Pride: Yeah.

W.D.V.: Was it related to reapportionment or anything like that?

Pride: Well, it started before the sixties, come to think of it. Because Trippet and Waldren were here when Collins was governor. So, it was at least as early as the mid-fifties and perhaps earlier to some extent, but that's when it really started to bloom, I think, during that period.

J.B.: How about in campaign coverage?

Pride: Again, I think probably more aggressive than most states, in the numbers of reporters put out on the road to cover the campaign and in recent years, it has been even more. At least papers are starting to make an effort to just report more than just what the candidates are saying. But I think that reporting on the contributions is an aspect of that started some time ago in Florida, as being a key part of the campaign, you know, and not just what the candidates are saying. But who is backing them and that sort of thing.

W.D.V.: But the Sunshine Law and the Campaign Contributions Law was essentially passed because of pressure from the press?

Pride: Yeah, very definitely. A few of us held a sit-in ~~in~~ the senate chamber in '66 or '67, I forget which it is now, and that was the last time that the senate has held an executive session. And after that, they passed the Sunshine Law, which they had been

trying to pass for a number of years. There was a senator from Gainesville, Red Cross, that had been trying time and time again, and had gotten nowhere, but they finally did.

J.B.: What happened on that sit-in, were you there?

Pride: Yeah. There were a lot of speeches on the floor of the senate, including one senator from central Florida who said that he felt like coming upstairs and throwing us out himself and finally, they took a vote, and the sergeant-at-arms came and escorted us out. But it was the last time that they did it.

J.B.: What happened, they voted an executive session, and you just didn't leave?

Pride: Right. And it was just spontaneous. They held them to take up matters of suspension of officials, although there was always some suspect that they also went into other matters at some of these meetings. And we were in the press box, and I forget who said it first, but someone said, "I'm not leaving." And a couple of the other guys said that they weren't leaving either and it just caused a big stir on the floor. Most of the press did leave and actually, we went up and sat in the gallery and they debated for awhile and took the vote and escorted us out. But it was the last time that it happened.

J.B.: Those that didn't leave went up to the gallery, is that the way that it worked?

Pride: Right. If you look up, there is a press box right at the back overlooking the floor of the senate and there are galleries on both sides, it's the same area.

J.B.: About how many people were involved?

Pride: I think there were four. John McDimmit was one, and I was one. I forget who else, two others, I think.

J.B.: And that was what year?

Pride: It was either '66 or '67.

J.B.: And was that the incident that triggered what eventually became the Sunshine Law?

Pride: I think so, I don't know for sure. I can't recall for sure when that passed, but I just read something the other day that indicated that was the trigger for it. I do know for sure that that was the last time that the senate ever met in secret. And I'm quite sure that that law passed shortly after that, but I can't, my memory's not that good. I suppose that the theory was that if they weren't going to meet in secret, there was no sense in letting the county commissions and the school boards and the city councils do it.

J.B.: Was Florida the first state to pass such a law?

Pride: I'm not sure. There's only a few now, I think.

W.D.V.: Elliot Neale says that that was the case. For a law that broad.

Pride: But even before they passed that, there was enormous . . . and I think that incident in the senate was just one of many over the years where the press, in their reporting, just made a big thing out of secret meetings. That it shouldn't be done. And in editorials. So, everytime they did it, you know, they did it at their own risk. And it's really amazing to me that that sort of thing isn't done. Like for example, in Washington, they can get away with so much secrecy up there. And you know, you've got to feel that it maybe is party because the press doesn't want it that badly up there. They

all have their sources, the ones that could really be pushing it effectively. I don't know. But I think that if the press wants it that badly, they can make an initiative.

J.B.: How does Askew relate to the press?

Pride: I think with very good relations.

J.B.: Does he have regular press conferences?

Pride: Yeah. One or two a month. We try to have two a month.

W.D.V.: When is the next one?

Pride: I don't know. We had one

W.D.V.: Could you stage one for us?

Pride: (Laughter.) We had one last week in which he announced for re-election. And since we are in the closing weeks of the session, we may not have another one this month. I'm not really sure. It depends on whether or not it looks more productive for us not to say anything and to just work quietly for the program for the rest of the way, or what. We're in pretty good shape.

J.B.: Can he serve unlimited terms?

Pride: Two terms now, used to be one, but the constitution changed that in '68..

