

## **SENATOR HAYDEN RUNS FOR REELECTION**

### **Interview #6**

**Wednesday, June 20, 1990**

**RITCHIE:** I thought today, to give Senator Hayden some background, and also some background to the work you were doing in his office, that we could talk about Arizona politics in the 1950s and 1960s. Looking at it, it seems to be a state that went from, up to 1950, being a pretty solidly Democratic state to today being a pretty solidly Republican state. Can you give me your characterization of Arizona politics, especially back in the 1950s?

**ELSON:** I think that's pretty accurate, I mean as far as the way it's ended up. But this all started as a result of World War II. They probably taught more men and women to get on and off the ground in the Army Air Corps in Arizona than in any other state in the union, because you had about 363 days of fine weather, so you had bases all over the place. The desert, I think there's something about the desert, the first time you're out there you sort of hate it, you don't see the beauty of the mountains, and the sand, and the soft pastels, and the life, it's difficult when you come from a wet area. You almost have to leave and go back to where your roots were, and then come back again to really appreciate what the West was like in the deserts, and the mountains and all that. So after the war a lot of men went back to school in Arizona at the university and moved back there. It was a good place to raise a family, and it was growing. Up until 1950, it was always a pretty heavily Democratic state, even in territorial days—contrary to what Darrell said—but after the war and starting about then, you had all these people coming in from all over the country, and a lot of them had been stationed there, like John Rhodes, who was the first Republican congressman elected in a long time, in 1950.

You had a new brand of people moving into the state, and they came from pretty conservative areas, the Midwest, Indiana, and places like that. Before they came out of Texas and Oklahoma and the Southern states more than the Midwest. They were coming from all over, and that's when the boom started. It definitely had a change in politics.

Carl Hayden was reelected in 1950. I wasn't even eligible to vote then, but I saw him around. I was still active as far as my interest in politics, and being around, but I wasn't really involved with anyone particular then. You had McFarland of course, who was here as majority leader at that time, at the tail end of that. And then, let's see, when did Eugene Pulliam come? He was the owner of the two big newspapers in Arizona, the *Arizona Republic* and the *Phoenix Gazette*, he moved in after the war and bought those papers. They were very, very conservative newspapers, and of course Eugene Pulliam was Dan Quayle's grandfather. He was also one of the men who talked me into running, but we can get to that later.

In the '40s and early '50s the fight for domination in politics was always pretty much in the Democratic party, though there were exceptions to that. You had what were called "pinto Democrats," sort of the conservative Democrats as opposed to the liberal Democrats, and the fight was always in the Democratic primary. After the war, I'm trying to remember when we became a "right to work" state, I think it was '48 or '50, somewhere in there, which is sort of a misnomer, but anyhow. But for a Democrat in the primary the unions were always after you to repeal 14(b) of the Taft-Hartley Act. They'd want you to get on the cross that way with them. So you'd try to walk a line between your conservative Democrats, your pinto Democrats, and the liberal Democrats to get the nomination. And the fights were normally then in those primaries. Well, all that started to change in the early '50s, when Rhodes first got elected, particularly in Maricopa County where the vast majority of the voting population was located. The two population centers were Pima County, Tucson, and Maricopa County in Phoenix, and the outlying counties, what you call the "cow counties," they were always sort of conservative, but Democratic.

Barry Goldwater got elected to the city council of Phoenix in 1949, and then of course the state though Democratic was a pretty conservative Democratic state, which always amazed me, because we fed at the federal trough. Any development in Arizona was a result of the federal government, and yet they all claimed it was because of rugged frontiersmen and rugged individualists. You know, between our cotton farmers, and citrus farmers, and our cattlemen, and the miners, they all thought they had done this all by themselves. They always wanted "peril points" on copper prices, or import quotas, or something like that to protect the mines. I always got a kick out of that too because—well, that's getting off the subject—between the mines playing their foreign

properties against the local properties. At one time, Carl Hayden was known as "Copper Carl," with the collar of the copper mines around his neck.

