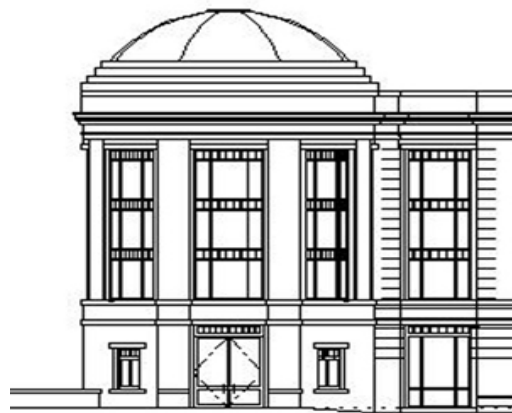


James Huggins



Oral History Interviews

Robert C. Byrd Center for Legislative Studies
Shepherdstown, WV
October 24, 2011-January 19, 2012




ROBERT C. BYRD CENTER FOR LEGISLATIVE STUDIES
P.O. Box 5000 • Shepherd University • Shepherdstown, WV 25443

Deed of Gift

I, James Huggins, do hereby give to the Congressional Education Foundation, Inc., a West Virginia corporation, the audio recordings and transcripts of my interviews between October 24, 2011 and January 19, 2012.

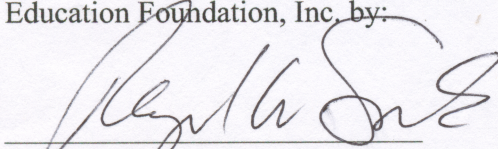
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James Huggins

5/15/12 [date]

Accepted on behalf of the Congressional
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Raymond W. Smock

June 11, 2012
[date]



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Preface

by Keith D. Alexander

In this series of interviews, conducted by Dr. Ray Smock over several weeks in 2011 and 2012, Jim Huggins gives an insider's view of how Senator Byrd's office worked. Born in Parkersburg, West Virginia in 1950, Huggins graduated from West Virginia University in 1973 with degrees in political science and business law. He began working for Senator Byrd in January 1973, and held a number of positions within the senator's office, including assistant to the majority whip, office manager, state director, and professional staff member of the Senate Appropriations Committee. In 1974, Huggins developed Senator Byrd's mobile office. Between 1985 and 1992, he ran Senator Byrd's high-tech project office, helping transform West Virginia's economy from heavy industry to high technology. Huggins proposed and helped design West Virginia projects worth over \$500 million dollars that were approved and funded by Senator Byrd.

Beginning in the 1970s, Huggins also became increasingly active in overseas business relationships, particularly with China, and he traveled extensively there. Huggins left Senator Byrd's staff in 1992 after 20 years of service to join fellow West Virginia native and former President Kennedy staffer Mel Cottone in establishing the Washington government and political consulting firm of The Cottone and Huggins Group.

Huggins remained close to Senator Byrd after he left Byrd's staff, and the senator occasionally called upon him to help raise money, seek his advice, or drive him to a weekend engagement in West Virginia. In 2004, Huggins suffered a bad fall, which ended his career as an active globetrotting consultant. Between 2004 and 2008, he was confined to bed fighting MRSA. He last spoke with Senator Byrd during a visit to Byrd's home in April of 2010.

Huggins is married to Connie Bandy Huggins of Cape Coral, Florida. He has two children, Jennifer and James III, and a step-son, Jeremy Hawk. He currently lives with his family in the Tampa Bay area.

A note regarding the transcript: After the interview was transcribed, the interviewee reviewed the transcript and made edits and additions. Material enclosed in brackets was added during the editing process. Bracketed text in regular typeface consists of editorial clarifications. Bracketed text in italics was added by the interviewee and is generally not in the archived recording.

About the interviewer: Ray Smock is the director of the Robert C. Byrd Center for Legislative Studies in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. He is the former Historian of the U. S. House of Representatives (1983-95). He holds a PhD in history from the University of Maryland at College Park. His latest book, co-edited with Roger Bruns and David Hostetter, is *Congress Investigates: A Critical History with Documents* (2011), a two-volume compilation of scholarly articles and government documents covering the history of Congressional investigations from 1792 to 2006.

Interview #1
Monday, October 24, 2011

Smock: My name is Ray Smock. I'm the Director of the Robert C. Byrd Center for Legislative Studies at Shepherd University in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, and today is October 24, 2011. I'm about to conduct a recorded interview by telephone with Mr. Jim Huggins of Bradenton, Florida, a longtime member of Senator Byrd's staff. This interview is part of the Byrd Center Oral History Program on the life and career of Senator Byrd.

Jim, you understand that our conversation today will be recorded?

Huggins: Yes.

Smock: After we get this interview done, I do plan to come down and see you in Florida, but we'll make a transcript of this. Then the way it works is we'll send you a printed copy, you can go over it and make any changes that you want, and then you send us back a copy. At that time, we'll ask you to sign a Deed of Gift saying that this is part of the Robert C. Byrd Oral History Collection. Until we do that, everything that you and I say is private and confidential and is subject to your control until you sign it over to us when you're happy with it.

Huggins: Right.

Smock: So let's get started. I'd like you to begin, Jim, by stating your full name and address and then, as you suggested, begin by telling me something about yourself, your own background, where you came from, where you grew up, how you came to meet Senator Byrd. Take as much time as you like.

Huggins: Sure. Sure. That would be fine.

My name is James Bernard Huggins. I worked for Senator Byrd between 1985 and 1990 as a computer specialist. I live here in Bradenton right now with my wife Connie and two of my three children. We live at 5004 24th Street West in Bradenton, Unit B, and we've been here now for about six months. I came here from Fort Myers and Cape Coral, where I lived for several years. Anyway, I wanted to—

Smock: Could you hold on a minute, Jim? We're getting really bad feedback. Are you close to some other device?

Huggins: No, I'm not. I have a cell phone, but I don't have any other device.

Smock: Okay. Are you on a speaker phone or on a hand phone?

Huggins: It's just a regular hand phone.

Smock: Okay. That's good. Okay. Well, we'll hope we get through. There's some interference. Go ahead.

Huggins: I think it will work. If not, then we'll just have to work it when you come down. But, anyway, let me go ahead and try this and see how far we get.

Anyway, I was born in Parkersburg, West Virginia. My parents, Bernard A. Huggins and Evelyn Wiblin Huggins, were basically from that area. My family was not political at all. I come from an apolitical family, and I was the first generation to go to college. I graduated from Parkersburg High School in 1968 and decided to enroll at the Parkersburg branch of WVU [West Virginia University], which was located about a block away from where I lived. It was in an old elementary school in Parkersburg.

About this same time, the legislature funded the building of a new Parkersburg Community College on Route 47, which was finished my sophomore year, so I actually graduated with an AA degree from Parkersburg Community College, but it was associated with WVU. I then transferred on to Morgantown for my junior and senior years. While at the Parkersburg branch of WVU, I got involved with some people in student government who were associated with the Young Democrats, and the president of the student government was a young Democrat official. Through these associations, I started to meet people in Charleston, started to meet some people in state-wide politics. As I stated, I never had been involved in any sort of politics before and didn't have any political officials as relatives, so I came into this from basically a situation of not having any experience or any family involvement. Anyway, from these associations, I discovered that I was very interested in politics and decided to major in political science, and through majoring in political science and in furthering these associations, I met more state public officials.

When I went to WVU as a junior, this was like 1970. I graduated from Parkersburg Community College and went on to WVU. In the spring of 1972, Senator [Jennings] Randolph was running for reelection to the Senate, and he had an article in the local paper that he was having a meeting at the Hotel Morgan for any students that might be interested in working for him. So I decided to go to the meeting, and it was a luncheon.

While he was there, it was composed of about ten or twelve students, and these were mostly the sons and daughters of old Randolph friends who were now going to the university. So I talked to him, and he liked my enthusiasm and he asked me after the meeting if I would be interested in being co-chairman of the Youth for Randolph campaign committee in the state. He had a northern coordinator and a southern coordinator, and he wanted to know if I would be the northern coordinator for Youth for Randolph, which would basically mean that I would go to rallies, contact Young Democrats at the state colleges and universities in the state, in the northern part of the state, see if they needed brochures. And whenever Randolph came into the area, I would

go to the rallies or the meetings with him, and he would introduce me as his college coordinator. And I said, "Yes, I'd be glad to do that."

So in 1972 I started doing that, and I organized a large rally at WVU for US Senator Hubert Humphrey. He brought Hubert Humphrey in, and we had four or five hundred students and faculty at the Mountainlair Student Center, it was a big rally for Hubert Humphrey. Humphrey was speaking that night at the Hotel Morgan at a Democratic fundraiser for Senator Randolph and presidential candidate George McGovern, and so Humphrey tried to do a university function, too.

During these Democratic meetings around the state, Senator Byrd would occasionally appear, and when he did at one of them, Senator Randolph introduced me to Senator Byrd as his college coordinator for northern West Virginia. Senator Byrd said that he was very interested in the thoughts and the opinions of college students. He asked me if he could write my phone number down and if I wouldn't mind on occasion if he could call me and just chat about what was on the mind of college students. Of course, this was the time of the Vietnam War where there was a lot of antiwar sentiment out there, and Byrd was known as a real hawk, a big supporter of the war, so there was a lot of students' opposition to Byrd because of his support of the war. It was a very troubling time in our history. So I was not so much interested in the war situation as just getting my education and getting out.

One day while I was at my college apartment, I got a phone call in the afternoon, and the voice said, "Jim, this is Senator Robert C. Byrd. I'm calling you from Washington." I was shocked to get this call. He said, "You know, I enjoyed meeting with you on a couple of occasions, and I told you I might give you a call. I just thought I would ring you up and maybe you could tell me what the opinions are of students and what's going on on campus."

So I gave him kind of a review of what most of the students were saying and what was happening, and he said that he really enjoyed chatting with me and that he wanted to continue to give me a call now and then. I said that was fine. I didn't really expect much more to come out of this.

At the end of 1972, I finished at WVU. I needed six more hours of French to graduate, and so I decided that I would leave WVU, pick up the French, finish up, and get a job. Having been involved with the Young Democrats and meeting all these public officials, I thought, "Boy, it would be great to go to Washington and get a job." I had no idea how difficult that would be or what that would entail. I just thought I'd go to Washington and ask Senator Randolph to help me, and I might be able to come up with a job.

My father had died of cancer my senior year in college, so I talked with my mother about it, and she was not happy about this at all. I was an only child, so she had very much wanted me to stay in Parkersburg, but she humored me by saying, "Well, you go over to Washington and see what happens, and if it works out, fine. If not, you can

come back and get a job here.” I think that she fully expected me not to be able to find anything and come back to Parkersburg.

I went to Washington and I used Senator Randolph’s office kind of as a base. I would work out of his office, and I had résumés, and I went out and walked the floors of the office buildings and gave out résumés in the offices. I visited every congressman’s office from West Virginia. At that point we had four congressmen, and I went over to Senator Byrd’s office. All the congressmen that I visited all told me, “There was only one place that you can really get help, and that’s Senator Byrd. He’s the only one that has any real power up here. We have a small staff. They’re very professional. If you want a job, especially if you want to work and go to school, get a patronage job, you’re going to have to go see Senator Byrd. He’s in the leadership. He’s the only guy that can do anything.”

Randolph told me, too, that he was Chairman of the Public Works Committee, but all his staff were mostly professional and that it would be difficult to hire somebody that just came out of college without much experience. So I began to feel that maybe things wouldn’t work out.

In those days, the Capitol was wide open, there was little security. They had security aides who were seventy-year-olds sitting out in the front of the Senate doors to the chamber, and one policeman walking up and down the hall. You could drive your car up to the steps of the Capitol, park, walk up the steps into the main floor on the second floor, where the Senate Chamber was, see maybe one policeman. There was no special security. Walk right in, walk up to the Senate door, and if you wanted to, probably walk inside. I mean, it was totally wide open in those times.

So I went up into the Senate gallery, and I saw Senator Byrd down on the floor and he was reading over the floor schedule for the upcoming week. He was there by himself. There was maybe one other member there. I thought, “Well, you know, I’ll walk downstairs to the front of the Senate Chamber, and maybe he’ll come out.” I had been over to his office in 105 Russell and talked to Joe Owens [phonetic], who ran his front office, and Joe had told me that Byrd didn’t have any openings, all of his patronage jobs were filled, and that there was no way I could see him on this trip to Washington, he was just too busy to see me, and that Senator Byrd would write to me, but basically I had no chance at visiting with him.

So I walked in front of the Senate Chamber, and there’s what they call the Ohio Clock, which is a big clock that sits there. I stood there, which was the entrance to the big corridor that went between the Senate main door to the chamber and the House side through the rotunda. This corridor goes all the way across the Capitol. I stood out in front of the main door to the Senate Chamber by this clock, and in a few minutes Senator Byrd came out the door, all by himself. And I walked over to him, and I said, “Senator Byrd, I’m Jim Huggins from West Virginia.”

He said, “Oh, yes, Jim, I remember you.”

I said, "Well, Senator, I'm up here right now. I'm working out of Senator Randolph's office, but I'm looking for a job, and I'd like to be able to maybe get some additional hours at George Washington University. I could finish my degree, but I'm looking for a patronage job or some kind of a job where I could work and go to school, but I've not been able to find any opportunities. I wonder if I could talk to you for a couple minutes."

He said, "Well, Jim, I'm on my way to see Senator Mansfield. I'm going to have a page bring you down to my office, my Whip office, and if you wait down there for fifteen or twenty minutes, I'll come down and I'll be glad to talk to you."

I said, "Fine."

"Jim," he said, "you'll never find this office without me getting somebody to help you." So he went in and he got a page to come out, and he told this page to take me down to the Whip office. Now, the Whip office was on the first floor of the Capitol facing the west front, down by the doctor's office, and you had to go down a little corridor and a circular staircase, and it was kind of through the back hallways of the Capitol to get down there. It was a very nice three-room office suite.

So the page took me down, and we walked in. There was a lady there all by herself, whose name was Ethel Lowe. She was Senator Byrd's executive secretary. So when I walked in with the page, the page said, "Senator Byrd sent this young man down. He said he'll be down in a few minutes to see him."

So the page left, and Mrs. Lowe said, "Oh, well, what are you doing?" I explained that I was there wanting to say hello to Senator Byrd and I was in Washington looking for a job. So she said, "Well, just sit right there. Senator Byrd will be down to have his lunch, and you can probably chat with him while he eats lunch."

I said, "Fine."

In about twenty minutes or so, Senator Byrd comes in the door and he walks back to the back of his suite, which was a big office with a huge picture window, looking down on the Mall on the water and the Washington Monument. It's really a beautiful view of Washington down Constitution Avenue.

Mrs. Lowe said, "Jimmy, you don't have but just a few minutes. Senator Byrd wants to get his lunch out and you can come back and talk to him." So she went back, and he had a refrigerator there, and she got this paper bag out of the refrigerator, and there was a Ball glass pint-size jar full of skim milk, and there was a couple of bologna and cheese sandwiches. So he sat there and he poured the skim milk from the Ball jar into a glass and started eating his sandwich, and then Mrs. Lowe said, "He'll see you now."

So I walked back and sat down, and he was eating his sandwich. He said, "If you don't mind, I'll just eat my sandwich." It was now about two p.m. He said, "You go ahead and talk to me, and I'll just eat my sandwich while you chat."

So I said, "Okay." I told him "I'm here in Washington. As you know, I finished up at WVU, but I still want to take some additional foreign policy classes at George Washington or Georgetown University. I'd like to find a job, but I've not been able to find anything, and I'm really becoming desperate. I'm really desperate to get a job here where I can get some additional college work and make some money."

He said, "You're desperate?"

I said, "Yes, Senator, I'm really desperate. I've been here a week now, and I've just not been able to get much encouragement."

He said, "Well, Jimmy, I think I can help you."

I said, "Oh, really?"

He said, "Yes. You know, I only have a couple of positions that are patronage, but I can get you a job on the elevator, if you wouldn't mind doing that."

I said, "No, that'd be great."

He said, "Well, I'm going to send you over to see Joe Owens." This is the guy I just talked to earlier who told me he had nothing available in the office. He said, "I'm going to call Joe. I'll send you over there. He'll give you the paperwork and you can take it to the Senate sergeant-at-arms office, and they will set you up and swear you in, and you'll work from seven-thirty a.m. to twelve noon on the elevator. Then if you wouldn't mind coming up to my office in 105 Russell at one o'clock, I'd like you to work from one to five in my office, maybe helping in the mailroom or maybe filling agriculture bulletins or giving tours of the Capitol or doing some office work like that, if you wouldn't mind."

I said, "Oh, no, no, I'd be happy. That'd be great."

So he said, "Okay. Well, we'll set you up."

So I went back to see Joe Owens, who could hardly look at me when I came in the office. He gave me the forms, told me he was sorry that he couldn't help me earlier. I went over, got sworn in, and then I went back to Senator Randolph's office and told him that Senator Byrd had gotten me a job. Well, Randolph was a little flushed about this, because Randolph and Byrd were quite the competitors. Later I learned that if I hadn't have found a job, Randolph was going to offer me one. But with Byrd offering me a job, I was very happy with what he had to offer.

I then called my mother, who was not happy at all that I'd found this job in Washington. So then I went home to prepare to come back and to start working with Senator Byrd.

It was very interesting, though, in working with Senator Randolph. He was a very funny gentleman, and at a couple of the rallies we went to, his wife Mary was there, and

Randolph would get carried away and speak and speak and speak about an hour. Afterwards, he'd ask Mary, "Well, Mary, how did I do?"

She'd say, "Well, Jennings, you missed several good opportunities to sit down."

He'd go, "Oh, oh, oh, oh, okay, okay."

Anyway, I enjoyed my association with Senator Randolph, the fact that he really helped me by introducing me to people like Senator Byrd.

Then later this all, of course, worked out well for me because Senator Byrd liked my association with the Young Democrats, and through that association with the statewide Young Democrats, I think I was actually able to help him politically later on with a lot of the political things he asked me to do in the office. So basically that is how I met Senator Byrd and how I first got my job in Washington working for him.

Then from there, my first job on the elevator was at \$7,800. I worked there about a week. In those days the Senate had elevators and a lot of them had to be manually operated. So the rule was that when a senator rang, you had to immediately go down to where the senator was, pick him up, take him where he wanted to go, regardless of who was in the elevator, and then you would go ahead and deliver the rest of the people. So when I'd get there in the mornings, I would pick up these senators who were coming in to work, and I was always very polite, always say, "Good morning, sir. How are you? It's a beautiful day."

They would ask me, "Well, who are you working under?"

I'd say, "Senator Byrd."

They'd say, "Well, you're a very eager young man."

I'd say, "Oh, yes, sir. I'm very pleased and privileged to have this job."

So I'd worked there for about a week, and in the afternoons I'd go to Byrd's office and work in his mailroom and do other things. About a week after I'd been there, I got a ring one afternoon on the elevator to go to the basement. I went down to the basement. It was Senator Byrd. He got on the elevator and he said, "Jim, you know, I've been up here a long time and had a lot of people working for me. In the last week, I've had six or seven senators who've come up to me and said, 'You've got this young man working on the elevator. He was really quite pleasant and quite eager and just very nice, and I just wanted to mention to you how nice he was, and he is certainly a very polite young man.'" Senator Byrd said, "I've never had that happen before. You know, Jim, I'd like for you to work full-time in my office. Do you think you'd be interested in that?"

I said, "Oh, yes, Senator."

He said, "I'll give you a raise. I'll move you up to \$8,500 from \$7,800. How's that?"

I said, “Oh, Senator, that’s great.” I thought, boy, this was the greatest thing in the world. I now had a full-time job in Senator Byrd’s office, making what I thought was a great amount of money. I started in January of ’73, I thought I had the world by the rings.

So that’s how I started. I worked for Senator Byrd till 1992, and I ended up being one of the top people on his staff. When I left there to work in a consulting firm in Washington, I had almost a twenty-year career working for Senator Byrd. I look back and think those were probably the fondest days of my life, working for him and doing a lot of great work for West Virginia.

Smock: That’s a very good introduction and a very good way to start and really a good story. I hadn’t heard all that before. I knew parts of it. So that’s fascinating.

So you didn’t spend much time on the elevator. You were only on the elevator for —

Huggins: For about a week.

Smock: So when you went to work for Senator Byrd full-time in 1973, what were you doing for him at that time?

Huggins: When I started working for him, he asked me to work in his Whip office, his Majority Whip office, with Ethel Lowe. He used to put out a Whip notice every week.

Smock: Excuse me, Jim. Is it Ethel Lowe, L-o-w-e?

Huggins: Yes, L-o-w-e.

Smock: Okay. Good. I just wanted to clarify that for the record.

Huggins: Right. That’s right.

Smock: So you were in the Whip office.

Huggins: Right. So I worked as an assistant in the Whip office with her, and every week Senator Byrd would get with Senator Mansfield, get the legislative schedule for the week, when the votes would be, what legislation was coming up. So every week, at least once or sometimes twice a week, he would send out—this was before computers—he would send out these written notices to all the Democratic members and to all the committee staff, the chiefs of staff, on what the schedule would be for the upcoming week. He would have pages, maybe five or six pages, to deliver the notices. We would print maybe 100 whip notices. He did just the Democratic senators, and to all the Democratic staff directors at the committees, so there would be about 100 that we would run off. Ethel Lowe would type it up, and then we would run it off on a mimeograph machine. Then we would stuff them in envelopes, and then these pages would take them out and deliver them to every office so the senators would know what legislation would be coming up that week and what days there would be no votes, and would give them a

good view of how they could plan their trips to the states and their speaking and so forth, because Mansfield would then give Senator Byrd the schedule. Byrd, as the Whip, he was in charge of getting the members there for the votes, lining up members for party votes.

Also in those days, if a member couldn't be in DC, Byrd would also try to get another member who might be voting against a measure not to vote. So that if a member couldn't be in Washington, he wouldn't lose his vote by pairing his vote. They don't do that so much anymore, but in those days they did a lot of that. So if a member was going to be absent, Byrd would get a member who was going to vote the opposite way and say, "Would you just vote present and therefore pair his vote—." That way it wouldn't cancel out the member's vote who wouldn't be there.

So that was Senator Byrd's duties as the Whip. He would have that responsibility. Then his staff, we would be responsible then for calling the offices, getting the Whip notices sent out. An office would call us and ask us information about legislation. We would give them scheduling information. That's what we did in that office.

Smock: Who else was in that office? Was this a routine kind of thing, or was it always busy?

Huggins: It was pretty routine. He did get a lawyer, Jim Duffy, D-u-f-f-y, to come to work for him after a year or so, and Duffy was his legislative counsel there. Then there was three of us. But, basically, that office was pretty quiet. In those days we weren't so busy.

Smock: Did senators come to that office?

Huggins: Yes, senators would come in there for meetings Byrd would have. We would have constituent meetings with like the Chamber of Commerce might come in, meet with Senator Byrd, or you might have a labor group come in there, or you might have a group of senators that would come in there, meet with him on something. So it was used a lot for meetings, and a lot of senators would call there and talk with him. The White House would call there for him. So it was pretty busy. From the standpoint of phone calls, there were a lot of phone calls.

Smock: When you got there, Senator Byrd was already the Whip.

Huggins: He'd defeated Senator Kennedy.

Smock: Yes. Do you know that story?

Huggins: Yes. Senator Kennedy had defeated Russell Long, and Senator Kennedy had decided—I guess he wanted to start moving up in the leadership. Senator Byrd became the secretary of the Conference, Democratic Conference, which was the third highest elective office in the Democratic caucus. The first was the Democratic Leader, then it was the Majority Whip or Minority Whip, whichever way the power was, and then the caucus secretary. Then, of course, there was the president pro tem, he was the ex

officio head of the caucus, but he didn't have a lot of real power. So Senator Byrd was actually the third-ranking member of the leadership when Kennedy was the Whip.

But Kennedy got involved in the Chappaquiddick situation, and after that there was a lot of opposition to Senator Kennedy growing. The press, you know, was quite critical, and Senator Byrd was a member of the southern coalition, which used to be under the leadership of Senator Richard Russell, who was the old dean of the southern coalition. The southern coalition in the early seventies was still pretty potent, but it wasn't as powerful as it once was.

But because of Kennedy's political problems, he'd been gone so much from the Senate because of his injuries and the Chappaquiddick situation, Byrd had done many, many favors for most members in scheduling votes for them that were convenient and being on the floor for them and adjourning early and scheduling votes at special times for members to leave to catch planes. So Byrd had quite a lot of chits, basically, favors. So he had been planning, I think, for a long time that he was going to run for Kennedy's Whip job.

In those days, Senator Kennedy and Senator Byrd were somewhat rivals. Senator Bobby Kennedy and Byrd absolutely despised each other, and with Senator Ted Kennedy, the situation wasn't as heated as it had been with Senator Robert Kennedy, but there still was the feeling that they really just didn't like each other. So Senator Byrd had met with his allies who were the moderates and the conservatives, and he felt he had enough votes to oust Senator Kennedy. Kennedy met with his friends when he got back, and a few of them weren't truthful with him and told him that he had nothing to worry about.

So when the election came, I think Senator Byrd won by three or so votes. Senator Byrd thought it was going to come down to one vote, and the one vote was a senator [Richard B. Russell] who was dying. Senator Byrd got his proxy, deathbed proxy, thinking he might need it in the caucus if it came down to one vote, and it actually wasn't that close.

Afterwards, Senator Kennedy said, "Well, you know, obviously some of my close friends weren't real truthful in telling me of their support." Years later he came to Senator Byrd and said, "You know, Bob, that's the best thing that ever happened to me. Your beating me was the best thing that happened to me in my Senate career. It put me on a different track. It made me much more legislative-conscious, much more interested in my social and political agenda, and actually I'm much better off that you won that election."

Then, of course, Byrd and Kennedy became very close friends, and in the end Senator Byrd considered Senator Kennedy as one of his closest friends in the Senate. I mean, that's a remarkable story of how rivals turned into extremely close friends. Senator Kennedy used to come in with flowers for Mrs. [Erma Ora] Byrd on their anniversary, and he'd come in with a birthday cake for Senator Byrd on his birthday. I mean, Senator Kennedy really went out of his way to befriend Senator Byrd over the years, and it was a mutual admiration. Senator Byrd really became quite familiar and friendly with Senator

Kennedy and considered him to be a very great senator. During Kennedy's run for the presidency, he offered Byrd the vice-presidential spot, but Byrd said as Majority Leader he didn't want to damage his working relationship with Carter. He told Kennedy if he got the nomination Byrd would reconsider the request.

Smock: Part of the tension between Kennedy and Byrd in those days in the seventies was obviously their rivalry for the leadership ladder.

Huggins: Right.

Smock: But were there other things, like Byrd's [position on] civil rights?

Huggins: Yes. That was especially the case with Bobby Kennedy. I mean, Senator Byrd said that if there were three votes he could change in his Senate career, the three votes that he would change, one was the airline deregulation he voted for, because it hurt small states like West Virginia and cities like Morgantown, Clarksburg, Parkersburg, Beckley, Bluefield, Lewisburg, and Huntington. The second was the Voting Rights Bill, and then the Civil Rights Bill of '64. He said, "Those two, the Voting Rights Act and the Civil Rights Bill of '64, those were the wrong votes for the wrong reasons," and he said that those were three votes he wished he could take back.

Of course, Bobby Kennedy was very big on civil rights, having been involved with Martin Luther King [Jr.] and all the civil rights issues when President Kennedy was in the White House. Of course, Bobby Kennedy and Ted Kennedy were very liberal. President Kennedy was more conservative. When Senator Ted Kennedy went to the Senate, he asked his brother, "Who should I look to up there in the Senate for help?" JFK told him, he said, "You should look to Richard Russell. He's the dean of the southern coalition, but he's the man that you should try to emulate as far as learning the rules and learning how to legislate, because he's a great senator." JFK thought that Richard Russell was a great senator.

Of course, later on, Ted Kennedy became the darling of the Left. The Vietnam War and, I think, civil rights were two big issues where Senator Byrd philosophically differed with Kennedy. Senator Byrd said he was the last senator out of Vietnam but the first senator against going to Iraq. He said, "If there's anything I've learned, it's that you can't get involved in countries where there's civil wars. The civil war in Vietnam and under the guise of Communism, we got involved there and lost 55,000 Americans, and we shouldn't be involved in nation building in Iraq, in another civil war, under the guise of fighting against people who were trying to hurt this country, Al Qaida. We're not sure that that's really Al Qaida there."

Byrd spoke out very much against going into Iraq when many of his Democratic colleagues were afraid to, because at that point with Bush being very popular and after 9/11, the sentiment of the country was probably for getting involved in Iraq, even though there were no weapons of mass destruction. Byrd said all along, "There's no proof there's weapons of mass destruction. There's no proof that the President is telling us the whole

truth about Iraq.” But he was pretty much a lone voice in the wilderness on Iraq until later on when a lot of other members, including Kennedy and others, came over to his side of things.

Smock: Now, again, just to try to keep the story—we can go anywhere we want, and everything you said has been absolutely wonderful, but going back to the seventies, you’re working in the Whip’s office, and I understand your duties there. What kind of contact did you have with Byrd in those days, and is there anything that you remember about him in—

Huggins: Well, I thought I would talk about him basically from his days as a youngster all the way through his career. I would start out and go into that when we got together and you could record it. I would tell you the first thing Senator Byrd told me about his youth was this and this and this. I thought I would give you a breakdown beginning from when he first remembered all the way through the last time I saw him, kind of a chronological overview of his life as he told me, through his whole career.

Smock: Yes, that sounds wonderful, and we can do that when I come down to see you in November.

Huggins: My personal association with Byrd was very close because I worked with him every day in the Whip’s office, and then he asked me to start driving him. So I would go out in the mornings and pick him up at his house and drive him in. Then he asked me to drive him to West Virginia, and that’s where I really started to hear all the stories about Senator Byrd, was on these trips, hour after hour, day after day, year after year, we would go to West Virginia. When we’d drive back in the middle of the night, Byrd would tell me stories, and that’s how I heard all the stories about his youth; about the Klan; about him running for office; about his legislative service; about him running for Congress, how Senator [Matthew M.] Neely tried to get him off the ticket; how he ran for the Senate, his Senate career. I mean, all of that was over many, many, many hours of riding with him to West Virginia.

Smock: Okay.

Huggins: We got to be very close. I was the only staff member he would have come to his house for dinner. I mean, it was amazing. He would have me come out to his house. Mrs. Byrd was a very, very gracious, loving lady, and Senator Byrd liked just very regular things, like soup beans and cornbread and pepperoni. I mean, he wasn’t anybody who liked a lot of special things, a lot of special foods. He was a country boy and he basically liked this kind of food.

I took Senator Byrd to lunch one day in Parkersburg to my mother’s house, and she fixed ground beef. We had a garden, and she had fresh beans and tomatoes and onions and cottage cheese and buttermilk. And Senator Byrd said, “You know, Jim, this is the best lunch I’ve ever had.” And he went back and told Erma, “Oh, Erma, you won’t believe Jimmy’s mother. She fixed a lunch just like you do.”

So over the years, Byrd would invite me to stop and have dinner with him. Nobody else on his staff ever was invited to his house to eat. That's why I felt so welcome in going to see him all the time at his house. Nobody. I mean, people were scared to death of Byrd. He was a tough cookie. In the office, you didn't look crossways at Byrd. In those days, he was a real strict disciplinarian. But I never felt that way about him, and I guess because he kind of treated me with kindness, I wasn't scared of talking to him and bringing up issues. So I think that led to a very warm relationship. And the fact that I drove him hour after hour, and he always said to me, "Jim, you're the only man I really trust to drive me."