J.B.: Was he involved in that constitutional change?

Pride: Yeah. Both as a member of the Constitution Revision Commission that started it off and then as a member of the senate.

J.B.: What did they have, a commission that drew up a constitution and then. . . .

Pride: Yeah, and then they drafted it and then the legislature amended quite a few changes.

J.B.: And then it was presented to the people as a referendum?

Pride: Right. Chesterfield Smith, the president of the Bar Association was the chairman of the commission. A very outspoken man, as you may have noticed in recent months on the Watergate situation. A damn good guy.

J.B.: Where is he from?

Pride: Lakeland.

J.B.: Was he politically active?

Pride: He is, particularly in judicial affairs, but he doesn't really try to get involved, I don't think, in campaigns and that sort of thing.

J.B.: Was the cabinet written into the new constitution, is that the

Pride: Well, it was in the old constitution, and it was just retained.

I think that the people of Florida probably . . . and this is probably too broad a statement, but they know that it is the least questionable, whether they know how the system works as far as having an elected cabinet. When problems come up, you know, sometimes we get letters questioning why the governor doesn't do something about so and so, you know, without realizing that he is a separately elected cabinet official who the governor has no power over. The system was improved though, greatly, by a combination of the constitution passing, which set in motion an executive reorganization, which put the department of administration, which is the budget among other things, under the governor's control and put several other departments strictly under the governor that were under the cabinet. So, it works better now and there are certainly some good points that favor it. One of them being the visibility of open meetings that you would not have otherwise. On questions of selling submerged lands and buying environmental lands

and parks. So, in some ways, it's worked pretty well and in other ways, in the administration of some of the departments, it's just sort of a clumsy set-up.

J.B.: Is the Sunshine Law written into the constitution?

Pride: No.

J.B.: That's what I thought, but you said that in opening up

Pride: Yeah. I was talking about that in relation to the fact that the cabinet works well, that you have the cabinet visibility that you would not have if there was just one chief executive, because they do make these collective decisions. We have bi-weekly cabinet meetings.

J.B.: Oh, I see. How many members in the cabinet?

Pride: Six, and the governor. And they are broken up into a number of boards.

J.B.: How many have been indicted?

Pride: One.

J.B.: One so far, and how many others are under investigation?

Pride: Certainly two. The comptroller and the insurance commissioner, he's called the treasurer, and the insurance commissioner. Tom O'Malley.

J.B.: And then you've got the education commissioner, and who are the others?

Pride: You've got the attorney general, the secretary of state, and the commissioner of agriculture.

J.B.: And what is the function of the cabinet?

Pride: Well, for one thing, they all have their different departments to run. Beyond that, they meet collectively as a board, the board of

education, the trustees of the internal improvement fund, which deals in submerged lands and that sort of thing, the board of natural resources, through which they run the department of natural resources.

J.B.: The governor serves on the cabinet also?

Pride: Right.

J.B.: As what, chairman?

Pride: As chairman, yes.

J.B.: Do they meet at his pleasure, or do they meet on a

Pride: No, they meet on a regular schedule, which cannot be changed except by a majority vote.

J.B.: But that's by custom, or statute? Not written into the constitution, I presume.

Pride: What, when they meet?

J.B.: Yes, these regular meetings.

Pride: No, they can do that themselves. They used to meet once a week and during the Kirk administration, he boycotted a lot of meetings, he wanted to change it and the rest of the cabinet wouldn't, so he boycotted meetings every other week and eventually since that didn't work, he finally started going to all of them again. And Governor Askew was able to convince them to go to every other week.

J.B.: But when they meet, they meet as the cabinet, is that right?

And wear different hats as the meetings proceed?

Pride: Well, they meet as all these separate boards. The term "cabinet", I'm not sure whether that's in the constitution or not now. But it's referred to as really these combination of boards which they meet as. The press refers to it as cabinet meetings, but

J.B.: But they may meet this week as the board of education and

Pride: No, in each meeting, they keep changing hats.

J.B.: Yeah, all the way around.

Pride: Yeah, that's true.

J.B.: But the cabinet serves as the state board of education?

Pride: Yes.

