



INTERVIEW WITH

Mort Frayn

by

Dr. Thomas Soapes
Oral Historian

on

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for

Dwight D. Eisenhower Library

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R. Mort Frayn
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This interview is being conducted with Mr. Mort Frayn in his office in Seattle, Washington on July 27, 1976. The interviewer is Dr. Thomas Soapes of the Eisenhower Library. Present for the interview are Mr. Frayn and Dr. Soapes.

DR. SOAPES: First, would you tell me where and when you were born and where you had your formal education?



MR. FRAYN: I was born May 3, 1906 in South Dakota, in Faulkton, but the family came out here when I was three years old, so to all points of intent I am a native of Washington state. My formal education was in Seattle, grades K through 12 and off to the University of Washington where I graduated with a degree in, at that time, liberal arts, majoring in history and economics.

DR. SOAPES: And what year did you complete your studies there?

MR. FRAYN: I completed my studies in '29. I actually was in the class of '27, but a couple of things chopped up my normal course of finishing school, and I had to come back and finish in '29.

DR. SOAPES: And what did you do after you finished college?

MR. FRAYN: I came to work immediately with my father who was

in the printing business, and that is our business now. I later assumed the management and purchase of the business from my brother. The two of us had worked out an arrangement with my father years back to buy his interests out and then I bought my brother's interest out. So it's been a sole ownership which was later incorporated and now my son is carrying on the direct management.

SOAPES: Did you have any World War II service or--



FRAYN: None.

SOAPES: When did you first get interested in working in politics?

FRAYN: Rather an interesting background, at least to me. I became interested in politics with, oh, some of the work in precinct work, but not too much. But I had been interested in University of Washington alumni activities. And we had a leasehold, which is still a very valuable part of our university property--which is the ten acres downtown. And it had a very

cumbersome relationship which had been built up with the legislature because the regents had requested, sometime in the early history of the university, that any changes that were made in the lease or the leasehold in any way had to be approved by the legislature. And we were moving towards the place where the entire leasehold was coming up for change. And I recognized as anybody else did that it would almost be an impossibility to handle something of that type in which you're really bargaining out certain things to make the leasehold operate. To open it up so that the entire legislature would have to approve or could moderate or change it, made negotiations impossible. So my first, I would say, reason for getting into the legislature, which is where I went when I first stepped in the political world, was primarily to go down and direct whatever I could to changing that process. Which we did. And it was done amicably with the legislature and also the business community, the rest of the community recognizing that it was the only way we could handle it.



SOAPES: What year was it you went in the legislature?

FRAYN: I went in the legislature in 1943-1945, two year terms, and I served ten years till 1955 and then I retired, if you can call it that. I came out of it because I just felt that unless I was going to stay in the political arena I had to get back to my business.

SOAPES: Your district was Seattle?



FRAYN: My district was Seattle, the 43rd district, which at that time was a very highly-concentrated Republican district. It's changed considerably at the present time. But the legislative members from the 43rd district had a pretty good record of going on in government, either state-wide or some of them have even gone into national issues. An example of that is our present governor, [Daniel J.] Evans, when I retired, took my seat. And so we've always thought of the 43rd as being the bulwark for the Republican party.

SOAPES: What kind of a district was it in terms of income levels?

FRAYN: I'd say probably upper--I shouldn't say upper middle class, but it was above the basic average, and that's the reason that it was, what I'd call a Republican district. The university was not in the district at the time, and the district was kind of split between two areas, as we went from one part of the district to another, the university was then on the borders of both sides. The district was made up of, I would say, middle class white population at the time. Of course, Seattle, at that time, as far as the minorities are concerned, didn't have the influx, although we had a big black population in the 37th district which was right next to us. And we worked quite well with them, even as in the community and in the political processes.



SOAPES: Was the Washington Republican party a united party in the '40s or was there heavy factionalism?

FRAYN: No, it was pretty united, which was a blessing as you can well understand. The party had pretty good organization, a situation which was aided because there was some means of support

that could be given to the county chairman, and in some cases even to the state chairman, which was generated out of handling estates. And one of the three parties that worked to value the estate was appointed by the state. And in this case it developed a factor in which the county chairman particularly, was able to participate in the small percentage. The total amount of handling estates was giving them some kind of main fund to operate. This later was removed, and I don't know just what the circumstances were. I think it was to take away any possible feeling that the operation of the parties--both Democrat and Republican side--was being hampered by some kind of a support of this kind. But the result was, that I think it has hurt to a certain extent the party organization in the state we had it at that time. It carried through even to the state chairman, people, who I believed same, from a type of representation that you'd see in their peers in the chambers of commerce and in the other activities such as Rotary and organization areas and the labor areas. People who were doing that without set salaries. This switched and it became a paid position. I



think it's weakened both party organizations for the purpose that it has hurt their own financial drives, just because people have misconstrued, if feeling possibly that State and county chairmen were out raising money for their salaries as well as to finance the party.