After I left Senator Byrd in 1992, I went downtown. For a year, after you leave the Senate, you can't have anything to do with the Senate if you're a lobbyist, so for a year I had to stay away from the office. In '94, he was up for reelection, and so one day I got a call from Anne Barth, who ran his Charleston office.

Smock: Anne Barth.

Huggins: Anne Barth. She said, "Jimmy, we've got a real problem."

I said, "What?"

She goes, "Well, these guys that we have driving Senator Byrd now, he is not happy with. He's like a bear. He is so difficult to deal with. He doesn't like this guy's driving. He doesn't like that guy's driving. He complains continuously. Can you think of any way you could come back and maybe do a little driving for him during this campaign trip? Because you're the only guy he likes."

Here I'm a registered lobbyist. I said, "Well, you know, if you want me to, I would be glad to. I would take a few days off." So I arranged to fly down and meet him, and I started driving him. From that point, for three or four years till I got sick, I would drive him to West Virginia. I wasn't paid. They did give me money for motels and expenses. But it was amazing. Here I am, a lobbyist.

Now, one thing I want to say, I never asked Senator Byrd ever for anything personally. Whatever dealings I had with Senator Byrd's office, I had to deal with his staff. My relationship with Senator Byrd, I felt, was so close and so important that I didn't want anybody to ever say that Jim Huggins asked Senator Byrd for a favor.

Senator Byrd many times would say to me, "Jim, tell me what you're doing. Jim, can I help you?"

I'd always say, "Senator Byrd, I'm working with your office. Senator Byrd, you know, you can find out from your staff." I never, in all the times that I drove him, never personally talked to him about any issues or any projects I was working on because I didn't want any conflict of interest between what I was doing for him in that manner and my professional job. I was very, very cautious of any ethical questions, and I didn't want anybody to say that I was using my association with Senator Byrd for anything special. I

would put my request in the mail and talk to the staff, but never once did I ever talk to Senator Byrd personally about any project or any funding matter.

Smock: Where did you live when you were working with Senator Byrd? How far did you have to go to get him in the morning?

Huggins: Well, when I was driving him, I lived in Georgetown and later over on Capitol Hill. It took me about a half an hour to drive out to McLean from the Capitol building. I picked him up at seven o'clock in the morning and I would drive him in, and then I would drive him home at night, ten or eleven o'clock at night. So I was putting in extremely long hours in those days. And, of course, my salary went up quite steeply, the more hours and the more my responsibilities increased. When I left Senator Byrd, I was one of his highest-paid assistants, so my duties increased significantly.

Then, you know, he got a full-time driver later. I took over his economic development work in defense and in high-tech jobs, and I was doing a lot of project development for him with companies and developing big projects. I did about \$500 million worth of projects for Senator Byrd in West Virginia that I basically developed, took to him, and then he decided to fund these projects and then he went through the appropriations process and got the money to put the projects in place.

I really do think that a lot of important work happened in West Virginia with the economy that never would have happened if we wouldn't have done these kinds of projects. I can get into talking about how I got into economic development at a later time, because there's an interesting story about how I first noticed this problem, and then I would go to him and propose projects.

In the beginning, he was basically the kind of guy who liked buildings and bridges and public works, things that had his name associated with it. He once told me, he said, "You know, you spend all your time and effort on getting a social program funded that's there three or four years, and then the program goes away and the people forget what you did, and you spent all your time on that. Then when election time comes, people ask what you did and then you say, 'Well, I did this and I got that enacted and I got this enacted,' and they say, 'Well, big deal. What have you done for me lately?' But if you got your name on a bridge or your name on a building, they know what it is. Or your name on a road, they drive over that road every day, they know what you've done.

I had to convince him that the economy in West Virginia was changing, we went through a huge kind of reorganization of the economy from traditional industries like steel and glass and coal and chemicals, into high-tech industries and in the back-office government operations and information technology and all that associated with the Internet. I mean, the Internet revolutionized the whole job industry in West Virginia. It brought the FBI there. It brought ATF to the Eastern Panhandle, and it brought a lot of government offices to West Virginia that before could never have existed because you couldn't do a big FBI Fingerprint Center outside of Washington. But the Internet changes all that. Information technology changed all that.

Senator Byrd was right on the cutting edge of getting those offices to come to West Virginia because he understood that being chairman of Appropriations, he had thirteen subcommittees funding the entire federal government. So every subcommittee funded every agency of government, and every year he'd have the staff director of those subcommittees talk to those agencies, "Hey, are you doing anything in West Virginia? Do you need any money for a special, urgent project? Do you need something funded that can't get agency funding or approval? If you could do it in West Virginia, and Senator Byrd can get you the money, would the agency do it?" That's how Senator Byrd enticed the agencies basically to put operations in West Virginia.

He got the FBI to come to West Virginia because he said he would completely revolutionize the whole fingerprinting procedure with the aid of technology and computers. I mean, in those days fingerprints were on card files, and you had to individually look at fingerprint cards. You know what I mean? You couldn't believe how awful the system was, and the states weren't connected with each other, and the United States wasn't connected with Interpol and Europe. Today everything is on a computer. In a police car you can do a fingerprint check and find out if the guy's wanted. But in those days that didn't exist.

Senator Byrd created all that by putting four hundred million dollars into the FBI budget to create these programs that made that all possible. I mean, I don't think he'll ever get the credit for completely changing the whole fingerprinting and biotech nature that's there today, the technology that's there today that wouldn't exist. I'll tell you the story about how he pulled that off on another occasion.

Senator Byrd was very proactive, and we were proactive as a staff and we needed to go after getting these operations to come to West Virginia. We had defense and technology conferences throughout the state. He developed the Software Valley Initiative, which was the high-tech initiative in West Virginia with WVU. So we tried to establish centers at universities around the state that would be centers of expertise for different types of technology. That was all done to bring technology and federal funds to West Virginia, and it built infrastructure there so that there would be jobs later on, and they wouldn't all go away after the initial contract expired. That was done by Senator Byrd to help change the economy of West Virginia because he knew with steel, chemicals, coal, and glass jobs all significantly decreasing, people were leaving West Virginia to go to other states for better opportunities.

They used to call Interstate 77 and I-79 the Hillbilly Highways, the highways out of the state, for hillbillies to take to go to Florida and to go to New York for better jobs, because there weren't many jobs left in West Virginia. Well, now we have an ARC corridor system in West Virginia that Senator Byrd funded. We have new interstates in West Virginia. Roads were just one part of his plan to make it easier for people to get to work and to make it more attractive for new industry and for federal government offices to relocate to West Virginia.

Smock: Now, he started doing that even before he became Chairman of the Appropriations Committee in 1989. In other words, he was on the committee, and my understanding is that at first, as you suggested, he was interested in roads and bridges more than anything because there were hardly any significant roads in West Virginia. Obviously this was before the interstate highway system of the late fifties.

Huggins: The interstates were limited—you had Interstate 77 when I started WVU in 1970, which connected with the West Virginia Turnpike from Charleston to Parkersburg, and then you had 64, which went from Charleston to Huntington, and a few miles of interstate through the Eastern Panhandle, and that was it. You know, 79 hadn't been built yet; 79 was finished when I was a senior at WVU. And the ARC corridors didn't exist. Corridor G, Corridor H, Corridor L, all the corridors hadn't been built, only a little bit of a road outside of Elkins. They called it the Highway to Nowhere. That road was supposed to be the hookup of Corridor H to connect Washington, DC from West Virginia, but then federal officials changed the direction of the road so it was a four-way highway built to nowhere. And it received a lot of criticism, that section of highway, around Bowden.

But Byrd knew that especially in the South, Corridor G in the coal fields to Logan was needed for economic development. It took forever to go from Williamson to Charleston. In those days, from Logan to Morgantown would take all day. So Byrd saw that a modern four-lane ARC highway system, even more than just the interstate, was needed. Eisenhower was really the father of the interstates. Ike saw that in Germany with the Autobahn, so he really pushed for the interstates in the US.

Byrd knew that there had to be connectors to the interstates. That was the real key, those connectors, and that's what he wanted to build. But he could only build roads as West Virginia could design them and as he could put money in the annual ARC funding bill. Nixon and Reagan wanted to do away with the ARC, so every year it was a battle to get ARC authorized and funded.

Smock: Tell me what ARC stands for.

Huggins: Appalachian Regional Commission. That's made up of the thirteen states in the Appalachian Region from New York to Alabama. But West Virginia, I think, is the only state that's entirely in the region.

So in the ARC authorization, it was road building, airport building, different types of public works programs, and Senator Byrd, when he used that, the problem he had is that the Public Works Committee under Senator Randolph wasn't always very active. I remember we had the huge floods in Williamson, and many southern counties had been flooded out. Senator Byrd went down there, and everybody was saying, "You know, we can't have this happen again." Matewan and Williamson were under water, and we needed to build flood walls.

However, the Corps of Engineers' formula for building flood walls couldn't be met in Williamson. It was a cost-ratio formula that didn't meet the number of people required by the costs, and there weren't enough people to merit the cost of the flood wall. So it had to be done outside the normal formula. Senator Byrd kept asking Senator Randolph, who was the Chairman of Public Works, to get that bill authorized. Senator Randolph couldn't get his own committee together in a quorum to do it, and Senator Byrd was very frustrated. Senator [Howard] Baker, who was the Minority Leader at this time, was on the Public Works Committee.

Finally, Senator Byrd—he was the Majority Leader at this point—he had had it, and one night about eleven o'clock, he was sitting in the Senate, and Baker was there, and he said to Baker, “Do you mind if I do something for West Virginia?”

And Baker said, “Well, if I can help you, I will.”

He said, “I want to propose an amendment to the current bill that we authorize the Army to forego the cost-ratio formula and to build the proposed flood wall project for West Virginia that's in Mingo and McDowell and Cabell and Wayne Counties, and push this amendment through in the full Senate.”

And Senator Baker said, “Well, I have no objection, Senator Byrd. I'll go ahead and support your amendment.” So they got it through on a voice vote in the Senate with very few members even being there.

Well, the next morning Randolph came in. He was ballistic. Senator Byrd had done this, you know, had gotten this authorization through the full Senate without getting Randolph's committee to do it. Senator Byrd said, “Jennings, I've waited and I've waited. I don't have any more time, and the people of Mingo County don't have any more time.” So the Army was authorized then. Senator Byrd put the funding in. The Corps was authorized to build the flood wall. That's how the flood wall got built.

I'll tell you another interesting story. The Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center at WVU, Jennings Randolph's wife, Mary, had cancer and died from cancer. WVU thought that since Randolph was chairman of the Public Works Committee that that would be where they should go to get money to build this cancer center. So anyway, they asked Senator Byrd for a meeting, and they said they wanted to come over and talk about a big university project. I attended the meeting with several other staff members. Byrd was on the Appropriations subcommittee on health. Senator Byrd had all the specialists there from the Senate staff and his own project staff people to attend this meeting with the president of WVU and the vice president of the Medical Sciences department, and there were four or five total WVU officials.

They came over and they said, “Senator Byrd, we have a story we need to tell you, and we're very embarrassed. We want to tell you this story about the need for a cancer center in West Virginia because we have many more different types of cancer than any other state, and we think a cancer center at WVU would be very helpful. We went to

Senator Randolph because we thought that because of his wife's cancer and he being chairman of Public Works that he could help us. We gave him this speech and this briefing and everything, and he said, 'Oh, I'm 100 percent for this.'"

And they said, "Oh, great, Senator Randolph. When can you put the funding in?"

He goes, "Well, we've got a problem here."

They said, "Well, Senator Randolph, we want to name this after your wife, Mary. We want to call this the Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center."

He said, "I'm thrilled. I'm thrilled. But I can't get you the funding. You better go see Senator Byrd to get the funding."

So they said, "Senator Byrd, we felt like we've kind of stabbed ourself in the foot here. We came in to Senator Randolph and we promised him that we'd build this Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center, and then he told us we need to go see Senator Byrd. So we've already promised him that we'll name the building after Mrs. Randolph. Could you help us?"

He just looked at them, you know, and he let a couple minutes go by before he said anything, and you could hear a pin drop in there. He said, "Well, let me talk to my staff and let me see what I can do. Funds for that would be very, very difficult, because the chairman of the House subcommittee doesn't allow earmarks, and so if I get this project funded, it's going to be a knock-down drag-out battle every year to get it through the House, because the subcommittee chairman over there is going to fight me tooth and nail to do this. I'll get back to you."

After they left, you know, they were walking out saying, "You don't know how embarrassed we are about having to come and tell him this story."

Senator Byrd talked to the staff and said he wanted to help WVU. Byrd decided to put the funding in over three or four years, and every year he had a horrible time with the House getting this funding, because the subcommittee chairman over there—I think he was from Kentucky—he absolutely hated earmarks, and he would just fight with Senator Byrd. Byrd had to get the full committee chairman to sit on the subcommittee chairman by giving the full committee chairman funding for something he wanted for Mississippi. Chairman [Jamie L.] Whitten from Mississippi was the full committee chairman. So Senator Byrd had to end up putting funding in for two or three other members' projects in order to get them then to wrestle their own subcommittee chairman to go along with it. Every year Senator Byrd would do this, and he told me, "The WVU Cancer Center was the most difficult project I ever got funded."

Byrd finally got it through, and then later WVU named the [Jon] Michael Moore Trauma Center at WVU for Senator Byrd's grandson who was killed. WVU gave Senator Byrd that as a tribute for what he had done. Then later, of course, they named the entire medical center the Robert C. Byrd Medical Sciences Center after Byrd. The entire

medical complex was named after Senator Byrd. But, anyway, it was real embarrassing for Randolph to go over for the dedication to the Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center that Senator Byrd got funded.

Smock: But they did name it for her anyhow. That was nice.

Huggins: Yes. Yes, they named it after Mrs. Randolph.

Smock: What else can you tell me? While we were talking about Randolph earlier, you described the two gentlemen as rivals.

Huggins: I'll tell you later on more details about this. But in 1958, both Byrd and Randolph were running for the Senate. They ran as a team, Senator Byrd from southern West Virginia, Senator Randolph from northern West Virginia. They felt they could run as a team. Senator Byrd ran for the term of [William] Chapman Revercomb, who was a Republican running for reelection, and Senator Randolph ran for the unexpired term of Matthew Neely, who had died in office, and the Republican Governor [Cecil Harland] Underwood had put his campaign manager, John Hoblitzell [Jr.], into that seat. That seat was to expire in 1960, so in '58 Randolph was running for the two-year term and Byrd was running for the full term. So they ran together on a combined campaign fund of \$50,000. I mean, it's amazing to think two United States Senate seats would go for \$50,000, when today they spend ten million, twenty million, untold millions of dollars in one Senate campaign, and they had two Senate campaigns that they funded for \$50,000.

Senator Byrd won the full term, and he took office in January of '59. Senator Randolph won the partial term. He took office immediately, so he became the senior senator and Senator Byrd became the junior senator, even though they took office about the same time. Then Senator Randolph had to run in 1960 for the full term. So that's how Byrd and Randolph both got to the Senate.

But as Senators, Randolph and Byrd were friends and competitors, especially for projects and press announcements. A lot of competition occurred in the offices over who would get the press announcements for different things, and it would usually go to the state's senior senator. But because Byrd was in the Senate leadership, he was able to get the agency to give him a call thirty minutes before they called Randolph, so Byrd would put out the press release first. So then in the papers it would be "Senator Byrd announces that the Department of Agriculture is going to do this," or, "Senator Byrd announces that Social Security is going to do that." And Randolph would fume and fizzle, you know, because Byrd would always get the first crack at the press with these announcements. But they were still close friends.

Smock: Of course, with Randolph being on Public Works, that would be an important committee for a lot of these earmarked projects, but from what you're suggesting, he wasn't as aggressive as he could have been perhaps in that area.

Huggins: Yes. I mean, I think as he got older, it just got more difficult for him. And Senator Byrd, because he was in the Senate leadership and then he was able to do a

lot of things, he would get very frustrated with the time it was taking to get things authorized. I mean, Randolph couldn't even get his subcommittee that would authorize a West Virginia project to meet. He couldn't even get them to come together and meet. So Byrd finally said, "Look. I've had enough of this." That's why he went to the floor and did it. Byrd finally would just go and do things, and he would share sometimes the things with Randolph. I mean, he didn't want to do anything that would be spiteful, but there was that little competition between them, which would always make us smile, because we always felt we were doing a good job if we could get the announcement out first. And if they beat us, then they got to feel good about it.

Smock: We've been talking for over an hour now. Did you need to take a little break, or are you—

Huggins: No. I don't know what else I can say about the background without going into some of the other things that I wanted to talk about more in detail in chronological order. I feel Senator Byrd—I've never seen anybody who has come down the road he basically came down from his meager beginnings in poverty and the Depression, in a loveless family, being orphaned, not knowing he had a father till he was sixteen, coming from that kind of childhood and then becoming the statesman he did. And he was so talented in music and art and poetry. It's an amazing success story.

Then to see him end up—he put in the funding to finish the Martin Luther King Memorial because he said, "You know, who else other than me would need to do that? After the things I did in the sixties and the things I said, who else but me should now come to this point where I'm the one who's going to put in the money to finish this memorial?" So I think that just shows you the growth of the man over the years, and there's a journey he made from his meager background in poverty, membership in the Klan, involvement and then running for public office in the forties, to where he ended up.

He was a very respected man by everybody. He said that, "You know, no matter what I do, in the end, in my obituary they will say I was a member of the Klan. You know, that's an albatross I will wear around my neck forever. I tell young people all the time when I go to schools, 'Don't do what I did. Don't get yourself mixed up with groups and associations that can come back to haunt you, because no matter what I do in my life, no matter what I accomplish, no matter what great things I do, they will always say, 'He was a member of the Klan.' You know, there's nothing I can do about it. It was part of the record and I have to live with it.'" But I think if there was anybody who ever transcended that and made a difference, it was Robert C. Byrd.

Smock: I think that's the compelling theme in his story, is that he came from a background and overcame it and changed and learned, continued to learn. I'm amazed, as we go through his stuff here at the Byrd Center, what a student he was, how much he read and studied virtually all the time.

Huggins: Well, that's it. He was somebody—he didn't have traditional hobbies. Playing the fiddle was the only enjoyment he ever really had, and then he got to the point

where he couldn't play anymore. But he would work every day. I mean, his idea was to go to the office and work or work at home, read at home, study at home. Every night he would say, "When I get ready to go to bed, I look myself in the mirror and I say, 'Robert, what have you accomplished today?' I'd better have something to say for myself."

He kept a diary, and one of the reasons why he kept that diary was so that he could write down what he did every day so he wouldn't waste time. He didn't like sports events. He didn't like idle use of time. He believed that he shouldn't be playing golf or shouldn't be doing other recreational things. That wasn't for him. He wanted to work. He did come to enjoy WVU football games, but at one point he said, "All football games are a waste of time. You just run up and down the field. Who cares?" As a boy, he liked playing baseball. He really enjoyed playing baseball.

So it's an interesting story of how he changes his interests over time to writing poetry, fiddle playing, and painting. He said that when he was a boy, his father bought him a box of watercolors and that got him into starting to paint. His father took the train when they lived in McDowell County and went to Bluefield and bought him his first little fiddle and then rode the train back and gave him the fiddle so he could play in the orchestra. I mean, he said that the entire time he was growing up, his mother and father never said, "Robert, we love you," and they never showed affection to him. It was a hard life of very fundamentalist religion, praying. He said he used to hear his mother praying on her knees every night. He said that was the way he grew up.

Later in Congress, when he got ready to go back to Washington after visiting his mother, she'd say, "Robert, don't get above your raisin' when you go back to Washington."

He'd say, "No, Mom, I won't." I mean, that was the kind of sendoff that she would give him. It was not, "Robert, I love you. Robert, be kind," and all that. It was, "Robert, don't get above your raisin'. You be a good boy." And, you know, it's amazing that he could come through that.

To find out when he was sixteen he had a father and brothers and sisters, believing all the time that his aunt and uncle were his parents, and then traveling down to North Carolina to meet his father, who was a carpenter in the woodshops in the furniture factories. I mean, he didn't even know. He didn't know till he ran for Whip and he won, and all the press came out about him beating Kennedy, he didn't know how old he was. His brother wrote him a letter and said, "Robert, I read in the paper where your birth was listed as January of 1918, but you were born in November of 1917." He didn't even know how old he was. So, you know, it's amazing that somebody could come through all that and then turn out to be a loving father and the kind of person he was.

Smock: Did he ever talk much to you about the Klan?

Huggins: A little bit. He talked a little bit about the Klan, and I'd like to cover that when I go into the chronological order of things.

Smock: Okay. That's fine. That's the one chapter that we're going to have to sort of flesh out through interviews like the one we're having, because there's not much in the record. There's nothing that we can point to.

Huggins: One thing, there's a mention of the letter that he wrote to the Mississippi senator [Theodore] Bilbo in 1944. In 1946, he wrote to the Klan's Grand Wizard, saying, "We need the Klan today more than ever before." A friend of mine, Bill Wooten [phonetic], who is an attorney and former state senator in Beckley told me once—I represented him. I did some campaign work for him. One of his clients owns that letter, so if you ever wanted to see the letter, you could probably see it by contacting Bill Wooten.

Smock: Yes, I would like to see that.

Huggins: There was a minister over in Oak Hill. He was a colonel in the West Virginia Army Guard. He was a chaplain and he was a Baptist minister, and he was very close to Senator Byrd. He was somebody that knew Byrd back in the forties, and when we were doing a lot of archiving work on his records, I took the archivist down to meet this guy, because at one point Byrd was going to put all these records over at WVU. So we started going through all the old letters and putting everything on microfilm. So I took this woman down because she wanted to talk to this guy about some of Byrd's background.

Smock: Was her name [Patricia] Aronsson?

Huggins: Yes, Aronsson was her name. That's right.

Anyway, we talked to this minister in Oak Hills, and after she left the room, he told me, he said, "You know, Robert seems to have a little faulty memory on some of his Klan work. He seems to have a convenient memory lapse about some of the things that went on." Well, I didn't really want to touch on that, so I kind of changed the subject and went on to other things. But it was my impression that Byrd was [unclear] the Kleagle, the organizer and later leader or Wizard of the Klan, the head Klan person for that chapter in the Beckley area. Byrd did tell me that he never wore the hood when he wore the uniform. He said, "You know, I was never afraid of people knowing who I was." I can get into his talking about what the Klan meant to him, but he definitely felt, I think, the Klan was important at a stage in his life, and also it was because the Klan probably got him started into politics, because people in the Klan told him that, "Hey, Robert, you've got a real knack, a real good talent for organization. You ought to think about running for politics." Byrd recruited 150 members and was elected Wizard without any opposition.

That became like a light coming on, and immediately he said, "You know, I might think about running for office." Before that time, he had no interest or any thought about ever running for public office. But because some of his Klan friends told him, "You know, you really have a great knack for organization. You ought to think about running

for politics,” that got him away from the Klan and basically into politics. So I think that’s something that’s interesting too. By 1947 or ’48, he was finished with the Klan.

Smock: Yes.

Huggins: Then I think he realized that the Klan was going to be an albatross and that he needed to get away from it. In ’52, it almost cost him his congressional campaign because—I’ll talk more about this, but when he won the primary for Congress, he’d been in the State Senate, and the incumbent congressman from that district, the Sixth District, which included Kanawha, Boone, Logan, Wyoming, and Raleigh Counties. Kanawha County was by far the largest, and I think Doc [E.H.] Hedrick was the congressman. He decided to run for governor in 1952.

So in ’52 there was an opening for Congress, and Byrd knew that there’d be five or six people running from Kanawha County, which would divide up the vote. If he could run from Raleigh County and with support from the other counties, he could offset the divided vote in Kanawha and win the nomination, and it worked.

Well, he was a big surprise. Nobody expected him to win. Some other politicians, along with Senator Neely, who was Catholic, went nuts because they didn’t want some former Klan member being in Congress. They tried to get the governor, who was going out of office then, who was from Fayette County, to call Byrd to Charleston. They had a big meeting where they tried to get Governor Meadows to put pressure on Byrd to resign and let the former congressman get his seat back.

Byrd went down to Charleston for the meeting and told the governor he needed to think about their request. He went back home, and he met with some of these members of his church. I’ll tell you about his church. He had a huge Sunday school class, and he was on the radio, so he was very well known in Raleigh County for his religious teachings through the Crab Orchard Baptist Church men’s Sunday school class and then being in the House of Delegates and in the state senate. So he went back home. He talked to Mrs. Byrd and to some of his friends from his church, and he called up some of the Democratic leaders in those other counties and talked to them, and they all encouraged him to stay in the race. So he called the governor back and told him he wasn’t going to drop out, and he stayed in the race.

Well, in those days, being the Democratic nominee, that was pretty much it. He didn’t have the UMW support, but they weren’t going to be for the Republican. The UMW never supported him till later in his life, even though he had rank-and-file support of the miners. The UMW leadership hated him. So he ended up winning, and once he won, then it became incumbent upon UMW to make him their friend, so then they wanted to support him.

But in the beginning when he was running for the House of Delegates, he’d go down to these rallies. Bill Blizzard was the UMW president [of District 17]. He was a lawyer, and he used to make fun of Byrd because they really didn’t like Byrd. Byrd

would go to a school where they were having a UMW rally, and they'd have a UMW slate of candidates there, and Byrd would go to another room in the school and he'd start playing his fiddle. Well, after a few minutes, people would start walking over to where he was. He'd maybe have a guitar player with him and maybe a banjo player or something. People would come over there, and he'd be singing, and in the end he'd have a bigger crowd in his room and listening to him than was left at the UMW rally. Well, Blizzard used to come over and say, "You know, Byrd was a butcher and he is a fiddle player and he didn't have much of an education and he really wasn't much of a legislator."

And Byrd would say, "You know, that used to hurt me beyond belief. I said right then, I'm going to get a law degree some day. I'm going to have it where nobody could ever criticize me for my education. William Shakespeare worked in his father's butcher shop, and Thomas Jefferson was the town fiddler in Charlottesville. Nothing was wrong with them. Some day I'm going to have a law degree, too, and no one's ever going to be able to criticize me for who I am." And that drove him to get that law degree finally in 1963. He never intended to practice, but he wanted that law degree so that he would be equal with everybody else from an education standpoint.

Byrd always felt an inferiority chip on his shoulder. He always felt like, I think, that he was always being compared to other people who had Ivy League educations, who came from privileged families, and he was a poor boy from the hills of West Virginia with a poor education, and I think it always bothered him. He was never at home in the diplomatic receptions and White House dinners and all the fancy parties in Washington. He hated these things because he always felt like, I think, he was being looked at. Unless it was a Senate function or something that he had to do as Majority Leader, he wouldn't go. He hated formal affairs, he said as soon as he stepped down as Majority Leader, he would never wear a tux again, and he didn't. He never wore a tux after he stepped down as majority leader.

He always felt like, I think, that he was being compared to society types and that he always felt uneasy at these parties and dinners, because people would always say, "That's Senator Byrd, you know, from West Virginia," and he always felt looked down upon. I think he unfairly compared himself to other high government officials and he viewed himself as being seen as inferior, and that's why he drove himself so hard to be the best he could be. He would say to me—I think he said to me a hundred times, "Jim, do you ever think I'm going to amount to something?"

I'd say, "Senator Byrd, you're already something. You're a great man already, Senator Byrd."

He'd say, "Yes, but do you think when my career's over with, people are going to remember me?"

I'd say, "Senator Byrd, you're already a legend in your own lifetime."

But he continued to ask those questions. “Do you think people are going to think I’ve done anything? Do you think people are going to remember me?” I mean, those self-doubts he always had.

Smock: I think that those kinds of things often drive people to perform, and there’s plenty of evidence that that certainly worked in his case.

Huggins: That’s right. That’s right.

I’m getting a little tired, Ray.

Smock: Yes, well, you’ve been at it a long time, and this has been very, very good, Jim. I really do appreciate this chance to do this ahead of time. So I’m going to come down on November second. I’m going to try to see you on the morning maybe around ten o’clock or so on—

Huggins: That would be fine.

Smock: —on Thursday, November 3.

Huggins: Okay.

Smock: I got your address, I can just probably put that in my navigator, and—

Huggins: Well, if you want, you just call before you come, and I’ll have my son give you the directions here and kind of go over the directions you have to make sure you have the closest way.

Smock: Okay. I’ll be staying in St. Petersburg somewhere, I think at the big Marriott Resort or something.

Huggins: Okay. Well, you’re only an hour away. Just drive across the Bay Bridge and you’re right here, so it’s very close.

Smock: I’m somewhat familiar with the area. So I’ll look forward to seeing you shortly, and then we will proceed like you suggest and we’ll sort of take things chronologically and work through Byrd’s life as you know it and heard it from him.

Huggins: Right. So you think that what I’m saying is useful?

Smock: Oh, absolutely.

Huggins: Okay. That’s great. I thought I’d mention to you, I don’t know what your mandate is from the Byrd Center, but, you know, a couple things that come to mind. One is Byrd’s work on the Panama Canal Treaty. He is really the reason they passed, and that’s a great foreign policy win. You know what I mean? There are some things you might think about doing from the research standpoint that would document that significant foreign policy event in our history and be a resource for the Panama Canal Treaty and Senator Byrd’s role. I can talk about some of these things, but I thought about

a couple of things that Byrd was instrumental in that might give you some more things to look at.

Smock: Absolutely those are the kinds of things that we will do, and we'll be doing a lot more of these interviews with a lot of people, some of whom he worked with on the treaty. We'll interview former members, staff members.

Huggins: I'll mention Perry Woofter. You need to see Perry before he dies.

Smock: Yes, I'm going to. I've got him on my short list of people to call.

Huggins: Great, great.

Smock: I've got his phone number. Well, this has been very good, Jim, and we'll cut it off now and I'll look forward to seeing you first week in November.

Huggins: Yes. I've enjoyed doing this and I look forward to seeing you. I should also mention Connie, my wife, worked for Byrd. Also, my stepson Jeremy Hawk was a page during the 1998 summer session. Further, my daughter Jennifer was an intern in Byrd's office in 2004.

Smock: All right. Thank you much.

Huggins: Right. Right. Bye-bye.

Smock: Bye now.

Interview #2
Thursday, November 3, 2011

Huggins: What I'd like to do is finish up talking a little bit about my background, which I don't think we finished the last time. Again, my name is James Bernard Huggins. My father was Bernard A. Huggins. My mother was Evelyn Bell Wiblin Huggins.

My father came from Waverly in Wood County. His family originally came out of Greene County, Pennsylvania down before the Civil War. His grandfather, John Huggins, was in the Civil War and fought on the Union side. My mother's family came from Frozen Camp in Jackson County. She was a Wiblin, but she was orphaned at the age of one or two. Her mother died in the influenza epidemic of 1918, and so she was raised by her aunt and uncle, whose names were Oaf and Elphia Parsons. He was a schoolteacher in Ripley, and so she was raised in Jackson County, West Virginia. [*The Parsons' home later in Ripley was next door to the Robert Goodwin family. Robert Goodwin, Esq. had several very successful sons, including attorneys Tom, a highly noted American corporate counsel; Joe Bob, a US federal judge; and Steven, who chaired WVU's Board of Governors. His grandsons included US Senator Carter Goodwin and US Attorney Booth Goodwin.*]

I was first generation to go to college of my family, and I started out in Parkersburg at the West Virginia University branch, which later became Parkersburg Community College and then WVU at Parkersburg. Then after two years, got my AA degree there, and then went on to Morgantown to WVU, where I graduated with a BA degree in political science.