J.B.: With control over what? I mean, public schools, grades K through twelve or is it

Pride: Well, have a board of regents which does most of the running of the university system, but on paper at least, they are under the board of education, too. But board of education stuff has always been routinely handled except, for example, an appeal by a teacher that has been fired that wants a hearing before the full cabinet, the rest of the agenda is usually handled by, upon the recommendation of the commissioner and the board approves it. So, on those kind of things, except when it has involved those sorts of things that require some kind of hearing, it hasn't really made that much difference.

J.B.: How about so far as the budget is concerned? Does the governor prepare the budget?

Pride: Yeah, he's got complete control of that now.

J.B.: Did the cabinet at one time

Pride: Yes.

J.B.: When did that change?

Pride: After the reorganization of 1968. No, wait a minute now. The constitution was passed in '68 and the reorganization came the following year.

J.B.: So, that was actually in Kirk's regime.

Pride: Yeah, it would have started in the last year of Kirk's term, 1970.

J.B.: So, the governor actually prepares the budget and submits it to the legislature.

Pride: Right. He gets recommendations, of course, from the cabinet, the people in their departments, just like he gets them from the departments that are directly under him.

J.B.: Does he appoint the other department heads?

Pride: Some he does and some he doesn't. The ones directly under the governor he appoints, those under the cabinet, they vary, too. In some cases, the governor gets to appoint, subject to approval of the cabinet, in others, it needs to be a majority vote of the cabinet. The department of natural resources is by majority vote and nobody really gets to initiate

J.B.: There's no system of boards or commissions of the various departments is there? How about the highway department, for example, is there a state highway commission?

Pride: No, there used to be a state roads board, but that was abolished. There is a state board of pollution control, which is a department under the governor and he appoints the board. And there is a board of business regulations, the same way.

J.B.: What do you have, a highway department or a transportation department?

Pride: Department of transportation.

J.B.: What's that cover? Does it cover ports and aeronautics as well as highways?

Pride: No.

J.B.: Or is it really just highways?

Pride: It's really highways and now, mass transportation.

J.B.: And you have a director that is appointed by the governor, is that it?

Pride: Yeah, the state secretary of transportation is appointed by the governor.

J.B.: Traditionally, does the incoming governor change most of these officials, these department heads, or do they sort of stay over from administration to administration?

Pride: Traditionally, they change them. Although, when more departments were under the . . . another thing that executive reorganization did was to cut down on the number of departments, they consolidated them. A bunch of them. But when all these departments were under the cabinet, I think that there was less change than there is now, where the governor has direct control.

W.D.V.: Do the legislators serve on any boards of commissions?

Pride: Not within the executive course, they

W. V.D.: Well, within the twenty-two departments, do they serve on any

Pride: No.

W.D.V.:as ex officio.

Pride: Well, they serve on a lot of task forces and things like that, to develop programs, but not directly.

W.D.V.: The cabinet system as it was, and even now, was unique to Florida, isn't that correct?

Pride: Yeah.

W.D.V.: Even the way that you've got it set up now, where they split the authority, he appoints about half. They still have enormous

authority, because they've got agriculture, education, what?

Pride: Right, natural resources.

W.D.V.: Natural resources and the comptroller has the securities and insurance and that sort of thing.

Pride: Well, some things don't even come under the cabinet. Banking, the comptroller has complete control over that.

W.D.V.: Now, who appoints the comptroller?

Pride: He's elected. He issues charters and that has been one of the exceptions to the public record laws, bank charter records, and the St. Pete Times did a series of stories, I guess it was last year, on how these are handled, you know, there are always

W.D.V.: What's the origin of that system? How did that come about?

Pride: I don't know. Allan Morris might be able to help on that.

W.D.V.: How is the legislature in terms of its power in this state? Since reapportionment, since the Pork Chop era.

Pride: It's become, well, I think that it has always been fairly strong in Florida. And part of the reason in the past, I guess, was because of the weak government system, before reorganization. And then of course, the legislature was controlled by what the called the Pork Chop Gang, the rural members before reapportionment.

W.D.V.: Are they all gone now?

Pride: Just about, yeah. Each session, there have been fewer and they are just about all gone. Of course, you still have . . . as far as being in control, except, I don't think that you could really classify Mallory Horne as a Pork Chopper, but of course, he was very much in the rural bloc, back when he was speaker of the house. Now

he's president of the senate.

W.D.V.: Has that been the biggest change in the legislature in the last twenty years?

