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Interview with Stuart Long, president of Long News Service, Austin, Texas, December 9, 1974, conducted by Jack Bass and Walter de Vries, transcribed by Linda Killen.

Jack Bass: Do you accept the version that the birth of the modern Republican party in Texas began when Allen Shivers endorsed Eisenhower and Eisenhower carried Texas?

Long: Not at all. That blunted the possibility of Jack Porter developing a party in Texas because Eisenhower always looked to Shivers rather than to the Republicans, for patronage and everything else. I guess actually the election of John Tower as Senator was the first Republican accomplishment. It was a special election, but the Democrat in the run-off was Bill Blakely. Probably the only man in history that ever held two Senate seats in the same state. Both Senate seats. Ran for both of them and didn't win either one. He was appointed twice. Once to replace Price Daniel. Appointed by Shivers. And then appointed by Daniel to replace Lyndon Johnson. He ran for both of them and got beat both times. Once by Ralph Yarborough and once by John Tower. But actually, the election of John Tower was what put something into the Republican party. [Static] [It is] at a very low point right now.

J.B.: What did they do in the last election?

Long: They lost one of their four Congressional seats and two of

their seventeen house members in the state house and had the weakest governor's race they've had in a long time.

J.B.: How about the state senate? They have three seats?

Long: Three. They just had one of them up and barely retained it by 500 votes. The other two had drawn a bye. The redistricting, you know. They've got four year terms.

J.B.: Did the switch of Connally have any effect at all on the Republican party in Texas in terms of bringing any Democrats over?

Long: No, it didn't.

J.B.: Was that viewed as a surprise or disappointment by the Republicans or was that expected by them? A year ago Republicans were talking all over the South about realignment.

Long: They thought Connally would just bring droves of conservative Democrats over. But what they forgot was that Connally was the guy who re-established party loyalty in Texas and made it fashionable after Shivers had made party infidelity fashionable. So nobody went except the defeated speaker of the house--was the only big name in politics that joined the Republican party.

Walter de Vries: Did he bring any money into the party?

Long: Yeah, he was able to raise some money. He raised \$100,000 for Bob Price. Banquet out at Tampa. And Price got beat 60-40 in spite of that. He raised \$100,000 for the state party at a \$100 dinner in Dallas this year. It's hard to estimate Connally's. . . why nobody followed him. Except, he was getting in trouble all the time you know. At the time he switched over he almost immediately began. . . . The \$10,000 which most of us can't believe is that little. Way below his usual

asking price. So people didn't want to get involved with him then. And Watergate came along.

J.B.: What was that \$10,000? Was that money?

Long: Yeah. Which he claimed he put in a safe deposit box.

A smart young FBI man looked at the serial numbers and found the bills hadn't been issued when he said it was put in the safe deposit box. So it's changed some other bills and some of them hadn't been issued either.

J.B.: What's the status of that situation?

Long: Set for trial in March in Washington on perjury and bribery.

J.B.: There was an indictment, wasn't there?

Long: Yeah. Five counts. Jake Jacobsen, the guy who took him the money, has turned state's evidence in return for dismissing some indictments against him. Then a federal judge in Dallas refused to grant the Justice Department's motion to dismiss the indictment on Jacobsen on an effort to loot a savings and loan association. That's, of course, being appealed by the Justice Department which wants to drop the case. The federal judge doesn't. Obviously Jacobsen made a deal to testify that he gave the money to Connally. The prosecutors, not the real Justice Department. . . .

W.D.V.: Is he finished in Texas politics?

Long: Yeah, I think so. Texas and national. Even if he's acquitted. A guy doesn't stay big league after that.

J.B.: What is Tower's role in the Republican party?

Long: He's it. He is the party.

J.B.: Is he the party in terms of decision making, in terms of policy, strategy?

Long: Yeah, he pretty well dominates it. He was able to prevent them from giving wholehearted support to Hank Grover in '72, their nominee against Dolph Briscoe for governor. And if they'd really torn their shirt for Hank, they would have [come very close to winning.] He just lost by 99,000 votes. This time they had a candidate that Tower approved, but he was an unknown and he ran way behind. Of course this was an unpredictable year. Nobody knew what '74 was going to bring.

J.B.: In Neal Pierce's book he quoted, I think it was Nancy Palm, but anyway. . . in effect holding Tower responsible for not making full challenges across the board in Congressional and legislative races. And that some critics of him claim that Republicans missed the chance to establish themselves in '72. Do you agree with that assessment?