Then later I took some Internet courses through the University of Wexford in Switzerland and got my PhD in international business, developing a model for doing business with China using American small businesses who had information technology expertise and plugging them into Chinese opportunities, because in China twenty years ago they didn't have the expertise in small business that we did, so they needed a lot of that expertise.

I developed a program with the West Virginia High Technology Consortium located in Fairmont, and we did a deal with the city of Tianjin, China, and developed a model. It worked out well for a while, but then I got sick and ended up after surgery with MRSA, a very serious infection from not having, I guess, clean tools or whatever, and almost died. I spent almost three years recovering, with a lot of antibiotics, and that pretty much ended my career and is the reason why I'm here in Florida and that I'm not able to walk now. So I'm living with my sons and my wife, and my wife is temporarily visiting

some relatives in Arizona this week. But anyway, I've been in Florida then. I used to split my time between Washington, DC and Florida, and then once I got sick, I had to stay here.

But that's basically my educational background, and I think that pretty much finishes up my personal history.

Smock: What was the lobbying firm that you worked for?

Huggins: When I first left Senator Byrd, I went with Linton, Miels, Reisler, and Cottone. Now, Mel Cottone was from West Virginia. He was from Logan County, and he had been an advance man in the John F. Kennedy election. He was a very young man, and they hired him in 1959 to do some advance work for Kennedy.

He then became familiar with Kenny O'Donnell, who later became Kennedy's chief of staff, and a lot of the Kennedy people, and when Kennedy won, they gave him a job in Washington. Then he got involved later with Bobby Kennedy when Kennedy was running for President. It's a sad story. He was going to be the deputy campaign manager for JFK under Kenny O'Donnell in 1964, and, of course, Kennedy was assassinated in '63, so then he went to work for Bobby Kennedy when Kennedy ran for President in '68, and then Kennedy got assassinated in '68. [*Mel had also dated Mary Jo Kopechne at one time. She died later in Senator Ted Kennedy's car at Chappaquiddick.*]

So Mel had been involved with the Kennedy family and in the various campaigns, and so he convinced me in 1992, '93 that, you know, I'd been working for almost twenty years in Washington for Senator Byrd, that it's kind of time to go out on my own, and if I was ever going to start my own business, it was better to do it while Senator Byrd was still involved in politics rather than to wait till something happened, and then I wouldn't be able to really use him to help in any way, and so I decided to do that.

After a year or two of learning the business from that firm, the owner of the firm, Ron Linton, decided to sell out and retire. So Mel Cottone and I went out on our own and started Cottone & Huggins, and that's how I started my own consulting firm, and I was very successful for ten years or so until I got sick. We had a firm in Washington, and I had several clients who were private industries, businesses, defense contractors, universities, nonprofits. I had a whole gamut of clients and did very well.

Smock: Most of those were in West Virginia?

Huggins: It was mixed. I had the city of Homestead, in South Dade County, Florida. I had the University of Tennessee, I had Marshall University, WVU, I had several defense contractors, so it was a mixed bag between West Virginia and other places.

So for somebody who didn't have a lot of contacts previously, usually to get into this business you have a family involved or you're a lawyer, you know, or you have some

means of which that you can use. I didn't. I really made my own contacts and developed my own businesses. It was one of those real success stories of starting out without really anything that I could use to develop the client base other than just my hard work. And then I made an awful lot of friends working for Senator Byrd, so a lot of the companies that I had worked with in his office I was able to go to them, and they were very happy to hire me because of my expertise. As I said to you earlier, I developed about \$500 million worth of business working for Senator Byrd, which he funded those projects, and so out of those companies a lot of them felt that I could help them with getting earmarks and developing business, which I was able to do a lot of good work in that area for many years.

Smock: You mentioned in the earlier interview that when you dealt with Senator Byrd's office as a lobbyist that you didn't bring this up directly with Byrd.

Huggins: That's right.

Smock: Could you describe how that process worked?

Huggins: Sure. Sure. He had staff in his office that were project staff, which was a person like I had been and if you have a business and you're interested in developing a project or approaching an agency, you would go in and meet with the staff first, you would brief the staff on what you had an interest in doing, and then they would decide whether or not your idea was good enough to take to Senator Byrd.

Then if they decided it was worthy, then they would approach Senator Byrd with the idea, and then he would make a decision whether or not it was something he wanted to do. And if it was something he wanted to do, he would then approach the appropriations staff and say, "Okay, I want you to go follow up on this." So it was my job when I worked for him for the last ten years was basically to develop the projects that I felt were of merit and then take those to him, and then he would make the final decision on whether to proceed. So that's what I did basically with his staff.

When I left, they replaced me with other people, and then I would go to those people and say, "I have a client," like Marshall University, "and they're wanting to develop the Byrd Institute," which I developed as a project when I worked for him, "and they're wanting to get additional funding for this other area that they're interested in with the Department of Defense. Is this something Senator Byrd would be interested in doing?" And then they would go to Senator Byrd with this idea, and if he wanted to do it, then they would develop the project and he would seek the funding for it. That's the way we worked it.

But I felt that my relationship with Byrd was something very personal, and I didn't want to talk to him directly about the projects. A lot of staff people who worked for him and later went on to their own consulting firms, people who had been in high-ranking

positions in the Senate like, for instance, Joe Stewart and Pat Griffin—Joe Stewart had been Secretary of the Senate, Pat Griffin had been Secretary of the Minority—they started a firm which is still in existence. But I know that Pat Griffin now is teaching, I think at American University, and I think Stewart’s pretty much retired. But they would meet with Senator Byrd and talk about projects. I didn’t feel like I wanted to do that. It was a personal choice, and I always felt more like I wanted to discuss the project with the staff, let them go to Senator Byrd through their filtering process, and then let them decide what to do.

Many times Senator Byrd, when I was talking with him on the phone, he would say, “Jimmy, I want to help you. Tell me what you’re doing. Let me know how I can help you.”

And I’d always say, “Senator Byrd, I would really rather just discuss this with your staff and let them talk to you about it. If you want to ask them, that’s fine, but I would rather not be a personal conduit to you. I feel like I’m serving my clients very well by dealing with your staff, and I would just really rather not discuss this with you personally,” because I felt that allowed me to do things with him like driving him and other things that might be a problem if I was personally discussing projects with him. So it seemed that his staff accepted it well, and we had no problems. Not once was there ever a complaint issued or any ethics issues raised while I was doing this, and I was very proud that I kept myself out of any gray areas, I felt.

Smock: Okay. I think that has covered the things that we need to talk about there. So now let’s switch and talk about what you know and what you learned from Senator Byrd in your years of contact with him and all the years that you had intimate conversations with him as you drove him around and dealt with him socially and other ways. You can start that wherever you want. If we go chronologically, that would be nice. Tell me at first stories that you know about when he was a young man growing up.

Huggins: Sure. We might be able to break this up into three or four areas. I’d say one would be his youth; maybe two would be his early career up through the West Virginia Senate; maybe three would be his congressional career; and then maybe four would be his Senate career. I think those four areas would be good ways of dividing up his career so that I could kind of focus on those specific periods.

Then maybe after this is over with, maybe we could talk about this, maybe discuss some political figures that he has dealt with over the years and his relationships with them. I feel if this is a true historical record, then there should be, I think, a true view of his relationships with some of these figures that I personally was there to witness his discussions with and their relationships that I think would be good for historians who might want to look back on this period and get some sense of how these people all got along.

I once asked Senator Byrd, in his writing of books, if he ever thought about writing a book about these historical figures, people that he knew through his life, and he said that he didn't really want to do that because, for instance, dealing with M.M. Neely, who had been involved with trying to get him off the congressional ticket in 1952 when he first won the nomination for Congress, and Neely, because of Byrd's Klan membership, Neely was very much opposed to Byrd being the nominee. He told me that if he wrote what he really felt about Neely, Neely's grandson, Richard Neely, was a politician during this time, was running for the State Supreme Court, and was very favorable to Senator Byrd, and Byrd felt that if he did a book like that and he gave his true views of a lot of these people, it might offend their relatives who were still politically active, and it wouldn't be a smart thing to do for him to write a book like that, even if he would put a time limit on it, so he just didn't feel like doing it. But I could understand why he would feel that way, and Richard Neely was a big supporter of Senator Byrd's, but I don't think Richard really understood the part his grandfather had played in trying to get Senator Byrd off the ticket in '52. But those are some of the things I think that need to be part of the record.

Smock: Absolutely.

Huggins: But anyway, I can start out by saying that I really feel Senator Byrd came from a very difficult childhood, having lost his mother at a very early age in the influenza epidemic of 1918. He was sent to live with his aunt and uncle in West Virginia, his mother's sister, and he never knew that he was adopted till he was around fifteen or sixteen years old. He believed that the aunt and uncle he lived with were his real parents. They were very strict, religious people, and they weren't people who, from what he said, were very affectionate. They certainly cared a lot for him, for taking him, but he said he never received a lot of love as a child. He never remembered being told, "Robert, I love you," as a child.

So he grew up in dire poverty during the Depression, and he grew up in circumstances that were very, very difficult for anybody, much less somebody who worked for a father who went from a different business to business. His dad worked for a while for the Bluefield Brewery Company in Bluefield, and then he moved over to McDowell County, where he worked in the mines. Then he moved back to Mercer County, where he worked in the mines. Then he moved to Raleigh County, Stotesbury, where Byrd actually went to high school and where he was the valedictorian of his high school graduating class. That's where he met Erma Byrd, his future wife, and they became sweethearts in high school.

So, growing up, he had a very difficult childhood. I think he was deprived is to say the least, and I think it left a mark on him that he never fully got over. I think later on he always felt like there was an inferiority chip on his shoulder, that when he came to Washington and he served in Congress and then later in the Senate, he always felt like that he wasn't quite as equal as the other members. He thought, of course, he was as

smart as they were, but many of them came from Ivy League schools. They came from privileged backgrounds. Even a lot of the southerners came from the oldest aristocracy of the South, and that was something that was completely foreign to Robert C. Byrd. So I think that was one of the reasons why he never felt at ease in a lot of formal settings like diplomatic receptions, White House dinners.

I think he always felt people looked down on him because he was a hillbilly from the mountains of West Virginia. He didn't go to Harvard. He didn't have the pedigree that many of them had. He said that when he was running for the House of Delegates, he ran into this man whose name was Bill Blizzard. He was the president of the district UMW. Blizzard was a lawyer, and he always tried to make fun of Senator Byrd by calling him a fiddler and a butcher and saying he didn't have a complete education. And Byrd said that at that point if he ever got to Congress, he was going to go to law school not because he ever wanted to practice, but he wanted to have a legal education so that no one could have any better education than he, they couldn't look down on him academically, and then he felt like he would be more equal, I think, in his background. And I think that's what drove him to go to all these colleges. He said his favorite college instructor was Professor Evelyn Harris of Morris Harvey College. He said she really inspired him. She was a political science teacher.

He had over a hundred hours of almost a four-point average, and he went to several colleges in West Virginia as he was in the legislature. He went to Concord State College; he went to Morris Harvey College; Beckley College; Marshall University; West Virginia Tech. And he would take different programs, different subjects. At one point when he went to Marshall, I think he had twenty-two hours in one semester of a four-point average. That's one of the reasons Marshall awarded him a Bachelor of Arts degree without him completely earning the degree. They felt that with so many hours, he had almost enough hours for the bachelor's degree from the different colleges that he went to, and with his lifetime of experience and his law degree later, they felt that he deserved it. So Marshall University, after he had been awarded his law degree in '63, I believe in the early 2000s awarded him a regular bachelor's of arts degree from Marshall University, and he was very proud of that degree since he'd never earned one before he went to law school.

There's an interesting story, which I'll tell you right now, about how he got the law degree. When he came to Washington, he went down to George Washington University to the dean of the law school, and he said he was recently elected to Congress and he was very interested in attending law school. The dean said to him, "Well, you don't have an undergraduate degree, and we have certain criteria here for going to law school, and we just can't admit you, even though I'm sure you would do well. But I know the dean of the law school at American University. I'll call him up and talk to him. He might be able to do something for you that I couldn't do for you."

So Senator Byrd said, "Fine."

So the dean of the law school at GW had made an appointment for him to go see the dean of the law school at American University, so he went over there and he talked to him. He said, "Well, we have the same criteria here as GW does, but, you know, I might be able to do something to help you. If we would give you an admittance to our law school on probation and if you could maintain a three-point average, if you can do that and show us that you can do the work, we will admit you then to the full-time law school. And if you can finish the law school requirements with a three-point average—now, our normal students only need a two-point average, but if you can maintain and graduate with a three-point average, then I will recommend to the board that you be given your law degree."

And Senator Byrd said, "Okay, it's a deal." So he was admitted to the law school under that basis.

Being in Congress, he could only go to night school every other year because every even year he'd have to run for reelection. So he could only go the odd years until he got into the Senate. Then when he got elected to the Senate in '58, he could then go full-time because he didn't need to run again for six years. And that's how he completed the degree in 1963 and graduated. So in the House, he would go to night school every other year. After 1959, he finished up by going each year until he completed his work.

Senator Byrd never learned to drive until 1950. The Byrds never had a car until he was in the legislature. Joe Rahall, who was Nick Joe Rahall's father, the congressman now from the Third District, was a friend of the Byrds. Joe Rahall was kind of a wannabe protégé type. He had money that he had made and some that he had inherited from his father, who had come from Lebanon and he had been a peddler in the coal mining fields. He had a cart, and he would go from mining camp to mining camp, peddling pots and pans and knives and linens and things like that, and made a significant amount of money. He then was able to buy a department store. He started a radio station. He bought a hotel, I think. And later on, as his sons, Joe and his brother, grew up, they got more radio stations and they bought a television station in Petersburg. So they had quite a broadcasting house of stations and different stores. Nick learned from this experience and has his own radio station today in addition to being a veteran congressman.

So Joe Rahall liked the idea of being close to politicians, so when he saw Senator Byrd come along, who seemed to have a lot of talent, he volunteered to drive Senator Byrd around to some of his functions before the Byrds had a car, and so Joe Rahall would drive Senator Byrd to these rallies and different functions in the forties.

Then when Senator Byrd got elected to the legislature, Mrs. Byrd learned how to drive, and they bought a used car and she would drive him. Then finally in 1950, when Senator Byrd got elected to the Senate, to the West Virginia Senate, then he learned how to drive. But he was a maniac at driving, let me tell you. He was the kind of guy that—I always would prefer to drive when we were together because he would drive on the

shoulder. He was kind of erratic at driving. He did have an accident very late in life, which was his fault. He ran into a truck in front of him that had stopped for an unknown reason ahead of a green light on Route 7 near Reston, Virginia.

Smock: We've got the copy of the ticket that he got.

Huggins: It was real funny because at first he claimed congressional immunity and he got out of it. Then after he reflected on it, he thought he didn't want to do that because that was a bad thing, he thought. So he went back and had the officer give him another ticket, I guess, and then went to court. He pleaded "no contest" and the judge said, "You're guilty," but Byrd didn't say he was guilty. Anyway, he paid the ticket and that was the end of it. But he, on his own, went back and did the right thing. He could have basically walked away from it by claiming congressional immunity, but he decided that politically that wouldn't look very good, although many members did it. During rush hour, some members of the Senate would drive in the rush-hour lanes which were reserved for commuters, and get tickets and then use congressional immunity to get out of them. But Senator Byrd never did anything like that.

I'd say through his whole life he only got one speeding ticket. That was back when he was in the House, and he got that in Virginia. He said that he was driving back to Washington around Luray, Virginia, and he was going about 80 on a real straight stretch of highway about 2:00 AM and a Virginia state patrolman pulled him over and gave him a ticket. And Byrd said, "Are there any more of you around here?"

And the state policeman said, "No, I'm the only one on this side of the mountain."

He said, "Okay, because I'm going to be doing 80 the rest of the way to Washington."

And the cop said, "That's okay, because I'm going south." [laughter]

So Senator Byrd said, "Good evening," and took off.

But Senator Byrd was a funny guy, but he was always very safe, and he never wanted me to do anything when I drove him that would ever be harmful or dangerous, and he was always very much worried about people seeing him do things that would be construed as breaking the law. Even if he had a police escort, he didn't like the use of sirens and he didn't like speeding because he always felt that it would offend somebody who saw a politician doing something like this. So he had a code about him that was, I think, very good in this day and age for somebody who had that kind of power and could have done anything he wanted basically, but still was very much concerned about what the public thought.

But anyway, back to his childhood. I think that growing up in that childhood, even at an early age, he said his father bought him a watercolor set which he enjoyed. He

started painting. He later gave several in the office—and you probably have one in your museum—a copy of one of his paintings, which was very good for somebody who wasn't professionally trained. He was an extremely talented young boy in music. He played the violin. He played the bass drum in the band. He had the talent of writing poetry, which later he wrote many poems. He had a memory unlike anybody I've ever seen as far as remembering poems. He could recite poetry at different speaking events from memory that was mind-boggling, very long poems. He had a mind that—it was the best mind I have ever seen.

He once said if he'd ever been motivated by greed, he could have been a very wealthy man, but he was never motivated by money. He was motivated by public service, and that's what made him tick, and that's why every night he would assess what he had been able to do that day for West Virginia. He used to say, "Every night I look in the mirror, and I'd say, 'Well, Robert, what have you accomplished today?'" That's how driven the man was.

He didn't have normal hobbies. I'd say that playing the fiddle was his one true way to let himself relax. He loved playing the fiddle, and then, unfortunately, with his growing problems, medical problems, he got to the point where he couldn't really play the fiddle any longer. With the tremor he had in his right hand and right arm, it got to the point where he could hardly hold the arm still late in the evenings.

He didn't like taking the medicine because he said that the medicine affected him. I guess the medicine kind of slowed down his metabolism, and he felt like that might have something to do with not being able to think clearly. So I think he decided to put up with the problems of the ailment rather than take all the medication that was available.

It really got to bother him, because later in life when we'd go out to eat and people would be around him and they could see his hand was shaking, I think he would become very nervous about people seeing him in that condition and feel like that maybe there was something more serious wrong with him than there really was, and he'd have his staff get his food. He didn't like to be seen by strangers eating late in the evenings when his hands started to shake. He felt, I think, that that looked very bad, and so we always tried to protect him from having strangers see him in that condition. As I said, it had nothing to do with his mind and his thinking and his ability to perform; it just didn't look good.

But as far as his mind, I have never seen anybody with a mind like his until the time that I left him, which was when he was in his late eighties. Then I was away from him for ten years. I was amazed at somebody who was in that age group who could still think as well as he did and still perform as well. Up until the last time I saw him when I spoke to him, it was amazing that even at ninety-two he was as clear, because we talked about events that had happened years earlier, and he was asking me about different events.

One of the things that we enjoyed doing, when I called him he'd say, "Well, Jim, let's go back down to McDowell County. It's Veterans Day weekend and we're going for the parade. Who are we going to see?"

And I'd say, "We'll see Chester Matney. We're going to see Colonel Ballard."

"Oh, yeah, Chester! What did Chester do?"

"Chester owned a junkyard."

"Oh, that's right. And Colonel Ballard?"

I said, "Yeah, he was the lawyer."

"Oh, that's right, Colonel Ballard. Now, he won that big law case."

I mean, it was amazing that he could remember so many things about these people. Most of them were dead, but he loved to talk about these old events and talk about people that he'd known. I think he really missed that. I think in the later years of his life he missed going to these events, because it seemed like to get him to leave Washington was kind of difficult, but once we got him out of Washington, it was like he took off his skin and he became an entirely different person. He loved West Virginia. He loved the people. Then we couldn't get him to go home.

So it was like we got ready for these trips and he'd go, "Oh, I don't like to leave Erma." Mrs. Byrd didn't like to be by herself. She was deathly afraid of staying overnight by herself, and she would usually get one of the grandchildren to go stay with her if he had to be away for two or three days. So he was so committed to her, and later in life when she got ill, then he really didn't like to be away. And so he would always try to make it where we would be no more than one night away or he had me drive half a night to get back, so even if he got back a two or three in the morning, she would be up waiting for him having his dinner ready when he got back. But he was that committed to really wanting to go home.

But as I said earlier, when he got to West Virginia he just became a totally different person. He loved West Virginians. He loved going back to the coal field roots where he'd grown up and talking to the people, especially a lot of his old friends. It really reinvigorated him and gave him, I think, a whole new sense of what his purpose was. I mean, he never forgot that he was there to represent the coal mining families of southern West Virginia. That's who he really cared about.

You look at all the politicians. He was one of the few people that the companies and later the union officials and the actual coal miners all could collectively say was 100 percent for them, and when he talked to them about the problems of coal mining, especially later when the environmental concerns got greater and greater, they listened to

him because they knew he was telling them the truth and they knew he was getting them the best deal he could get out of the committees. And when he said, "Look, we're going to have to face the fact that we can't do as much as we used to. The coal mining companies are going to have to start buying these billion-dollar stacks to clean coal," they knew it was the truth, that the environmentalist lobby was getting stronger, and it was just not feasible to do a lot of the burning of coal that was once done to the degree it was, without cleaning up that pollution. There's no Robert C. Byrd today that was in the position he was in to help the coal mining industry, and I think they're going to suffer in the future. You are seeing it today with the Obama administration.

Smock: Let me interrupt you, Jim. When you were talking about him early on, I know his adoptive father did work in the coal mines. Did Byrd work in the coal mines?

Huggins: No. Senator Byrd never worked in the coal mines. He said he never had any interest in going in the coal mines. In each mine they had a mine rescue group, and he did get trained at one point to be a part of a mine rescuing group for people who just would help bring people out of the mines and give them Red Cross-type treatment until the ambulances could get there and that sort of thing. So he did do a little bit of that, but he said he had no interest in ever going in the mine himself. He wanted to get an education.

He did work in the mine stores. He learned to cut meat from a manual. He first started out working as a produce salesman in one of the mining stores, and he saw that the meat cutters made more money and they seemed to have a better job, so he got one of the manuals and he said he taught himself how to cut meat from reading the manual, and then got started as an apprentice, and then started cutting meat.

So he worked in several of the company stores, and then later went to work for the Carolina Supermarket in Crab Orchard. Then after he worked in the Carolina Supermarket, when he got into the legislature, he and Mrs. Byrd owned their own little store in Sophia, and they owned that store until he got elected to Congress, and then gave it up and moved to Washington.

He said he lost a lot of money because they had a couple of big strikes, and he offered credit to the miners, and he said he never really got paid back, but he always felt very compelled to be compassionate, and that was one of the reasons why the miners always liked Senator Byrd. Even though the UMW didn't endorse him, the miners knew how nice he had been in offering credit and in giving them free things. So he always got a big vote out of the coal mining families because he had a very good reputation with them working in the store.

So, anyway, growing up, I think that he saw how difficult things were in the Depression, and he valued an education, but it was impossible for him, when he first graduated, to go to college, so he married Mrs. Byrd and they started working. He first

started working at a gas station in Helen, and he used to have to catch a ride in the bread truck early in the morning from Stotesbury down to Helen, where he worked in this gas station and grill. That was his first job, and then later he got a job in the company store. He said that he and Mrs. Byrd had a second-story apartment and they had an old orange crate in the back in the kitchen window as a refrigerator, and they put their milk and their fruit and stuff, meats, in the wintertime out in this orange crate, and that was their refrigerator until they could afford a regular icebox when he got more salary.

So they started out in pretty poor conditions, but he was a great saver. He probably had the first dollar that he ever made. He was somebody who believed in saving. And as I said to you, Mrs. Byrd used to make his lunch every day, even in the Senate, and he would bring his lunch into the office with the milk in a Ball jar.

When he was in law school, Mrs. Byrd would come and pick him up and take him to law school for evening class, and she would bring his dinner in a paper bag, and he would eat in the car on the way to the evening class, like a meatloaf sandwich or a glass of milk or whatever. So she would fix him his dinner in a paper bag, and then she would go back when his night-school class was over and pick him up and then drive him home.

In those days they lived in Arlington, Virginia, near Fort Myers, and so it was pretty close to Washington, and she would drive him a lot. Then later when he got to the Senate, he would drive himself as he got older. Then when he started up into leadership, when he got elected as Majority Whip, he got a driver provided by the Senate. So from that point on till his death, he had a driver provided by the Senate. As Whip and then as Majority Leader, then as President Pro Tem and as Chairman of Appropriations, he always had a driver provided, so that made it a lot easier on him than where he had someone that could drive him around.

But back to his youth, I think that growing up in those conditions left a mark on him for the rest of his life that having that kind of poverty and having that feeling of not even knowing that he had a father till he was sixteen, and then finding out that his aunt and uncle weren't his real parents, he then made a trip to North Carolina to meet his father, and then he found out he had brothers and sisters, that had to leave a mark on him about who he was and the kind of person he was. I think that all his life he probably questioned himself. He used to ask me over and over again, "Jim, you ever think I'm going to amount to anything?" If he asked me that once, he asked me that 150 times. And, "Jim, do you think that people are ever going to remember me?"

And I'd always say, "Senator Byrd, you know, you're already a legend in your own time. You're the Majority Leader of the Senate. Just think how many people have held this position in the history of our country."

But it seemed like he always continued to want to measure himself with others, to make sure that he felt like he was adequate, that he measured up to other people, and I

think that's why he drove himself to the extent he did, was that he never felt that he was really that equal.

Everybody around him would just be completely blown away by his ability and his mind, but he was the last one, I think, to really recognize his greatness. And I hope that out of all this, people can see what a phenomenal public official he really was. Hell, I really believe he was in the same caliber as our founding fathers. I think when you look at what he did and the things he accomplished and his view of the Constitution, I think he was of that stature, that he was one of the last of that group, of those people who were of that greatness. I don't think we have those types of people today. I don't see the public officials today having that caliber that he did and the Everett Dirksens and the Lyndon Johnsons, the John F. Kennedys. I don't see that type of greatness today.

Smock: You mentioned his real family that he discovered later.

Huggins: Yes. His name was Cornelius Calvin Sale, Jr., and he used to say, "If I was still Cornelius Sale, they'd say I was 'Senator for Sale' or they'd call me Corny, Corny Sale. So," he said, "I'm sure glad my name is Byrd.

Smock: Did he ever have any significant contact with his real siblings and his father after that?

Huggins: Well, his father died, I believe, when he was in his twenties or thirties. I don't remember him ever talking about his father too much after his twenties or thirties. Now, his brothers and sisters he had contact with for many years. He had a sister that lived in Pennsylvania, and he kept in touch with her, and he had a brother that lived in North Carolina—two brothers. One died, I think when I worked there, and another one that died later on, and he talked with them because it was one of his brothers that actually told him how old he was. When he ran against Senator Kennedy for Majority Whip and all the news stories came out, it listed his age as January 1918 as his birthday, and his brother wrote to him and said, "Robert, you were born in November of 1917." So he didn't know till then how old he was, but his brother told him that he—and then sent him a copy of his birth certificate from the courthouse. He was born in North Wilkesboro, North Carolina.

He did have contact with his brothers and his sister. He may have had two sisters, I'm not sure, but the one in Pennsylvania he did have contact with. I know that it wasn't a real close connection, but they did correspond and talk, and she did visit on a couple of occasions.

Smock: One of the things that came up at Senator Byrd's funeral, I believe it was a niece who claimed that Senator Byrd had dyslexia. Did you ever—

Huggins: I never heard any of that. You know, there was a niece that got in trouble that worked for him in the Senate, and who got involved with stealing some post office funds and she had to repay the money. It was Mrs. Byrd's niece, I believe, and it was a very embarrassing situation. Of course he had no knowledge of it, and he had only tried to befriend her.

But nobody I had ever talked with who knew him as a child—there was a lady in Spanishburg [WV] who went to school with him and who was quite friendly with him, and in talking with them and other people he knew, no one ever mentioned that he'd been anything other than extremely bright. He used to say that he was the bright one in the class, but it was a small class! He was the one who always got all the As. And so I never heard of any problems like that. It would be hard for anyone like that to know that because they weren't around him as a child. Mrs. Byrd never mentioned it and I never heard it from any of his friends who knew him as a child, because I said I knew a couple of them in Spanishburg who knew him in primary school and no one ever mentioned that.

I think we've pretty much finished up to the point where he's a young man.

Smock: Let me ask you one question. This is simply something that we have to deal with at the office. In Senator Byrd's office in the Hart Building was a school desk, a fold-up seat. Basically it looks like it was from an old one- or two-room schoolhouse. It was a gift of the staff to Senator Byrd back in the 1980s. He had it there prominently next to his desk, but we don't know anything about that desk or where it came from. Do you know anything about that?

Huggins: It must have been after—well, it wasn't in the eighties. I was there from '73 to '92, and it didn't happen while I was there, so it had to come after '93. I do remember someone finding, I think, one of these desks in one of the old schools and giving it to him, but I think that's basically how he got it. I don't know that it came from one of the schools that he had attended. Most of those were destroyed.

Now, I did visit when he lived outside Spanishburg up—I'm trying to remember the name of the place. It was a creek. I don't remember the exact name of the place, but you could probably find it, but it was like almost a mile or so up this creek. It was a gravel road off the two-lane highway near Spanishburg. I believe it was Camp Creek. I've heard him talk about the name of this place many times. We went up there once, and the old house where he lived had basically fallen down, but the base of it was still there and he'd walk in and look around. They had a well outside and a fresh spring, and he said he used to lay down on his stomach in the summertime when it was real cool and drink out of the spring.

In that location when his father worked in the coal camps around there, they had kerosene lamps. You studied by kerosene lamp. There was a two-room schoolhouse up on the mountain that he attended, and that's where he said he got one of the best educations

in his life from the teachers in that schoolhouse. Then later he rode, I think, the school bus into Spanishburg, where he attended school. Then they moved from there to Stotesbury, to where he finished up school. That's when his father worked in the mines there. In the house at Camp Creek they had a wall telephone and Byrd said his friends would call him and everyone on the party line would listen to everyone talking on the phone line.

Smock: Did he talk much about going to church when he was a youngster?

Huggins: Yes. Well, his mother and father were very religious. He used to say he heard his mother pray many a times in the next room. Even later after his father had passed away, he would go home in the early fifties and he would stay with his mother in Crab Orchard overnight. He could hear her praying in the next room on her knees. And when he'd leave, she'd always say, "Robert, now go and be a good boy, and remember never get above your raisin'." He said she'd never say, "Robert, I love you." Those kind of things, those terms of affection were never used very much, and that's one of the things I think that he missed as a young boy and he missed growing up, is that we're all used to telling our children, "We love you," and giving them hugs and everything. I don't think he got any of that as a kid, and I think that he really missed, growing up, the affection of the family.

I think that later on he did a very good job, I think, in adjusting to life, and I think that's one of the reasons why he and Mrs. Byrd were so close, was that she was the first person to give him that kind of affection that he needed, and that's why he loved her so much. In the Senate many of his colleagues would say his dear beloved Erma, who's passed away or whatever it was, that he had a reputation. Their affection for each other was legendary in the Senate for their relationship of having been married sixty years or sixty-five years, whatever it was.