Pride: Well, reapportionment and as a result of that, for the first time really having a staff. They used to rely so much on the lobbyists for their information and as a result, there was no way to really question the lobbyists. In recent years, they have come up with, particularly on the house side, with strong staffing by aggressive, younger type people who come in from the universities and that sort of thing.

W.D.V.: With the diminishing of the. . . .

Pride: Of the effect of the lobbyists, yeah.

J.B.: Is that a year round staff, or just during the session?

Pride: Year round. And they have committee meetings just about year round, now.

J.B.: How about legislative pay, what's happened there?

Pride: It used to be just a nominal

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Pride: no, as a matter of fact, he vetoed it, I believe. It was overridden.

J.B.: So, it increased the salary to \$12,000. Do you recall what it was before that?

Pride: No, it was nominal, I know. I don't remember what it was.

J.B.: The legislative salary is \$12,000. Does that make a difference in the type of people who came to the legislature, or stayed?

Pride: (Pause.) My feeling is that it has, but I don't really have that kind of information. My feeling is that it has broadened the

type of people who can come.

W.D.V.: Is the governor overridden very much?

Pride: No, as a matter of fact. . . .

W.D.V.: Historically?

Pride: Governor Kirk was overridden a number of times.

W.D.V.: Was he atypical?

Pride: Yeah. I think so. Because he was a Republican.

W.D.V.: It was a partisan thing².

Pride: Yeah. Governor Askew hasn't been overridden yet.

J.B.: Looking back over his administration, his first term, what would be the accomplishments and achievements of Askew's administration?

Pride: Number one, I think, was the tax reform, which I know as a reporter just seemed like an impossible task in Florida, because anytime that anybody would try to reform the structure, he'd be opposed by a "no new tax" candidate, picturing the guy as a candidate just trying to pile taxes on us. But the governor was able to convince the people that corporate taxes ought to be levied for the first time, corporate profit tax, profit or income tax.

J.B.: At what grade?

Pride: I believe that it's 5%.

J.B.: What else, I mean, what else besides tax reform?

Pride: Well, for the first time, another issue that had been fought for years was a severance tax on phosphates and minerals removed and that was passed.

J.B.: So they imposed the severance tax?

Pride: Yeah.

W.D.V.: Was Florida the first to pass a severance tax, 1971?

Pride: I don't know about that.

J.B.: South Carolina doesn't have one.

W.D.V.: They don't have one either?

Pride: They also put in a provision to reclaim the land that had been destroyed, so that they couldn't . . . I don't know how it's set up, whether the state reimburses the tax or it's a tax credit for the reimbursement, but they can use, in effect, part of the tax to put the land back in order.

J.B.: Does it cover anything besides phosphates?

Pride: All minerals, yeah. That were removed from the soil.

J.B.: It doesn't apply to forestry?

Pride: No. And then they closed some minor loopholes, I guess, in the sales tax, but they also repealed some consumer taxes, the household utility tax, the state sales tax on household utilities, and the state sales tax on apartment rentals. And in addition, it enabled the state to send more money to the local governments in revenue sharing. Florida, I think, as made as much progress as any state in equalization of the schools and taking over the funding at the state level.

J.B.: Is it full funding at the state level?

Pride: No. But they did put a ceiling on county school taxes.

W.D.V.: Is the state in more than fifty percent in the school systems now. Are they contributing more than fifty percent?

Pride: I don't know what the breakdown is, and one problem that we've run into, the state keeps pumping more into it, and then recently, the assessment levels have been required to go up around the state and the school boards have not cut back on their millage in proportion to the increased valuations, so they have been increasing theirs at about the same rate that the state has been putting more money in. That's

one reason that the governor did this time, they did put a ten mill cap on the school tax, and this time, the governor is recommending that they lower that to eight mills, to enable the state to take over a larger share percentage wise of the cost. Beyond tax reform,

J.B.: In addition to the corporate income tax, was there . . . and the severance tax, was there any other aspect of tax reform?

Pride: Well, we consider the repealing of the others very much a part of it, you know, it was a package program.

J.B.: What was repealed?

Pride: The household utilities sales tax and the sales tax on apartment rentals.

W.D.V.: But you have a 5% sales tax, is that right?

Pride: Right.

W.D.V.: And no personal income tax?

Pride: Wait a minute, 4%.

W.D.V.: 4%.

Pride: And no personal income tax and the governor is very strongly against the personal income tax.