SOAPES: In '44 and '48, in terms of presidential politics, how did the state line up; Dewey or Taft?



FRAYN: I'm really going to have to kind of construct this because I can't really put my finger on it entirely. Dewey was, I'd say, a fairly welcome candidate here, although Taft always had strong support and probably, from what we might call the quote conservative unquote party. But there wasn't the great factionalism that we seem to find between conservative and-- using a bad word again--liberal groups of the two parties that we find now. But Dewey, I think, was a very acceptable candidate. He had a very strong supporter in [Arthur B.] Langlie who was governor at that time.

SOAPES: As you come up on '52, when do you first recall people

in Washington talking about Eisenhower?

FRAYN: Well, again, I'd have to reconstruct this. But it came rather late as I kind of recall in the setting up of the state convention that would be held for delegates to the national convention. Taft had an organization and I was a Taft man, although I had not been particularly identified with the party organization at all.

SOAPES: You didn't hold positions in the party.



FRAYN: I didn't hold positions in the party in any way nor had I held positions in the county. I did, because of the fact I'd been in the legislature, I attended their meetings for obvious reasons--as an elected part of the party--that was some of the things you did. And I knew the county officials fairly well. But I hadn't been really too aware. I knew that the Taft organization had been organized and it had been organized before, although I had not been particularly aware of it. And it was under Judge Charles Paul. And Judge Paul was a college friend and, I guess, more than that of Robert Taft. And he'd more or

less conducted the campaigns. And in '52 he'd started the campaign again. I had become involved, I think, probably because, just by being made aware of the fact that Taft was running, I became aware of this position as far as the country was concerned and felt that that was a place that I could find a good spot to land. So I identified, but not actively. And really, at that time, although again I'd have to check this out, there hadn't been any great Eisenhower move, as I kind of recall this, at the time that Taft was becoming involved because that came later and it came in a big rush. I believe I'm correct in stating this. And too, the Eisenhower organization went with the Dewey faction almost completely. That included Langlie, who became extremely active in the campaign of '52. Walter Williams, who is a good friend of mine and lived just about a block from where I live, he became the national chairman for--

SOAPES: Citizens for Eisenhower.

FRAYN: --Citizens for Eisenhower. And of course we had Don



Eastvold who was just coming up at the time, who went back and made, as we still recall around here, his famous seconding speech for Eisenhower when he said he was the man with the book. And he captured, I think, some national audience in what he did. But the result was that the Taft organization was just simply, just completely obliterated, and it wasn't because they (Eisenhower people) were playing hard. I think they knew the job better than Judge Paul did, and those of us who had aligned with them hadn't really even made any particular effort to work a precinct organization for delegates or that part. So, to all intents and purposes, the Eisenhower move was accomplished without the factionalism that has come later in the party organization.



SOAPES: Going back a bit, what was it about Taft that attracted you to him?

FRAYN: I think he attracted me because it seemed to me he was just the answer of a politician's politician. Now I don't like the connotation that's given to the word politician. It rings something that leaves a little to be desired. But I'm saying

this as the highest compliment that could be made, that in the source of government and the source of service to government, I've always felt that way. I felt that there have been some great tragedies in this country just because of certain things that have happened with our people that have been involved in government. I think the dissipation and the waste we have of fine people that we've had in government is just fantastic, but that's the price we pay in the kind of government we operate. I've always felt that the death of Taft, after Eisenhower was elected, which came I think within a year or two after he was elected--

SOAPES: Right, it was in the summer of '53.



FRAYN: It was right in there. And if you recall--I may be wrong in this--Eisenhower, contrary to what a lot of people seem to feel, I think he was a very warm person. I think his background was military and he kept it, but, as I remember, one of the first persons he called after his nomination was Taft. And this to me was a tremendous move and he didn't do it, as

I recall, and I'm not clear why he did this, he didn't do it in a patronizing manner. I think he called him out of genuine feeling that here was a person who could add a great deal to the responsibilities that he undoubtedly felt was going to be laid on his shoulders if he was successful. And I feel very strongly if Taft had been able to continue the liaison and relationship-- it would have been a big help. I went back at a later date and this was before he passed away and stopped in his office, I never really had a chance to talk to him. But I thought he was highly respected and well liked by the whole congressional delegation, and what a help he would have been to carry Eisenhower into the congressional area. I do think it was something that was a great loss as far as the Eisenhower administration was concerned.