Long: They won a hell of a lot. But here you've got a party that is a minority. They've got half a million people on their mailing list, people they think are Republicans. In a state with over five million registered voters. They didn't have anybody to be enthusiastic about this time. Because your enthusiasts in the Republican party are the Birchers and Nancy Palms. She represents the far right wing that was never happy with Nixon. They were just burning when Goldwater was the nominee. Working like heck. If you look at the '64 results, considering he was running against a Texan, Goldwater ran awful damn good in Texas. As always, your enthusiasts in politics are your radicals, left or right. Tower's view was that they ought to concentrate on a few races and not spread themselves too thin, which is probably a wise policy. Of course in '72 they were concentrating on his race. That's certainly



why he didn't want a bunch of other people running.

J.B.: challenges across the board it would have brought a lot more Democratic vote. That would be the presumption.

Long: If you challenge a county judge, you're going to get out the Democratic judge's votes and a lot of others. Constable and sheriffs and legislators. But mainly your danger in the theory of running candidates across the board is the courthouse. If you run those local candidates this year, you're going to get hurt.

J.B.: Do you see a political future for Ben Barnes?

Long: He doesn't. He thinks he's through and intends to be through. He was probably the finest politician this state's ever had. Made a bad mistake by not running for the Senate in '72 instead of governor. If he'd been the nominee against Tower, he probably would have beaten him. It's hard to tell. But he wouldn't have had the hard primary probably. It's hard to tell what would have happened in view of the Sharpstown. We had our Watergate two years early in Texas.

J.B.: In your own assessment, is that permanently damaging to Barnes if he should decide to re-enter politics?

Long: No. He now lives in Bob <sup>Poage's</sup> ~~Pogg's~~ Congressional district. If he ever re-enters politics I'd think it would be in the House when Pogg quits. What's <sup>Poage's</sup> ~~Pogg's~~ 72? In his seventies. It's a natural district for Barnes. He could win it. If he should ever re-enter. I think he'd (do well in Congress) Because he really belongs in the federal. He should have run for the Senate in '72. But he had the problem of Ralph Yarborough, which has been the problem of every progressive in Texas for

the last twenty-four years. He decided he ought to run for governor instead of Senate and the possibility of losing his liberal support by being in that race against Yarborough. Of course Yarborough never said whether he was going to run or not until the filing deadline in February. In his off years in the Senate he always was running for governor up until the filing deadline and then backed out when it was too late for any other liberal to run. Incidentally, I hope I contributed to Teddy Kennedy's decision. I interviewed him in August and he said he was going to decide in mid or late '75 whether he would run. And I said "You are fixing to be the Ralph Yarborough of the United States." He said "What do you mean?" and I told him that story about how Yarborough prevented any liberal candidates for governor being serious candidates because he always talked like he might run for governor in his off years right up to the filing deadline. And it was too late for anybody else to run. Kennedy said "I don't see how that would hurt." I said "Well, people are not going to get committed to Mondale or to Udall or to any of the other liberal candidates as long as you're saying you may run. You ought to make up your mind." I was supposed to be interviewing him, but I got to lecturing. This was the week Bob <sup>Sherill's</sup> ~~Sherrill's~~ piece come out, or the week after in the New York Times that was so devastating. Of course Boston was working on it and the Ladies Home Journal had one. Cosmopolitan. I think two or three women's magazines. Very strong indictments of him on Chappaquiddic. Then I was interested to see where he said he thought he ought to say now where he wasn't going to run so others would have an opportunity. But that's what Ralph Yarborough's

done to liberal opportunities in Texas. Don Yarborough and all the others. Farenthold. Always had to wait for him to say. He always waited until the last minute.

J.B.: Did you view that as him being really interested and then deciding at the last minute or a ploy to keep other liberals from running?

Long: I don't know. No question Yarborough always wanted to be governor. He ran three times. Lost twice pretty narrowly. Lost by 3,100 votes. And of course it was always intimated. . . . The Dallas News always started the story that he might run

[Another conversation drowns out parts of Long. The gist of the next few lines is that politicians never really know what they might do or why you do what you do.] And there's nobody harder to psychoanalyze than a politician like Yarborough or any United States Senator. Anybody who can get to that level is a special kind of guy with special kind of genes, I guess. So I can't try to read their minds. Self-centered. You have to be to get to the United States Senate or governor.

W.D.V.: In the twenty-five years from 1948 through 1974, what are the major changes you've seen in Texas politics?

Female voice: I'll tell you one. The conservatives now call themselves Republicans instead of Democrats.

Long: Some of them do. Some of them do because you remember in '48 Truman beat Dewey, what, three to one. 750,000 to 200,000 in Texas. All the conservatives now consider themselves independents, after the Democratic primary. That's a big change. Many people that in '48 just

automatically voted the Democratic ticket in November. Now the voters are more choosy.