J.B.: Does the sales tax apply to food?

Pride: No, or medicine.

J.B.: Food and drugs are both exempt?

Pride: Right.

J.B.: They've always been exempt?

Pride: Right.

J.B.: Is anything else exempt? How about gasoline?

Pride: They are taxed. I think they call it an excise tax, rather than a sales tax, but it is taxed by the state.

J.B.: But is there a sales tax in addition to the excise tax on gasoline?

Pride: I don't think so. I can't say that for sure, but I don't think so.

W.D.V.: Any other major accomplishments?

Pride: Yeah, quite a few. The one thing that . . .when they passed the constitution in '68, the legislature was unable to agree on a revision of the judicial article, and this has always been one of the governor's main concerns, both as a legislator and as governor and he was able to get the legislature to agree and the people then to adopt a revision of Article 5, the judicial article. Which has streamlined the court system in Florida, and also provided for appointment through judicial nominating councils around the state, rather than the governor picking political friends for the judgeships that happen to open up during the term. The governor actually, even before the constitution passed, he put this into effect on a voluntary basis, because that's the way that he thought it should be done, but he's got it into the constitution for good now. Plus the non-partisan election of judges. I think that education is another area in which there has been considerable progress toward equalizing the schools between the poor counties and the rich counties. Prison reform, going toward community correctional centers, there were none when the governor took office. There are. . .I don't know the figures, he will, maybe thirty or so now around the state. Trying to go away from the large

institutions toward the community facilities to put them closer to the work release program, things like that.

J.B.: He was in the senate for how long?

Pride: I think that he was in the legislature for twelve years, and most of that was in the senate. It might have been eight years.

The consumer . . . the governor named a consumer advisor and for the first time, the consumer had somebody looking out for him, and they pushed through a bill in the last session, that set up in effect a little FTC act in Florida, which is working through the attorney general's office quite well. And election reform in setting up the elections commission and putting enforcement teeth in it.

This time we are hopeful of making real advances in ethics, with the financial disclosure act requiring all candidates and public officials to disclose their sources of income. The governor also wanted them to disclose their income tax return, but it doesn't look like that part is going to go through. But it will probably be one of the strongest laws in the country, if it goes through.

W.D.V.: What has he tried to get that he didn't?

Pride: That he didn't? Well, he tried to get this last time and didn't, but it looks like he is going to get it this time. We tried to get a wet lands bill last time, and we are back again trying this time, I don't know whether we are going to get it or not, to protect the coastal lands. We tried also to get the inland waters under it, but at this point, that's out of the bill, the coastal wet lands is still alive and could pass. One of the strongest areas has been the environment and he has been recognized by both state and national

environmental groups for what he has done. So, the land and water resource management act is considered a model in the country and I think that the national act that is pending in Congress now is pretty close to Florida's act.

J.B.: Is that basically a land use planning

Pride: Yeah, land and water management and planning.

W.D.V.: What is there left to get done, that he needs another four years?

Pride: (Laughter.) That's a good question. Actually, in his first year, he pretty much accomplished his platform, which was primarily the tax reform.

W.D.V.: Yeah, I know. It has piqued my curiosity, it's early May, and he announced for the primary in September?

Pride: Yes.

W.D.V.: Doesn't he lose the advantage of being a non-candidate and

Pride: Yeah. He wanted to hold off as long as he could, and the reason . . . it was a very low key announcement, the big announcement will really be in late June or early July, when he names his running mate for this time. But the reason that we had to go ahead and announce was because he has decided that the reason we had to go ahead and announce was he has decided that he is going to limit contributions to \$100 a person, and we are going to use direct mailing for one means of raising this, and we need about thirty days leave time. And it has never really been tried in Florida before, you know, that kind of a ceiling, so we need to get started on it, getting some money.

W.D.V.: Who's doing it for you?

Pride: We haven't signed up with anybody yet, but we are talking to a firm in Arkansas, but I don't know the . . . a guy in Arkansas.

W.D.V.: Guy Nolan.

Pride: Are they good?

W.D.V.: Yes. Do you want to go off the record?

Pride: Yes. (tape is turned off)

J.B.: . . . when he picks his running mate, is it traditional that the candidates for governor run with a candidate for lieutenant governor?

Pride: Well, we didn't have a lieutenant governor until the new constitution was passed in '68. There was one back during Reconstruction. That was the last time.