Anyhow, that started to change, and then Truman, for lots of reasons became unpopular. When the end of his term was coming, and Stevenson got the nomination, and Barry was running against Ernest McFarland who was then the majority leader of the Senate. Barry did to Mac what Mac had done to Ashurst in 1940. Henry Ashurst never went back home. He was sort of too big for a lot of that, he got "Washington fever." Carl Hayden used to tell Henry that he'd better get back home and mend his fences. So Mac beat him in 1940, and then Barry did to Mac what Mac had done to Ashurst, only as a Republican. And of course, he only won by four or five thousand votes, and Eisenhower was carrying the state by seventy percent to thirty. Barry came in literally on Eisenhower's coattails, or otherwise he wouldn't have made it then. Then of course, Mac didn't run a very good campaign that year. It was hard being majority leader and defending his position and the Truman administration. Of course the Korean War wasn't a very popular thing. Eisenhower was going to end that, just like Nixon was going to have a secret plan for Vietnam. But the Pulliam papers were also very helpful, because when he first started there, any Democrat was practically a Commie. He just ripped them, just tore them apart. He sort of helped make Barry Goldwater in the state of Arizona, Eugene Pulliam did. Pulliam was very conservative at that time, as were his papers and his editorials. That paper permeated, and even later became even more powerful throughout the state, but certainly in Maricopa County that's all you had to read. There weren't even many weeklies or anything in the area, and as the city grew, it grew and it got more and more powerful. So between Eisenhower's popularity and Pulliam's papers' all-out support for Goldwater, Barry managed to win. That changed the whole complexion. Arizona now really became a two-party state.

We had several Republican governors then. We had Howard Pyle, and then we had Jack Williams, "one-eyed Jack." At one time I used to call Arizona the "cyclops state," because we had a congressman, and a former ambassador to England, Lew Douglas, who had one eye, and then we had Mo Udall, who had one eye, and then we had the governor who had one eye, so I used to call Arizona the "cyclops state." In the interim, Mac went back and got elected governor, because he wanted to come back to the Senate.

In '56, when Senator Hayden was up again, I ran the office while they were out campaigning. He always had an opponent, both in the primary and general elections. I don't think he ever got a free ride. A guy by the name of Ross Jones ran against him in 1956, and he won that very handily. But again you could see the changes taking place. The state wasn't like it was in the old days, when the senator knew everyone. It was getting so you couldn't get home as often or spend as much time. That started to change in the late '50s. And with the advent of jet travel, and I think I mentioned how our whole office operation changed as a result of the growth of the state and everything that took place in the late '50s.

It was still pretty much a heavily Democratic state, even during the '50s, from the standpoint of registration. But people didn't vote that way. Most of them were conservative. So outside of down in southern Arizona, where the Udalls ran—first Stewart and then Mo when Stewart joined the cabinet in '61—it was not easy getting elected as a liberal of any sort. Anyone that the paper branded as a liberal was going to have problems. I think I mentioned how it used to irritate my Republican friends that the senator was seen as so conservative. Incidentally, a lot of those were really Democrats who then switched to the Republican party when they started becoming really respectable, and the thing to be. A lot of them I went to school with were Democrats, and then all of a sudden they got involved in Republican politics. I could go down a whole list of names that way. But you still had the fight in the Democratic party, this balancing act you had to do to get the nomination.

There was really never a strong party organization in Arizona. The Republicans started to build one under Barry and the right-wing. They started really going at it in the right way. They started using computers, and they got into the legislature and into redistricting fights. Where the Democrats would still be using their little calculators and adding machines, particularly in redistricting the state legislature, the Republicans were using computers. They really started working at it and building during the '50s, and became an organized party, where the Democratic party as far as I could ever tell was just sort of a loosely formed organization. Back in the old days, the senator used to tell me, there was a party organization, particularly controlled by the governor, who had lots of patronage. Any of the federal patronage, of course, was either the senator's or the congressman, whoever that might have been at the time.

During the '50s this all started to change. It became very difficult because you almost had to be on the liberal side to get the nomination, but then when you got into the general election you'd get crucified with that so-called liberalism. It was quite a balancing act, everyone had to try to get, so you wouldn't get labeled and the paper wouldn't start hitting you so hard. When you have well over half the vote in Maricopa County for a statewide election, and then in Tucson another 20-25% and then the rest of the state makes up the balance. So you would concentrate on those two counties, particularly Maricopa, but there was no real way to do it. Then with the advent of television and radio. . . .