Female voice: It's a national trend. They're voting for the individual and not the party. The man and not the party. You hear it over and over.

Long: Actually, the party as such is perhaps better organized, at least better financed. Both parties in Texas. Than they've ever been. '48 or '50. I think the state Democratic committee had raised about \$5,000. Maybe \$10,000. Didn't have an office. Didn't have a full time staff member. Now they have over \$100,000 budget and the Republican party has got a half a million dollar budget in '74. State party. The Republican party was run out of somebody's hip pocket back in those days.

J.B.: What do the Republicans do with that money?

Long: I don't know. Their final report. . . if it's been filed it's been filed this week. They put a little bit in campaigns, but not much. But they did raise over half a million dollars this year. I simply do not know what they did with it.

Female voice: They spent some of it on Laraza.

Long: We were never able to prove they were subsidizing Laraza in '72. Some of the guys who still own notes from the Laraza-Unida party in '72 claim they were promised money by the Republicans. But when they wouldn't run a national ticket. . . . They had a convention in El Paso and decided not to run a national ticket which would splitter off some Mexican-Americans from what's that fellow's name? McGovern.

[Laughter.] We've tried awful hard to establish that the Republicans were subsidizing them and haven't been able to find where they were doing it. Now they used to subsidize. . . . Tower used to subsidize some liberal Democrats, so-called liberal Democrats, to be for Tower against conservative Democratic nominees. No question about that. They may have been promising Laraza. Or some of the guys were hoping they would get Republican money.

J.B.: What's the role of organized labor in Texas politics in general?

Long: Strong Democratic. Stronger than it's ever been. It has been able in the Briscoe to form liaisons with Briscoe. The first governor they've been able to. . . . Well, they supported Price Daniel for his third term. And that's the only governor's race they've won. Until Briscoe.

J.B.: What has Briscoe done for them?

Long: He's appointed their people on boards. Listen to them in conventions. And in the convention leading up to the Kansas City mini-convention there was a strong liaison with the AFL-CIO. He didn't have as strong in '72 but he's listened to them, let them in the house. In contrast to Connally, who hated them and would have nothing to do with them and Shivers, who hated them also.

J.B.: In addition to appointments, has he done anything insofar as promotion of substantive legislation?

Long: Briscoe hasn't done anything in the promotion of substantive legislation in any field. We don't know what he's going to be like now

that he's got four years. But he's the least active governor that we've had. Or was, during his first two years.

J.B.: Have they lengthened the term?

Long: Yeah, this time they were elected for four years.

J.B.: Is there any limit on that?

Long: No. No, people voted for it, much to my surprise. Sure enough, that's what we've got now.

W.D.V.: You say he's the least active of the governor's that you've known. How do you rate the other governors?

Long: See, the governor's of Texas are constitutionally figure-heads because we're under this 1876 constitution. It was written in resistance to strong executive power after we'd had four years of the last Republican governor. And the governor's only influence or impact on state government is what he will do personally to influence legislators. Of course with our two year terms, a guy was in office four years before he got a majority on these overlapping six year term boards, which are the policy making boards in the state government. So the governor's influence, as we told in this book, is on how he will work with the legislators to get them to do things. Carpenter was a failure because he didn't work at it. Briscoe has failed to work at it. Daniel worked at it and had a lot of impact on legislation.

Female voice: Shivers had a great deal of impact.

Long: Sure. Shivers led them around. Really dominated the legislature and got nearly everything he ever wanted. But he knew how. Briscoe, who was a legislator at the time and was fighting Shivers. . . .



Briscoe was one of the young liberal G.I. legislators that defeated Shivers on his only big fight that he ever lost. roads.

Has not done what he knows should be done to dominate legislation.

There's some hope, or some indication, that during this four year term--

?Female voice: Stu's hoping. I'm not. I predict he'll do just what he did these last two years.

Long: He may.

Female: If he does anything, it will be the wrong thing, in my opinion.

Long: Well, he's a kind of a mixed up guy because of this background, back when he was young, fighting the establishment. Now he's been president of the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers and president of the south Texas Chamber of Commerce and the Texas Chamber of Commerce. He's now a big banker and worth \$40 million. You just can't see him as fighting the establishment.

Female: He's not going to. He's a conservative.

Long: The big issue in the next session, of course, is going to be number one on utility regulation. In particular, the telephone company. And on reform of the property tax. The biggest individual land owner in Texas is Dolph Briscoe. King Ranch has a little more land in acres, but it's a corporation. And is he really going to be for reform of property tax?