SOAPES: This is an impression that you got from talking with the Washington state legislators?

FRAYN: No, this is an impression that I got from talking to national legislators. I wasn't that well acquainted with them,

but I knew enough of them, I certainly can't say that I found it in reading or even in discussions with Langlie and some of the others. Because at this time I made some rather substantial changes in my relationship as far as party organization, and in assuming responsibilities as far as campaigning was concerned. It brought me into contact with a number of people that I could direct these ideas, not questions, but it really came up in conversations.

SOAPES: When you say the Eisenhower campaign started late.

By late, you mean it was in the spring of '52? Or--

FRAYN: I really couldn't tell you. But I don't recall-- certainly it wasn't running a year ahead of that time, or a year and a half ahead of that time. I think it finally came down to when they were having the state convention. I'm certain they must have had spent time putting the county conventions and the rest of it together. As I recall, the state convention was held in Yakima that year, and I believe it's the first state convention I'd ever gone to. And I don't know that I went in



any official capacity. I couldn't really speak to that; hadn't thought that much. I went to it as a, oh, I'd been in the legislature for two terms then and so I went as a legislative member and was involved in some platform work and some of the fringe areas. But the number one thing was the selection of the delegates. You were very well aware that it was under the control of the Eisenhower supporters at the convention.

SOAPES: In distinguishing between Taft and Eisenhower supporters, you said that the Eisenhower people were many of the old Dewey supporters. Could we go a little bit deeper in terms of age levels, economic standing, newness to politics?



FRAYN: Well, I would say probably the Taft people, although again I just have to speak off the top of my head on this, but probably had retained some of the older persons that had been identified in the party, although at that time I wasn't what you'd call an old person in the party. I was rather a newcomer. And I had three or four other people who I met who were also identified with the Taft people who later became identified--

which I probably am identified now--as in the liberal wing of the Republican party. But they would be--really I don't think I can answer that particularly well. The governor, Langlie, carried pretty good support from around the state, but I would suppose maybe if you call quote establishment, and by that I mean big establishment, it would probably have leaned into the Taft area. But it wasn't in any way that I was ever aware of that they ever got together for a Taft state convention campaign. Which I later could understand, you'd call organization work, to do something to see about getting your story in front of the delegates at a convention, state convention, which is for the selection of delegates. There was no campaign for Taft whatsoever if you could visualize what you can think of as a campaign for a possible contender for the presidential election. I really didn't realize that Taft was as strong as he was until the '52 convention went on, and then I found out that really he had a lot of strength around the country, which was later proven at the closeness of the '52 convention.



SOAPES: But Judge Paul hadn't really put together an effective organization.



FRAYN: If you can say it with certainly no disrespect to Judge Paul, who was a great person--and I don't say that lightly, he was. This kind of political activity was not his cup of tea. What he needed was probably someone who had been aware of how you do organization work and probably it would have aided and abetted Taft's case as far as Washington state is concerned. Washington state has always been--it's a middle-of-the-road state. Up until very recent years, Washington state always voted for the winner. Which means one thing, that the people of Washington state were swinging with the national pattern. I think the first place we ever lost was in 1960 in the Nixon campaign. We voted for Nixon, in '60, but we lost to Kennedy.

SOAPES: In terms then of the Eisenhower campaign, I take it they did put on--

FRAYN: They did. And they knew their business. At least to

a person who was a complete novice, I could see they knew how to operate. Now I knew the method of procedure of electing legislative candidates. I wasn't a complete novice on that. First place, I ran my own campaign in my own district which, while it was a strong Republican district, I still had to take out some primary candidates when I first ran. So I knew a little of this. And then I'd been in other types of organization work, but I hadn't really been in party work, and particularly in convention activity. So I think it was party of the overall approach that they used; I know very little about this-- this is something, you know, you read about. Eisenhower's-- you'll have to tell me his name, I've been trying to think about it--who was his chief of staff over in Europe and then came back with him and he was very high in his, as one of his close persons that he had dealt with?

SOAPES: Jerry Persons?



FRAYN: Jerry Persons. We called him "Slick" Persons out here. I don't know whether that name has come up at all. And he

was older than I, but he had been in Seattle several years before. Lived out at the university, and I think lived in a fraternity house that I belonged to. And he knew quite a few people out here quite well. And I think Eisenhower was being approached from both parties, prior to '52.

SOAPES: Certainly in '48 he had.



FRAYN: '48, but he'd been approached as a potential from that area. And I think they knew the business. Dewey had got himself trapped in--it was '48 I guess, that's when he was running. He still had an organization background and [Herbert] Brownell and some of those persons who had worked with him. I think this carried right into the whole Eisenhower campaign.