I mean, you had many senators who were divorced once or twice, and here he was in a relationship that had that many years together. I think that was quite a thing of awe for politicians to see today, is somebody who can have a marriage. And I'm sure it wasn't perfect, but, you know, they made it work. They were brought up in a different time. When things got rough, you didn't just run out and get a divorce; you made it work. You stuck together. And I think that over time their love for each other got stronger and greater, and they absolutely, I can tell you, loved each other. There is no doubt, from being around them, to see that they completely did have a love affair.

I'll tell you another thing is that she cracked the whip, too, you know, because when you worked for Senator Byrd, he was a tough guy. I mean, he ran a very disciplined office, and he in his younger days, was a disciplinarian and a tough guy to be around. But when we'd be in the car and he'd start talking and she'd get upset about something, she'd say, "Robert, I'm going to say this," and he'd shut up and she'd say her piece and he didn't say anything. I would know, well, it's time to be quiet now. She knew exactly how

to pull him in. It was very interesting, because everybody thought that he was the big power and he was the guy who had all the say, but I think that she ruled the roost pretty well in the house.

I think that Mrs. Byrd, you know, she was a very quiet, elegant lady. She didn't like public speaking. I know that when the [West Virginia Society of Washington] made her the Daughter of the Year, and later when she was the sponsor of the USS *West Virginia* submarine, she had to go give speeches and she was scared to death. We didn't know whether we could get her through it or not, because she just hated to speak publicly, but she did get through it. She was a complete introvert. She didn't like public occasions. She would go with him to certain events, but she didn't like any of the public limelight being on her.

In these events when she had to get up before a large group, it was very difficult, but she did it, and he was so proud of her for doing that, and he would always say to us, "I don't want to put Erma in a situation that's embarrassing for her. I don't want to put her in a situation where she feels like that she might be embarrassed by something that she would say or someone would say about her." So we were always very concerned to protect her, but she carried her own very well, and she didn't need really to be protected as much as he would let on.

Smock: We're going to move into the next phase. Do you want to take a little break?

Huggins: Let me get something to drink here.

Smock: So now we're going to pass his youth and we're going to talk about his early career getting into college.

Huggins: His getting into the Klan and the politics.

Smock: Yes, the Klan and the politics.

Huggins: Basically I believe—well, first of all, you have to understand the environment, I think, politically and socially of the times when he joined the Klan, when he was in his twenties, and he was active until about the late 1930s and the early 1940s. Before World War II, the Klan situation in West Virginia, I think, basically was made up—the Klan was viewed, I think, more as a group that—by those who were involved in it in West Virginia as compared to maybe the deep South, was viewed more as a group that tried to do community good, at least in their minds. It was viewed as anti-Communist. It was viewed as a group that would try to exert pressure on bad husbands who drank or who gambled or who womanized, they needed to get back to their families, and to a certain extent pressure or make examples of African Americans who maybe were doing things that the community viewed as bad. I think this group viewed themselves as kind of

a positive vigilante group that tried to do good, in their minds. I don't believe he viewed them as being there for the purpose of harassing African Americans as compared to the Klan in the deep south, so I think there was a difference in the Klans of the north and the deep south.

He told me that the Klan in West Virginia, its members were judges, doctors, mayors, lawyers. There were a lot of professionals, a lot of businesspeople. A lot of outstanding people of the community were members of the Klan, so it wasn't viewed as a bunch of redneck whites who were there for the purpose of harassing blacks. I think that was a difference in the Klan of West Virginia.

Also there was an incident, I think, which has to be told. I think it did reflect somewhat on Senator Byrd's views. When he worked in the Carolina Supermarket, he was the head of the produce department. He caught a young black man stealing, and when he confronted the man, the man swung at him and they got into a fistfight, and they had to call the deputies, I guess, to arrest the black man. That always caused, I think, Senator Byrd—it left a mark on him, getting into the fight with the man, and the man had hit him in the mouth and bloodied his lip and whatever.

Byrd didn't talk a lot about the Klan, but he did say that he was more interested in what the Klan was trying to do being anti-Communist and trying to do positive things than in harassing groups. However, it was through the Klan, I think, that his organizational skills first came to the attention of some of the businesspeople who came to him and said, "You know, you've got a lot of skill in organizing, and, you know, you might think about politics." And I think that for the first time in his life—he had never given much thought to running for office, and a light went off at that point and said, "Hey, politics might be a way to go here." And I think at that point he then started to think about politics and about getting out of the Klan and doing more things towards running for office.

Before the war, Byrd worked in several company stores in towns such as Stotesbury, Montgomery, and other locations. But the war came along, and he became a welder on ships. He helped build Liberty and Victory ships and these other transport ships that Roosevelt was using in the Lend-Lease program of sending supplies to England because the U-boats were sinking so many of the ships. The US was building these very quick transport ships, about one a week, and he started out working in the shipyards in Baltimore. And then he and Mrs. Byrd moved to Tampa, and he worked in the shipyards in Tampa towards the end of the war. That's when the war ended, he was working in Tampa.

Then after that, he moved back to West Virginia, back to, I think, working in the Carolina Supermarket in Crab Orchard. So, working in the Carolina Supermarket is when he got involved with the Baptist Church, and he started teaching a Bible school class there, a men's Bible school class, which grew to, I think around three hundred. It was so

successful that a local Beckley AM radio station started broadcasting his Bible class every Sunday morning on the radio, so he started to gain an audience in Raleigh County from the Bible school class and from the church.

Then I think at that point he decided to run for the House of Delegates because it would be one of the easier things to run for. It was a part-time job. He didn't have a lot of political connections. He didn't have a well-known political name or a lot of money, so it would be an easier job to run for than one of the full-time jobs like sheriff or assessor or such. So he started running for the House of Delegates, and that's where he said that he first came across Bill Blizzard. The UMW didn't like Byrd because they didn't feel like they could completely control him, so they only wanted to endorse candidates that were 100 percent for the Union.

Smock: Was Byrd still in the Klan at that time?

Huggins: That's real fuzzy. I told you about the letter that he supposedly wrote to Senator Bilbo of Mississippi. But there is a question of its date. There is so much concern about all of this, the date and the Bilbo letter. I believe his Klan activity waned greatly after 1947, when he went to the House of Delegates. I believe at that point he got out of the Klan, although the Bilbo letter said that, "We need the Klan today more than ever before." But I think that was more a sense of his views on maybe race relations than on what he was actually doing, because no one I've ever talked to has told me of any association of his in the late 1940s. From '47 on he was in the legislature. Nobody has ever mentioned any Klan activities, and he didn't talk about the Klan anymore after he got involved in politics. So it's my belief that probably at that point—he said that he felt that the Klan was going to be an albatross around his neck that he would never get rid of, that he came to realize that it was a tragic mistake to belong to it, and I think that he tried then to disassociate himself from it.

Probably later on I imagine that the Klan probably wasn't the same organization that it once had been in the thirties, after the war, when blacks were more involved in the service and Truman came along and desegregated the Army and everything. So I think history was just catching up with all of this. I think he saw that those times had passed. He was at this point more interested in his political career, and I think he believed that the Klan would probably be a big negative. He came to realize it even more when he ran for Congress, but I'll mention that in a minute.

As I said in the beginning, he didn't drive, so Joe Rahall used to drive him around to a lot of these events. It wasn't till he got elected to the House that Mrs. Byrd learned to drive and started driving him. When he went to Charleston, a lot of the members of the legislature would stay in the hotels. He didn't like that because there was a lot of drinking and a lot of partying. The West Virginia legislature had a reputation for being pretty wild, and he stayed in a rooming house on Kanawha Boulevard near the state Capitol.

He was one of the few members who would actually read the bills. I met one of the people who had either lived in the rooming house or had owned the house that he had stayed in, and they said that Senator Byrd was very studious, that every night he would come in after dinner, go to his room. He would read the bills till it came time to go to bed. He would not go out with the rest of the legislators when they would go to the various clubs and so forth. He never did any of that. He stayed in his room. He read his bills. He would go up to the legislature in the morning. He would be there early. He would go to his committees. He really took his job very serious, and he got a reputation for being one of the more serious-minded members of the legislature and one of the ones who really did a good job and that you could depend on if you needed help for support of a bill. He was there really for all business, and so they said there was a big difference between him and most of the members of the legislature who were there just to have a good time. He was there actually to do his work.

That takes you up to the time he ran for the Senate. There was an opening in the West Virginia Senate, and I think he had ambition of always wanting to run for higher office and maybe going to Congress, and he saw running for the West Virginia Senate was just another step in getting closer to being able to run for the Congress and getting him to a bigger district, because now he had Wyoming and Raleigh County in that Senate district, and so he was getting into a bigger area. I think it gave him a bigger name. He was still not well thought of by the UMW, but he had such a strong following by the rank-and-file miners, that the UMW mostly left him alone. So he always would lead the ticket and he was very well thought of.

I mentioned that in 1952 the incumbent congressman decided to run for governor, and so that created an opening in Congress. In the fifties there were six congressional seats in West Virginia, and that was the sixth congressional seat. That was composed of Kanawha, Boone, Logan, Raleigh, and Wyoming County. The congressman usually came from Charleston because Kanawha County was by far the largest county. It was larger than the rest of the district. But Byrd thought that if there were four or five candidates running from Kanawha County and maybe only one coming out of Raleigh, that the one coming from Raleigh with Wyoming and Logan and Boone and having the support of those counties could offset that split vote in Kanawha County. And, sure enough, that prevailed. He was able to lead the ticket and win the nomination, which surprised everybody because the *Charleston Gazette* and almost everybody thought that the candidate would be from Kanawha County.

So when he won the nomination, it was surprising, and the current senator, M.M. Neely—there were two senators, Senator Kilgore, who was a Democrat from Beckley who Senator Byrd liked very much and wanted to emulate. He really wanted to emulate Senator Kilgore because he thought that he was the ideal type of U.S. senator.

Then there was M.M. Neely, who was from Fairmont, who was Catholic and who was very much involved with the UMW. He was a big supporter of the UMW. M.M.

Neely had been governor and United States senator, had been in the House of Representatives, and then after he was governor he had run for Congress and was defeated in 1946. Then he ran for the Senate and won in 1949. So he was an incumbent senator in '52.

In '52, Senator Kilgore ran for reelection. But Kilgore died in 1956. So in 1956, Chapman Revercomb, who was a Republican from Charleston, ended up getting to the Senate, and that was the Senate seat Senator Byrd ran for later in '58. So in '52, you have M.M. Neely, who died in 1958, in the Senate from Fairmont, and then in '56 you have Chapman Revercomb from Charleston, who replaced Kilgore, who died in '56.

In '52, before the general election, after Senator Byrd won the primary, M.M. Neely, the *Gazette*, and some of the Democratic state committee people didn't like the idea that Senator Byrd won the nomination, because of his Klan membership and all that. So they went to Governor Meadows, who was outgoing—in those days you had one-term governors. He was from Fayette County. So he called for Senator Byrd to come to Charleston for a meeting.

Senator Byrd at this point—he had learned to drive when he was in the state senate in 1950, so before that time, Mrs. Byrd had done all the driving. So Senator Byrd drove to Charleston and attended the meeting in the governor's office. He said the governor himself didn't push him to step aside, but said, "There's a lot of opposition to you. Senator Neely is raising the most ruckus about this. The *Charleston Gazette* is upset about it, and we'd hate to see you end up getting defeated by a Republican here. So now that the incumbent congressman didn't win the nomination for governor," that was won by Bill Marland, "there's a lot of people who'd like to see the congressman get the nomination and go back to Washington again," something that Hechler tried to do. He did the same later on when Nick Joe Rahall first got elected. Hechler ran for governor, didn't win, and then wanted to get his House seat back.

Smock: Yes, that's Ken Hechler.

Huggins: Yes, Ken Hechler. Tried to run a write-in campaign, but Nick Joe Rahall beat him with the help of Senator Byrd.

So anyway, Senator Byrd said, "Well, I need to think about this, so I'm going to go back and think about it." The governor told him to take a couple of days, talk to his family, and let him know.

So Senator Byrd said he drove back to Beckley, he talked to his wife, Erma, and she told him, "You do whatever you feel you should. I want you to make the decision on this." He said he called up some of the members of the Sunday school class, and they were all very supportive of his staying in the race, and he said he called up some of the

Democratic officials in those counties of the district and he asked them, and they were very supportive of him staying in the race.

So he said he didn't like the idea that he was being forced to give up something that he had won and that he had fought so hard for, so he decided that he was going to run anyway, and if he lost, he lost, but he wasn't going to just give it up. So he called the governor's office back and he said that he'd given this a lot of thought and that he really felt that he had won it fair and square, and that he had talked to people in the district and they were all very supportive, and that he was going to stay in and he was going to let the people of the district decide whether or not he was fit to serve.

He then decided at that point to do a lot of advertising because he felt that there would be a lot of rumor campaigns run against him and everything. This is where he said that—and later this came out to help Bob Mollohan, but television was just becoming an effective medium in those days, and he said that because of the Klan situation, he would always buy a half-hour of television time on the Charleston television station on the evening before the general election, so that if anything was brought out against him at the last moment, he would have a half-hour the night before to defend himself. Although nothing ever came out after that about him, he said that every two years he would always buy that half-hour of television time.

He said that in '56 when Bob Mollohan, who'd been the congressman from the First District, he had given it up to run for governor. They brought a scandal out on Mollohan. Cecil Underwood was the Republican nominee for governor, and they brought a scandal out on Bob Mollohan that he had been involved—when he worked in the [Marland] administration. He had been Commissioner of Public Institutions, having authority over the Boys Industrial School at Pruntytown, one of the institutions, he was accused of selling some coal from that property. He had taken a bribe or taken the money for the coal, but there was some kind of a deal where he had taken money for some coal that had been sold illegally. So Underwood waited until a week before the election and brought out this scandal on Mollohan.

Well, it was a quite a big scandal in those days, and Mollohan was really not able to adequately defend himself with the time that was left. So Senator Byrd said Mollohan called him up, and Byrd said, "Look, I have this thirty-minute television time in Charleston the night before the election. I'll give you fifteen minutes of that and I'll keep fifteen minutes for myself. If that will help you, I would be glad to do it." So he gave Bob Mollohan fifteen minutes of his television time. It wasn't enough. Mollohan lost, but he never forgot what Senator Byrd did to help him, and that really forged their friendship that lasted till Bob Mollohan died. From that point on, Bob Mollohan and Senator Byrd were great friends. Bob Mollohan had been a protege of M. M. Neely. Then Alan Mollohan later came on too. Senator Byrd helped Alan get elected, so that forged their relationship.

Cecil Underwood won the '56 election, then right afterwards M. M. Neely died, so Underwood then appointed his campaign manager, who was from Parkersburg, to the Senate seat for the term that would be up in 1960. So in 1958 they had to run again for the partial term, just like [Joe] Manchin ran in 2010 for Byrd's seat. So that created then two Senate seats up in 1958, one that was the Chapman Revercomb Senate seat for the full term, and then the M. M. Neely Senate seat for the partial term that had been filled by a vacancy until '58 when the person would run for the last two years, and then the full term would be up in '60. Senator Byrd was in the House at this point, and he thought about running for the Senate.

Now, Bill Marland, who'd been governor from '52 to '56, had gone out of office. Marland was a very colorful figure. He was somebody who graduated at the top of his class, WVU Law School, and who was a brilliant lawyer but had become an alcoholic and he'd become quite a person at this point of questionable qualifications. Later on there was a CBS news story, I think in the eighties or nineties, where he was driving a cab in Chicago, and he died basically as a cab driver in Chicago. But anyway, in the late fifties he was a darling of the UMW. They loved this guy because he would do exactly what they said. However, his drinking was so bad that they threw him out of The Greenbrier for being drunk.

So there were these two Senate seats, and Senator Byrd wanted to run for the full term, but the UMW wanted Marland to run for the full term. So there was a big question about who should run for what. Byrd knew that Jennings Randolph, who had been in the House from 1933 to 1946 and he'd gotten beaten in '46, had an interest in running for the Senate. He was living at Elkins. So Senator Byrd thought, "If I could get Jennings Randolph to run for the partial term and I would run for the full term, we could have a northern candidate and a southern candidate and run as a team. I would help Jennings in the South and Jennings can help me in the North."

So he said, "I thought this was a real good idea, but the problem was I had a meeting with the chief lobbyist, House lobbyist, for the United Mine Workers, and he came up to see me and he told me that John L. Lewis," I think he said, "who was the legendary president of United Mine Workers, wanted me to run for the partial term and wanted Marland to run for the full term, and that if I did that, they would support me, but if I didn't do that, they wouldn't support me. He told me to take a few days and think about it, and, you know, the more I thought about this, the madder I got, and I started driving over to West Virginia." He said, "I was driving Route 50 and I was going towards Clarksburg on Route 50, and I drove, and the further west I drove, the really madder I got at the fact that they thought they could control this election. And when I got to Romney, I pulled over to a telephone booth and I called Erma and I said, 'Erma, you know, I'm really very upset about this. I wonder what you think about what I should do.'

"And she told me, she said, 'Robert, you know, you do what you think is best. You've analyzed the situation, and I will stand behind whatever you want to do.'"

And he said, "I made my mind up at that point that I was going to contact Jennings Randolph and see if I could talk him into running for the partial term and see if we could run as a team. So I got back from my trip to West Virginia and I called Bob Maxwell," who was a lawyer in Elkins and he was a protégé of Randolph's. Randolph later made him a U.S. judge, district judge. "I said, Bob, I'd like for you to talk to Jennings and see if he would go for this idea. This would be I'll run for the full term from the South, and if he will run for the partial term from the North, I will get all my support in the South to go for him, and he can help me in the North and we'll run together as a team. I think that we could both win that way because I don't think either one of us wants the UMW to tell us who's going to win this election." So Maxwell said he would talk to Jennings and call him back.

A couple days later, Bob Maxwell called him back and said, "I've talked to Jennings and he is agreeable to do that." So he said, "You all will run as a team." He said he got together with Randolph and they planned their strategy, and they had a combined campaign finance chest of \$50,000. Can you think of today what a Senate election goes for? Ten million dollars. Two Senate seats went for \$50,000.

Then they made the decision that Byrd would run for the full term, he did, and Marland ran against him, as well as a couple other people, one from Fairmont and I think one from Raleigh County. Anyway, quite a contested group ran, and then Randolph ran for the partial term. Of course, they ran together and they won overwhelmingly, which ticked off the UMW even more.

But he said finally the UMW decided after the election they wanted to make up. So the guy came back up to see Senator Byrd, said, "Look, you've won. The Boss—." He called John L. Lewis "the Boss." "The Boss wants to make up."

So Senator Byrd said, "You can tell the Boss that whenever I can support the UMW, I will. I will vote on the issues as I feel they benefit my constituents. I'm not in anybody's pocket. So whenever I can support the union, I will. You know I'm always for the mine worker, but I'm not going to be in anybody's pocket." And he never did have a relationship of being in any union's pocket or any corporate industry's pocket. I mean, everybody viewed him as being very pro-coal, which he was, but he never was viewed as being in anybody's pocket from that point. He always wanted to be independent and he always was.

But that's how Byrd and Randolph got elected to the Senate. That's why Senator Randolph became the senior senator, because he immediately took office and Byrd had to wait till January.

I told you the story about how they had a wreck. Well, maybe I didn't. Well, Senator Byrd bought a car, a used car, to get ready for the campaign. It was a Buick, I think. It was a used Buick in a car lot in Beckley. So a couple of weekends before they

were going to make this big campaign trip up to the northern part of the state, his daughters, both daughters, were washing the car and cleaning it out. His daughter found a bottle of whiskey under seat of the front seat of the car when she was cleaning it out, and she took it in and showed it to her father and he said, “Oh, where did you find this?”

She goes, “It was under the front seat, Daddy.” So he poured it out, but it was an open bottle of whiskey that somebody who’d owned the car before had stuck under the front seat.

Well, a few weeks later, Senator Byrd and Senator Randolph were making a campaign trip up to Wheeling, and they’re driving. In those days they drove up Route 21 through to Charleston, to Ripley, then up to Parkersburg to Route 2, and then Route 2 up the Ohio River. Senator Byrd had driven most of the day, and when they got to Sistersville, Senator Byrd was really tired. It was about five o’clock in the afternoon, and they decided to switch over drivers and Senator Randolph would drive then.

So Senator Randolph took over driving, and he drove from Sistersville in Tyler County, and it’s about twenty miles up to New Martinsville. Then outside of New Martinsville there’s this big S-curve in Route 2. At this point it was just beginning to get dark, and Senator Randolph fell asleep at the wheel. In this S-curve he went over the double line, and there was this farmer in this little pickup truck coming down the other way and he hit this man head-on. Killed the guy.

Senator Byrd hit the windshield, said it cut his lip and broke a tooth and broke his nose. He was all right, but he was kind of beat up, and Senator Randolph had some internal injuries, hitting the windshield and all that. They were taken to the hospital, and after the investigation, they determined that Senator Randolph had fallen asleep.

In those days, the Wetzel County prosecutor was a Democrat. Everybody in the county was a Democrat, and so they basically took a very light view of the accident, and they charged Senator Randolph I think with vehicular manslaughter or something, but anyway, they suspended his license for a year, put him on a year’s probation, but let him go.

[Begin Part Two of interview]

Smock: This is an interview with Jim Huggins on November third. This is part two of that discussion. We left off with the accident, and I think we finished up talking about that accident. We’ve got Byrd now all the way up to the fact that he’s in the US Congress.

Huggins: He’s been elected to the United States Senate.

Smock: Tell me what he may have said about his service in the House of Representatives before we talk about the Senate.

Huggins: Sure. When he first got elected to the House in 1953, he came from at that point the Sixth District. Today we only have three districts in West Virginia, congressional districts, but in 1950 we had six congressional districts in West Virginia. The Fifth District was held by a man named John Kee, who died, and his wife, Maude Kee, took his seat. Then his son, Jim Kee, became a congressman later.

But anyway, John Kee had been the congressman in the 1940s and 1950s, and he had been chairman of the International Relations Committee of the House. So when Senator Byrd went to the House in 1953, Senator Byrd was put on Kee's former committee, the International Relations Committee of the House. So that gave Senator Byrd some international relations experience that he had never had. He had never had anything to do with foreign travel or known very much about international relations, so that had opened up an entire new area to Senator Byrd.

One of the things that Senator Byrd was most proud of, and that was that in the late fifties before he went to the Senate, the International Relations Committee took several of their members on a world tour, and Senator and Mrs. Byrd went on this trip. The trip lasted, I think, for over a month, and it went to Europe, it went to Italy, it went to Turkey. He talked about meeting a barber in Turkey who wanted to come to the United States. That's all he could talk about. The trip continued to India. He went to the Taj Mahal. I think it went to the Middle East, and I think it ended up coming out of Vietnam and then on back to the United States. So it was a round-the-world trip visiting foreign countries, and it gave Senator Byrd some foreign policy experience he'd never had before.

I think that was quite useful for him in 1958 when he ran for the Senate because he could say, "Oh, I've been around the world. I visited all these countries. I met with a lot of these foreign leaders." So that gave him some additional resources at his disposal that maybe some of the other members didn't have. So, being one of the International Relations Committee usually is not thought of as to help you that much back home, but in this case it gave Senator Byrd a lot of foreign policy experience he didn't have, so it definitely helped him when he ran for the Senate.

So this brings us up to the point where he's elected then in 1958 to the Senate for a term beginning in 1959. Well, when he goes to the Senate, the first figure he runs into is the legendary Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson. He and Johnson immediately hit it off, and Johnson liked Senator Byrd a great deal. You'll find out more about that relationship when you talk to Perry Woofter because Perry was with Senator Byrd during his first term in the Senate.

But anyway, from what I've been told, this is also at the point when John F. Kennedy is running for President and starts to come to West Virginia to campaign. Senator Byrd had endorsed Lyndon Johnson for President because Johnson was running too. So Johnson was running for President. Kennedy saw West Virginia as a Bible Belt

state, Protestant state that he needed to win. If he could win in West Virginia, then he could win in the South. So West Virginia was really a very important campaign state for the Kennedys. So the entire Kennedy family went to West Virginia to campaign; the mother, the sisters, the brother, Bobby Kennedy, Teddy Kennedy. Except for the father, the whole Kennedy family camped out in West Virginia during the entire primary campaign.

Senator Byrd came to West Virginia. He did support President Johnson. He ran as a delegate and won to go to the convention to support President Johnson, at that point Majority Leader Johnson. He wouldn't give in to the Kennedys. He was very much a Johnson guy.

But there's lots of interesting stories that the chairman of Logan County, which is one of the more infamous Democratic machines in West Virginia, the old chairman of Logan County tells about the first time he met Senator Byrd when he was running for the House. In 1952 he was somewhere out in the rural part of the county and he saw this old Chevrolet with a bass fiddle tied to the top of it by a rope. It had a sign on it, "Byrd for Congress." When Byrd ran for the legislature, he had a slogan, "Byrd by Name, Byrd by Nature, Let's Send Byrd to the Legislature." So when he ran for Congress, he wanted to continue, I think, that sort of a slogan, so he had "Byrd for Congress," and he had this old bass fiddle tied to the top of the car so people would know it was Senator Byrd because he was the fiddle-playing candidate.

So this guy thought it was quite funny that Senator Byrd was driving around in this old car with a fiddle, bass fiddle tied to the top of it with a rope. But that's how Senator Byrd campaigned in Logan and Boone Counties and those rural areas. He campaigned by himself and with some of his campaign workers. He had some supporters in those areas who were very instrumental with various groups, and so he got them to support him. So Byrd was successful and won the nomination.

But later on, Senator Byrd then was elected to the Senate. He still, I think, was very much the man that he'd always been, with Mrs. Byrd driving him a lot, with Mrs. Byrd fixing him his lunch. He always felt like trying to save as much money as they could. When he bought his house in the Evermay addition in McLean, it was one of the first houses. Mr. May was the developer, and he developed two or three subdivisions in McLean. This was one of the first ones he developed, and he built a house for himself on the same street that Senator Byrd lived on.

But anyway, when he planned the subdivision, Senator Byrd wanted to move from Arlington, and so Mr. May approached Senator Byrd, who he heard was interested in moving, and made him a deal. He was trying to attract some well-known people into that subdivision, and he basically gave him a deal on the house that in the end cost him more to build than what Senator Byrd paid for it. He used to comment that Senator Byrd got such a good deal that it ended up costing him money because by the time he built the

house, prices had gone up on the price of lumber and materials, and he gave such a good deal that it ended up costing him money. But having Senator Byrd in that subdivision was a selling point. There were many diplomats that lived there. Senator Cannon lived there. Other senators lived in that subdivision. So that subdivision ended up being one of the more popular places. Then he built another Evermay addition next to it. This addition is next to the CIA. So Mr. May made out quite well, I think.

Smock: When you talk about the addition, what was the name of it?

Huggins: It was called Evermay, E-v-e-r-m-a-y, and Mr. May, M-a-y, was the developer. So he lived across the street from Senator Byrd, up the street.

But anyway, Mr. May was very nice, and the subdivision turned out to be one of the more lucrative ones in McLean that people wanted to live in. Senator Byrd had a huge house right when you drove in, so he got one of the better deals living in a very beautiful house. Mrs. Byrd took very nice care of it, and it was very attractive on the inside.

When Senator Byrd first went to office, the state would send the public officials special liquor bottles. They would have like a General Lee or a General Grant or they would have a special liquor bottle made that they would sell. They would give them out to the members of Congress and to legislative leaders. So Senator Byrd had a basement that was like a basement rec room in his house he didn't use, but it was there and it had a big bar built into it, and he had a huge number of these decanters that the State of West Virginia had sent him over the years. He ended up giving them all away at one point because he was trying to downsize himself and he didn't want them around, so he gave them to one of his former aides, Joe Stewart. But anyway, he had a huge collection of these decanters, and he ended up giving them all away. It was a very nice collection at one point.

Smock: Speaking of decanters, did Byrd imbibe very much?

Huggins: Byrd never drank liquor the entire time that I was with him. On occasion he might have a glass of wine, but he never drank any hard liquor at all. As I said, on a rare occasion he might have a glass of wine. That was it. He was very religious about drinking, and he didn't like the fact that people drank too much.

He loved cigars. That was his one big vice, probably, was smoking cigars, and he quit smoking when Mrs. Byrd's breathing got so bad. He actually quit for a few years until after she passed and then started smoking again. He smoked cigars over the years, but he never did anything else. He never did anything that would bring any bad press or did anything that would bring any bad view on his office. He was a very moral man and he acted like he was.

Smock: Now we've got him in the Senate and we've got him working with Lyndon Johnson.

Huggins: Lyndon Johnson put him on the Appropriations Committee. In those days, the leadership leader had a lot to do with what committees you got, and getting on Appropriations was almost an unheard of thing for a freshman member to get appointed, but Lyndon Johnson took a great liking to him and put him on the Appropriations Committee. Also Byrd became a member of the Southern Coalition, which was really headed by Richard Russell. Richard Russell was a senior senator from Georgia, and Richard Russell was kind of the dean of the Southern Coalition. So he immediately fell under, I think, the mentorship of Richard Russell.

One thing that's interesting, when John F. Kennedy was elected President and his brother Teddy was elected to his Senate seat, Teddy asked JFK, "When I get to the Senate, who should I look to for leadership?" And President Kennedy told him Richard Russell was a good person that you should look to for kind of mentoring you in the ways of being a good senator. I think a lot of people forget that John F. Kennedy was a fairly conservative man, not as liberal as his brother Bobby or later Ted. In those days, John F. Kennedy was certainly in the center and probably a little conservative and viewed Richard Russell as somebody who had a lot of knowledge and a lot of importance in the Senate. John F. Kennedy, of course, was campaigning. He missed a lot of Senate votes and was gone quite a bit, but he looked to Richard Russell, I think, as a man who had a lot of respect from his colleagues.

Johnson and Kennedy had their problems, but Senator Byrd viewed that Johnson took the deal that Senator Kennedy gave him to become Vice President for what LBJ could do to get the Kennedy programs through Congress. Kennedy viewed that Johnson was really good with his legislative guidance and he could help Kennedy get Kennedy's programs through. It turned out that Kennedy and Johnson didn't get along very well, and then LBJ and Bobby ended up hating each other. I think that relationship also, I think, probably reflected somewhat on Senator Byrd, because Senator Byrd then didn't get along with Bobby Kennedy at all.

Smock: Do you know anything about any of the legislation? There was an area redevelopment bill or something he got involved in.

Huggins: Well, the ARC, the Appalachian Regional Commission, was a bill that Senator Randolph helped get enacted originally, and it was composed of areas in thirteen states. West Virginia was the only state that was entirely in the ARC region, and the ARC was created to help these Appalachian states with programs, water programs, road programs, education programs, all kinds of programs to help poor Appalachia areas become more equal with the rest of the country. So that became really a vehicle for Senator Byrd then to put funding in to build highways and to build programs which

helped a lot of people in West Virginia with bridges and other things that West Virginia wouldn't have been able to get otherwise.

Smock: At this time also in his first term he develops contacts with Vice President Nixon.

Huggins: Yes. He liked Vice President Nixon. When he was in the House, when he first went to the Congress, Truman was President for a few months. Then Eisenhower became President and Nixon was Vice President. As President of the Senate, the officer who would be in control of the Senate, Nixon got to meet the congressional leadership. Senator Byrd liked Vice President Nixon, and when Nixon became President, Senator Byrd would go down to the White House quite a bit. He was one of the hawks on Vietnam, so he said that he got along pretty well with Nixon.