J.B.: What is it about the property tax that needs reforming? Lack of uniform assessments? We've got 3,100 different tax assessors. School district, water district, county, city, everything else. As a

result, you'll have \$100 worth of property in one area paying 7 cents in taxes a year and in another area it will be paying \$1.25. I mean the real market value of \$100. This is what we need under the Supreme Court's lousy decision where they said you don't have to but you ought to.

J.B.: That was the Rodriguez case.

Long: Yeah. You don't have to, but you ought to. That's what they said. And this is the only way you're going to have equal education. Is by making everybody try equally and then supplementing state funds. Of course it's a golden opportunity to do it, with a \$1.5 billion surplus in sight. It's a golden opportunity to really equalize it.

J.B.: But you think Briscoe really has had no substantive programs.

Long: No, nothing. They were ready to go on some kind of school tax reform last session. Then Rodriguez came down in I think it was March '73. And Briscoe said they'd study it some more. Well, they've had five studies. Connally had a great study that proved just exactly what everybody's been saying. Great study on school tax. Which he couldn't put over in the legislature. Then he lost his interest. There have been several since. All of which say the thing to do is to have state-wide equalization. Briscoe has had a guy studying. Now having

public hearings on his plan, which is a way of changing the formula for allocating the state money. It doesn't really get at the real basic thing, which is property tax as a way of equalizing it.

W.D.V.: Which of the governors in that period do you think have done more for Texas? You obviously rate Briscoe as a kind of a caretaker governor. Who really developed the programs and got it through the legislature?

Long: Of course most of the things that have happened have happened because of federal legislation, which have forced massive new programs in order to keep them eligible for federal aid. Lyndon Johnson did more for state government in Texas than any governor did, with his Great Society program. This forced them in welfare, health, education, everything. Big expansions of state spending for their matching programs. You can't believe how this state's budget's gone up. Really the only way to measure state government activity is through spending. How else do you measure it? Got any better way?

J.B.: You say you've got \$1.5 billion surplus.

Long: In sight. \$581 million August 31. And assuming inflation continues and our sales tax continues to rise

We'll be appropriating next year for the two years starting September 1, 1975. And they figure half a billion for each one of the coming years plus this half billion. Two year budget.

J.B.: They don't meet annually? You must be one of the few states left that doesn't meet annually.

Long: We've had a few occasions where annual budgets have been adopted, more or less accidentally. Gov. Smith once vetoed the second year appropriation because he didn't have the money to do it. Go back as far as Jester in '49. He vetoed part of the second year appropriation.

Forced a special session to raise the money to finance the second year. Got into a bind about taxes.

J.B.: Am I correct that there is still no state income tax, either personal or corporate?

Long: That's right. It's funny. I was talking to some people from Louisiana, from Baton Rouge, on this cruise we've been on. They were saying about how their income from oil and gas tax was going down. Of course ours has doubled even though production has gone down. Louisiana has a cents per barrel, cents per on oil . So they don't have the advantage, income-wise, when the price goes up. Ours is a percentage. 4.8 percent of well-head price on oil. 7.5 percent of well-head price on gas. So when the average price of gas goes up 20 cents or 15 cents to 60 cents, you triple your gas tax income. When oil goes up from \$3.40 a barrel to \$10, you triple your oil tax. And that's where most of the surplus was coming from, plus the 4 percent sales tax with inflated prices

Our sales tax exempts food, feed, fertilizer and farm equipment. Which indicates our agrarian background. If we had it on fertilizer, the way that price has gone up, we'd have a hell of an income.

W.D.V.: But you think the big increase in state services and spending is principally because of the federal grant in aid? Were any of the governors known as road governors, or education governors or any specialists like that in their career?

Long: Yeah, they've all been education governors. And our educational budget has just gone up tremendously. \$50 or maybe \$60 in 1948 to

\$600 now. Ten-fold. Your state teachers association has been a big influence in legislative activity on education. Connally, while he fought the teachers association, did have a massive impact on higher education. He was very sold on that. Our college and university system has quintupled in the last fifteen years, easily. And this was Connally's main accomplishment. He got people aware of the of higher education.

secondary education. He got a study made and it showed something ought to be done [several sentences lost in background noise.]

J.B.: Does Price Daniel, Jr. have a political future?

[End of side of tape.]

J.B.: We just got in this afternoon so we really don't know much. We know they had a constitutional convention this year and he played a very active role and then it got defeated.

Long: Yeah, he was speaker of the house and he wanted to be president of the convention. In order to get the presidency of the convention, he announced that he would not run for re-election to the house or for any other office. As a result. . . it was a bad tactical mistake. If he'd been running for speaker of the house again, and running for re-election to the house, he would have been able to accomplish what he wanted to. He wanted to have a historic role as chairman of this convention that put over a new constitution. But because he gave away his ax, he didn't have the swing to get the last three votes it took to submit the constitution.