[Interruption]

SOAPES: What was the nature of the appeal that the Eisenhower campaign was making; what was the pitch?

FRAYN: That's an interesting question. I don't think I've ever really analyzed it out. I think that there was a fundamental

appeal that he would bring--I hope you won't misconstrue this word--would bring a father complex into the picture. And they could look towards him for this, and while he might not know all of the ways to do this, his character and his background would give confidence--as I say I think he had a very pleasing personality and pleasing smile. These are little things, but there wasn't anything about him that resisted people, as I look back, and my casual relationship that later developed would carry this along. I think that that had a great, strong appeal. We had gone through four years of readjusting ourselves after the war, maybe eight years, and I think people were a little bit uneasy and upset possibly, I don't know. I really can't look back at the economic situation. As I look back at it now, it wasn't entirely a bleak period. I think it was a pretty fair period from that standpoint. But while Truman has come through a great Truman surge identifying him as one of the great people of the country, this was a phenomenon that developed later in his life. It certainly wasn't developed in this time, and I still think that to a certain extent there was a tinge of what



you'd call back room politics involved in his administration. I don't know whether they overplayed this or stated it--but Eisenhower was new. With the new it was to bring in character of his type--I think that was it.

SOAPES: Do you remember them in this period before the nomination of bringing up the issue of who was more electable?

FRAYN: Between Eisenhower and Taft?



SOAPES: Eisenhower and Taft, yes.

FRAYN: Oh, yes, I can remember that a little bit. But again the problem here was we were not getting any Taft direction, I'll put it that way. There wasn't any Taft direction in '52.

SOAPES: Looking at some of the personalities, you served in the legislature while Arthur Langlie was governor.

FRAYN: Right.

SOAPES: You saw him operate. Could you tell me about some of the principal traits that you remember of Langlie?

FRAYN: He had a lot of character, and he was extremely--kind of hard to voice this. I think Langlie had some difficulty in getting along with people because he left the feeling that his way was the only way. A comment to that--I was speaker and we'd run through a pretty good, I thought, program which had been identified with Langlie, and Langlie'd only had kind of outlined it and we'd thrown a bunch of things in together and in the sixty days. We were through in sixty days, at that time you could do this, could work it out. And he was very strong for reorganization of certain phases of state government. He had some bills in and they weren't going any place. Here we were, we were a Republican House, Republican Senate and Republican governor, and he called us in, the so-called leadership, which would include me as speaker, saying that he wanted those bills through. And I think I was the only one, along with one other one that said, "No way. You're not going to get them through." I said, "You don't have the feel," which he didn't like to hear regarding it. I said, "The trouble is that you've got some state elected people and



some heads of departments that don't want reorganization. And while everybody will come down into your office and tell you that they're going to go in support of this, you get up into caucus," which was closed at the time, "and you get someplace else, they don't give you that reading." I mean, it's true, I mean he just wasn't--and people don't dogmatically state something like that to someone who was in a position of responsibility like the governor was. I only state this, that in calling us back in, he called me and said it was the worst session he'd ever had. Which is a great thing to tell the speaker that he's going to have to depend upon. Well I said, "Well, that's your analysis, but," I said, "I have my analysis, which doesn't quite fit what yours is. You're calling us back into session," and I said, "I'll tell you what it's going to cost us. It'll cost us twenty-five or thirty million dollars to go in because we're going to pay the price on additional appropriations that are going to be made." And it did. I don't think it's fair, probably, for me to spend that much time with it. I think he was a good governor, he knew his trade, and the



amazing thing about it, after he left office he didn't have anything, a very limited amount of money. He was picked up and he had such a fantastic success in the private business world. He carried it. No, I'd give him, I'd give Arthur B. one of the top ratings as far as a governor was concerned even though I got off a little bit on that, but that was one of his major problems, which is true of a lot of people. I don't know whether this fits in to what you've wanted, you might want to know how I became involved in the campaign.

SOAPES: Yes, I do.

FRAYN: Was that in your question?



SOAPES: That was my next question that I was going--

FRAYN: No, I'm sorry, because it falls into some of these things, points in there which, to me, are rather interesting.

SOAPES: Okay, why don't you just go ahead and relate.