Nixon even considered him at one point for the Supreme Court. When two of Nixon's appointments were shot down by the Senate, Nixon floated Senator Byrd's name as a potential Supreme Court appointment. Byrd said he thought about it for a while, but he decided he really didn't want to go to Supreme Court. So he notified the Secretary of the Treasury at that point, who was Governor Connally from Texas, who used to be a Democrat, and he told him that he would like for him to go to Nixon to remove his name from the short list of names that Nixon had. So Connally informed Nixon that Byrd didn't want to be considered and he took his name off the list. But anyway, Nixon seriously considered Byrd at one point for the Supreme Court.

Smock: Senator Byrd is now—this is his first term in the Senate. He's on two good committees. He's on Banking and he's on Appropriations, but he's still a junior member.

Huggins: Yes. He doesn't have any seniority. Later on he becomes Chairman of the DC Appropriations Subcommittee. Of the thirteen subcommittees of the Appropriations Committee, the DC was the lowest level, and he becomes DC chairman. He used to ride around—he really had a dislike for welfare cheaters, and so one of the things that he would do that really got *The Washington Post* on his back and developed a relationship with the FBI and the DC Police, he would ride around and be with them when they busted welfare cheaters. Like they used to have a rule that if there was a man in the house and the woman was on welfare claiming she didn't have a man, they would bust the woman off welfare. So the police would ride around on Sunday mornings. At seven o'clock they would raid a house, and if there was a man there, they would bust the woman off welfare.

So Senator Byrd on a few occasions would ride around with the police when they were doing some of these things, and the *Post* used to say that Byrd was terrible. But Byrd's view was these people were cheating people who deserved to be on welfare and get the money, and they were taking money away from people who otherwise should get

more money if it weren't for these people who cheated. So he was trying to strengthen the rolls of people who really deserved it.

He also got to be friends with J. Edgar Hoover, and he liked Hoover. He thought Hoover was a good director, and Hoover liked Byrd. A couple times Hoover called the office while I was there, and the FBI used to come up and meet with Byrd. So I got the view that Byrd was one of those people that Hoover liked.

Then, of course, there's the famous story that Byrd told me about Martin Luther King [Jr.], and this is, the FBI had been watching Martin Luther King and tapping his phone. Martin Luther King was coming to Washington the week after he was going to Memphis for his rally of the garbage workers, and the FBI had put a sting together for Martin Luther King at the Hotel Washington, and they had invited Senator Byrd to come down and to witness this operation. Supposedly some women who were going to be there weren't Mrs. King or other wives, and the FBI was going to catch Martin Luther King with some women in this room like they did later with Mayor [Marion] Barry—the mayor that they did the sting on with the cocaine. He was mayor of Washington for several years.

But anyway, they were going to do this sting on King, and they invited Senator Byrd to be there as a witness to all this. So Senator Byrd said he had thought about going. He'd not made up his mind whether he was going to go or not. But anyway, the FBI had tipped him off they were going to do this. Well, Martin Luther King goes to Memphis that week and gets assassinated. So it's interesting what would have happened if he hadn't been assassinated and if he had gone on to Washington, whether or not this whole thing would have happened. It might have changed history. One never knows.

Smock: There's a story about when the riots occurred in DC after Martin Luther King's assassination, that Byrd was Appropriations Subcommittee chair for DC, and that he took a very harsh stand regarding the rioters. Do you know anything about that?

Huggins: I know that he always felt that that was a bad thing that—unfortunately, the rioters ended up burning their own areas of town, like what happened in Watts in Los Angeles. They riot in their own neighborhoods. They burn their own stores. So Byrd felt that it was the nation's capital and that they should be more respectful of that. It was a terrible thing for anybody to be assassinated, but to act the way they acted he thought was being disrespectful to their neighborhoods and to the nation's capital. But he never really talked much about that.

Smock: We occasionally get inquiries about that.

Huggins: I remembered one of the movies. I saw a cut on television where after Martin Luther King had been killed he called Martin Luther King a rabble-rouser, some interview that he'd made about King. Even during this period, if you look at Mrs.

Kennedy's memoirs, there's something that has come out, a new CD on some interviews she made in '64 after the assassination of President Kennedy. She had serious questions about Martin Luther King. You know, Robert Kennedy approved the phone tapping of King as a way to get J. Edgar Hoover to tap Jimmy Hoffa and other Teamster officers that Kennedy wanted monitored.

So I think that in the context of the times, a lot of people had questions about motives of some of these people. Later on, they changed their views on all these things, and today a lot of these people are great heroes, but in those times I think people questioned a lot of the motives. It was a different time, and you have to look at everything in the time that the statements were made. Today things are quite different. People change their views about people, but, you know, people were the way they were from their upbringing and from their views of those times of the sixties. Like Senator Byrd said, if he could change two votes, he would change his vote on the Civil Rights Bill and on the Voting Rights Act. Both those votes were the wrong votes for the wrong reasons.

People from the South were usually put into two categories. You were either pure segregationists, like Senator Eastland from Mississippi and Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, or you were states' rights advocates like Richard Russell, William Fulbright, John Sparkman, and some of the others. Within those two groups, they all took the stand that the states should be able to determine their own voting rights and their own destiny. So from a constitutional standpoint they believed that. We have a different view today. We're more federal rights-oriented today than we were back then. But this goes all the way back to the creation of this country where this argument was held by our founding fathers. So these arguments went on for years, and a lot of these things were very hard to finally bury. In the recent GOP primaries, we saw a lot of states' rights issues discussed.

Smock: Do you think Byrd at this time—how would you classify him? Would he be in the sixties at this time in his first years in the Senate classed as a segregationist?

Huggins: I would think he would be more in the states' rights area. I don't believe that he was a pure segregationist like Eastland and like Strom Thurmond. I believe they were racist. I don't think Senator Byrd was ever that way. I think he held views from the states' rights standpoint that these were areas the states should have the right to determine. I don't believe he was an outright racist. I think that those were the two categories southerners came from, and he was from the more liberal camp than the camp of the James Eastlands and the Strom Thurmonds.

Smock: But certainly his ideas at this time and the way he expressed them and the way he voted—

Huggins: He was very strong.

Smock: Those resonated well in West Virginia—

Huggins: That's right.

Smock: —at election time.

Huggins: You see, that's one of the things that hurt him later on. As Senator Byrd grew in the Senate leadership and became more of a leader, he had to come more to the center and to the left because the Democratic Caucus was to the left of center, and in order to keep them happy, he had to become more liberal himself, and that hurt him in West Virginia because for years he would have very little, if no opposition when he came up for election. Then for a few years right after he became Senate Leader—in '76 I was the campaign coordinator—he ran unopposed, the only man in U.S. Senate history in West Virginia to run unopposed for a Senate seat.

He also ran for President as a favorite son, and West Virginia was the only state Jimmy Carter didn't run in. He ran in the other forty-nine states or whatever and won the primaries, but in West Virginia he didn't run.

I'll never forget George Wallace ran in West Virginia. I was down there, Senator Byrd called me up, and it was about a week before the election. The polls came out and Byrd had like 85 percent, Wallace had about 8 percent, and there was like 7 percent undecided. I was very excited about this. I was saying, "Senator Byrd, the polls have just come out and you've got 85 percent, Wallace has got like 8 percent, and there's like 7 percent undecided."

There was this big pause and he says, "Jim, I want that 7 percent undecided."

I thought, "Okay, well, we'll do our best." But he was getting almost 85 percent of the vote and he wasn't satisfied. He was that way. I mean, he campaigned himself hard. He never took anything for granted. Nobody worked any harder. He came into the office at seven in the morning. He left at ten or eleven at night. I mean, he didn't go off to play golf or go off on junkets or whatever. I mean, he worked continuously. He didn't take vacations.

Later on, he and Mrs. Byrd occasionally would go to the Greenbrier for a couple of days, and that was a big treat. That was their vacation, was to go to the Greenbrier. They loved to take a buggy ride at dusk around the Greenbrier every night. Then he would read all day or study, and they would go have lunch and go have dinner, but he would study and she would do what she did, read books or sew or whatever. They never took the other amenities of the Greenbrier other than the food, but they loved to go on that buggy ride at dusk.

That and playing the fiddle. He had a couple of groups that he played with. Making the record, going down to Nashville, those are probably—the biggest thing in his

life was being on *Hee Haw*. He was on *Hee Haw* twice. He was on the *Grand Ole Opry*. He said all his life when he was a little kid, he grew up listening to the *Grand Ole Opry* on the radio, and then to actually go down there and meet those people, Roy Acuff and Minnie Pearl and all those people, his heroes of the *Grand Ole Opry*, was one of the greatest things that ever happened to him. They entertained him, and for several days they put his red vest and the fiddle in the Country Music Hall of Fame. They had an exhibit there with his record and his red vest and everything.

He was really proud that he had a connection with country music, and I think it helped him a lot, because whenever anybody would come into West Virginia, any group like Johnny Cash, he would go see them at the West Virginia State Fair, and they'd have him come out and play with them on the stage. He played with Johnny Cash, and different professional country music stars would have him appear with them, and he loved it. You could just see him, he would light up like a little kid at his first Christmas to be with these guys, because they were his heroes from when he was a child, these country music stars, and to think that they would look at him as an equal was really something. I think that gave him a lot of acknowledgement later in life that he did amount to something, that these people would recognize him.

Smock: I think when he went down just a few years before he died, when he went back down to the *Grand Ole Opry* and got a Lifetime Achievement Award, I think that he really appreciated that very much—

Huggins: That's right.

Smock: —and was quite an event.

Huggins: I think that was great of them to do that because, you know, he didn't have a lot in his life when you look at the kinds of things. I mean from a politician, yes. I mean, he was Majority Leader of the Senate, Minority Leader of the Senate, President pro tem of the Senate. But to actually do something, to him that was like winning the PGA award. I mean, getting that Lifetime Achievement probably meant more to him than anything else he had done because they recognized him for his professionalism as a musician, and I think that, to him, was a great deal. The fact that his peers, peers that he looked up to so much, would do that for him. I think that was a great, great thing that was done.

Smock: What did he ever tell you about his run for the presidency briefly in 1976?

Huggins: That was basically, he knew that Mansfield was going to retire. Mansfield had told him. He didn't tell the other members. So he did this as a way to position himself to be a better candidate for Majority Leader, and he thought that if he would run as a favorite senator for President, lightning might strike. Maybe Jimmy Carter

would choose him as his running mate. He didn't know. Or maybe the convention would lock up. He didn't know what would happen, but he was doing this more to show his colleagues that he could raise money (\$5,000 each) in twenty states. He raised money, the minimum to be—if he raised money in twenty states and he could get federal matching funds, you can get funds to run for president, so he met that level. So he was a certifiable presidential candidate. He'd raised money in twenty states, \$5,000 in each state, so I think he wanted to show his colleagues that he had recognition from around the country.

I think he did that mostly to position himself to run for Leader, and then he knew that Humphrey might run or there might be others that would run, and Humphrey did run. He did run an abortive [?] campaign and then got out. But as soon as Humphrey figured out he couldn't win, then he got out. But Byrd, like he had done his work for Whip, he had his votes lined up.

Mansfield announced he wasn't going to run, and then Byrd started running openly for it, and some of the others came out, two or three others came out too. But it was pretty much a foregone conclusion that Byrd was going to win. We were in Welch [WV] when we got word that Humphrey had dropped out of the race, and then Byrd was going to be the only candidate. Then Byrd got a call from Humphrey, so Byrd was very happy that he was going to become Majority Leader. Then that set things forward with some of the things that you'll talk about later, the Panama Canal treaties, and he visited the Shah before the Shah fell in Iran.

Johnson very much tried to neutralize him on these civil rights votes, and he offered to send him around the world as a special ambassador while this vote was going on so he'd miss the vote. And Byrd said, "You know, Mr. President, you put me on the Appropriations Committee. I can go around the world anytime I want. I'm not going to leave."

He said, "Well, I'll make you a special ambassador. I'll send you on a diplomatic mission for me."

He said, "No, Mr. President, I'm not leaving."

Johnson tried and tried to get him not to vote or to vote for him, but he wouldn't budge. He says, "I'm voting my conscience and I'm voting with Richard Russell," and he voted against the bill.

In those days it took two-thirds of the Senate to break a filibuster, so Johnson had to get sixty-six votes, and he was able to do it with a lot of Republican support, and the northern and western Democrats voted, and he got a couple of southerners to go along with him, but it was a hard filibuster to break. You talk about filibusters today at sixty votes being hard to break. In those days—it was Byrd who got it moved down to sixty from sixty-six, so it was really hard to break those filibusters.

Smock: In the primary for President, Senator Byrd handily beat George Wallace, but a lot of people said that turned the tables on Wallace as well. He was a rising son and was getting the states that Wallace was expected to get till he ran into Byrd in West Virginia. Did Byrd ever talk to you about Wallace?

Huggins: He didn't talk much about Wallace. Wallace was shot, and I think the fact that Wallace wasn't his former self and the fact that Carter became the southern candidate pretty much shot Wallace down. When Wallace couldn't go forward and Carter became the southern candidate and was able to take advantage—and that was probably the last time that the South went full-heartedly for a Democrat because the Old South is now broken and mostly Republican. That was probably the last time the South went for a Democrat the way it did.

After that, things happened to cause the Democratic candidates to be liberal with the caucus. Then even Vice President under Clinton, from Tennessee, Gore, even Gore couldn't carry his own state. Gore would have won the presidency if he would have carried his home state. He couldn't do that, and he lost West Virginia. So that really turned around. West Virginia today in some respects from a national standpoint is a Republican state with Bush carrying it twice and Clinton carried it, but Obama lost it.

I've always said that West Virginia was one-third Democratic, one-third Republican, and one-third Independent. Of those one-third Independent, most of them vote Democratic because that's where most of the action is in the primaries. But there's a one-third of that state that's pretty independent that flip-flops, and that when you get into some of these national elections, even though the state's Democratic, it will vote Republican because that Independent swing will swing it the other way.

The thing about Byrd is that I became very political for Byrd. I kind of became his political guy, and one of the things that I wanted to do was to make him stronger with Republicans and with the business community. We targeted Republican county chairmen, the Republican State Committee, we targeted Republican businesspeople. We sent them special mailings. We sent invitations to, like, Republican inaugurals. Senator Byrd would get on the Inaugural Committee and would give him additional invitations to the presidential inaugurations.

So when Reagan got inaugurated, we were sending out tickets to the inauguration to Republicans, and we would write to all the members of the legislature and Republican chairmen. We were giving out more tickets than the Republicans had, because Byrd was on the committee. I convinced Senator Byrd that he ought to do this, and so we had special mailings for Republican businesspeople. I mean, we went all out to neutralize these people so that even though they might not be for Byrd, they wouldn't necessarily be against Byrd, so that when somebody was going to run, they might say, "Well, I'll vote for you, but I'm not going to do anything to help you." If we could do that, that would go a long way in neutralizing all these big Republicans, the big people who had the money

who the Republican candidates had to depend on. If we could neutralize them, people like Buck Harless and Jim Compton, these big coal operators, they became big supporters of Senator Byrd and they were big Republicans. And if the Republicans couldn't get them to support them, they didn't have anybody to go to. So we went all out to bring those people into the fold. Senator Byrd would call them up and talk to them and ask them their opinion on things.

Really, he would call all the county officials every year. He had a card file, and we would keep the phone numbers on all the sheriffs and assessors and members of the legislature, and every year at Christmastime or during the holidays he would call these people at home and talk to them. They used to say, "Oh, yes, every Christmas, Senator Byrd calls me up, calls me at home." And he would do that to stay in touch with these people because he had a policy of trying to get into every county every year at least once, and he would always try to do that. Especially election years and the year before the election year, he would make sure to get into every county.

So we would do this. We would set up our calendar. Since we only had fifty-five counties, it wasn't too hard to get into every county, not like some states that have a hundred counties. But even with fifty-five it became difficult at times, but we would try to get into every county for some function, either an apple festival or a Chamber of Commerce dinner or something. In some counties like Kanawha and Cabell and Harrison we got into many times. But he always tried to get into every county at least once. Then he could say, "Well, I was in your county this year."

Then that's when we started the mobile office. That was an idea I had. I saw some of the House members had mobile offices, and I suggested to Senator Byrd that that was something I could do for him in the summertime. I could drive the mobile office around and then also provide him transportation when he was in the state. So he gave me the authority then to set up this mobile office, which I did. We took caseworkers around every year to every county for casework sessions. So every year, caseworkers went into West Virginia and they went to casework sessions, and that continued on to the time he finally passed away. He was still doing that. Every year he was having his caseworkers go into every county in the state, and that was a very successful thing because it took the office to the people. We would send out notices that the caseworkers were going to be in a town or city during a certain week, and people would come out and talk about Black Lung or Social Security problems. They couldn't go to Washington or Charleston; they could come to the county seat. This also gave his caseworkers a good view of the state and I took them on tours of West Virginia historical sites and places like the coal mine exhibits over in Beckley.

So I did a lot of that, and then I got involved with economic development work and doing all these projects and started this Software Valley Initiative for Senator Byrd. We got him to get involved with that as a way to help diversify the economy. We saw the economy in West Virginia going down with the big industries, steel and glass and

chemicals, all going down, and we had to diversify into other sectors. We saw the whole idea of the Internet coming along with the Information Age at this point as the place to go because we could put government offices in West Virginia connecting them to their main agencies in Washington.

That could never be done before, so that was the idea, and Byrd moved the FBI division from Washington, the Identification Division from Washington to West Virginia. They were having so much trouble in Washington. They were having over a 10 percent per year change of staff, and they were spending so much money on training their people. They didn't like the people they were attracting. These were low GS-level jobs--GS 7, GS 9--so there was a lot of change.

In those days, the fingerprints were on paper cards, individual cards. So Senator Byrd came up with the idea of basically changing the system to a modern system using computers, having the fingerprints computerized and put on digital systems and files, and that way you could link the states together. The states weren't linked together. We weren't linked with Interpol. I mean, when you think we were on the verge of all this terrorism out there, if we hadn't done this, I don't know where we'd be today because all this was done just before the 9/11 thing happened, what if we had not had this in place and we were not able to take advantage of this new technology. I don't know what would have happened to this country if that wouldn't have taken place. But Senator Byrd was able to convince George Bush the first to do this, and there's a real story behind that, how he got Bush to go along with him.

When Senator Byrd became chairman, he said he was going to put a billion dollars in earmarked funds into West Virginia. He was going to basically move money around, not basically just make the government spend additional money, but he was going to take money from different pots and move it around to put it into West Virginia projects. He said he was going to put a billion dollars into West Virginia in funds that weren't budgeted. I would say he probably put three or four billion into West Virginia that weren't budgeted. Given the number of years he was there, he had a lot more than a billion dollars. I mean, half a billion probably went into the FBI facility. We have over 3,000 employees in Clarksburg today, and the FBI is happy because they have a workforce that's dedicated, that doesn't move around. They have no security problems with these people. They're not wanting to leave Clarksburg to make 25 cents an hour more to go up the street to another agency. I mean the FBI is very, very happy.

There's a biotech element there now with the Army in Clarksburg, and that's something that's real important to our security and to terrorism, and that would have never happened if Senator Byrd had not have convinced the FBI to do it.

Smock: Just by the merits of coincidences, we were walking down the streets last night in St. Petersburg [FL] and ran into a former FBI agent who was on the street, and we got to talking about that, of all things. He said, in effect, that the home office was

mired in the old way, and it took an effort like this where you're really going to create something brand new and bring in the Internet and bring in computers to really make it happen.

Huggins: It did.

Smock: He verified that independently.

Huggins: That's right. Now I'm going to tell you the story of how that came about. And this is controversial. Well, when Senator Byrd became chairman, he had a meeting of his staff director, Jim English, and all thirteen of the subcommittee staff directors in his office, and he said, "This year when all the agencies come up here for their hearings, their budget hearings, I want each one of you to ask these agencies that are under your jurisdiction if there's anything that can be moved to West Virginia, anything that can be modernized and moved to West Virginia, and if they need additional funding, to come to me and tell me about it if there's a problem so that I'll know."

Out of this the Coast Guard moved from Governors Island to the Eastern Panhandle. ATF moved to the Eastern Panhandle. The Department of IRS put a new resource in Beckley in the Federal Building down there. The Public Debt put additional resources in Parkersburg. I mean, he put out the word to all his staff committee directors to question these agencies.

Well, the FBI had this big problem, which is what I just told you about, how to modernize. It was going to cost 200, 300, 400 million dollars to do it right. They'd gone to OMB, and OMB said, "No, you can't do it." The subcommittee director said, "The FBI director is really for this. Everyone in the FBI really wants it."

So Senator Byrd met with the FBI and they gave it a big push. "We'll support you in any way we can, we just can't get presidential authority to do this, and it's going to cost so much money that we will never get this money authorized ourselves."

So Senator Byrd said, "Well, I'll go talk to President Bush and see what I can do." So he went over to see President Bush at the White House. This is Bush One. He laid out the whole scenario for what this new technology would do.

Bush said, "Well, this is really a grand plan. It certainly probably is needed, but we have really serious, serious budgetary problems in this country. Coming up with 200 or 300 or 400 million dollars, even if you could put it in and move it around, is going to be very difficult for me to justify. But I have some other problems that you might be able to help me with, and if you can help me, maybe I can help you.

"I have an election coming up here, and I'm taking a lot of criticism from the far right and from the religious groups about my ability to work with Congress and to get some things done here that shows them that I've got some power, I've got some muscle

in Congress. You know, one of the areas where I'm really taking a lot of heat is in the abortion area. You know, if I could just for one year get the abortion funding in the DC Appropriations Bill cut, I could show all my religious supporters, 'Look. I've been able to get abortion funding cut.' That would really be a big thing for me to be able to do just before the election here."

Senator Byrd said, "That's really a tough thing to do."

He said, "Well, if you could do that for me, I'll get Dick Darman," I think was the OMB director. "I'll get him to give you the go ahead for this FBI project."

So Senator Byrd said, "Well, let me go back and talk to some of my colleagues on the Hill."

So Byrd goes back up to the Hill and he thinks about it, he talks to his staff, and this was very controversial because this is definitely a two-edged sword here, but you've got to think about what this would do for the FBI and for West Virginia. I mean this is going to do something the FBI needs very badly, and it's going to create thousands of jobs. At this point there was 900 people doing this. Today there's 3,000. It could create probably a couple thousand jobs in West Virginia down the road. This is just one year here.

So he said, "Well, I'll do this for one year, and then I'll restore the funding."

So he calls Bush up and he said, "The DC appropriations bill is coming out today and it's got no funding in it for abortions for fiscal year," whatever it was. He said, "I've been able to deliver on what you wanted. Now you're going to deliver for me."

Bush said, "I'll send Dick Darman to your office this afternoon, and you can sit down with him and with the FBI and start planning this." So he came up and he gave the OMB go ahead with the FBI, and Byrd started the project by putting like 50 million, then 150 million. Before it was over with, it was 300 or 400 million dollars. When you put all these systems that they had to have together, it was a huge amount of money, and built the facility.

They got the land donated. They went over to West Virginia and got Harrison County to basically buy the land themselves and donate it to the FBI free. They got the state to build a ramp off the interstate for free. They got all this stuff done for free to entice the FBI to come there. But that was all done by Byrd. And the next year Byrd plussed up the account again for the abortions and put the money back in, but he did cut it out for one year to give Bush what he needed so that Bush would go along with his project.

Smock: That was just abortions in the—

Huggins: The DC bill for one year.

Smock: While we're on that subject, Byrd was basically—

Huggins: He was anti-abortion.

Smock: —anti-abortion.

Huggins: Yes. Yes. His view on abortion was, "I'm against abortion except in the cases of rape, incest, and the life of the mother is in danger." Now, he liberalized that life of the mother to go a long way. So the pro-abortion people thought he was probably pro-abortion, and the anti-abortion people thought that he was anti-abortion. He voted back and forth on the issue so that it kind of confused everybody, but he basically, because of his religious beliefs, was against abortion, and he really was opposed to it for birth control, for people who just had abortions for birth control. He didn't like abortion, but he wouldn't vote against it for all uses.

Smock: I had not heard that story about how the FBI deal was—

Huggins: Well, you probably won't.

Smock: Well, now we will.

Huggins: Maybe. If they know I told you, they'll probably be mad. But I think it's part of the record you need to know.

Smock: It's on the record. The thing about oral history is that there's other ways to verify—

Huggins: Just check the DC appropriations bill for that year.

Smock: Yes, you see what happened. Right. Do you want to take a break now?

Huggins: Sure, that's fine.

Smock: I think this is excellent, and let's take a little break now. We'll see where else we can go.

Huggins: The reason I told you that is if Byrd hadn't done that, I don't know where this country would be today if we hadn't built that new infrastructure for the identification end and computerized everything. We would have been in a hell of a mess when the 9/11 hit. I mean, it was bad enough the way it was, but we had all these new systems in place then that we could track these people and do this stuff. We wouldn't have had any of that. So it was really a small price to pay for what we got out of it.

[Begin Part Three]

Smock: All right. This is session number three with Jim Huggins and it's still November third.

Jim, tell me the story about the radio telescope [Robert C. Byrd Green Bank Telescope] and Byrd's involvement with that project.

Huggins: Sure. Byrd had been involved with the radio telescope over several years. The radio telescope is in an area in West Virginia, it's a radio-free zone. It's in the Monongahela National Forest. It's the only place of its kind in the United States. It's in a radio-free zone. This antenna is connected to another one, I believe, in California to form some sort of an arc over the country, and they look for extraterrestrial signals from outer space. Also the Navy did have a small complex there where they, too, would look for signals.

Now, at Sugar Grove, which is not too far from there, there is a Navy facility. It's the only active duty military base in West Virginia, and Sugar Grove Navy Base is also a communications center. As you know, the CIA, through a book that came out a few years ago, listed—they have an antenna in Preston County, which is a telephone link between the United States and Europe where the CIA supposedly used to listen in on conversations. I visited that facility one time.

But anyway, the radio antenna at Green Bank collapsed because of metal fatigue, and there was a big debate over how to rebuild it and whether it should be rebuilt and what it should be rebuilt as. So the National Science Foundation and some other agencies came together and decided that they wanted to rebuild the antenna, and they went to Senator Byrd with the cost, and he was able to put the money in the budget to rebuild it.

I remember we were driving over to the dedication of this antenna, and I was telling Senator Byrd in the van the fact that the Navy had a facility there, too, and that they were looking for signals from aliens. This is just after Senator Byrd had spent 100 to 200 million dollars, whatever the cost of it was to rebuild it, and I said the purpose of this is to listen for signals from outer space, for aliens, and other planetary systems.

He said, "Jim, don't you know? There are no aliens. God didn't create any aliens."

And I thought to myself, here I am driving Senator Byrd to dedicate this new radio antenna which cost all these millions of dollars to continue to listen for any type of signals from outer space, and Senator Byrd's saying, well, you know, God didn't create aliens. So really this whole project is really not going to produce anything because we don't have aliens. So I thought that was kind of funny. I didn't talk anymore about that. I didn't want to get into any more discussions on aliens.

Smock: On a more serious story, one of the big issues that Senator Byrd was involved with, of course, was the Panama Canal Treaty when Jimmy Carter was

President. We have political cartoons that show Carter sort of hopping mad at Senator Byrd at various points in the process because Senator Byrd had his own views of how that Panama Treaty should be handled. What story can you tell me about that?

Huggins: Well, the interesting thing about the Panama Canal Treaties was that in the beginning, Senator Byrd was opposed to the Panama Canal Treaties, and all the veterans groups were about 110 percent opposed to these treaties, and the military didn't seem to be very much in favor of it either. But as Senator Byrd got into it, he wanted to study, as he did in all of these issues that were very important, and issues of which he would play a major part, he wanted to study them himself, do his own homework on them, and he would get books from the Library of Congress and also get lots of reports and studies from other academic institutions to study and to do his own background work, and then get briefings from his staff on what they believed. But he wanted to make the final decision himself. As he got into this, he determined after he read this book—I think it was *The Path Between the Seas*.

Smock: By David McCullough.

Huggins: That's right. After he read that book, he changed his opinion on the Panama Canal Treaties and believed that Panama had not ceded full authority and ownership to the United States. That didn't happen. The language in that treaty did not cede ownership to the United States. So after he read the book, he and Senator [Howard] Baker, who was the Minority Leader, talked. Both of them felt that the treaties probably were the right thing to do, considering the environment in Latin America and what would happen if the United States didn't approve it. There was no doubt there would be problems in Panama, maybe even a disruption of the canal by the Panamanians. There was the potential for all types of problems.

So Senator Byrd decided that he and Senator Baker would make some changes to the treaty as proposed by the President by adding amendments which would give the United States some additional assurances that he felt would be needed, such as putting U.S. ships to the front of the line in case of national emergency, by giving the United States the right to protect the canal if it was threatened. They did certain things through these additional amendments to these treaties that Carter hadn't envisioned but that Senator Byrd felt was needed to get Senate approval, so this caused some problems, caused problems in Panama, caused some problems with Jimmy Carter, but in the end, Jimmy Carter wanted this Canal Treaty approved, so he went along with it.

This was a very, very grave issue, though, for Senator Byrd in the next election, and he had to face the wrath of a lot of veterans groups and a lot of voters over his leadership in this Panama Canal Treaty debate. He won the election, but it was one of the tightest elections he'd had.

Cleve Benedict, a Republican who'd been a congressman for one term, decided to run with the Reagan landslide behind him, hoping that he could defeat Senator Byrd. Unfortunately for Cleve Benedict, he started the campaign out by doing a bunch of dirty tricks at the announcements that Senator Byrd gave throughout the state on the day he announced at these airport press conferences. These dirty tricks that Benedict pulled backfired and basically hurt Benedict from that point on, so Senator Byrd ended winning by a good percentage. But the election could have been much tighter, given the fact that a lot of groups were very upset over the Canal Treaty, and that Reagan was very popular. Byrd at this point, because he'd been Majority Leader, he'd had to become more liberal, and he had basically hurt some of his base.

Smock: What kind of tricks was Cleve Benedict pulling on him?

Huggins: What he did was at every airport stop he would have some guy get up. At one stop he'd give a bundle of roses from the National Coal Association to Senator Byrd for everything he hadn't done to help coal. You know, he'd do things like this to try to bring attention to something Senator Byrd had done that was negative in his viewpoint, and he'd get somebody to stand up and say something in this press conference. The press especially got very incensed by what had been done at these press conferences, and the newspapers came out in editorials and really burned Benedict for this whole campaign of dirty tricks. It was seven or eight different things he'd done on the day Byrd had announced at these different events, and it really backfired on Benedict.

Smock: It was basically the veterans groups in West Virginia that was the problem that Byrd had with the Panama Canal Treaty, is that right?

Huggins: Yes. Well, yes. They were all, of course, connected to the national groups, so the VFW and the American Legion nationally, and then through their state chapters. Senator Byrd went to each of the conventions that summer, and they stood up and turned their back. I mean, they were very upset with Senator Byrd over the Panama Canal Treaty leadership, but Byrd went right to them and told them, "Look. I studied this. I did what I thought was best for this country. I know you're not happy with me, but you elected me to be a leader. You elected me to go to Washington and do what I thought was best for this country. That's what I did. You didn't elect a computer. You have to go up there and vote the way you wanted. You voted for a human to go to Washington, to study the issues, and to try to represent you in the best way possible. I did that. I know you're not happy with this, but I think history will tell that I was right."