W.D.V.: Weren't you the only state that didn't have a lieutenant governor too?

Pride: I'm not sure about that.

W.D.V.: I think that's true.

J.B.: Who succeeded the governor if a vacancy occurred?

Pride: Well, it was the president of the senate.

J.B.: Who was elected by the senate?

Pride: Yeah.

J.B.: Is the seniority rule in either house?

Pride: No, not at all. The speaker and the president have the control, appoint the chairmen and

J.B.: The elected president of the senate makes the appointments, not the lieutenant governor, in the senate.

Pride: In the senate? Oh, the chairmen? Right, the lieutenant governor has nothing to do with the legislature.

J.B.: He doesn't even preside over the senate?

Pride: No.

W.D.V.: But the two do run jointly now?

Pride: Yeah, right.

J.B.: And what work does the lieutenant governor do?

Pride: Whatever the governor wants him to do.

J.B.: So, he is in effect, he's the vice-president without the duties of presiding over the senate?

Pride: Yeah.

J.B.: But there is no real power in the office of lieutenant governor?

Pride: No.

W.D.V.: He doesn't preside over the senate?

Pride: No. What's been done. Kirk had the first lieutenant governor in modern history, and he named him secretary of commerce. In other words, put him as head of one of the big departments. And Governor Askew did the same with Tom Adams, who was the former secretary of state.

J.B.: So, he made him what, secretary of commerce?

Pride: He was, and he ran into a problem in that he was ousted and he is now running for governor against the governor. Right now, he has almost no duties at all.

J.B.: That impeachment proceedings and all against him, did that grow out of originally newspaper stories?

Pride: Yes, t.v. and newspaper.

J.B.: Do you know who broke that story?

Pride: Yeah, Bill Cox, who is now with the Miami News, he was with the Fort Lauderdale News then, was the newspaper guy and John Hays was the t.v. guy.

J.B.: They broke it simultaneously?

Pride: Right.

J.B.: This was on the use of prison labor on his farm?

Pride: No, it was an employee of the department of commerce, on his farm. He really just, he used him as a personal aide in effect, is what he did. But actually, he and the governor have . . . it just didn't work out, because they are very different men and there is no way to share the administration.

J.B.: They did not run as a team, though, right?

Pride: Yeah, they did.

J.B.: They did?

Pride: Oh yeah. Tom Adams was the secretary of state for, I guess, ten years, and had always been talking about running for governor and never did.

W.D.V.: But he has no constitutional or statutory duties, only what the executive office decides he's going to do?

Pride: Right.

J.B.: They ran as a team and both being nominees of the Democratic party, but did they run as a team in the primary?

Pride: Yeah. You've got to select them as

J.B.: Oh, is that right? You've got to vote for a team?

Pride: Yeah.

J.B.: That's

W.D.V.: Well, how does that work then? Is he selected by a convention, does the governor control a . . . or does he just pick him?

Pride: He just picks him.

W.D.V.: And it doesn't have to be referred through a convention or a primary process?

Pride: That's right.

J.B.: To run for governor, you've got to pick somebody to run for lieutenant governor with you?

Pride: Yes. And it was a mad scramble last time, because nobody wanted to run for lieutenant governor, everyone wanted to run for governor.

W.D.V.: That must be unique.

Pride: The system really . . . there have been some members of the legislature that want to abolish the office altogether. And the governor really, when he was in the legislature, he didn't favor creating the office. He's not pushing now to have it abolished, but he's also

W.D.V.: But it was created by the constitution?

Pride: Yeah.

W.D.V.: But the constitution doesn't say what the office is supposed to do?

Pride: No, it just says

W.D.V.: "There shall be an office." Right?

J.B.: "He shall succeed in the event a vacancy occurs."

Pride: Yeah. We would be in a good position to do without one because of the elected cabinet, you know. If they are going to have the elected cabinet, they are elected state wide, you go to the secretary of state

or the attorney general or whatever. It could be set up in another way.

J.B.: Just have a line of succession.

Pride: Yeah.

J.B.: Have it involving that and that and

W.D.V.: Has he picked his candidate?

Pride: No, he hasn't. I think that in his own mind he has kind of narrowed it down, but he's not talking about it to even staff at this point. After the session, we are going to start talking about it seriously.