FRAYN: Once the nomination was over and--I don't go into that for obvious reasons, I wasn't involved in it--Walter Williams, who was state chairman, and then he went on to become a national chairman for Eisenhower and stated that he was going to continue as state chairman of the party here. And I got him, when he was out here, I called him and I said, "There's no way." I said, "You simply cannot be state chairman of the Republican party and be identified as a national chairman for Eisenhower." I think this may have been prior to the state convention, but it was in there some place along about this time. And Walter agreed with this. I said, "There are certain other functions that have to be done if you're going to run that state organization correctly." And I, like angels who rush in where fools will fear to tread, I got ahold of a couple of the people here that were on it, said, "I'll go for state chairman." And I didn't even know the ramifications of it, what you had to go through to be elected. But I did carry some weight within the state, and it was so done. But it was a remarkable thing, I feel, and it's one of the things that I think did us a great deal of good as far as our party



organization was concerned: here it was that the state chairman who had been a strong Eisenhower, moved on up into the national picture for the handling of the party operation and the new person coming in was a Taft person, and the two of them could work hand in hand. I think it had a great deal to do with the success that we had. Now Eisenhower--let's never understate this--he brought a great deal to the party at that time and he brought something that we hadn't been able to get. Dewey had blown it, and party organization had blown it as we'd understood it. To a certain extent, I don't think they had the grasp on some of the things. And there had been an upsurge, which had been in Congress, and that's what Truman had captured in his campaign against Dewey. But Eisenhower brought a tremendous surge, in our own state-- I don't know how other states went, they might have done the same--we put a terrific ticket together. We had Langlie, who at one time almost came to the decision that he wouldn't run for governor because he felt he was going to be in a cabinet position level, but we finally dissuaded him from.



that and said that this could be done in another manner, that he better not start monkeying, playing cute politics at this stage of the game. He was moving Eastvold in as his candidate and Eastvold was not that strong a person. But in it we had Langlie, who was a proven person. We got Emmett Anderson head of the Elks, of Swedish background to run for lieutenant governor. We had Eastvold who was a new young man coming up-- he was the guy on the white horse that we had. One other person who had come out of the retired area. We had the whole gamut covered. And the only person that we didn't elect including the legislative, House and the Senate, was our senator, and that was [Harry] Cain. And he lost to [Henry] Jackson. And an interesting byplay on that--I'd known Cain all my life and still see him at times in Miami. But at that time the greatest feeling he had of the loss was the fact that he ran so far behind Langlie with his vote total against Langlie's total. It was an interesting deal; they had a very strong antipathy to each other.



SOAPES: Cain and Langlie?

FRAYN: Cain and Langlie, oh yes. Brings a couple of--if you want this--

SOAPES: Yes, I do.



FRAYN: You can cut it out if you didn't. Two things happened which cover this. I think it's understandable. We did a lot of campaigning by trains in those days, and Nixon had come up from California and was in Portland. We had the whole thing all set up and he was going to do his campaigning up through Vancouver and up this way, and that's when he got trapped on that Checker's case. He had the meeting there in Portland and I was down there to get on the train with Nixon. I was state chairman and Cain was there and we had quite a few people. Under the circumstances he had to go back to California to get this thing cleared up. I was in touch with Langlie, because I had Langlie geared in to pick this thing up as we were going through certain parts of it. I wanted the governor to get in it because he was running, and two or three others so we could make as good a

showing as we possibly could. And I told him that because of the problems generally he was going to have to go down and get it straightened out, which he did. And after about the second or third call, because I kept Langlie advised as to where we were going, I said Cain had said that under the circumstances he would be happy to fill in for Nixon on the train because he was one of our elected--he wasn't the senior elected person but he could be there. And I was wise I think, I shouldn't say wise enough but I had intuition that I better clear this with the top person in the state. And Langlie would have no part of it. He wouldn't have Cain riding on that train. And so we ended up, we brought a couple of congressmen or something. And this got to be really kind of a problem that Langlie wouldn't work with Cain on the same platform. And that gets kind of tough, when you start trying to have meetings. But I do think we were able to sell the deal so well and it's just a shame that we couldn't carry this on, not only in the state election but from a party operation. Part of the benefits-- I won't even say collateral benefits--part of the real benefits was I put together some people that I thought could work with us.



I still retain Walter Williams' executive secretary as a paid staff man, George Carlson--I don't know whether he's a person that you've been to see.

SOAPES: Not a name that I recognize.



FRAYN: Well, he had been, and even during my time and after my time, had really been one of the best--took the work of keeping the state party going and really did an excellent, fantastic job. We started within our own county, King County, and I had finance people there, and we covered the state in about two and a half to three weeks and raised money. We were making King County a focal point and I had enough communication, enough things going on this, that we could use King County as the example for other counties. I said, "As you move to that total, we'll call you every night. And when we're in the different counties, we'll say King County's here, you people better get here." Well the result was we really put a financial team together. And in that time, in '52--this wasn't for the President; this campaign money came out for the state ticket, I

don't think it was ever done before. We were able to go to the governor and give him ninety thousand dollars. Now in '52, that was an event.