Smock: And the veterans, of course, were against this because they felt that we were giving away American soil.

Huggins: That's right. Teddy Roosevelt stole it fair and square, and it was U.S. and we shouldn't give it back. It was a big thing with them that Teddy Roosevelt had built

it, and therefore it belonged to the United States. So they were very, very upset, along with a lot in the military that felt we shouldn't have gotten into these treaties.

But most people who were fair-minded could see that this was needed. With the situation in Latin America firing up and with a lot of problems down the road in El Salvador and other places, we didn't need to make any more enemies, and certainly if we'd have made Panama an enemy, they could have done a lot to disrupt the canal. The most important thing for everybody concerned was free commerce through that canal and a canal that worked. As we could see ourselves, the biggest ships that we had couldn't use the canal now, and even some of our warships couldn't use it. So the canal was becoming every year less important, but it was still something that we didn't want to see completely leave our sphere of influence. You ought to interview Jimmy Carter.

Smock: Yes. That would be good. He has done some interviews in which he covers this. I haven't looked at specifically what he said about the treaty, so some of that may be on the record.

Huggins: I'll tell you another story, too, about Jimmy Carter. This is the hostage situation in Iran. I was driving Senator Byrd when this happened, and we went down to the White House several days in a row. Senator Byrd wouldn't talk about what was going on until after it was over with. But after it was over with, he told me one day, he said, "You know, I told President Carter that you have to be very careful about listening to the military and about accepting everything they say as if they have exactly everything well planned and well laid out and that it's going to go the way they think, because I've seen it many, many times it didn't go the way they thought.

"And also, if this doesn't work, something happens, there's no doubt these hostages will be moved. They'll never be together again. We'll never have a chance to do this. Some of them might even be killed because of this if this fails. So I was very concerned about this whole thing, and I expressed my deep concern privately to the President that he was taking a big, big risk by doing this. But he felt that he had to do it, and he felt the military had confided that they were completely confident that they had the right people and the right equipment and it would all work. But I felt all along this was a major risk that the President was taking.

"Then sure enough, he called me and said, 'Senator, you're going to hear in about an hour or two where there's been a problem on this mission. It's failed. There's been some people killed and equipment destroyed, and so our mission to rescue the hostages has failed,' and I told him I was very sorry that this had happened during his watch. But afterwards I was not surprised, because I felt this was a long reach for them to be able to pull this off."

Smock: Let's go back and cover some of the people that worked in Senator Byrd's office when you were there, in particular the story of how in the early days his staff was run by a schoolmarm with an iron hand.

Huggins: Right. Virginia Yates was the administrative assistant, and she had been, I think, an English teacher. She never married, and she reminded me of a nun from a Catholic school who ran the office like she ran her school. She would walk around with a ruler in her hand, and she would tap on someone's typewriter or on their desk if they were doing something they shouldn't be, like on the telephone. She also had all of the typewriters' desk put against the wall so that the staff couldn't look at one another and just chitchat over their desk and had to be looking at the wall while they typed. All these things were done so that there would be the most efficiency in the office. Senator Byrd even wrote a grammar book for the staff.

Byrd was a real stickler for discipline, and he wanted to make sure that his office put out the most work and the best work every day. Virginia, being an English teacher, she was very good at grammar and sentence structure, and so she reviewed all the letters and sent any letter back that she didn't like and crossed out things that shouldn't be used. So she was a tough administrator, and she would not release the staff till all the work that day was done. On Fridays we couldn't be released till every letter had been answered that week, and so we had to be there sometimes on Fridays till seven o'clock or seven-thirty till every letter was finished. Then she would walk around with a little bell, ringing it like she was releasing us from school, and we would all know then that we were finished and we could leave for the evening.

So she ran it like a school in a way, but she was a very dedicated lady, and I had nothing but the highest regard for her. After she retired, Senator Byrd used to call her regularly and talk to her because he really felt a great kinship to her and always tried to look in on her after she retired to make sure she was okay.

Smock: Was she from West Virginia?

Huggins: No, she was not from West Virginia. She had just been hired because of her expertise and capability.

Smock: Had she worked for somebody else?

Huggins: I don't know her story. I don't know how she got there.

Smock: What else did you want to cover this afternoon?

Huggins: Well, maybe talk a little bit about what we saw. In the late eighties up to '85 we saw a big change coming in West Virginia's economy. We saw the economy basically changing from steel and a lot of coal mining jobs. The chemical industry was

going down. Steel was shutting down. The glass industry was almost completely closed. Chemicals were on the downtrend.

Seeing such a change in the economy, even though a senator's job is not usually involved in creating jobs, Senator Byrd thought he could do something maybe in Washington to help with the creation of jobs in West Virginia. We started what we called the Software Valley Initiative, which was a way basically to bring more high-tech opportunities to West Virginia. We saw a lot of these projects over the years come and go, and after they left West Virginia, there was nothing but an empty building. We saw the tech transfer leaving the state, and there was nothing really of critical mass left after millions of dollars of investment. So we decided to create what we thought was a way to start Centers of Excellence around the state at institutions of higher learning, and then build on those projects, and hopefully we could then spin off small businesses, and that's what we were able to do for a number of years.

From '85 to '95, for about ten years, Senator Byrd was able to fund through the appropriations process a lot of projects, about a billion dollars' worth of projects into West Virginia through the colleges, and through subcontracts with private businesses. Those businesses then flourished, and many of those businesses were able to capture that technology and use it then to bid on new contracts. That really helped a lot in building the information technology network in West Virginia that exists today. Also it helped in building the infrastructure for the Internet and the fiber optics and digital switches that are needed for all the back-office operations of the government agencies that are there.

So none of that would have happened if Senator Byrd had not got involved in this effort, and he is the primary person responsible for bringing these back-office operations, these government agencies to West Virginia, creating thousands and thousands of jobs. I would hate to see what the state would look like today if Senator Byrd had not been there and had not been able to do what he did in the late eighties and early nineties to help change the economy in West Virginia.

Smock: Senator Byrd always said when a reporter would ask him how many Presidents he worked under, he would always say that he never worked *under* any of them, that he worked *with* a number of them. Did he ever express a favorite in terms of who he got along with better or who he felt he was more productive in working with?

Huggins: Well, he always told me that his favorite president was Truman, even though he was only there for a few months before Truman left office. But he thought that Truman, being the tough guy he was with the slogan "The Buck Stops Here," he thought Truman was the best President in his lifetime.

He never said very much about Eisenhower. He liked President Nixon but saw that he had a major flaw, and Nixon, in the end with the Watergate situation, brought himself down. I think that in a way he identified a lot with Nixon because Nixon felt

among the Republicans that he wasn't respected. He went to Duke Law School, but he never felt he was part of the country-club set. He always felt that the blue-nosed Republicans looked down on him. I think Senator Byrd felt a lot like Nixon did. They had to try harder. They were number two, trying to try harder. And although they became number one, they always felt like that they had to try a little bit harder, they had to work a little bit more because other people just didn't expect them to make it. So when they did, there was always a lot of questions about, well, did they really deserve to be where they ended up being. He liked Nixon, but he felt in the end that Nixon had a definite personality flaw that created the situation that brought him down.

He liked President Ford, but I don't think he thought he was the brightest guy around. He thought that President Clinton would possibly do a good job, but he became very, very disenchanted with Clinton over Clinton's personal indiscretions, and felt that Clinton had given up a grand opportunity as a Democratic president to really be quite a president. If it hadn't have been for his own indiscretions, Clinton had done a lot with balancing the budget and with creating a surplus. As a Democrat he had done a lot as a president. But he was very disappointed with Clinton's indiscretions. I think he liked him personally, but felt, a lot like Nixon, he had that flaw. It's funny because Clinton has come to regard Senator Byrd as a great legislator, and I was very pleased to see President Clinton attend the senator's funeral in Charleston and give such eloquent remarks about Senator Byrd, especially about his Klan membership.

Of all the Presidents, I think he disliked President Bush the second the most. He absolutely despised him, thought he was a terrible president and thought that he was making a horrible mistake getting involved in Iraq, and he lied to the American people over the weapons of mass destruction, and thought the whole administration was warped.

Smock: Of course, you've talked briefly about his hawkishness in the Vietnam War and his complete change. That's one of the various metamorphoses that we've seen in Senator Byrd's career, certainly the one on the war—

Huggins: I talked about his journey from being in the Klan to the man who put the last money, the funding in to finish the memorial for King. He said, "Who better than me to put this money in to finish the King Memorial?" And the same thing, he said, "I was the last senator out of Vietnam, but I'm going to be the first one against going into Iraq because I've seen what countries with civil wars and the kind of problems that Vietnam created can create, and we're going to get involved in another situation like that in Iraq."

So he was at the very front of those opposed in the very beginning when it was not the political thing to do with a lot of Democrats, like Kennedy and some of the others voted for going into Iraq. Byrd never did. At one point I think he was the only vote—maybe he and one other member were the only two votes against getting involved. He felt from the very beginning that Iraq was a major mistake. I mean, Iraq was a tool against

Iran. I'm not trying to say much for Saddam Hussein, but he was a balance against Iran. I mean, there's no doubt he did horrible things to his people, but I think you have to look at what the cost to the American lives and to American financial interest has been, and it's been a major mistake to be involved in Iraq.

Smock: All right. I think we're close to wrapping it up. Just in reflecting, if there's anything else—of course this doesn't have to be the end of our interview. We can do this again. In fact, what might happen and what often happens in these oral history programs is that the more you talk to different folks, other stories come to light. Also I'll talk to other people and your name will come up in a context, and then I might come back to you to get your feeling of that. So I see this as an ongoing process, and we've covered quite a bit just in the couple of interviews that we've had. Any final thoughts or words before we close it off?

Huggins: Well, I mean, knowing Senator Byrd, he was without a doubt the greatest man I've ever known, and it was a real privilege to work with him. The greatest part of my life I believe I spent working with him.

The last time I went to see him before he died, I went to his home on a Sunday and I talked with him for about an hour. I never will forget he held my hand as I started to leave, and I told him that I wanted to come back and see him another time, because I was driving up from Florida for that visit and then driving back, and that I would come back and see him again. He kept holding my hand all the way out of his house. He wouldn't release my hand, and he kept saying, "Jimmy, don't wait too long to come and see me again. Just don't put it off. Don't wait too long."

I finally got my hand back and I thought, you know, I may never see him again. I felt like that when I left, I didn't know that he was going to get sick and then pass on right after that, but some sense came over me that this was a special time, that when I saw him, this might be the last time. And I'll never forget that, the fact that he wouldn't let go of my hand, and he kept saying, "Jim, don't wait too long now before you come to see me again."

And I told him, "No, no, I'll come back as soon as I can."

When I left, I felt so sad because he was the shell of the man that I had once known. I saw him sitting in his reclining chair in his—he had a kitchen and a little dining room there together that he used as a study. It was in his kitchen, and it was full of books. They'd made it into a little office there. He couldn't get up and down stairs. His office, which was upstairs, he probably couldn't get to any longer, so he was using that little room there off his kitchen as a study. It had a television in it, and that's where he spent most of his time. It was full of books. Also there was a figure that I'd gotten him from the Charleston baseball team. They'd come up with these little statues of Byrd to give out to

some of their fans, and I'd gotten him one from the owner of the Charleston baseball team, and it was on his desk.

I just thought to myself, gee, how I remember when Mrs. Byrd was there, how she was always having a meal on the table and asking me if I wanted to sit down and eat, and how different it was now to see him so feeble, yet still very sharp mentally. But I felt that I probably wouldn't be visiting with him too many more times, and that ended up being the last time I saw him.

I talked to his daughter after that, and I asked her if she had any idea that he was that sick. She said no, that they thought that he was just going in basically to get some antibiotics and he was supposed to be coming back out again. They had no idea that he was that critical till they got a call from the hospital. They fully expected him to be released, and it was quite a shock to them when they were told that he was going to be passing.

Smock: One final thing. We broached this briefly, but I don't think we were on the record. Tell me a little bit of your understanding of Byrd's relationship with his two daughters.

Huggins: The two daughters, Mona and Marjorie, Mona was the oldest and she was a schoolteacher. My two children went to the grade school in McLean where she taught, so I knew her pretty well. The other daughter, Marjorie, lived, I think, around Leesburg, Virginia, on a farm. Her husband had worked for the post office. Now, Mona's husband, Mohammed, had worked for the Navy as a physicist, I think with the Naval Research Institute or some research arm of the Navy. He was a physicist, I think. At one point he tried to go to law school, but I think he decided that was too difficult.

But anyway, during the entire time I was there, I was very active with the West Virginia Society, I served as president for two years, and with the WVU Alumni Association. We had several events that we would invite Senator Byrd to, inaugural parties, and we had two tribute dinners for Senator Byrd, one with President Carter and Secretary of State Vance and one with President Clinton. Both of those I served as co-chairman.

At all these events we had for Senator Byrd, inaugural events, the tribute dinners, none of his family ever came to any of these events. I thought that was kind of strange throughout the years that his family never got involved in any of his Senate duties or any of the associations around West Virginia. It was a very close-knit family. The family got together on weekends. He visited his daughters quite a bit, but they never got involved publicly with anything he did over the years.

It wasn't until later when a couple of his grandchildren came to work in his office that his grandchildren would come to his parties. He used to have an annual Christmas

party, but none of his family would ever come to any of these events. So I never really inquired into why, other than I just got the feeling that his family always felt like that they didn't want to go to these things, that they felt that they were matters outside their family.

Smock: All right. That was very good. Again, thank you very much, Jim, for your time and for your tremendous number of insights into Senator Byrd's career and your involvement with him. I look forward to chatting with you again.

Huggins: Sure, and I'll be glad to follow up if you have any additional questions.

Smock: We will do that. As I mentioned, these transcripts will come to you, and you can edit it and fill in some of the blanks and some of the names that we might misspell when we transcribe it.

Huggins: That would be great.

Smock: Okay. Thank you so much, Jim.

Huggins: Thank you for your time for coming here.

Interview #3
Thursday, January 19, 2012

Smock: Okay, Jim, we're on and we're recording. This is an oral history interview with Jim Huggins, a follow-up on earlier interviews that we've conducted. Today is January 19, 2012. This is a telephone interview with Jim Huggins, who's in Bradenton, Florida. Jim, we appreciate all you've done in the past with these interviews, and we look forward to today's conversation.

Huggins: Okay, great.

Smock: Now, one of the things we wanted to talk about first, Jim, is you wanted to share with us some of the acquaintances, some of the people who were in Byrd's life, public officials and others that he knew, and what he thought about some of those folks, so start wherever you think you'd like to.

Huggins: This basically came to mind because I recently learned that [former West Virginia governor] Hulett Smith had passed away. Hulett Smith I think was in his nineties, and he was a contemporary of Senator Byrd's, both being from Raleigh County from the Beckley area. Hulett Smith had served as governor I believe from '64 to '68, and Smith of course had been a young man whose father had been a member of Congress from West Virginia and there is quite a bit of wealth in the Smith family, so I'm sure as youngsters they didn't know one another because they basically were coming from different backgrounds. And Senator Byrd didn't arrive in Raleigh County until he was basically about high school age or close to high school age. So he didn't know Hulett as a young boy. But they became very good friends, and later, when Senator Byrd was in the Senate and Hulett was governor, I would say that probably Byrd had as good a relationship with Governor Smith as with any governor, with the exception maybe of Gaston Caperton. I would say that Senator Byrd and Gaston Caperton grew to be extremely close. Caperton was affiliated with Byrd's campaign and was one of Byrd's chairmen for finance. So over the years Gaston Caperton had been known to Byrd, though once he became governor I would say that probably Byrd and Caperton's relationship was so close that it was maybe even closer than his relationship with Hulett Smith. And that probably had been the relationship that was the closest that Byrd had with a governor over the years of which I'm aware and of which I have any knowledge. So I just wanted to point out a couple of these facts. I think that later on, as people look back on this period, it will be helpful to know about how some of these people got along.

I know that Senator Byrd when he first started thinking about running for the Senate was a congressman--Harley Kilgore had been the senator, and he had died in '52, then Chapman Revercomb took that seat, which Byrd later ran for in '58, the one he was elected to. But Byrd told me that he talked to Harley Kilgore in the mid-'50s, and he thought that Kilgore was a good model for a senator and that he wanted to model himself after Harley Kilgore. It's interesting because Kilgore probably was not noted for any greatness. He was a good senator but not probably noted for anything outstanding, and Byrd really became someone who was an icon in West Virginia politics, even on the national level. But it's interesting, some of the people Byrd mentioned as people he looked up to. I mentioned earlier [Matthew] M. Neely. Neely had been a very popular politician in the forties, a congressman, governor, and then senator. Byrd had problems with Neely. Neely had been the one who wanted to lead the movement to keep Senator Byrd from being elected to the House because of his Klan background. It's interesting because one of Neely's top proteges was Bob Mollohan, who later became a congressman. I think he ran in '52 for Congress, then in '56 for governor. But anyway, Bob Mollohan and Senator Byrd became extremely close friends, and over the years I would say that their affiliation and their association was probably one of the closest that Byrd had, and that was interesting considering the fact that Bob Mollohan had been such a close protege of M. M. Neely. And then of course Alan Mollohan, Bob's son, followed Bob Mollohan into Congress and was a congressman for either 26 or 28 years until he was defeated two years ago [in 2010] in the Democratic primary and lost his seat. Byrd also was very close to Representative John Slack, who took Byrd's House seat upon his Senate election. Slack was on the House Appropriations Committee and worked closely with Byrd until Slack's death [in 1980].

But Alan Mollohan and Byrd became very close. Alan got on the Appropriations committee in the House and Byrd and Alan Mollohan worked very closely together on many West Virginia projects over the years because Alan would work the House Appropriations side and then Byrd would work in the Senate, and they would help support each other in their projects as Byrd and Slack had done, although Byrd was much more the senior partner and probably did more for Mollohan even with some of the House leadership than Mollohan was able to do sometimes. But Byrd very much valued Alan Mollohan's work and his friendship and they worked together quite a bit. I mentioned earlier Nick [Joe] Rahall because Joe Rahall had been a good friend of Senator Byrd's and had driven Senator Byrd around in the early years when Byrd first ran for office. Senator Byrd gave Nick a job in the Democratic cloakroom when Nick came out of college, and it gave Nick kind of the bug for wanting to run for public office. So Nick later then ran for Congress when Ken Hechler decided to run for governor in 1976 and opened up that congressional seat in southern West Virginia. So then Nick Rahall ran and won that seat and has been a member of Congress ever since. He at one point was the youngest member of Congress, and now is one of the longest-serving members, with over thirty years in Congress, and he is the only current Democratic member of our three-member delegation. The other two members currently are Republicans. So Nick Rahall

has been a strong friend of Senator Byrd's, and Senator Byrd used to stay in his father Joe's residence when he visited Beckley when Nick's mother Alice was alive, and then when Nick first married Helen, I remember that we stayed in their house in Beckley several times when Byrd visited in that area when Nick was first elected to Congress.

So let me say that I wanted to mention some of these people because of their influence over the years. In 1946, when Senator Byrd was first elected to the House of Delegates, it was a very interesting class. That year Byrd was first elected, Cecil Underwood was first elected from Sistersville as a young Republican, and A. James Manchin was first elected as a young man from Marion County, and all three of these men would later become quite big leaders in their different parties. Cecil Underwood later became governor of West Virginia and would serve two terms. A. James Manchin became secretary of state and then state treasurer and later got into trouble as treasurer and was impeached in the House and he resigned before he was convicted in the Senate (to be able to keep his pension). He later went back and kind of rehabilitated himself by being elected to the House of Delegates again from Marion County. But the Manchins are very famous politicians from Marion County. There were three Manchin brothers. Papa Joe, the father, owned a store in Farmington, and he had three sons: John Manchin, who is the current Senator Joe Manchin's father; Joe Manchin, Jr., who operated a physical fitness and rehab center in Clarksburg for rehabilitating people with disabilities; and then A. James Manchin was the third of the sons, and the Manchins were all very well known Marion County politicians, and there was a very big feud that existed between the Mollohans and the Manchins, like the famous Hatfields and McCoys. I think this is something that is noteworthy because the feud existed for many years. I don't know whether anyone knows how it really started, but the feud really came to a head when Bob Mollohan was re-elected to Congress after Arch Moore was elected governor in '68. Moore had taken Bob Mollohan's seat in Congress between '57 and '68, and in '68 Arch Moore ran for governor, and that gave Bob Mollohan a chance to be re-elected to Congress and to go back again.

In 1970, the Manchins decided to recruit Sam Huff, who was an all-American football player at WVU and played with the New York Giants and the Washington Redskins as a professional football player. He was a native of Farmington, and they recruited him to come back and run against Bob Mollohan for Congress. They got Arch Moore to have an announcement party in the governor's office, and this is interesting since Moore was a Republican, but they had this announcement in the governor's office for a Democratic congressional election, and the Manchins, John and Joe, were the campaign managers for Sam Huff against Bob Mollohan. So this became a very tightly contested election, and Bob Mollohan won the nomination for reelection over Sam Huff, but that really heightened the feud between the Mollohans and the Manchins, which existed on through to the sons Alan Mollohan and Joe Manchin III.

Of course now Alan Mollohan is retired from Congress. I believe he's back practicing law again in Washington, and of course Joe Manchin, who was governor, is now in Senator Byrd's seat in the Senate. He won the two-year seat to fill Byrd's end of his term, and then this year in 2012 it's expected that Senator Manchin will run for the full six-year term, and then if he wins he will have the seat in his own right.

Smock: Jim, can I interrupt you at this point? Getting back to the Mollohan-Manchin feud, where does Byrd fit into that? Did he get involved in that?

Huggins: No. Senator Byrd stayed completely out of that. He considered Jimmy and John Manchin to be friends, and of course Bob Mollohan to be a friend, and he did not in any way get involved in that feud in that contest in 1970. He stayed out of it. He believed basically that one did not get involved in primary elections, and then what he would do, he would support the Democrat in the general election. But he very rarely got involved. He did support Nick Rahall in the primary when Rahall ran the first time in that primary, and then he supported Rahall when Ken Hechler tried to come back as a write-in candidate and get his House seat back. Senator Byrd strongly came out for Nick Rahall, but Byrd very rarely--I only know of one or two times--ever got involved in primary elections. He always stayed out of primaries and believed you should let the primary process work, and then he would support the general election candidate across the board as a good Democrat. He felt that it was bad because primaries many times were so divisive that one got hurt even being allied with somebody. So his view was that, unless he was running himself as a candidate, he stayed out of all the primaries. He stayed out of the 1976 gubernatorial primary between Rockefeller and Jim Sprouse, too. After Jay was elected governor, Byrd got Sprouse appointed as a US federal circuit judge.

Smock: That's good. Also, following up on Governor Smith, they were friends and they worked together, and of course Smith was governor from 1965 to 1969.

Huggins: Right.

Smock: And that was just as Byrd was starting to move up in the Senate leadership. He hadn't quite achieved that status yet, but he was high on the Appropriations Committee I expect at that point already.

Huggins: Yes, he started, as I mentioned earlier...his first chairmanship was of the DC Appropriations Subcommittee, which was thought of to be the junior of the thirteen subcommittees. Then he worked his way up. He was a member I think of three or four subcommittees, and over time he worked his way up to become chairman of the final subcommittee that he served on, Homeland Security. He was not originally a member of the Defense Subcommittee, but he got himself on the Defense Subcommittee. He was chairman of the Interior Subcommittee for several years. He was chairman of another subcommittee, I'm trying to remember which, I believe Transportation, too.

Smock: What I'm driving at is, in what capacity that you may know of did he and Governor Smith work to do anything particular at that time?

Huggins: Smith was a one-time governor, but this was during a lot of the interstate [highway] buildup in the sixties, and Lyndon Johnson was president, and so Smith would come to Washington, and I know from Senator Byrd talking and from seeing Byrd and Smith together on TV that they worked quite a bit together on a lot of programs, Appalachian Regional Commission programs, poverty programs, a lot of programs that were started under President Kennedy, when Kennedy saw how bad things were campaigning in West Virginia, really came to fruition under Johnson and then Smith as governor, so a lot of the projects were started by President Kennedy. President Johnson came to Summersville when they finished the Summersville dam and lake project, and President Johnson dedicated that project.

Smock: What's the name of the lake again?

Huggins: Summersville.

Smock: Summersville, yes.

Huggins: Summersville dam and lake. That was a very big recreation area, and I know President Johnson came to West Virginia for that, and so I know that after Governor Smith went out of office, Arch Moore came in. And Arch of course was a Republican, and then Nixon was elected president. So that changed things pretty much for West Virginia. The Nixon administration liked to work through Arch Moore, so a lot of programs that Byrd had been directly involved in with the federal government and the Johnson administration changed and became Nixon and Arch Moore. So I think it was kind of a change at that point in a lot of projects that went on. Byrd as you said grew on Appropriations and moved his way up on to other subcommittees as his seniority grew, and he took on more responsibility and was able to get more projects in other subcommittees, and then also because of his leadership ascendancy, becoming Majority Whip and then later Majority Leader. That helped him out quite a bit in getting a lot of things passed that normal senators could not have gotten done. I mentioned earlier about the work on the Tug River dam and flood-wall projects in Mingo County and McDowell County and Logan County and Wayne County where there was a real problem getting that authorization. [Senator Jennings] Randolph could not get his committee to authorize it because it did not meet the Corps of Engineers cost-benefit ratio formula, and Byrd had to do it alone at 11:00 PM one night on the floor with only Senator Baker basically there to get it done.

Smock: Yes, I think you told me that story. We have that one.

Huggins: That's right. So those are the things Senator Byrd was able to do. But anyway, I just wanted to go back to the Manchin and the Mollohan feud. One of the things that was a problem was the Manchins. Joe Manchin Jr. had been very much involved in supporting Jim Sprouse's campaign in '68 when he ran for governor the first time against Arch Moore. And the Manchins had been big supporters of Jim Sprouse. And then right after the primary was over, it came as a big shock when out in the paper there was an announcement that Democrats for Arch Moore had been started and Joe Manchin Jr. was the chairman of this committee. And many Democrats took that with great surprise that the Manchins had been big supporters of Jim Sprouse and then switched over to work for Arch Moore. So the Manchins have had a reputation of being kind of on both sides. They were Democrats but at the same time they were supporters of Arch Moore. So that's kind of an interesting story about the Manchins, and of course the family is still very much a force today with Senator Joe Manchin III being in the US Senate. At one point, Joe Manchin III was in the state senate, and his cousin, A. James Manchin's son Mark Anthony Manchin, served in the state senate from Kanawha County, so they had two Manchin cousins serving in the state senate at the same time. Joe Manchin III has gone on as I said to become a very popular governor and now a US senator. Underwood I mentioned...Senator Byrd and Underwood had a very cordial relationship over the years. Underwood as a Republican when Senator Byrd started his Software Valley initiative in Morgantown, and some of the people who were involved with that got together. Underwood was very much interested in playing a visible position in that, and Senator Byrd agreed for Governor Underwood to become president of that Software Valley corporation, which was really the first high-tech movement in West Virginia to move a whole new mindset into the state from its traditional role of being a coal and an old manufacturing economy into high technology and information and telecommunications-type jobs. So Cecil Underwood was president of Software Valley for several years and then ran again for governor and was elected and served another term as governor, I believe in the '90s. Then he was defeated by Bob Wise, who was a popular congressman from the Charleston area.

But anyway, Bob Wise was a one-term governor, and at one point, when Wise was in congress, there was some speculation that Wise might take on Senator Byrd for the Senate. Wise had knocked off Senator Bill Brotherton, who had been president of the state senate, for that state senate seat, and then Wise had been in the state senate for only a few years. And in 1980, there were some changes in the congressional makeup in West Virginia. Two Republicans were elected, Mick Staton of Charleston and Cleve Benedict of Lewisburg. And so Mick Staton was elected to the then third district, which was the Charleston-based district, and Cleve Benedict was elected to the second district, which was the district that covered the eastern part of the state.

Smock: Jim, I'm going to interrupt you at this point because I think we're getting a little bit far away from Senator Byrd. A lot of the information that you're giving me now

is the kind of thing that we can get from many sources, like lists of what officers were in at any given time. So let's--

Huggins: I was just mentioning Wise because Wise had sent out some feelers that he might want to run against Senator Byrd. So Senator Byrd took very seriously the talk at that time about Congressman Wise, who won in 1982, and so Byrd had just won a very difficult reelection against Cleve Benedict, and so because Byrd had moved to the left quite a bit as Democratic leader from his original, more conservative roots, there was some feeling that Wise, because he had been the giant killer, he'd beaten the president of the state senate, he'd beaten Congressman Mick Staton, he might run against Senator Byrd. But he later came out and said that he wouldn't run against Byrd, that Byrd didn't have to worry, although Senator Byrd was never worried. But some of his people leaked to the press that the congressman was going to stay in Congress, and then he later ran for governor and ended up being a one-term governor, getting himself in trouble with a scandal in his administration, and he ended up only serving one term and then leaving West Virginia. So I just wanted to mention the fact that at one point, Bob Wise had kind of touted himself as probably someone who would run for the Senate but never did.

Smock: Okay.

Huggins: Okay. Of course, Senator Randolph--I mentioned quite a bit about him. Senator Rockefeller as governor worked very well with Senator Byrd, and I would say that their relationship was cordial. Senator Rockefeller, I think in 1970, when Senator Byrd was running for reelection and Rockefeller was rather new to West Virginia, made a contribution of I think a thousand dollars to John McOwen, an attorney from Huntington who was a primary opponent, and that caught Senator Byrd's attention. So after that Senator Byrd was always aware of the fact that Rockefeller had made a donation to his opponent in that election. I think Rockefeller probably thought Senator Byrd was too conservative. At that point Rockefeller was very young and probably more liberal than he is today. It has been reported that Rockefeller later said that probably one of the biggest mistakes he ever made was making that political contribution to McOwen because it was really foolish, and later he had to develop a relationship with Senator Byrd. And Byrd was the kind of guy who never forgot anything. He was an old-style type of politician where loyalty meant everything, and over the years he and Governor Rockefeller, then later Senator Rockefeller have had a good relationship, but it has been rocky on occasion, and one of the rockiest points was when Rockefeller was first elected to the Senate. I think Senator Rockefeller felt that Senator Byrd didn't do as much as he could have to help him. That was a very difficult election. I think Fritz Mondale was running for president, and in West Virginia the polls were not real favorable for Mondale and I think Rockefeller was running against John Raese, and that was a very difficult election for Rockefeller, and Senator Byrd and the Raese family, John Raese's father, Richard "Dyke" Raese, Sr., had been friends for many, many years. Dyke Raese was a Republican from Morgantown. He was the basketball coach of the 1942 WVU national championship

team. He later married the daughter of the Greer family. The Greers were very wealthy industrialists who owned Greer Limestone, newspapers, steel, radio stations, and coal companies. They were probably one of the two wealthiest families in Morgantown, and so John Raese inherited a lot of wealth, and that election was very difficult, and Rockefeller did move on to the Senate, I think for a few years after that he felt Senator Byrd had not done as much as he felt Senator Byrd should have done to help him get elected. But Senator Byrd I believe felt he did everything he could, having endorsed and campaigned hard for Jay. Finally that little rift healed, and later they became I believe even closer, and I think that towards the end of Senator Byrd's life, Senator Byrd and Senator Rockefeller became very close and worked together very well. I believe Rockefeller has become an outstanding US senator for West Virginia.