Well, McFarland ran against Barry in '58. Actually, he should have won that election. A lot of people think Barry is a very popular figure in the state of Arizona, but Barry Goldwater has always been a controversial figure. He's really never won very big, well, if you consider 58%, I think that's what he beat McFarland by. He only beat me 57-43 in '68, in that wonderful year. But in that race and also in his first race it was very close. And then in his last race that unknown almost knocked him off. So Barry has always been controversial. Mac was ahead in that race, but a couple of things happened in that election. We had a gubernatorial candidate by the name of Morrison who was running. His real name happened to be Marsekian, and they tied him up with a record over in California and sort of wrapped it around him. There was some hanky-panky going on. They put the union label on Mac and a few other things. And then here Mac owned a television station, but some of his television spots in '58 were really horrible. I know he got the senator to do some, and geez I was embarrassed to even see the senator on the tube. They were just very shabbily done. In my opinion, Mac blew that race. He had it up until the last few weeks. And of course the paper was after him, and all these other things didn't help.

**RITCHIE:** Did you consider McFarland a liberal. . . .

**ELSON:** No.

**RITCHIE:** Or a conservative? Where did he stand?

**ELSON:** I always figured Mac was his own party. Mac was for Mac. He grew up down in Florence, that's where he had his farm, came out of Oklahoma. I'd say he

was more conservative, though he did support a number of pieces of social legislation. But of course after he lost to Barry that first time he never did get back. After he had been governor then he got on as chief justice of the Supreme Court in Arizona. So he had a very distinguished career. But I would certainly not call Mac a liberal. In the Democratic party, for instance, normally the governor, whoever the governor was, if he was a Democrat, he pretty much controlled whatever organization there was in the state, to the extent that we had an organization.

We never got involved in it—the senator never got involved in it. We sort of had our own organization of people he had known over the years and he relied on in every county in the state. So it was sort of part of the Democratic party but it wasn't any official organization. We worked with the party organization. Only once, maybe twice [laughs], did we get involved in the party politics. Once when we should have, perhaps, we didn't. That was leading up to the Democratic convention in 1960, when the liberal part of the party headed by Stewart Udall and his brother, they stole the delegation. They didn't steal the delegation, but they got the delegation to go for Kennedy. They beat the conservatives at their own game. We had what they called "unit rule" in our caucus, to give us more strength supposedly. Well, they turned around and used the unit rule against the conservatives and took over and got the delegation to go to Kennedy. It was sworn to Kennedy at least on the first ballot.

Well, before that happened, I know Lyndon was twisting the senator's arm to get him to work on the Arizona delegation and to come out publicly and endorse him. The senator hesitated for a long, long time. I remember early that year, Paul Eaton and I sat down with the senator, I don't know how many occasions, and said, "It's fine if you're going to stay out of it," because Mac and a lot of people wanted him to get in too, because McFarland and Lyndon were close friends. Lyndon for some reason always liked Mac. Anyhow, we tried to convince him that if he was going to get involved, or if he was going to take sides for Kennedy, or [Henry] Jackson, or any of them that he might want to support, that he should send us out to the state to lay down the law and get involved in the party struggle. He didn't, until very late when he finally made a public statement endorsing Lyndon for the nomination. Well, by then it was all over. We had had our convention.

So when I went to the 1960 convention, the only reason I was out there was in case it went beyond the first ballot, that we might then try to twist some arms and get the delegation to go for Lyndon. But of course I never had the opportunity to do anything. Because of the senator's reluctance, we never got involved, and the liberal side of the party took over the delegation and got it committed to Kennedy. They did a good job. Then of course, after they used the unit rule, they wanted one man, one vote, and they had proportion after that. We changed the rules against the unit rule, which I still think was a mistake for the party to go that way, as a little state.

Stewart headed up the liberal wing of the party, and then when he joined the cabinet, Mo was elected. He had been county attorney. Of course, they both came out of St. Johns, Arizona, up in the northeast corner, but having gone back to the university after the war, they made Tucson their home, and that was their headquarters. Again, this was a new crowd coming in, all the World War II veterans. One comment on that, Carl Hayden once told me that he thought that the greatest piece of social legislation ever enacted was the G.I. Bill of World War II, which he got involved in. He thought that was one of the best things this country ever did. And people took advantage of it, twelve or fifteen million men and women went to school under that program. It changed the whole nation.