SOAPES: That's a pretty good sum then.



FRAYN: It's a pretty good sum of money and we gave Cain ninety thousand dollars, and we gave to each one of the candidates for state offices fifteen thousand dollars, with the exception of attorney general which was thirty thousand dollars. And all of it came out of the state. But can you imagine the organization we had with our elected people campaigning. And I think the result, basically came because we captured that great thing and we could take from Eisenhower, which was to me the most tremendous thing his campaign brought, enthusiasm. He just spread, I feel he just spread an acceptance with people in terms of--another anecdote--you don't mind my rambling for a little--

SOAPES: Go ahead, go ahead.

FRAYN: Okay. When he came out here I went to Spokane to meet him and we came over on the train. Well I didn't see him on the train but did talk with Persons, Fred Seaton and others, and Janet Tourtellotte, who was our national committeewoman, and if you haven't seen her, you should.

SOAPES: Yes, we have interviewed her.



FRAYN: She's good. Tremendous person. Still is.

Another interesting point, when we got to Seattle the reason I rode with Eisenhower was that there wasn't any way I could settle the Cain-Langlie deal to put them in the car going to the rally. And so I said, "Well, if none of you will go, I'll go," which was understandable. But to me, it was the warmth that Eisenhower showed as we drove the three miles from the station to the rally. The whole way was just jammed with people. And of course a lot of service people still in uniform at that time. And he was saying, "Hi, soldier; hi, sailor"-- hi, this; hi, that; and hi, the rest. And again not leaving the impression--at least I didn't have it, nor did I think the

people that were close enough for meeting him have ever had the feeling that he was patronizing in any way. And I always remembered, which I think was another interesting point when we made the turn to go into the auditorium and there was a big friend of mine that was standing there and he said, "Hi, Mort." It was the only thing that came through at that moment. And Eisenhower didn't miss a word. He said, "It's nice to be recognized, isn't it?" Now I don't know whether you grabbed that, but I grabbed it because someone who has got a real ability to project, I felt this even in areas where I've been later--I went to Palm Desert and I still go down there. At the time he was down there and he belonged to the Palm Desert Community Church, along with Mrs. Eisenhower. And I think in some ways that was one of the high points of how that family, General and Mrs. Eisenhower, could become a part of the community.

SOAPES: This is after he was president.



FRAYN: Oh, yes. They'd go to church and he'd come over sometimes by himself. But I only mention this because some places

I think I read a little scribble in the paper where young David was writing a book.

SOAPES: Yes.



FRAYN: And in the book he's expressing the fact that his grandfather had been quite a disciplinarian, which I can well understand he would have been. You know, you just don't have that military background--but some of these other things may indicate he also had a great feeling of warmth.

SOAPES: I'd like to back up just a bit. After Eisenhower was elected, did you, looking at it from the state point of view, feel that he was understanding of state political problems? Was there enough patronage? Did he deal effectively with Washington Republicans?

FRAYN: I wouldn't be able to even comment on it. I don't think I kept that close to it. I would say that undoubtedly it went well or I would have heard about it. Because by that time, I resigned as state chairman because I went in as speaker of the House, but I was still close enough to the organization and the

person that followed me in had been the finance chairman for me. And we did get into some problems, because it's the first time we'd been in. It got into some judgeships and things of that kind. But as far as I could find out, our biggest problem was to get the local people to heal their wounds and not to settle on the one person that they'd like to have selected. Janet would have been much more familiar with this because she was national committeewoman and she found herself in a--it was an entirely different role for her to participate in and undoubtedly she's probably commented to it, in the selection of people who could become a part of the Eisenhower team. Walter Williams, I think he was number two in the Commerce Department--

SOAPES: Yes.



FRAYN: --and I think did a very representative job in that area.

SOAPES: You went out of the legislature in '55.

FRAYN: Yes, I went out; I'd served as speaker and then I ran one more term. Then I went out in '55.

SOAPES: Did you participate in any way in the '56 or the '60 campaigns?

FRAYN: The '60 campaign I became active in the Nixon campaign and much more so than I had expected. In the Nixon campaign I'd received a call from John Hauberg--I don't know whether you've talked with John, have you talked with him?

SOAPES: No.



FRAYN: I don't know whether your time will permit it, but he is one you could very properly--

SOAPES: How's his name spelled?