J.B.: The convention itself decided not to submit it?

Long: Well, it failed of a two-thirds majority by three votes.

J.B.: It would have required a two-thirds vote of the convention to submit it to the people?

Long: Yeah. Under the terms of the resolution on which the people voted in '72. He felt he would remove himself from politics. Be up above it. And this would make him more impressive and above criticism as president of the convention. Briscoe could have twisted three arms. But the showdown at the convention was right to work. And the blacks and labor defeated it because they were going to submit right to work as a constitutional provision. It's already a state law. The blacks stayed with labor. One of their leaders got up, announcing a vote no on this proposition. He shouted up to the gallery, to Harry Hubbard, the president of the AFL-CIO, "And don't you forget what we're doing. We'll be back to see you about this." This made your minority big enough to block the convention. Daniel had opposed the right to work provision. But at the last, desperate to get something submitted, he was for it, including it. It was to be a separate proposition. The whole constitution and a number of separate propositions.

J.B.: How much did they spend on that thing? About \$10 million?

Long: About five.

J.B.: Legislators were allowed to serve as delegates.

Long: They were the delegates.

J.B.: The legislature in effect served as a constitutional convention.



Long: The senators moved over and became equal with the house members. They became delegates. Irritated the hell out of them.

J.B.: Was that by special referendum?

Long: Yes.

J.B.: Do you know if that's ever been done anywhere else?

Long: It's been tried in Illinois. It was tried in several other states and failed.

J.B.: Where the legislature itself actually served as a constitutional convention.

Long: They've all failed. But this is the only thing they could get two-thirds on in '71. They couldn't get two-thirds for a citizens convention but they could get two-thirds for the legislature. And here they started it in January '74 and then they had to take a month's recess to go out and campaign in the primary. Of course all the lobby was right in there with the campaign contributions for their primary campaign. Impossible situation. And the business community decided to push them on right to work. Which has been the law since '49 and has never been invoked yet. But the national right to work committee came down here and raised money and organized. And they screwed up the convention. The Republicans made the big issue. The Republican block in the legislature and the Republican candidate for governor and other Republican candidates. Hollering for right to work.

J.B.: How effective is the women's political movement in Texas?

Long: It's not effective.

J.B.: Has it gone down? Has it peaked already?

Long: No, there are more women in office now than there were two years ago. More elected this time. We gained one woman in the house this time. Makes six. And she was elected from Austin. She was a black. She increased the black caucus to eleven.

W.D.V.: Do the blacks work as a caucus? Effective?

Long: Yeah. Fairly effective. They stuck together on the right to work. Sometimes they do and sometimes. . . .

W.D.V.: Is race still an issue.

Long: Not much.

W.D.V.: Is that one of the big changes in the last 25 years? Or wasn't it ever very important?

Long: Yeah, it made the difference in a close race. Shivers beat Yarborough hollering NAACP at him. PAC. Labor is no longer a viable issue. Race is a viable issue in some areas. We've got plantation country in east Texas still. But this black woman elected here in Austin this time is the only black that's ever been elected except from single member districts. Of course we've had single member in the senate always. Barbara Jordan got elected from Houston when they worked out a district that she could win in.

J.B.: How many senators are there?

Long: 31. 150 house members. But this is the first black elected in an at large district.

W.D.V.: So she had to be elected by a majority of whites.

Long: Yeah. We have four house members in Travis county. And this time we elected a white woman, a chicano, a black woman and a white

man. We've got perfect balance. [Laughter.] But it's a result of the

even though they don't vote very good, but they did make the difference.

Seven or eight thousand out of the 40,000 that voted here undoubtedly makes a difference in electing a liberal, balanced house delegation.

Emma was on the city council here for sixteen years, so people in Travis

county are used to voting for women. And it helped the few women that

got elected in various counties this year because they've had a

for the women, or a woman.

[Interruption and a few minutes of heavy static.]

Long: Who you going to talk to in Texas? How long you going to be here?

W.D.V.: Ten days.

Long:

J.B.: There is no such machine in Texas and there never was machined by Lyndon Johnson?

Long: Never will be. We've got a chapter in that book which was Lyndon's last interview before he died. We wrote a chapter on Shivers' relations with Johnson. We showed it to Shivers and he fussed about part of it. Then we showed it to Johnson and we had a two and a half hour interview in November, before he died in January. He says in that-- and it's true--that he never made an endorsement in a primary. He always supported the Democratic ticket in November. And it's true. You can

never find Lyndon making an endorsement in a primary. He had his organization, which was for him. And he never did try to use it for anybody else. He just didn't believe he could or should.