But in the first few years, the relationship was difficult. Senator Rockefeller didn't get along with Governor Caperton, who had been one of his best friends, so there was a rift there. Byrd and Gaston Caperton were extremely close, I think Senator Byrd probably had the closest relationship of any governor with Governor Caperton that I know of, and so I think that it's important to note that this period was very successful for cooperation between Senator Byrd, who at that point was very high on Appropriations, maybe even chairman, and Governor Caperton. They used to talk regularly about projects that Governor Caperton wanted done that needed federal support, and Byrd would always put those at the top of his list of things he wanted to do. So that was a very close relationship. The same was not true with Arch Moore. Moore and Byrd did not get along, and on several occasions, Moore would do little things to tick Senator Byrd off, like not invite him to dedications. For instance, when they finished the West Virginia Turnpike, there was a big ceremony marking the completion of the turnpike, and there were a lot of federal funds used in four-laning the turnpike and changing it over to Interstate 77, and Senator Byrd called Governor Moore, basically at Senator Randolph's request, because Randolph had been chairman of Public Works, and he wanted to attend the dedication. And so Senator Byrd called Governor Moore and asked him if they could attend the dedication ceremony at the site of the old Memorial Tunnel overpass, and Governor Moore told him no, that he had a very busy program, he had a couple of bands and a choir singing, and he just had too many people on the program to accommodate the state's two US senators. Senator Byrd told him, "I understand your meaning here, thank you very much," and hung up. And I don't think Senator Byrd ever spoke to Governor Moore again. I know that ended any further cooperation that Senator Byrd had with Governor Moore, who was later convicted and sent to federal prison for numerous crimes.

Smock: Let me ask you a general question about the various governors that were in West Virginia during Byrd's service in the Senate, especially some like Rockefeller. You know, Rockefeller ran in '72 and was defeated by Arch Moore before he came back and won in '76, I guess it was. Did Byrd ever stomp for governors when they were running? How did he find ways to support them?

Huggins: Well, you know, that's an interesting case. In the '72 campaign, George McGovern was the Democratic nominee, and McGovern was very liberal and very much against the war, while Byrd had supported it. And Rockefeller as a candidate was against Appalachian strip-mining, which was very controversial. Byrd knew that Rockefeller, then secretary of state, probably wouldn't be elected. Now I wasn't working for him then, but from what I've been told, Byrd stayed completely out of that election and did not campaign. In the general election, he endorsed the Democrats who were the Democratic candidates, but did not do much. You know going back, to West Virginia...Because he was not a candidate himself, he tried to distance himself from that because he knew how controversial some of these positions were and how it would hurt him. He was very much an advocate of coal and coal mining, so he did not want to get involved in that strip mine battle.

Smock: Okay. Can we move on? I think you had a few more stories to tell about Senator Byrd's early years, his courtship with Erma, some other things you'd like to talk about?

Huggins: You mentioned some of the stories that Senator Byrd used to tell. Some of them I think were very cute and very telling and would embarrass Mrs. Byrd. But Senator Byrd, having been from a very poor background...When he was going to school in Stotesbury, there was a boy there, his name was Julius Tecosh. And Julius-

Smock: How do you spell that? Do you have any idea?

Huggins: I don't know. He said he was a Jewish young man... Tecosh, I'm thinking it's something like T-E-C-O-S-H.

Smock: P as in Peter?

Huggins: T as in Tom.

Smock: T as in Tom. Tecosh. Okay.

Huggins: Julius Tecosh. Anyway, Julius's father owned a general store in Stotesbury, and Julius would always come to school every morning with pockets full of candy and bubble gum and chewing gum and things like that that he got from his father's store. And Senator Byrd said that he would always be the first student to meet Julius at the school door and he would ask Julius for any bubble gum or chewing gum or any candy he had, and Julius would give him some, and then he said he would wait for the classes to change and he'd meet up with Erma and he'd give Erma this chewing gum and this candy. And he said that's how you would court your girl, with another boy's bubble gum. "And it stuck pretty well," he said. "We've been married now for fifty years" or

fifty-two years and he'd always look at Mrs. Byrd and wink at her, and she would roll her eyes back like, "Why do you always tell this story?" but he told that story many, many times as a way that he would get chewing gum and candy because he couldn't afford it himself. And he'd give it to Erma, and he would court her with another boy's candy and bubble gum.

Also, he talked about how as a young boy he would go around...His mother ran a boarding house as a way to make extra money for miners to eat meals, and his father raised hogs as a sideline to his being a coal miner. And so it was young Robert's job to go around to the different families there in the coal camp and pick up scraps from the table from leftover food and he would feed the pigs the scraps, and then every year at butcher time he would take part of the meat from the butchered hogs and he would go around to the women who'd given him scraps and he would give them slabs of pork and bacon and ham to pay them back for some of the food that they'd given him over the year to feed his hogs. That was one of the ways that the Byrd family raised money because, as you know, early in the years as a coal miner you worked twelve hour shifts six days a week. They were paid in script which was only good many times at the company store, and so miners had very little actual spending money they could use for buying things that they couldn't buy at the company store. So this was one of the ways that the Byrds had for making spending cash that they could use to buy things that weren't purchased through the company store. And those were the sort of things that Byrd said reminded him so much about how difficult it was to be in a coal mining family, when the miners had to work so hard, and they were so happy when Roosevelt became president and Roosevelt brought in collective bargaining and the unions were able to organize and change a lot of the laws that set up the number of hours in a work week and set up the rules for mining and brought more regulations into the mines, made the mines safer and made it easier then for the mining families. So Byrd said that that made a big impression oh him, those early days of living in the coal camps and having to raise hogs.

Also as a boy he sold the Cincinnati Post on Sundays and he had about \$23 or \$24 saved up, and he put it in the bank in Bluefield, and in '29, when the banks crashed, he lost his \$24, and he said he never saw that \$24 again. That made a big impression on him too, the fact that the banks could fail and wipe out the savings of everybody, and you know that's one of the reasons why he believed a lot in federal regulations for the banking industry and the FDIC and a lot of the rules that came along later that made it safer and better for the average workers to be able to save their money without fear of losing it, and to have better working hours and better laws governing the workplace and everything. So he was always a big proponent of those types of legislation.

I wanted to mention also that Senator Kenna has his statue in Statutory Hall in the Capitol in Washington and a lot of people wonder why Senator Kenna is there. He's there with Francis Pierpont, who was governor of Virginia during the Civil War, but was a West Virginian, and let West Virginia break off from Virginia. He had been governor of the

reconstructed West Virginia, of Virginia, which was really West Virginia during the Civil War. So Francis Pierpont and Senator Kenna are two statues. And Kenna was the man who championed moving the state capital to Charleston. The state capital originally had been moved between Charleston and Wheeling. Wheeling had been the first organizational meeting site for the new state of West Virginia capital, and then they moved it to Charleston, then back to Wheeling, then back to Charleston. They used to call it the “capital on the barge” because the barge kept moving it up and down the river between Wheeling and Charleston. But Kenna was the man from Kanawha County who championed the vote which was the statewide referendum which then chose Charleston as the permanent state capital. Byrd told the story about Kenna. Kenna had campaigned for this and he went around with a circus at the time, and the circus gave him some time to speak at each one of their events. And it was hard to get the crowd together to talk about this, but Kenna used the circus as a venue for talking about moving the capital permanently to Charleston. And when the election came, Charleston won out as the permanent site for the new state capital. That’s how Charleston ended up being West Virginia’s permanent capital.

[I want to mention some of Senator Byrd’s favorite restaurants. For steaks, he liked the Char in Beckley. He liked the Bavarian Inn, located in Shepherdstown, and had several dinners, Senate functions, and special personal events there. His friend Bob Person introduced him to the Southern Kitchen in Kanawha City (Charleston), and he really liked its country cooking. He had a story on it placed in the Congressional Record. They had the page framed with Byrd’s autographed picture and placed it on the restaurant’s wall. It is now closed after the owner died.]

I think I've probably talked about many of the people I wanted to mention. I think I wanted maybe to talk next about the staff meeting structure, how Senator Byrd would set up his staff meetings. Do you have any questions on anything I've said?

Smock: No, no, this is fine, and yes, I think that, of the points we talked about before the interview began, the remaining ones are more focused on Senator Byrd, which is what we want to keep the focus on. So yes, please proceed. I think you were going to mention how Byrd conducted a staff meeting, using the issue of the development in Fairmont as an example.

Huggins: Right, right. That's right. You know, I want to mention one other thing. I just want to mention Harley Staggers. Harley Staggers was the congressman for many years from Keyser, and Harley was elected in 1948, after Senator Randolph, who had had that seat from '32 to '46, was defeated right after World War II, and then in '48 there was a one-term Republican congressman from Kingwood, and then Harley Staggers had that seat until 1980, when he retired, and that's when Cleve Benedict got that seat for one term. But Harley Staggers had a very good reputation with Senator Byrd over the years, and Senator Byrd thought very highly of him, and his son Buckey Staggers later became

a congressman for a few terms--that was Harley Staggers Jr.--until he was defeated by Alan Mollohan in a redistricting primary, when West Virginia lost a congressional seat, and so Buckey lost out to Alan Mollohan. But Buckey was a very nice young man and a very talented young congressman. As I said, he didn't last very long, but he used to call me "West Virginia's third senator," which was kind of amusing, because I guess at that time Randolph and Byrd were the senators and Buckey would always kid me by calling me "West Virginia's third senator," which was kind of a funny sideline.

Smock: You know, Jim, we have Harley's papers and Buckey's papers here at the Byrd Center.

Huggins: That's really great.

Smock: And it was Buckey that gave us permission to go over to Keyser and retrieve Harley's papers and his papers from a barn there where they were stored on the Staggers property in Keyser.

Huggins: I've been to the Staggers farm and it's up in this little hollow. It's really a very interesting place. Since you've been there, you know--it's a very interesting farmhouse and barn and it's right in the middle of this little hollow.

Smock: Yes.

Huggins: It's amazing that Harley Staggers was in Congress for so many years. That's one thing that Byrd mentioned: He said, "Look, if I'd ever been motivated by greed, I could have been a very wealthy man. I was in Congress back in the days when you could make a lot of money being a member of Congress or a Senator, like Senator Kerr from Oklahoma, who was a multi-millionaire. When Kerr died, they found millions of dollars in his office safe in the Senate. You know, Kerr used to walk around with money in his pocket, supposedly giving members money for votes. I mean, there's some really colorful figures in the Senate back in the fifties and sixties. But anyway, I'm glad that you got those papers from Buckey Staggers and from Harley.

On to the staff meetings. I wanted to mention this because this was the last project I worked on for Senator Byrd, and it brought about the development of the NASA facility in Fairmont, which was the NASA software center. The center was the IVV software center, and IVV stood for Independent Verification and Validation of software. You know, we on the staff looked for opportunities wherever we could to bring projects to West Virginia, and so Senator Byrd when he became chairman of Appropriations sent out word to all thirteen subcommittee staff directors that he wanted them every year to question their agencies and see if there were any projects that could be brought to West Virginia. And it so happened that the new associate administrator at NASA for congressional liaison was a West Virginian by the name of Jon McBride. Jon McBride had been an

astronaut, he was a Navy captain who had been a Navy pilot and was an astronaut. He'd been born in Beckley but had been brought to Charleston and went to high school in Charleston, and then went off to college and to the Navy, but considered West Virginia his home. So when we discovered that the associate administrator for NASA was a West Virginian, we immediately hit off a relationship, and he wanted to do everything in his power to help West Virginia get projects. So we put together a pretty good team of McBride and our staff to try to find things that we could do in West Virginia. Now this brought about this project. As I stated before, I worked on developing projects for West Virginia, and my job basically was that I would be the one that the company would first approach in Byrd's office, and they would say, "Look, we have an idea for a project, and we would like to know if Senator Byrd would be interested in helping us with this because we're going to need some congressional funding," or, "We're going to need Senator Byrd to approach the Department of Defense, and we need help on this. We'd like to know if this is something Senator Byrd would be interested in." They would approach me, they would then brief me on it, I would then type up a kind of rough draft of what the project was about, and then I would decide whether or not I thought it had merit, and if it had merit, whether or not it was something that Senator Byrd might want to do. And if I decided that it met those two criteria, then I would send a memo over to Senator Byrd, and then Senator Byrd would look at it and he would decide whether or not he wanted to go forward with it as a staff project, and ultimately come to him for some sort of a final decision. And then I would get word back from him via his return memo, you know, "Yes, proceed," or, "No, we probably shouldn't do this," and I would write a letter from Byrd saying, "I'm sorry I can't be helpful," or, "Yes, there seems to be some opportunity here, I want to explore further." So then we would go to the next stage. So this came to us as a proposal. NASA had a major problem with its software. They had just launched the Hubble telescope, which had not worked. Once they launched it into space, spent millions and millions of dollars developing and launching it, it didn't work, because there was a software glitch. And we came to find out that the people who had built the Hubble telescope also designed the software, so that taught us a very important lesson: You need an independent company to review the work that's done by the prime contractor, because sometimes the prime contractor might make mistakes, and if they didn't catch them when they made them, why would they catch them later on if the same people are going over and reviewing the same work? So it was a very glaring example of how NASA needed an independent arm that would look at its projects, its software, and check out the software to see if there were glitches that weren't caught originally. It could save millions and millions of dollars, because it cost the United States a great deal of money having to go up, recapture the Hubble, fix it, and then relaunch it. So NASA headquarters said, "You know, this is a good idea."

So anyway, we had this meeting, and it finally reached a senior level in Byrd's office, and then we had to make a decision whether or not he wanted to go forward. And the people in the meeting at this level would be Jim English, who was staff director of Appropriations at that point, Barbara Videnieks, who was chief of staff, Joan Drummond,

Byrd's administrative assistant, Terry [Terrence] Sauvain, who was deputy staff director of Appropriations at that point, and he was the one responsible for going to the Appropriations subcommittees with these projects and working then through the subcommittees. Myself, I was responsible for prepping the project, developing it into a project, and then giving it to Byrd to see whether or not he wanted to go forward with it, and then possibly another couple project-type people. We had the subcommittee staff director of the Appropriations subcommittee that oversaw NASA there, and a couple of other state staff people. That was typically the type of meeting that we would have for a final decision on something like this to be made. And what this entailed then [was that] Senator Byrd would put money in the NASA budget to build this building and put the program together that was needed based upon a budget that NASA would give him of the costs of the program, and later he decided to let WVU own the facility, so WVU would build the building, and it had to be put on a site. So they had to make three decisions. One, was this something that Senator Byrd wanted to do? Two, who would do it? And three, where would it be located? Those were the decisions that had to be made. In the staff recommendation, I had recommended that we align it with the Goddard Space Center. Goddard was in Greenbelt, Maryland, it was the closest to West Virginia, and usually NASA projects had to be aligned with some space center, had to be sponsored under some space center, and so Greenbelt was the closest. I recommended that if we go forward with this, we put this in the Eastern Panhandle because it would be within easy train distance of Washington, whereby the people from Goddard could easily get over to the Eastern Panhandle. It would be a project that would be good for the Eastern Panhandle, and it would be close to Goddard and NASA headquarters. Also, the staff director of the subcommittee said that he felt the project was meritorious because there were major problems in NASA in this area and this could definitely be a project that could be defended and no-one could say it was pork barrel or it was a project that was just an earmarking project that was just some senator's pet project. It was definitely an important and meritorious project.

So then we had to decide where to put it. So in this meeting we got into this philosophical discussion over the project, and it came down to Jim English and Barbara Videnieks, who didn't like the project. They felt that Senator Byrd was being pressured by NASA to do this. We were really bringing the project up, but their view was that with the space station and with so many big projects coming down the road, that this might put Senator Byrd in a position where he would feel he was indebted to NASA for them going along with this, and then that would put him in a position as chairman of Appropriations of having to support a lot of NASA programs that maybe he wouldn't want to, or maybe a lot of people felt were too expensive in the future. So they had serious reservations about doing this.

Joan was neutral, while Terry Sauvain and the subcommittee staff director felt that it was a good project, and that they didn't want to get involved in the merits of it other than they felt that it was meritorious and that it could be defended. I felt very strongly

that the project was good for West Virginia because we needed to develop more projects like this to bring infrastructure like this to the state, so that we could build off of these projects. I had developed about \$500 million worth of projects like this over several years that had been placed around different areas of the state, so I was always the advocate for doing this, and then you know there were others who sometimes felt that these projects were too expensive, or might put Senator Byrd in a bad position. So Senator Byrd listened to everybody's view. He'd been under a lot of pressure by the people from Fairmont over the fact that Fairmont was dying, Fairmont was very much economically depressed. Clarksburg was very bad, it had lost a lot of coal operations, all of the glass industry was gone, so that area was very much depressed. The leaders of the Fairmont economic development authority and the Chamber of Commerce had recently met with Byrd at a graduation exercise at Fairmont State College and pressured Byrd to try to do something for the Fairmont area, and he was saying to them, "Look, guys, I can't just pick projects out of the air and bring them to Fairmont, that's not how it works. You have to have a company that wants to do a project, there has to be a reason for doing the project, you can't just make them up and bring them someplace." So anyway, when we had this discussion, it came down to the end of the meeting, and we all made our recommendations to Senator Byrd, and it was up to Byrd then either to make a final decision or to say to us, "Let me think about it and I'll get back to you in a day or so." He didn't always make an immediate decision. He told the group, "Well, you've all made very significant points. I want to think about this a little bit further. If you don't mind, I'll think about this overnight and I'll talk with you about this tomorrow," and so we started leaving. He said, "Jim, I'd like for you to stick around. I want to talk to you a few minutes after the others leave." Well, the others kind of rolled their eyes at me, you know, because I didn't know what to expect when they all left. And he brought me over and he said, "Jim, you mentioned doing this project in the Eastern Panhandle. Is there anything that dictates where this project has to be done? Could this project be placed anywhere?"

I said, "No, Senator Byrd, you can put this project anywhere you want. I mentioned the Eastern Panhandle because I was associating it with Greenbelt, with the Goddard space flight center, but basically you can put this project anywhere. I would, however, associate it with a major university so that you can defend this with the fact that there were academic people associated with it, and maybe even WVU, because it's the largest school and it has the most credentials, so if you are going to move it anywhere else in West Virginia, I would recommend that you associate it with one of the large universities."

He said, "Jimmy, could we do this in Fairmont?"

I said, "Sure, Fairmont would be a perfect place, and it would go well with WVU. WVU is nearby, you could very easily have WVU as the partner in this, and then have this center in or near Fairmont, and you would then have to get NASA to okay it, they had to get WVU to go along with it because they actually would own the building and be

involved. We'd have to get the development people in Marion County to go along with it because they would have to come up with the land to put the project on."

He said, "Let me think about it overnight and tell you tomorrow." So the next morning he called me up and said, "Have another meeting in the office." So we all went over and he said, "I made a decision. After listening to everyone, you've all made good points, but I want to go ahead and do this. I want to do it in Fairmont because the people over there are very anxious for a project. I think this project fits. So what I want to do is, tomorrow, I want to meet with NASA, I want to meet with J.R. Thompson, the deputy administrator of NASA." That was Wednesday. "Thursday, I want to meet with the president of West Virginia University, and Friday, I want to meet with the head of the development office in Marion County."

This was Tuesday, so Wednesday, we had Thompson come up from NASA. He sat down, went over the plan, thought it was a great idea, "We'll go along with it, we'll give you a budget for doing it. Count on us."

Thursday, we called the president at WVU. He flew over in a plane, we met with him Thursday. [Senator Byrd] said, "I'm giving you a project with NASA. We're going to do it in Fairmont, and you are going to build the building."

The guy who was the head of the WVU development office said, "Well, you know, it's going to cost about \$25 million."

So Byrd said, "Okay, that's fine." The WVU official just kind of guessed off the top of his head what he thought it would cost. "So you go ahead and you make plans with NASA to do this, and I'm meeting with the development people tomorrow from Marion County." The next day he had the chairman of the Marion County Development Authority come over. So he said, "I'm giving you guys a gift. If you guys can find the land to put this project on, I'm giving you a NASA project for an IVV software development center that will then be the center that looks at all of the NASA software. You can build a park around it, but you'd better come up with the land."

The guy said, "I know exactly where we want to go, we've got an option on some farmland that's out by Interstate 79. The farmer that owns it has given us the option to buy it. I'll put money on it tomorrow and we'll put it all together and sign it off." And that's basically how that NASA facility got built in Fairmont, how WVU became the owner of the building and the partner in it, and that's what created the whole West Virginia high-technology consortium project that you see today.

Smock: The NASA IVV facility, was that the first thing that was built there in that technology center?

Huggins: That was the cornerstone, and after that Mollohan stepped in, and he then worked with John Spears and a lot of companies to bring small businesses to the state. But we were involved in the Software Valley initiative. We haven't talked too much about it, but that was a movement to bring in high-tech businesses and all these projects around the state. I mentioned that we had the Concurrent Engineering Research Center at WVU, which was a Department of Defense project. It was a \$125 million project with GE as the prime to develop a better airplane blade for their jet engine for their next generation jet aircraft, and that was a project done at WVU, and that was really the centerpiece at WVU. We had the Byrd Institute for Flexible Manufacturing at Marshall University to do flexible manufacturing for small manufacturing facilities using robotics. That was something the Navy was doing. The Navy was building parts for submarines using robots and computer aided design, computer aided manufacturing as a wave of the future for cutting down on labor costs, so we set up a factory of the future at Marshall. That's something that Byrd did that I was involved in. We had a NASA technology transfer center at Wheeling Jesuit College in Wheeling that was supposed to be a place where NASA would be able to spin off all the technology developed through NASA programs to the private sector, like a big library, a computerized library that would spin off its technology to the private sector. We had an artificial intelligence program at West Virginia Tech College before it became part of WVU, dealing with an Army artificial intelligence program. We had a program at Beckley College dealing with lunar mining of all things, looking for minerals on the moon, lunar programs that Senator Byrd got a grant for Beckley College to do. We got a grant, an ARC grant, for Concord College to train people in the tourism industry, because tourism was getting so big in West Virginia. We wanted to put together a program where we could send people to train them how to be hotel managers, or how to be people to run ski resorts, so ARC put together a program at Concord College. Senator Byrd's idea was to go around West Virginia and put these centers of excellence at different colleges so it all wouldn't be done at one place. So that way every region of West Virginia would have some sort of project that would be doing research and bringing in companies and would be doing things so that it would help with rebuilding the economy. That, coupled with the back office approach, bringing government agencies to West Virginia because of the Internet. That whole thing started to work out when he brought the FBI to Clarksburg. I've talked about all of that.

Smock: Yes, you can see evidence of this everywhere in the state of West Virginia, how Senator Byrd used infrastructure and new technology, bringing technology into various places. You know, whenever outsiders talk about Senator Byrd, they often call him the King of Pork, and of course he took that as a matter of pride and said yes, he was in fact doing these things for his home state, but as chairman of the Appropriations committee, the part I think that's overlooked, and perhaps you have a comment on this, is that he was also supporting programs that other senators from other states were doing along similar lines, was he not?

Huggins: Sure. You know, I'm going to talk about earmarking again in the next stage when I talk about his legacy. But earmarking, when it was at the biggest point in the budget, represented only about one-half of one percent of the budget. People talk about earmarking as this budget-busting, terrible thing that Congress does every year in appropriating millions of dollars in earmarking, and basically what they don't realize is that they changed the rules on earmarking after the seventies and the eighties, when the government had a surplus, and then earmarking could be done over the budget level without any problem. But once we started to have budgetary problems, Senator Byrd was one of the ones who fought for the creation of the Budget committee, and he later served on the Budget committee. The job of the Budget committee was basically to do a blueprint for the amount of money each committee could have to authorize and to appropriate, and they had to live within their budget, and so what Senator Byrd did, and what later became the general practice in earmarking, was that earmarking was done within the budget level of the budget of that subcommittee. So they didn't bust the budget of these subcommittees, they reprogrammed funds.

So basically what Senator Byrd did, when he wanted to do a project, he just would go to another agency and basically steal the money from some other program or some other project or something that was being discontinued or something that was very large and maybe didn't need all the money or couldn't use the money that year, and he would reprogram that money into projects for West Virginia like ARC [Appalachian Regional Commission] highways. So that's how the earmarking was done. I think that if people understood earmarking a little bit more, earmarking is more of a states' rights issue. Here you are, the senators from these states are telling the chairman in the committee what their states need, instead of the federal government saying, "Look, here it is, take it or leave it." The states are saying, "No, we have priorities too, and our priorities may be different from the federal government's priority. And here's what we want." So there's a states' rights side to this argument with earmarking. Now there's no doubt there've been some terrible earmarks. There's been wasteful spending. They've done some stupid things. But I think if you look at earmarking overall, most of the earmarking has been for relatively good projects. I know Senator Byrd had strict rules for earmarking. First of all, it had to be a meritorious project. It could not be a project that was frivolous, that was in some private interest or self interest. It had to be a public project, it had to be meritorious, and it had to be supported by the government agency it was under. It could not be a project that the government agency didn't want. So those were the rules that he made all of us live by, and so the projects that we got through and he supported, that he appropriated money for, were all supported by the agencies or by people in those agencies who wanted those projects. You know, sometimes we would have for instance the CERC [Concurrent Engineering Research Center] project at WVU. It was a DARPA project--

Smock: Say the name of that project again, please.

Huggins: DARPA, it's DARPA, DARPA stands for Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, and DARPA is the research arm of DoD [Department of Defense]. And DARPA wanted this project to help plan and to help build this new blade for the jet engines for the future to make them more efficient, more high performance and all that. But in the overall scheme of things, there was not enough money in the DARPA budget to do this project the year that the prime contractor, GE, wanted it done. So we got approached by a couple of companies, some subcontractors who were from West Virginia, and GE was saying, "Look, if Senator Byrd would help us with this project, we would do this project in West Virginia, and it would be a lot of business coming out," because you know the rule was, if we did a project in West Virginia, you had to subcontract out some work to West Virginia companies. And so subcontractors would come over in droves to West Virginia and put in one- or two-man offices so they would have an address in West Virginia. So then we worked with the SBA [Small Business Administration], and we said that if they were not registered in West Virginia, they couldn't bid as a subcontractor as a small disadvantaged business on this contract. That's one of the ways that we got businesses to come to West Virginia. You now, in all this craziness, there was a plan to it that worked.

But anyway, that brought a lot of small high-tech businesses to West Virginia, who wanted to work on the FBI, who wanted to work on all these big projects that had come to West Virginia, and in Morgantown, like I mentioned, there's the CERC project, the Concurrent Engineering Research Center at WVU, which ended up being a \$125 million project over about seven or eight years. And a lot of subcontractors were involved and a lot of companies came to Morgantown to work on that project. And what we wanted to do by affiliating it with WVU was to keep the technology transfer there, and then we would be able in the future to have people that could bid on additional work. That's because normally, the cycle would be that after three or four years, the project would close down, you know, GE would move out of the state, everybody that had moved in would leave with it, you'd have an empty building and nothing left of the project, and we said, "We're not going to have that, we're going to do something different this time, we're going to keep the technology transfer, we're going to try to keep the people and some of the businesses in West Virginia to build on." That's how we did it. We basically made them bring businesses to West Virginia, set up operations, and then the people got to like West Virginia, they wanted to stay there, so then they started bidding on new work, which they would win and bring to West Virginia, so after the original contract expired, those same people would stay in West Virginia and bid on new work, and that's how we built up a lot of the infrastructure in West Virginia in this new high tech stuff that we have today.

So anyway, that's basically how that project in Fairmont came about, and it's amazing that once a decision was made, it came about so quickly, and then a whole industry grew up around Fairmont, and then with the FBI coming to Clarksburg, it changed that whole area forever. As you know, now, Morgantown, Fairmont, and

Clarksburg are some of the best areas for jobs and for growth because of all of the things that have happened there.

Smock: That's a good summary of the technology end of it and the long-range plan to bring all of that infrastructure to West Virginia.

Huggins: I just wanted to mention a couple of things. This came about basically because Senator Byrd saw in the seventies things were going to get very bad in West Virginia with the Rust Belt situation, I mean in Ohio and Pennsylvania and Michigan and West Virginia, he saw the steel industry going down, he saw coal miners one-fifth or one-sixth the number they used to be, you saw so many of the old traditional industries that were going away, and West Virginia was going to become basically an empty state. We had gone from six congressional districts in 1950 to three congressional districts, so there was a huge population change. And he was very smart. He knew education was the key, so what he started doing, for instance, he got this copy from the Department of Labor of where the new jobs were coming in the next twenty years, kind of a job outlook catalog, and he sent those out to all the high schools. He sent letters to the principals asking them to please give these to the guidance counselors so that students, when they come in and want to talk about what they want to do in college, they'll be able to look at these books and see where all the jobs are going to be in the latter twentieth century and in the twenty-first century. Because the whole job market is changing.

So he did that, and then he started having conferences around West Virginia on selling to the government because he knew that the US government was the biggest customer out there in the workplace, and of the US government, the Department of Defense was the biggest part of the government. So we needed to teach our manufacturers, our businesspeople more about contracting and more about doing business with the government. So he went all around the state and conducted government seminars on how to sell to the government. And he had representatives from the Navy, the Army, the Air Force, DLA [Defense Logistics Agency], small business, he had a whole menu of people there from government agencies that would get up and talk about doing business with the government, and then he gave out these big packets full of brochures on how to do business with the government, how to do contracting, how to do subcontracting, who your small business friends are for each agency. He went all out trying to educate the workforce and the managers in West Virginia about how to do business, how to do better business with the government, because very few people in West Virginia did business with the government. [He sponsored a huge national conference on DOD software in Charleston with Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger as speaker.] West Virginia was forty-ninth in defense spending. Forty-ninth! In 1992, when I left Senator Byrd's office, West Virginia was forty-third in defense spending, so in just a few short years, through all these efforts on his behalf with Software Valley and with the seminars on Software Valley and on the training things he had done and all the projects he was bringing to the state, with the earmarking, he moved West Virginia up

that far. Unfortunately it's dropped back to around forty-seventh again, but for a few years, a lot of things were happening in West Virginia, and you know, you hear a lot of activity in a state with different agencies, and with the Department of Defense over there, because Byrd was pushing them every year to do more business with West Virginia companies, and it really paid off. I think it has helped propel West Virginia into the twenty-first century, to make West Virginia more prepared for the future. I think that basically covers what I wanted to say about economic development.

Smock: All right. I think we're down to number five on your list. How are you holding up? You've been at it for an hour and a half.

Huggins: I think maybe we can do another one here. Let me see from my notes here. What I want to do...

Smock: You talked about, we discussed the idea of talking about, well, you've also been covering Senator Byrd's legacy in terms of ...

Huggins: I think I've done that pretty well. The economic development thing...

Smock: We were going to talk about some of Senator Byrd's defending various aspects of, you've talked about the earmark, but...