FRAYN: H-a-u-b-e-r-g. Because he was finance chairman during all this time and was a very positive force as far as the party was concerned. He wasn't back in '52 but he became finance chairman and he moved right up through the ranks. I think he

came in in '56 rather than 1960. They called me and wanted me to know if I would take over the state for the Nixon campaign, which I said I'd be glad to do. I'd met Nixon at that time; I met him in the East, had no misgivings at all, even with the Checker's deal. And still don't. I think that's a tragedy in itself, speaking not to the subject of what we're discussing. There's certainly some character flaws there, but I think it has to do with the people that kept pressing him to keep running for office. I told them, couple of guys in the '64 campaign they ought to knock it off. Because I said he's run his race, leave him alone. But that's--

SOAPES: You think there were some people, some of his associates who were pushing him beyond--



FRAYN: Oh, there's no question in my mind, just like anybody else you get an investment of time and effort and the rest of it in it. And of course I think, inherently, with Nixon he had this burning ambition and desire. And I found out later in some of these things in which--I certainly won't be presumptuous

enough to comment to--that were unfolding a little bit as it later developed, and the situation that came that caused the big problem. But I handled Nixon in the state in 1960 and then I went East and I supposedly handled the--I shouldn't say supposedly, I did--I handled the western states for Nixon. And that's where I met Finch.

SOAPES: Bob Finch from California.

FRAYN: Who in my book is again one of the great examples of how in this country we squander people. I mean it's just inconceivable that they couldn't look ahead and put him in that senatorial race when George--

SOAPES: Murphy.



FRAYN: --Murphy last ran and yet there wasn't any way Finch could go if Murphy went. Then in '62 the Rockefeller people came out and I don't say that I had not noticed it before, but here was an area in which I could begin to accept the background of what the Rockefeller political ideals were, [George L.]

Hinman, who was the national committeeman, who had come out and wanted to know if I would handle Washington state for them. And I said I would and, as a matter of fact, he'd been in the 1960 campaign and we'd just pushed it aside and Rockefeller withdrew. So that's why in 1964 I really did a great deal of work in the Rockefeller campaign.

[Interruption]



SOAPES: In the 1960 campaign for Nixon, as I recall he did very well in the western states, despite the fact that he lost the election. What was the attraction Nixon had for the western states over Kennedy?

FRAYN: Well that's hard to answer. I think if there's one thing we were selling Nixon on, and again I think it was getting to the place that he was bringing a continuation of--I don't like the word honesty--there's nothing wrong with the word--but he was bringing a feeling that there was a depth, a security, a feeling that the country was in good hands. He wasn't bringing the father image because he was different, he had almost made a

fetish of not wanting Eisenhower to become too involved in his campaign. I didn't realize it till I'd sat in on a couple things back in Washington and this would come up. We would be kicking this around.



SOAPES: You mean at the national campaign headquarters?

FRAYN: Yes, Nixon national campaign headquarters and we would discuss ways to use Eisenhower, and for some reason or another they'd say, well the feeling was that this wasn't the time that they ought not bring the big batter up yet. But I got the feeling that maybe Nixon wanted to do this on his own, and I think in all reality I think this is part of the Nixon character that he wanted to do this. They put that debate deal together, and I'd heard Nixon in his acceptance speech back in Chicago and I thought, brother, this guy is something. He can really give it to you; he can really charge it. And I thought so much of the debate--which just shows how faulty you can be about letting the guy that's way behind get on the same platform with your man; it just isn't done. We spent,

out here, in Washington preparing for the debate, and it was quite considerable for this period, six to eight thousand dollars, I don't remember if it was six or eight of these debates, I forget what--

SOAPES: I think they actually had four of them.



FRAYN: Four, all right we'll say four. And we had it put together so that the first one would be the start of a pyramiding deal. We'd sent the stuff out, we had enough of our organization throughout the state that you'd invite ten people in and everybody there take a blank home with them and the next one was going to be the next week. And they would invite ten people. And you know, the mushroom?

SOAPES: Yes.

FRAYN: Well after we heard the first one when he bombed out, then we dropped the deal.

SOAPES: You could tell immediately that it was--

FRAYN: Oh! Then I found out that Nixon had hit his knee or he'd done something and he was actually in physical pain.

SOAPES: I think he'd spent some time in the hospital.

FRAYN: Yes. And he was really a sick person. And I think if we had to do it again we'd just say, "No way," It was kind of an interesting situation for me then because I was with about six or seven of the area directors, that would be Finch and others. We'd kick around campaign strategy. But I don't think any of us realized how good Kennedy was.

SOAPES: As a campaigner?