J.B.: Do you think Johnson had Texas in mind at all and Texas state politics when he was passing Great Society programs? Was he aware and keeping up with what was going on at home that much? You knew him fairly well, didn't you?

Long: He had a great disdain for state government. He told John Connally that Secretary of the Navy was a better job than governor of Texas and he shouldn't quit to come run for governor.

J.B.: But do you think it was the failure of Texas state government to respond to social needs. . . did that have a special effect on Lyndon Johnson, in your opinion?

Long: Oh sure, sure. No doubt about it. He felt state government was not meeting the needs of the people. His programs were forcing the state government to do what he thought they should do.

J.B.: When he thought of state government, he thought of state government in Texas?

Long: That's the only one he knew much about. And he didn't pay much attention to it. Well, now wait a minute. I don't know. I publish a weekly political newsletter and have for 26 years. Starting in '48, incidentally. Your time. He was an original subscriber to it and subscribed to it all his life, all the rest of his life. I don't know whether he read it or not. I know whenever I said something about him he didn't approve of I heard from him. But he was federally minded.

Of course he realized that your pattern of programs is through the states, or through the cities. Of course a great deal of his went direct to the cities or the schools instead of through the states. I think that's a fair analysis that he. . . . States don't have the taxing power that revenue. And I would not with that idea that with what he knew about state government. . . . Being practical, he knew he could pass these things if the money went through the states or the local governments, where they couldn't set up direct federal grants to the people.

J.B.: Do you know of any academic type researchers that have done any consistently good analysis on Texas politics? Analysis of election results, this sort of thing.

Long: Yeah, there's a bunch in the University of Texas. Actually, McCliskey headed that up and got it started. Of course he's gone now to Maryland, isn't he? Isn't that where?

J.B.: Do you know who heads that thing up?

Long: I really don't. This has got some analyses in it. That's the new edition I told you about the other day and didn't remember the title. It's something they put out. Readings, some analyses, and then there are a bunch of publication of articles and so on that are collected and put together.

W.D.V.: Is there any pollster in Texas that's been doing it for a good many years? Alex Lewis. Where is he located? Dallas. Is he the only one that does that?

Long: Well, Joe Beldon has done Texas poll. But ever since Alex



quit him and started his own, Joe has not been very respected. L-o-u-i-s. Louis Bowles Associates I think is what he calls it. He specializes in Texas and Louisiana. Political people have Louis. He's the only one that anybody pays any attention to.

J.B.: Where would you be able to get this book?

Long: I don't know. They sent me that review copy. I imagine it's in college book stores, particularly at the University of Houston. I think they're all faculty members at Houston.

J.B.: Is it a pretty good book?

Long: I've skimmed through it. Three-fourths of it is reprints of articles by various people. But it's sure something you ought to look at. Did you get a chance to read The Great Plains State, the Texas chapter? Did you notice the difference between the two versions?

J.B.: I'd read the [megastates] some time back and I hadn't really compared them reading one after the other. But my recollection is that it read like it was a lot updated.

Long: Lot different. And different conclusions.

J.B.: More current, and spoke much more of change and ferment. Since that chapter by Neil Pierce in the Great Plains States, have there been any other substantive changes that come to mind?

Long: Yeah. Sure. We've got these three new guys, all of whom are more progressive than anybody we've ever had in the state. John Hill and Bob Armstrong and Bill Hobby.

J.B.: Weren't they mentioned in the book?

Long: Yeah, but they had just come in and nobody really knew.



But all three of them, and John White, of course, who's an old one. They were all endorsed by the AFL-CIO and they've been doing some amazing things. Consumer protection by John Hill. Got a strong law passed. He's enforcing the anti-trust. All four of them plus the chairman of the railroad commission endorsed utility regulation.

J.B.: Who is that?

Long: Jim Langden, chairman of the railroad commission, endorsed creation of the utility commission.

J.B.: There is no utility commission?

Long: Only state that doesn't have one.

J.B.: Well how are rates regulated? Are they not regulated at all?

Long: By cities. They regulate telephone and gas in their corporate limits. There's no regulation in the rural areas. No regulation of intra-state long distance calls. People on the edge of Austin are on eight-party lines because there's nobody to make them give good service. The telephone company has got this big suit, and they're spending hundreds of thousands of dollars in their lobbying activities with city councils and legislators. The suit was brought by the widow of the head of Southwestern Bell in Texas who committed suicide. And by the vice president of Southwestern Bell, who was fired. *[They have a]* \$40 million damage suit against Southwestern Bell. This is going to pass telephone regulations. What they do, they had stacked their investment and their local charges and charged very little to long distance. so as to kick up their local rates. And they set the long distance rates

inside the state. Ninety percent of the long distance calls in Texas are intra-state. It costs you two bits more to call Texarkana, Texas, than to call Texarkana, Arkansas. Because there are FCC regulations to Texarkana, Arkansas. At least that's the last time I looked that was the difference. And there's just a street between them.