J.B.: How about so far as the cabinet is concerned. Do they run as a ticket? Does the governor have a ticket that runs with him for the cabinet?

Pride: No, it has always been every man for himself in Florida politics.

J.B.: Has that changed at all, except for this lieutenant governor thing?

Pride: (Pause.) Not really I don't think, although there's some signs that it could change this year and some other signs that it may not. The party, and you might want to get into this with John Moore, I think is going to be a lot more active this year than they have been in the past, and a larger force in the election.

W.D.V.: Well, as the Republicans field more and more candidates and become more and more of a serious threat to state wide office, won't the tendency be to run together as a ticket then? There's one Republican state wide officer now, is that right? This is . . . what's her name?

Pride: Hawkins.

W.D.V.: Hawkins, yeah.

Pride: (Pause.) Well

W.D.V.: What I'm getting at is, that in the future, as the Republicans become more of a threat, won't they tend to run together as a ticket then and it won't be every man for himself anymore?

Pride: It may go that way, but so far, everybody seems to be running his own campaign and in some cases, not wanting the liabilities, you know, that another candidate may have, or wanting their own campaign organization to work with somebody else, you know, they want them to work for themselves.

J.B.: In so far as being a political force, what extent are the local Democratic organizations a force or the local Democratic officials? If someone is building a political organization in Florida, to whom does he turn?

Pride: Well, again, the way that it has worked in the past is that everybody has built up his own, outside the party structure. This time, the party is geared up, they've got a bunch of guys like John French, you know, who really want to make it a viable force and John Moore himself is a very, I think that he is probably one of the best state chairmen in the country. He is a young guy that is very enlightened and he's a lawyer and shares many of the commitments that Askew has. And this time, they are setting up regional . . . they have started training people in the regions to be involved in politics and in the coming elections, so I think that they are going to be a stronger force this time.

J.B.: This will be after the primary?

Pride: Yeah, after the primary.

J.B.: So, each candidate has his own organization for the primary?

Pride: Right.

J.B.: And then the question is whether or not he

Pride: Then, they will get help from the party in the general election, but they will also have their own organizations working.

W.D.V.: Well, Don, if the primary is in September, you can't get a hell of a lot of help, can you, from the party in that short a period of time?

Pride: Well, it will be more than a month.

W.D.V.: Will the party gear up and perform a whole lot of activities in the course of that month?

Pride: Yeah. They can help a lot, for example, in getting out the vote. That's one of the things they'll be doing. Canvassing and that sort of thing and getting people involved at the local level.

J.B.: You mean, that will be a party

Pride: But the local Democratic groups have not really been that much of a force at all. I think that they will be more at this time.

W.D.V.: State wide, would you think that the candidates' organizations are still stronger than the party organization, in the state wide election. In other words, the candidate's personal organization doesn't turn over and become party?

Pride: No.

W.D.V.: It still remains.

Pride: You're right, yeah.

J.B.: Does Governor Askew perceive of himself as being the titular head of the Democratic party in Florida?

Pride: Yeah.

J.B.: So, he maintains an active role in Democratic party politics within the state?

Pride: Yeah, at the same time, it's kind of . . . he enjoys considerable support among Republicans in Florida, as a matter of fact, the polls indicate that percentage-wise, the Republicans support him just as much if not more than the Democrats.

J.B.: Is that because of the integrity issue?

Pride: I think so, yeah. For some reason, I think that it is the sincerity that comes across and the honesty, it just seems to cross all the usual lines, his support. Even when he opposed the straw ballot on busing. That was in March, and the following June, the polls came out and showed him stronger than ever, even though people, you know, strongly disagreed on that issue. 70% or something like that.

J.B.: Now, his likely Republican opponent this year will be who?

Pride: Jerry Thomas.

J.B.: Alright, he's a former

Pride: Former senate president, former Democrat. He switched to Republican.

J.B.: Is he still in the senate?

Pride: No.

J.B.: Did he lose, or

Pride: He just dropped out, I guess with the idea of running for governor.

J.B.: He lives where?

Pride: Palm Beach County.

W.D.V.: Who beside the lieutenant governor is apt to be

Pride: The only other one talking about it now is Norman Bea.

W.D.V.: The Wallace guy.