Huggins: Let me end at the legacy part of the outline. That's the next to the last part, and I think that will cover the other thing I wanted to mention. In his legacy, I thought about what would Senator Byrd want to be remembered for. I know in talking to him and in looking at his many years in Congress, the thing that inspired him the most was education. I mean, if there was ever an example of anyone who was involved with continuing education, it was Robert C. Byrd, because he never stopped studying. Up until the week before he passed away, he was reading books, he was still studying. I mean, the man never stopped learning. He felt that one's course of life was a course of study of life and work. He never stopped trying to improve himself. He felt that every day, he wanted to learn something different, learn something new. He wanted to improve himself a little bit. So I think that in looking at those things he accomplished, you know he had that, he started out with his savings bond valedictorian award, where he would give out every year a savings bond to each high school's valedictorian. He had been the valedictorian of his high school. He said they used to kid him about it. He said, "Well, it wasn't very difficult to be valedictorian because there were only seventeen students, so it was easy to be valedictorian of that class." But some of the high schools some years would have five valedictorians, it was amazing. That was one of the things I worked on for a number of years, preparing the savings bonds to send them out to the high schools.

Smock: Where did the money come from for those savings bond?

Huggins: Originally it came from speaking engagements. He would get \$5,000 or \$10,000 for giving a speech to the National Coal Association or the American Petroleum Institute. He would go to some convention or some conference. like the American Bar Association, and they would give him a speaker's fee, and in those days they were unlimited in what they could make. So he started out by making speeches and taking the money from the speeches, and he used that to pay for the bonds. Originally the bonds were \$25, and then they became \$37.50, and he went from a \$25 bond to a \$50 bond. And he gave each valedictorian at each public and parochial high school in the state a \$50 savings bond, and they would give them out during their graduation ceremony, or sometimes the high schools would have awards ceremonies, and they would present them at these ceremonies, and then Senator Byrd would be the commencement speaker at a high school graduation. They would usually let him give it out himself to the student who was the valedictorian. That was done every year. That gave him the idea for this national merit scholars program. I really think that's probably the thing that he was the most proud of, of all the things he did over the years to promote education and to promote achievement, having that national merit scholarship award named after him probably was the thing that would make him the most proud today. That is a four-year scholarship they give out each year, and I think that he would probably be very proud that it bears his name and that it's given out regardless of race, creed, wealth, color, or anything. It's based totally on the scholastic achievement of the student. I think he would be very pleased to see that scholarship and to see how that goes to students and it helps them achieve their wish in having a college education.

Smock: Do they still call it the Byrd Scholarship?

Huggins: I think it's still called the Robert C. Byrd National Merit Scholarship program, as far as I know.

Smock: There's a National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

Huggins: I think that's it. Basically it's a scholarship given out each year to students, and they can get it for four years. So I think that's probably something that you know that he would probably be very proud of, that that scholarship program is out there. I think the other thing that he would probably want to be remembered for would be to be remembered for being coal's most serious advocate. Over the years, probably no one was a better friend to the coal industry and to the coal miner and to the coal miner's family than Robert C. Byrd. He always supported the coal mine industry, he told them when he thought they should change, you know, he was always very honest and truthful with them. But he fought very hard for the coal industry, and he did everything in his power to help the coal miners with Black Lung, the coal miners' widows. I think that he would want to be remembered as being a true advocate for coal miners and coal miners' families. The third thing I think that he would want to be remembered for is the Senate rules and traditions. He was very much the Senate's man, the man who wanted to

preserve the rules of the Senate. He believed the Senate was very different from the House, and the Senate was the place where you didn't act quickly, you gave more serious deliberation and more serious thought to legislation. It then moved forward at a slower pace, but it was done with more cooperation between the majority and the minority than basically happened in the House. In the House, with the House rules being the way they are, the majority pretty much railroads whatever they want through the House, and the minority has very little rights. In the Senate, it was completely different, and the Senate minority had rights, especially with the filibuster, and so he was always one who believed in preserving those rights.

I spoke earlier about the Budget committee. He was one of the advocates who wanted the Budget committee created. He thought the Budget committee was a good idea, that every year, the Senate should come up with a budget level that all the committees had to live under. Also I mentioned earmarking, the fact that he was very proud to be the "Prince of Pork." He said, "One man's pork is another man's highway, one man's pork is another man's bridge." He said, "You know, pork actually means projects for people-- roads, bridges, docks, dams, river improvement." So it's very difficult to look at pork and not think of it as a project, because usually earmarking is a serious project. There are a lot of projects that got a bad reputation, like the Alaskan "Bridge to Nowhere" that Senator Ted Stevens wanted. There were some projects that got a bad reputation, but I would say most earmarking was all very responsible and was very much for good projects when you look at it on the whole.

So with the filibuster situation, Senator Byrd worked to change the filibuster. With filibusters, you originally had to have sixty-six votes to end a filibuster, two-thirds, and that was very difficult to get, and so Senator Byrd was for amending that to 60 percent, and so now the rule is that 60 percent of the Senate is needed to break a filibuster. Senator Byrd testified a couple of years before he died before the Rules committee on the filibuster. There was some movement to amend the filibuster again and to do away with it. And he believed that the filibuster was important to protect the rights of the minority, but he never believed the filibuster should be used as it is used now and has been used recently to stop normal legislation and normal appointments from being enacted. He felt that the filibuster was for extraordinary legislation, for a Supreme Court justice or for a very serious legislative proposal, not just every piece of legislation and every presidential appointment. But it's being used now basically by the minority to stop the flow of all legislation in the Senate by almost forcing a filibuster vote on everything, and that was never the intent of the filibuster. Back in the Bush administration, the Democratic leader [Senator] Harry Reid started using the filibuster to block a lot of President Bush's appointments, and there was a gang of fourteen members, seven Democrats and seven Republicans, Senator Byrd among them, who said that this is wrong. They went against Leader Reid and told him you can't use the filibuster rules this way, and they basically stopped Reid from doing this. Unfortunately now that the shoe is on the other foot and Obama is the president, the Republicans who, under the Bush administration, joined with

Democrats to help President Bush are not helping the Democrats with Obama appointments. Senator McCain from Arizona was one of the fourteen, and I think Senator Snowe was another of the seven [Republicans]. There are still three [of those] Republicans in the Senate, and none of them help with the Obama appointments, and it shows how much more polarized and even more political the Senate is today than it was just a few years ago, when Democrats tried to help President Bush. No Republicans now will help President Obama.

So I would say that Senator Byrd would be very unhappy today with the use of the filibuster as a way just to block normal legislation. He was also very much against constitutional amendments for every cause. There are now a lot of people who want to see a constitutional amendment for a balanced budget, for prayer in schools, for right to life, for term limits. He was always against these things. He always said, "Look, if the members vote, you don't need constitutional amendments. If the members vote, that should take care of it." The problem is people are not voting as much as they used to. You have a lot of members of Congress many people don't like, so these unhappy citizens want to propose constitutional amendments to change everything. Byrd believed that that was putting the constitution and Congress in more of a straitjacket: The more constitutional amendments you pass, the more you straitjacket Congress in what it can and cannot do. Especially a constitutional amendment on a balanced budget is a real problem for the future, dealing with downturns in the economy, dealing with these wars that are not always declared, national emergencies like 9/11, and NASA and space projects. You know, there are escape clauses supposedly in these proposed balance-the-budget amendments, but they really put Congress in a very tight situation, and Byrd always believed that, if you did your job and if you voted, you didn't need a balanced budget because you should vote to balance the budget, you should vote to make the cuts you need to balance the budget, and he believed if the members did their job, there didn't need to be all of these constitutional amendments. So I think today, he would view Congress as really skirting its responsibility by not making the tough decisions to balance the budget, in trying to put it off on these automatic things that will kick in because Congress didn't act. I'd think he would be very unhappy with Congress today.

Also, you've got these nut-cases like Governor Perry out there, coming up with the part-time Congress proposal. These are things that are very worrisome because Congress is in such low esteem that you have presidential candidates who want to create a part-time Congress that would work for two or three months and then go home to real jobs. But who is going to watch the government? I mean, federalism is much different than the state system of government, and the federalist system of checks and balances of the three branches checking each other is far different than the state system, and so I think any system you put yourself in a position where, as George Washington feared, you would end up with an imperial presidency, a president that would be so powerful because the other two branches would diminish their capacity to really exercise themselves in a responsible way of their constitutional duty. That's one of the reasons why the Supreme

Court did away with the line item veto that President Clinton wanted. Most governors have a line item veto, but under the federal system, that very much erodes the power of Congress in giving the president extreme authority over members of Congress, and I think the governors don't understand federalism. So I think Senator Byrd would be very upset today at some of the things these presidential candidates are saying.

Smock: Well of course, you have to take this with a grain of salt. I don't think anybody's taking Rick Perry seriously about a part-time Congress in the twenty-first century.

Huggins: I think a lot of the Tea Party people are pretty extreme, and one never knows where they may end up, and I think the American people are so fed up right now and are so upset that it's just hard to tell what we may end up getting because of the frustration level over what they see in Washington. Moderate Republicans are almost extinct today.

Smock: Yes, this is a tough cycle, that's for sure, with all this extremism going on. But it gets beyond our role here on the oral history, that's for sure.

One other thing, you know. You told me this story when I was down in Florida, but it apparently didn't get recorded. It might have been when we were having our lunch break and the machines were off. But I want you again, if you want to take the time to do so, to tell me the story of how you got fired by Senator Byrd and then put back on the payroll.

Huggins: Sure, sure. That was an interesting story and I think it tells a lot about Senator Byrd's personality and our relationship, because over the years one of the things that I feel gave me a lot of authority to do things that he'd never given other people before was his trust in me. I think it was because I spent so much time with him. He really did view me as somebody who would not betray his trust, and I ended up being a campaign coordinator in West Virginia. I did things that nobody else had ever done before for Senator Byrd outside of maybe his press folks. To be able to go to events and speak for him, represent him at political events, be his campaign coordinator, it was amazing...run his first mobile office in West Virginia, go all over the state meeting with public officials. I mean, if I had been a person that was dangerous, I could probably have ruined the man. But I always felt the utmost trust and the utmost desire to want to do everything possible to do my duty and to show the people what a great member of the Senate he was and what a great job he was doing. I was very fearful of screwing up, so I was always mindful of the fact that I didn't want to do anything that could ever be looked back upon as something I did that would embarrass him.

But anyway, this is an interesting story. At one point, right between the time he was majority whip and then became majority leader, I was driving for him, and I would

pick him up in the morning at 7:00 and then I would drive him into the office and I would work in the office all day and then I would drive him home at night at about 9:00 or 10:00 or 11:00, then I would drive back up to the Senate, park the limousine, the Cadillac, or the Lincoln, whichever one he had. Then I would go home and then get up the next morning at 6:00 or whatever time and go back and do this again. This was very difficult, very long hours, and I had to do a regular job during the day in addition. And then on weekends, I would drive him to West Virginia and spend hours and hours driving him back and forth, so I spent many, many hours with him over the years driving him back and forth. I think that's really what developed our trust and why many times he took my side in various staff discussions, because he knew that I always had the side of West Virginia. I always wanted to improve West Virginia and would never do anything that would embarrass him or hurt the state. Anyway, this story is interesting. Right after he became majority leader, I had worked for him in the majority whip's office, and as I mentioned, Ethel Lowe had been his executive secretary for sixteen years. She was very talented, she was very good, she took dictation and typed very fast and was an extremely efficient secretary. Ethel was very protective of Senator Byrd. She was the ultimate guard at the palace door. To get an appointment, to get in, to get staff time with him, she was very difficult to deal with. She just really liked the idea that she had this authority and she was very dedicated to him in her own way. But she always felt that I was too assuming to Senator Byrd. She felt that I was like the little puppy that would follow him around, and I was always volunteering to do things, and so I think she felt that for some reason she didn't want me to be any more associated with him than what I needed to do as his driver at that time. So when he became majority leader and he was setting up the office, she asked him if she could make a change and move somebody else into the majority leader's office and move me back over to the Senate office where I would work. And he said, "Why do you want to do this?"

She said, "Well, I just think it would be better to have a female answering the phones, and working in the office, and to meet and greet people that come in."

So he said, "Well, okay. You find somebody that you want to be the receptionist, and I'll talk to Jim and move him over to the Senate office and I'm sure everything will be okay." So he talked to me and I said that that was fine, no problem. So Ethel looked around, and Barbara Videnieks was new on the staff. She was a receptionist-secretary type, kind of a junior caseworker, she was fairly new, and Ethel I think liked Barbara because she was bright and young and she thought that she would be somebody that would be very personable and that would be someone that would be liked, but wouldn't be someone I think that would seek a lot of attention or would be someone who at 5:00 would want to go home, be with her husband, and want a life after work. Ethel was pretty much dedicated to staying long hours with Byrd. So Senator Byrd agreed, and then there was a short time after this that Senator Byrd began doing a lot of work on his violin and he was very much into playing, and he had gotten a lot of tapes of old fiddle tunes, and these old fiddle tunes were on cassette tapes, and he wanted to copy the words to sheet

music. So he asked for someone who could stay after hours, because this could not be done on Senate time, and who could sit and basically go through these numerous cassette tapes hour upon hour and record the words of each fiddle tune. You had to stop, listen to it, repeat it, stop--it was a very tedious process. Well, Barbara Videnieks volunteered to do this after work, so she would then after 5:30 go in to the conference room in the majority leader's office, and Senator Byrd would sit down with her and start going through these tapes. Well, he got very, very much involved in this project. He absolutely loved this project, and he then started telling Ethel to go home at 5:30 PM, that he didn't need her any longer. Well, Ethel I think took this as some kind of a view that maybe after being there sixteen years, for some reason her services were not as important as they used to be, and now all of a sudden he was talking to Barbara Videnieks, who was transcribing all these tedious musical tapes. Well, Ethel just absolutely had a breakdown one day and quit, just absolutely quit in the middle of the day and went home. Once that happened, the senator said to Barbara, "Would you want to take over Ethel's job as my main person here in the leader's office?"

Barbara said, "Sure."

Then he said, "I think that you can handle it, and if there's a problem, we'll try to get you help." And so Barbara became his top assistant in his majority leader's office. In those days, it was a much smaller operation than it is today. Today, you have many people in the leader's office, it's a very big operation, but in those days, it was a one- or two-person operation, and when you went out of session, they closed the office and went back to the state office and they didn't keep it open. So the leadership offices today are much different, much more sophisticated, and much bigger than they were, even in the seventies and eighties.

So anyway, there was a football game at WVU that coming weekend, and I was supposed to drive Senator Byrd in on Saturday. So I called over to Barbara on Friday. I said, "Barbara, I'd like to go to this football game. Do you think it would be all right if Senator Byrd can drive himself in? Would you ask him if he can drive himself in on Saturday so I can go to the football game?"

She said, "Well, I'll ask him and get back to you." So I said okay, and I waited and I didn't hear anything, so I gathered from that that it was okay for me to leave. Well actually, when she finally got a chance to talk to him about it, it was late in the evening, and I'd already left Washington to drive to West Virginia, so she couldn't get ahold of me to tell me that he did indeed want me to drive him in the next morning. He gave a Saturday morning press conference every Saturday morning to the written press, to the newspaper people, not the TV and radio, but to the newspaper people, and then I could go home after I dropped him off. But it took up a couple of hours of my Saturday morning driving him in, then he would drive himself home.

So I drove over to Morgantown Friday night, and I'm at this football game on Saturday, and in the middle of the football game, on the PA system, I hear this announcement: "Would Jim Huggins please call his office. Would Jim Huggins please call his office." I couldn't believe that in the middle of the WVU football game, I'm being paged by the public affairs announcer. So I go to the phone and I call back to the office, and Barbara answers, and she says, "Oh boy, Jim, we've got a real problem here. When I finally called you back I guess you'd already left, but Senator Byrd didn't approve you leaving, he wanted you to drive him in, and when you weren't there this morning to drive him in, he is really upset, he wants to talk to you."

So I said okay. So he got on the phone, and he said, "You know, Jim, I'm very disappointed. I thought we had an understanding about this. And you know, when you didn't drive me in this morning, I had to drive myself in. I don't think you really appreciate this chance that you have to work for me, and maybe you ought to think about this. I'm just going to suspend you and give you a chance to think about whether or not this job is important to you."

I said, "Well, I'm very sorry, Senator, it obviously was my mistake. I truly apologize, but I'll certainly abide by your wishes," and I hang up. So I go back to the football game, and I think, "Oh well, I may have just cost myself my job." So on Sunday I drive back to Washington, and as was the practice in those days, I had a friend who had tickets to the Washington Redskins, and that Monday night the Redskins were playing the Broncos on Monday night television, and so I had tickets to go to the game. So I went with my police friend to the game, and I was sitting there during the third quarter, and I look up and about five rows behind me is sitting Barbara Videnieks with her husband and Joan Drummond, who later became administrative assistant in the office, after Virginia Yates retired, and her husband. Joan and Barbara were very close friends. So anyway, I got up and walked back to where they were and sat down and started talking to them and said, "How's everything going?"

Then Barbara said, "Jim, I'm really glad I ran into you tonight, because you know, I talked to Senator Byrd later in the day, and I think he really feels bad about what happened, and he would like to find a way to make up with you, but it has to be on your initiative. I think that if you would come in tomorrow morning at 9:00 and come to the majority leader's office and tell him that you're really sorry about the mix-up on Saturday, he very much wants to make up with you, because he felt like he shouldn't have said some of the things he did and he wants to make up, but he doesn't want it to seem like it's all on him."

So I said "Sure, sure, I'm glad that he feels that way." So the next morning bright and early I beat it over to the Majority Leader's office at 9:00. I was sitting there and he came into the office and Barbara went in and talked to him for a couple of minutes. Then she said that he would see me now.

So I went back and sat down, and he said, “Well, Jim, I know from talking to Barbara that it was a mixup and that you're very sorry about what happened, and I'm sorry that the situation ended up kind of blowing up, and it's just important that we have clear communications in the future and there not be any more miscommunication like this.”

And I said, “Senator, you're perfectly right, it was all my mistake. I should have waited or called Barbara back to talk with her. I had just assumed that she'd worked it out and I didn't know, and you have every right to be upset because I wasn't there.

But he said, “Let's just let all this pass Jim, let's just learn from this. In the future, we'll make sure we talk over everything.” He was man enough to let it go like that rather than to continue to give me a hard time. Some senators would berate their staff and really just give them an awful time. But Senator Byrd was never that way. In all the years that I worked for him, never once did he ever say a mean word to me, or never once did he really get mad at me over something he thought I'd done that was inappropriate. So you know, I think that speaks well, having been with somebody so many years that our relationship was one that we ended being so close, and you know we ended with him actually wanting me to come back to work for him. I'm very pleased. My daughter worked for a summer in his office and he talked to her very much about how much he enjoyed me working there. He even asked her if I was interested in coming back to work after I'd left and become a lobbyist. So Senator Byrd always thought very highly of me, and I equally cannot say enough about him, and he even asked me to drive for him after I'd left his office, and I spent quite a bit of time driving him to West Virginia on several occasions because he trusted my driving. So it was a real honor to know him and I will always treasure those memories and that relationship.

Smock: Okay, I think we've got that story on the record finally, and I'm glad of that, and I think this covers our list of topics fairly well. I don't have any additional questions about any of this unless you have something else you want to add.

Huggins: *[One story that was left out of the recording that we did earlier concerns a situation when Byrd was majority leader and we were just starting the Software Valley Initiative. One of the first projects that Senator Byrd got funded by the Defense Department as a \$125 million DARPA project called the Concurrent Engineering Research Center, to be hosted at WVU. The prime contractor was GE, and the purpose of the project was to create a next generation jet engine blade. Senator Byrd was going to announce this project at an upcoming Software Valley conference. However, DOD officials notified Senator Byrd that he could not announce the project at the upcoming conference because the deputy secretary of defense, Will Taft IV, the great-grandson of President Taft, had issued a moratorium on grant announcements. Senator Byrd called Secretary Taft and asked for an exemption just to make the announcement at the*

conference- which would not authorize any funds until the moratorium was lifted. Secretary Taft said he was very sympathetic to Senator Byrd's request, but he could not allow the announcement when he had disallowed other Congressional requests for announcements. Senator Byrd said that he perfectly understood Secretary Taft's decision, but this created a real hardship for Byrd because the DARPA project was the main reason for holding the upcoming scheduled conference. He told Taft President Reagan had wanted him as majority leader to have the Senate approve the START Treaty. The president wanted to take the Senate approved Treaty with him to the upcoming summit with Soviet Leader Gorbachev. "As of tomorrow," Byrd said, "I am withdrawing the Treaty from Senate consideration. When my friend, Howard Baker, the president's chief of staff, calls me and asks why I have pulled the treaty from Senate consideration, I will give him your name and phone number to contact."

Secretary Taft, said, "Senator Byrd, I understand your meaning in this matter, and if possible, could I call you back in fifteen minutes to finish this call?" In approximately fifteen minutes, Secretary Taft called Senator Byrd back and reported to him that he had approved the announcement for the DARPA project Senator Byrd was concerned about, and Senator Byrd was free to make said announcement at the upcoming Software Valley Conference. Senator Byrd thanked Secretary Taft for his consideration, and the phone call ended. This is an example of Byrd's use of political power.

I wanted to follow up with some additional comments. During Byrd's majority leadership tenure, I believe it is important for all to understand that he was a very hands-on leader. Some leaders, like Mansfield and Mitchell, left the caucus alone to form its own opinion on issues independent of the leader's personal views. Byrd was much more of an opinion persuader than the aforementioned men. Leader Reid acts a lot more like Byrd acted. One thing for sure, we would not have Justice Clarence Thomas on the Supreme Court today if Byrd had still been leader when the Thomas nomination was acted on. Byrd told me he truly believed Anita Hill in her Senate testimony and if he had still been leader, instead of Mitchell, he would have influenced two or three senators on the fence to vote against Thomas rather than voting for him. Even though Byrd was a strong conservative, he did not believe Thomas was fit to be a Supreme Court justice.

Also, Byrd, should be given credit for bringing TV coverage to the Senate. Originally opposed to the idea, because he believed some might use the TV coverage for grandstanding, after watching the success of the House TV coverage, he decided that getting TV in the Senate would be positive. So he pushed the Senate into accepting the TV coverage.

This is another story that I felt was important to recite as an example of Senator Byrd's leadership during the Nixon-Watergate era. Byrd was Senate majority whip, under Majority Leader Mike Mansfield. I worked in the whip's office, a three-room suite on the first floor of the Capitol Building, on the west front facing the national mall. After J.

Edgar Hoover, the legendary founder and, until then, the only director of the FBI, died, President Nixon named L. Patrick Gray as the acting director, pending Senate confirmation. During this time, the Senate was holding hearings on the so-called Watergate scandal, and the connection between the Watergate criminals and the White House. Two of the men arrested at the Watergate building break-in, Howard Hunt and G. Gordon Liddy, had ties to the Nixon White House.

During the Watergate Hearings, witnesses stated that Nixon had pressured FBI Acting Director Gray to back away from any serious investigation of connections between the Watergate criminals and White House involvement. According to numerous statements given to the Watergate Committee, FBI Director Gray followed Nixon's wishes and did not actively pursue any leads that might take the investigation within the White House.

One morning, Senator Byrd told me that FBI Director Gray was coming at 2:00 pm for an appointment. At 2:00, Director Gray arrived at Byrd's majority whip office in the Capitol building. Gray was hoping to get Democratic Senators' support enabling him to be granted Senate confirmation. When he arrived, he was friendly and very chatty. Byrd had not yet walked down from the Senate Chamber, so I had an opportunity to visit with Gray. In a few minutes, Byrd walked in and went directly to his personal office in the rear of the suite. I walked back and asked Byrd if he was ready for the meeting with Gray. Byrd had taken his bag lunch out of one of his briefcases and poured himself a glass of skim milk. He said, "Yes, please escort Director Gray back."

I walked back to the front office and said, "Mr. Gray, Senator Byrd is ready, would you follow me." Gray stood up and followed me to Byrd's personal office, and sat down opposite Senator Byrd's desk. Byrd followed me out to the door between his personal office and an inner office, and shut the door. I walked back to my desk in the front office, and thought it somewhat unusual that Byrd shut his door. He shut the door very rarely.

In about twenty minutes, Director Gray opened the door and came walking briskly out of Byrd's personal office with a very serious frown on his face. After our friendly greeting, I expected some gesture of goodbye. However, Gray did not even look my way as he exited the front office. I later learned that Senator Byrd had told him that he had no chance for Senate confirmation because of the statements during the Watergate hearings about his taking directions from President Nixon on misleading the Watergate investigation away from the White House. Within a few days, Gray stepped down, and Nixon nominated another individual to serve as acting director of the FBI.

Another story of interest that was left out of the original recording that we did earlier concerns a situation when Byrd was majority leader and he was holding one of the several Software Valley conferences he championed (between 1985 & 1994), this one at the Lakeview Resort in Morgantown. During a morning break of the conference,

Senator Byrd decided to stop by the resort's coffee shop and get a snack. While he and I were seated, Representative Alan Mollohan and Dr. John Spears stopped by the table to chat with Byrd. Mollohan asked Byrd about some comments that the Senator had recently made on the Senate Floor about Hannibal, the famous Punic Carthaginian military commander, and his struggle with Rome.

For some background: Hannibal, 247-183 BC, is considered one of the greatest military minds in history. Hannibal was from Carthage, a nation in northern Africa, and led his country's army in the Second Punic War against Rome. Everybody knows that Hannibal marched his army over the Swiss Alps with elephants into northern Italy, completely surprising Rome. Hannibal had landed his army in what is now Spain, took the troops north, crossed over the Swiss Alps, and attacked Rome's legions from the rear. For fifteen years, Hannibal and his army harassed the Romans throughout Italy. Finally, Rome sent an army to attack Carthage. This caused Hannibal to return home to defend his country from Rome's attacking legions. After much bloodshed on both sides, Hannibal was cornered and committed suicide rather than be taken prisoner and returned to Rome in chains.

So Senator Byrd asked Rep. Mollohan and Dr. Spears to join us at the table for a cup of coffee. Byrd, a student of Roman history and the author of a book on the Roman Senate, then began giving us a history lesson on Hannibal and his battle plans against Rome's legions sent to attack Carthage. With red, black, and blue felt pens, he drew Hannibal's troop movements and Rome's attack plans on the back of paper plate settings and napkins. At one point, I looked up and there was a crowd of coffee shop customers standing around our table. Mollohan looked like a young student in a college history class, intrigued by a lecture from Senator Byrd. After we finished the discussion, a waitress came by and scooped up the dishes and papers with Byrd's battle drawings. It was all dumped into a plastic tub with water, and as we departed I saw the paper place mats and napkins sink into the dirty water and dishes.

The amazing part of this story is that Byrd was describing Hannibal's detailed military movements to an awestruck young Congressman, surrounded by onlookers totally surprised by the Senator's detailed knowledge of Hannibal and the Second Punic War, all without notes and from memory!

I also missed talking about Byrd's hobbies. Unlike most, he had unusual passions, including fiddle playing, playing on "Hee Haw" and the "Grand Ole Opry," making the bluegrass record, writing poetry (especially after Jon Michael's death), writing a four-volume Senate history, and researching and writing other books on Roman history and other historical subjects. He once lectured Queen Elizabeth on all the English monarchs. He also had earlier water color paintings reproduced and presented to good friends. He was multi-talented, extremely intellectual, but most at home around country folk--not the country club. He was indeed a Renaissance man, in my opinion!]

I just want to mention one last thing, and that is that I hope in the future at some point there is an effort made to return Senator and Mrs. Byrd to West Virginia. You know, currently he and Mrs. Byrd are buried in a public cemetery in Arlington, Virginia, and I think that very few people actually know where he is buried. I think that for a man as great as Byrd and who meant as much as he meant to his constituents and to the state as probably the foremost statesman of the twentieth century and maybe even the greatest West Virginia statesman of all time, I really hope that some effort is made to approach his daughters, either by the legislature or by some organization, to move his body back to Beckley. He told me on several occasions when we visited the cemetery outside Beckley, which is where his foster mother and father are buried--I believe some of Mrs. Byrd's relatives are buried there--that that's where he wanted to be buried. He said, "Jim, someday you'll come here to visit my grave, and this is where Erma and I will be." And many times he made me stop at that cemetery on the north side of Beckley and go up, and he would go visit the graves of his foster mother and father.

I really hope--and this is the last thing I want to say: People who read this in the future--I hope that if you're a governor or a Senate president or speaker of the House of Delegates, some effort will be made to move Senator Byrd and Mrs. Byrd back to West Virginia and that a fitting tomb and monument will be built for them as a reminder of everything that he accomplished, and really in respect for what he did for his state and for a lifetime of self-sacrifice for West Virginia and for the people of the state that he loved. I really hope that his remains are returned to West Virginia where I think they need to be and where a fitting tribute can be built for him to be forever there and for people in the future to be able to go and see where he is buried. Right now I feel no one can find him, and once his daughters pass, there will probably be no interest by his grandchildren to move him, and he'll be there in Arlington, Virginia, and very few people will ever know where he's buried.

And I think that's a real tragedy and travesty that he's not returned to West Virginia, where he told me he wanted to be. I understand his daughters wanting him to be near them now, and I know that for all those years, they felt that he was not close to them because he was gone so much. But he's really bigger than one family, he's bigger than just one thing, and I really do believe that for the sake of history, he needs to be returned with Mrs. Byrd back to West Virginia, where I think he truly wanted to be buried. And that's really the last thing I want to say. It was just a real honor and a privilege for me to work for him, and I'll always remember those years with a great deal of affection.

Smock: Okay. Of course we've heard that from a number of other folks as well about his final resting place, and I do hope that that's on the agenda. There's been a lot of talk about it even before he passed, but as you say, it's going to take some action.

Huggins: Well, I think if someone would write to the governor and the legislative leadership and say, “Look, you need to approach the family, the two daughters before they pass and say to them, ‘You know, this really needs to be done.’ You make some kind of preparation for it, because otherwise, it will never be done.” Once they pass, I don't think it will ever be done. I don't think the grandchildren will ever have the interest to do it, or get involved in an agreement. Unless the two daughters agree to do it, it may be very difficult for it to ever come about. So I think that someone needs to step in now while they're still in good minds and try to get them to make a decision.

Smock: All right. You're still a lobbyist, and I'm glad of it.

Huggins: Well, I told Erik [Byrd Fatemi, grandson of Senator Byrd], I called Erik one day. I said “Erik, let me tell you. Your grandfather told me on several occasions when we stopped at this cemetery that this is where he wanted to be buried. I don't know what he discussed with your mother and with your aunt, and I know that he wanted Mrs. Byrd near him because he visited her grave site every day. Every day that he went to the office he came back by her grave site and stopped and went and visited her, and I know that he wanted her to be close to him, but now that he's gone, the girls ought to do the right thing, and the right thing is to work out an agreement to move them back to West Virginia, and I think the legislature would probably even vote an appropriation to build a tomb and monument there for them.”

Smock: Well, let's hope that that happens, because I think it's an important part of his legacy to be here in the state. I personally agree with that. So all right, Jim, again, thank you for doing all this. We managed to squeeze another two hours and fifteen minutes into the record. It's going to be a nice fat oral history when we get it all put together.

Huggins: That's great.

Smock: Once we get it all, you'll see this copy like you did the other, and I will also send you another release form for this particular one in addition to the ones you already signed. Once we get this transcribed, I'll send it down to you so you can expect it, make any corrections like you did before, and then get it back to us and we'll put it in the system.

Huggins: Okay. Also you mentioned about a picture. You might be looking for a picture?

Smock: Yes, we looked all over for a picture. I'm going to turn the tape recorders off now.