FRAYN: As a campaigner, as a person who's got the ability to project. I don't know why we went as we did in Washington state. This would be logical Kennedy country. But this is a funny area. I remember Finch calling me the night of the election and wanted to know what we'd do. I said, "Well, we'll carry this state by about twenty-five to fifty thousand votes and the reason we're dumping a hundred (for I thought we'd carry it by a

hundred and twenty-five thousand) is that the guy we had running for governor had done a kind of a turkey job and it had hurt us. And I said, "If we can go by what we've done before I think you're in." Because Washington, usually, votes the way the national vote goes. Finch was calling I suppose to get the feel of what was going on. Nixon lost but in a couple of states they were counting the votes out in the graveyard and in a few other places. And I give Nixon a great deal of credit on this, that he didn't really blast them. You know he didn't.

SOAPES: Right. You're talking about the Illinois--



FRAYN: Illinois, and then they had something going in Texas. He didn't really blast it. He found out things but he didn't want to create the turmoil that a full investigation would have started. It's a hard thing to understand and I certainly don't excuse any of it. I remember when the campaign was over, Nixon came up here, and he used to travel around in great big super jets. He came up here just to carry out an assignment

that somebody wanted here and over in eastern Washington. George Gunn--he's since passed away--but he's always been a very able person as far as the party was concerned and financially was able to do quite well for the party. More than filled his part, and he was a big person in the community. But we drove Nixon out and here he got into a little, I think it was a Piper Scout plane, and George said, "How the mighty have fallen; there's somebody who can take it and still go and carry out an assignment like a trooper should." Which I thought really kind of told the story to a certain extent. That's why I felt after Nixon had run in California and it affected him so badly--I mean that's when he lashed out, and turned real vindictive. They should have laid off trying to get him to run for office again, but they didn't in 1964 and 1968.



SOAPES: You mentioned you had some contact with Eisenhower down in Palm Desert.

FRAYN: Very, very limited. I'd see him. I belonged to one golf club he belonged--which doesn't mean anything--he was

playing El Dorado, I was playing Thunderbird. But I'd be over there and casually you'd see him. One thing about the people there and that's probably true in other areas; they were very careful not to intrude. He could be sitting in the clubhouse, and I'd seen that a couple of times where he'd be sitting there and people wouldn't stand and look. They did as well as they could to allow them to have that feeling of a natural existence. Of course he loved golf, as I understood it. I never had the opportunity to play with him and I never made any particular effort. I'd known Edgar Eisenhower over in Tacoma reasonably well and played with him. I think he's the one that started the General on the golf playing deal. But I think that that same pleasant attitude, and I'd noticed it at church, which is probably easy for him to do, but there wasn't anything about this that seemed to be patronizing. If they had the finance drive, he wasn't down there as honorary chairman; he'd be on there as chairman or co-chairman. I'm not too sure that he wouldn't sit within the framework somehow and would talk it over with the people relative to the responsibilities they



owed their community. Now Mrs. Eisenhower, much the same--gracious, which she is. And when the kids would gather, this was the one place that I would say they recognized that they had to act out their role a little bit. The kids would gather Sundays, and when they would come to church and they'd pick the flowers. They'd let some little kid take them over to them. I don't know whether others will speak to this, but I do think this was a great example of what to me was a tremendous part of his character. He was able to do that in the community without making you feel that he was--I use the word patronizing again which probably is as good as any. He just seemed to be able to do that.

SOAPES: You said you knew Edgar fairly well. What major traits of his do you remember?

FRAYN: Well he was a very strong personality, and he was the older brother. I don't know how true this is, but as long as you're digging it up you might take a look at it and I don't know whether you could trace it back. When President Eisenhower,



general at that time, came out here on his campaign deal, there seemed to be some kind of a question as to who was to meet who, between Edgar Eisenhower and Dwight Eisenhower, because Edgar was the oldest. And the oldest was the "number one", and the result was that Edgar and his wife (he had remarried) missed several events, including being in Spokane and at the Seattle Rally because there was a touchiness about who proceeded who on the platform at the meeting. The first son was the top person.

SOAPES: Despite the fact that Dwight was President of the United States.



FRAYN: Well at that time he wasn't President, he was running. But even when we got on the platform, normally I think Edgar would have been on the platform. It seemed perfectly logical to me. And his wife would probably have been sitting up there with Mamie Eisenhower, but she wasn't there. I sat with Mamie.

SOAPES: That's an interesting story; I hadn't heard it before.

FRAYN: Isn't that an interesting anecdote? And I hope it doesn't get any place because it's not one of those things that--but it's kind of an interesting point.

SOAPES: Yes. Very interesting.

FRAYN: I think that family must have been a pretty strong family, the Eisenhower family from the mother, from all I can gather.



SOAPES: Well, we've covered quite a bit of ground, and I thank you for your time this morning.