Pride: The Wallace guy. I don't think that he's going to get in, but there have been rumors from time to time that the fact that Bea was talking about it and that Adams is in will draw somebody else, a more moderate guy, to try to take advantage of the situation. And one name that has cropped up in the past was Mayor Tanzler of Jacksonville. But I would say that it was pretty doubtful that that is going to happen.

J.B.: Who does the governor's polling for campaign purposes?

Pride: Bill Hamilton has done it, it's really been done for the party, although we may hire him during the primaries to do another poll.

J.B.: Does the party do much polling?

Pride: Yeah, each year they've done it, and the governor's popularity ratings, according to Hamilton, pretty amazing. You know, they have stayed at such high levels.

J.B.: Would we be able to have any access to those polls, our book is coming out in the spring of '76? We've seen a number of them in other states, some by party, in fact, we saw one in Georgia recently and Louisiana.

Pride: I think so, yeah. I'd have to explore that, but I think so.

J.B.: What it really does, you've got a genuine measurement of all sorts of things. You get out of guesswork then.

W.D.V.: This would be after the elections, though.

Pride: Yeah. (Interruption by telephone. Tape turned off.)

J.B.: Where does the party get its financial support?

Pride: It gets it mainly from the candidates' qualifying fees.

J.B.: Who runs the primary, the state or the party?

Pride: The state.

J.B.: And how do the fees work? The state runs the primaries for all political parties?

Pride: Right, and the fees are paid to the state and they refund a share of it to the party.

J.B.: What percentage, do you know?

Pride: No, I don't know that.

J.B.: Sounds like very similar to Georgia.

W.D.V.: Yeah. But you can get on the ballot by petition as well?

Pride: Yeah. But it's never been done, ~~except in~~ I think that's a

J.B.: Can you get on the ballot in the primary by petition, or is that only in the general election?

Pride: No, you can do it in the primaries too.

J.B.: It sounds very similar to Georgia, Walter.

W.D.V.: Uh-huh.

J.B.: Well, does the governor, would you expect him . . . does he have in effect, "his" candidate in the U.S. Senate race?

Pride: No, and there are several guys running that he is very close to, but he is just going to take a strictly hands off policy toward all the races.

J.B.: You mean publically and privately?

Pride: Yeah. Right.

J.B.: So, his organization will not even be working with any of the

other candidates?

Pride: No, there may be . . . he's not going to strictly require that nobody in his organization can work for another, and I think that there will be some cases of individuals working in one campaign or another, but very little.

J.B.: But it would be split, right?

Pride: It would be split, right.

J.B.: If you ended up with a run-off, does it require a majority to get the nomination, a majority vote.

Pride: Yes.

J.B.: So, if you had a run-off in the Senate between two Democrats, somebody he was close to, and somebody that he didn't care for, then you might very well presumably get in at that point?

Pride: He might, but I would say that it was unlikely that he would. In the Senate race, I don't know of any two candidates that would fit that kind of a situation.

J.B.: And how about in the general election, do Democrats tend to run as a team?

Pride: More so, of course, but still, it has always been every man concentrating on his own campaign with his own organization and the only team aspect would be when they all happened to appear at a rally at the same time.

J.B.: How about 1970, when Chiles and Askew ran in the general election, did they run together?

Pride: They were . . . no, they didn't run together, of course, Lawton was walking. (Laughter.) But in the people's minds, they were very much

identified together because of their

J.B.: Was their campaign coordinated at all?

Pride: No. But I think that in both in the press and, you know, what the press conveyed in the public's mind, they were a kind of a team thing, a "fresh, new faces type of thing." That had Populist appeal. Lawton from his walking and meeting with the folks, and the governor from his program, tax reform.

J.B.: That was his big issue, wasn't it?

Pride: Yeah.

J.B.: Was it more on the repeal of certain taxes, or the addition of certain taxes, or a combination?

Pride: The main thing, the main part of it, was the corporate profits, or the corporate income tax, whatever you call it. And that was the thing that was considered impossible to pass in Florida. He had to work very hard to get it through the legislature and then he had to go out and campaign for it, it took a constitutional amendment.

J.B.: Do the lobbyists still retain the same influence that they had ten or fifteen years ago?

Pride: No, it's been weakened.

J.B.: Why?

Pride: Partly because of electing people like the governor and some of the members of the legislature and Lawton Chiles on the national level. Another reason, going back to what I said before, on the staffing of the legislature, they are more independent.

J.B.: How about the campaign contribution law?

(End of tape.)