J.B.: How about electric power rates? Are they set the same way?

Long: Yeah. City council.

J.B.: So it's different from city to city?

Long: Yeah. Depends on what kind of city council they got. And Bob Armstrong, the land commissioner, who's an environmentalist. And that's an important job in Texas because it controls twenty-two million acres of state school land and two million acres of university land.

J.B.: What's the state school land?

Long: Well, when we came in the Union, we had a \$15 million war debt revolution. And Sam Houston told Congress that if they'd take over our war debt we'd give them the public domain. Congress said oh hell, no. We don't want it. So it was kept. And most of it was either given to the railroads or stolen by carpetbag Republicans. But they managed to retain all the river beds and bays and inlets in the Gulf of Mexico for the public school fund. And the University of Texas got two million acres in west Texas. Which was lousy land but it turned out to be knee deep in oil and gas. The revenues from those lands go into a permanent school fund or a permanent university fund. The permanent school fund is administered by a school land board, of which Bob Armstrong is chairman. And the governor has one appointee and the

attorney general has another appointee. That permanent fund is now \$1.1 billion. It's invested and last year produced \$54 million which goes out to the schools. And the university fund is now \$700 million. Oil and gas on both of them. The revenue from it goes two-thirds to the University of Texas and one-third to Texas A&M. They had about \$30 million in revenue and income from their investments last year. Armstrong is an environmentalist and he's the only one in the state that's pushing land use management. We got a \$300,000 a year federal grant for a coastal management study and are having hearings all over the state. We're going to come out of it with land management legislation. So it's Hill, the attorney general, Hobby, son of the former governor, Bill Hobby. Is pretty damn progressive. All three of them are pretty rich. Which is almost necessary doing politics here in Texas. But they are pretty progressive and they are supported by the Sierra Club and the AFL-CIO and all the liberal organizations. These are the three guys-- and Price Daniel was a fourth one until he wiped himself out--of the future. Plus John White. White and Armstrong were McGovern state campaign managers.

J.B.: What does White do?

Long: He's the state agriculture commissioner. He's fifty, and he's been in office twenty-five years. He got elected as a young reformer and was the only state official that refused cross filing in '52 when Shivers and all the others accepted Republican cross filing. White has survived and done well. Briscoe didn't make it to Kansas City, so White was chairman of the Texas delegation in Kansas City. He's pretty

powerful in the national Democratic party affairs. Emma was Humphrey's chairman on the Texas delegation in '72, but John White was really Humphrey's manager. But he and Armstrong got out and campaigned like hell for McGovern. Everybody thought it would be the end of them. Hill, Armstrong and White ran one, two, three. They were the high vote getters in the general election the other day. So four years from now we're going to have. . . one of them will beat Tower and another one will replace Briscoe. And they're modern guys. They're Ben Barnes types.

J.B.: Is Hobby likely to run for governor?

Long: Yeah.

J.B.: If he runs will one of the others take him on? So if we want to look at Texas politics of the future we need to talk to all four of them.

Long: Hill, Hobby, White and Armstrong. All of them under fifty. Well, Hill's 52. Very successful plaintiff's attorney. Made a lot of money practicing law. Good jury lawyer. Ran for governor and lost in '68. Came back and ran for attorney general in '72 and defeated the incumbent who was a Connally-related guy who had appointed me to this school land board I was telling you about. Hill reappointed me, a few months ago. I think we're getting away from the Confederate colonels at last.

J.B.: Do you see any move toward imposing a state income tax? Or do you think this big surplus pretty much. . . .

Long: We don't need it.

J.B.: That takes the steam out of it.



Long: Oh sure. Well, there was a big fight years ago. Income tax or sales tax. See, we didn't levy a sales tax until the Daniel administration of '61 I believe. And then raised it during Connally's administration. In the big fight then income tax got fifteen votes once in the senate, out of 31, and about 60 in the house. But the sales tax was passed and it has taken care of things.

J.B.: You said earlier that Briscoe didn't do any of the things that he knows need to be done in Texas. What are those things?

Long: Well, our biggest thing now is this tax reform and school finance reform. Property tax reform. And also we have generated a real strong movement. . . . Is your state getting into this business of making its prisons local and your mental institutions local?

J.B.: Moving in that direction.

Long: I'm not so sure it's a good idea, but we've got a strong movement for those things. Reform of our youth programs. All of them. Briscoe's appointee--he just has one so far--on youth council has joined one of Preston Smith's appointees in coming out for this community business on your delinquent kids and all sorts of programs. We've had a very strong study committee recommendation for doing this. Of course I look on this as shifting a hell of a burden on your cities and your counties are almost nothing. They put in a little money out of their federal revenue sharing. A burden they can't support unless you put on--with your federal aid dropping off, on your MH centers and now this new one on prisons and new one on youth. I'm fearful that it's going to wind up as programs that have to be supported by your local governments,

which have enough problems already. This is what concerns me because the local--

J.B.: You're not talking then about simply decentralization.

Long: They're going to want to put one of these MHMR centers and one of these youth centers and all of them. And they're going to expect the local government to contribute to their expenses. Of course something else in state government is the penetrating and devastating effect of these patient law suits brought up by these public interest law firms. We've already got one on our youth council, where they filed with a liberal judge appointed by Lyndon. He ordered them to close down their three big youth, delinquent youth centers and to move to local. And we've got one pending on MHMR that's based on the Georgia decision which is probably going to do the same thing in that field. These are things that trouble me because I can just see them doing like the federal ones on the community action programs. Where they constantly shifted the percentage of cost to the city government and county government and the programs are disappearing as a result.

J.B.: Do you see the Republicans as losing ground?

Long: Well, they did this year. It depends. They had a high water mark in '72. They elected their first members of the legislature along with Eisenhower. He pulled some of them in. Lyndon wiped them out in '64. They made a come back with Nixon, or made a slight come-back. Single member districts in the big cities--when we finally get them in all our big cities--are going to produce a few more Republicans. But outside of that there's just no way for a Republican to get elected. Except, you know, sometimes they put up a lousy Democrat nobody likes.



And there will be an occasional accident. But all our Republicans in the legislature come from Midland which is an oil and Republican town. There's one from Amarillo, which is a Republican town. And he just got elected this time. And the others are from Dallas and Houston in safe Republican districts.

J.B.: Do they tend to pretty much all be conservatives?

Long: Oh yeah, sure.

J.B.: Has it become a country club party?

Long: No, it's become the jaycee party. Junior Chamber of Commerce. These young businessmen get elected who don't know their ass from a hole in the ground about government. A lot of them are just damn fools. And that's who the Republicans like. These boys who have the jaycee mentality. There are two Republicans in the legislature that are worth listening to. That's all. And they don't have much influence except when they get into a close situation, then they can make the difference.

J.B.: Do they tend to stick together? Is there an active Republican caucus?

Long: Yeah. Republicans are about as effective as the blacks, except the blacks are all liberals.

J.B.: Who are the two exceptions you cited?

Long: Fred Agnich. I told you you ought to talk to him. He's a multi-millionaire from Dallas. And Hutchison from Dallas. Lawyer. I think his home's really in Richardson.

J.B.: To what extent do special interest lobbyists dominate the legislature?

Long: Which legislature? The lobby has always dominated the Texas legislature pretty well. When I say the lobby, that covers a hell of a lot of people and sometimes with diverse views. But the last session, after the Price Daniel revolution, the lobbyists had to meet the members, get acquainted with the members. Because they could no longer deal with the speaker as they had done in the past. Or with the lieutenant governor. We've had a tradition of strong lieutenant governors. Which Allen Shivers invented when he was lieutenant governor. Hobby is not that kind of guy. The senate votes its views, which are very closely divided. But I think the new speaker coming in. . . the lobby will have his ear. Bill Clayton from Spring Lake, population 460. A pretty well to do west Texas farmer. Who just very luckily fell into the speakers race and it looks like he has it won. But the lobby will be in better shape in the next session. With the advent of political committees, they've been stirring up their people pretty well. Getting them to put money in for candidates for the legislature. But actually, the last legislature was so damn independent it was unbelievable. And nobody could put together a majority on anything. Because we had a speaker who didn't believe in that, a lieutenant governor who didn't. And they kind of went their own way. This, of course, is the reason that the constitutional convention collapsed. Because it was a bunch of rugged individualists. Probably the most honest legislature we ever had.

J.B.: Do you see that trend continuing? Is that a result of reapportionment in part?

Long: Just a little bit. Your election in the big cities of

blacks and liberals and Republicans has neutralized your big cities. See, you've just got Dallas, Ft. Worth and Houston that have single member districts. No. Dallas, San Antonio and Houston. Ft. Worth still has a solid, conservative Democratic delegation except for one Republican woman senator.

[End of tape. End of interview.]