And all this time, Arizona was still growing. I know, gee, between 1956 when the senator ran and 1962, his last race, my God, there must have been a fifty percent increase in the voting population. I think I mentioned that when I did a survey in early 1961, Christ, forty percent of the people in Arizona didn't even know who Carl Hayden was, because he didn't put out press releases. He was still doing it the old-fashioned way. This was about the same time that I took over as his A.A. and was getting ready for the '62 campaign. During all this time, the Republican party kept getting stronger and stronger in the state. They were better organized, better financed, and any Democrat statewide always had to take into consideration how Pulliam was going to play them.

Early in '61, getting ready for his reelection, Mrs. Hayden was still alive, I wrote a fifteen, twenty-page memorandum to the senator on what he had to do if he was going to win, because of this whole change in the demographics of the population, and what we had to do. I laid out this program, and how we couldn't rely anymore on his

old organization, we had to do more press, get things into the can, do television spots, you know, I just went through a whole litany of things. Every Saturday we'd have these conversations, and I gave this memorandum to him—I only made two copies, one for me and one for him. In the meantime, I had this survey underway, but I never let Carl Hayden see it until later that year—though the Udalls tried to steal the survey from the pollster, I remember that very well.

**RITCHIE:** How did they do that?

**ELSON:** Well, they knew the pollster and they tried to get it out of him, and then they thought that some of our people that they were friendly with might have a copy of it. They were trying every way to get their hands on it. But I made sure when I did that that I would have shot the pollster—it was John Kraft, he's dead now—had he leaked any of the information out of there.

**RITCHIE:** What was so damaging?

**ELSON:** Well, it showed how weak the senator was. Age was a factor—among those who knew him. And then you had this big unknown. But I helped write that questionnaire, though Kraft was a very fine pollster. He was a wonderful guy. His real strong point was interpreting data, and the intensity of people, you know, the reports he got back. But we spent a lot of time putting that together. I had taken a whole year in test and measurements, because I was going to be a shrink, I had majored in psychology, so I had a little experience in that sort of stuff. We worked very hard on this questionnaire. There wasn't any surprise to me in there about where the senator was, but I wanted to also sort of get a feel on where the state was going, and what were the real issues, and how intensely people thought about them. I managed to raise enough money to pay for that all on our own, without anyone riding it, or any union paying for it, or anything like that.

**RITCHIE:** But you didn't show it to Carl Hayden for a while?

**ELSON:** Not for a long while, in fact, until we were going back out that fall to Arizona. Well, Mrs. Hayden had died, though early on I had made him make a decision, and he initialed that memorandum. Because I said, "If you agree on this, I've



got to start to now." He initialed that once and I just took that as permission to do everything that was in there, whether he agreed with it or not. I started putting everything together. But I didn't show him the survey, because then Mrs. Hayden died and a lot of people thought he'd fold up in six months and drop dead himself and all that. He was just too strong a man both emotionally and physically for anything like that.

**RITCHIE:** Were you afraid that the statistics would scare him?

**ELSON:** Well, yeah, I thought it would upset him, and so much was going on then. There was a new administration and we had problems with them. We were always in fights with Stewart Udall over patronage, because he thought he was going to control all the federal patronage and he forgot that Carl Hayden had been a senator for a long, long time, and had his prerogatives. It was a silly fight, and it really got down to a nasty level, because Stewart blamed me for everything. You know, I didn't ever do a thing without telling Carl Hayden I was doing it. I wasn't that dumb. I wasn't going to get blindsided that way. Though everyone thought that I was running things, and that the senator didn't know what I was doing. That's just total rubbish. But we were always having fights. In fact, it got so bad once that the senator had to go to President Kennedy and tell him to control his Secretary of the Interior, and the senator would take care of me [laughs] as his AA, because it was getting really vicious.

But I hesitated showing him the poll because I wanted to get a lot of these things started, and there just wasn't a good time, with the session going on, and everything that was happening there with the new administration. Then we were putting on that dinner that the president came to in November '61. So it wasn't until we flew out after the session ended on the airplane, and I said, "Senator, you know I've had this." I'll never forget it because I've never seen a man more intently read a document. He said, "Everything in there is true." He said, "This is right on target. I don't question a thing that he's found." Then he asked me what I was doing about it! [laughs] Then I was sort of in a position to say, "this is how we're going to handle this, and that's why it's important while you are out here that we get around the state and get some video footage and all that." Which we did, we had all that stuff in the can before the year was out, getting ready for '62. Fortunately, because we never got out to the state in

'62 except for four days when he opened his campaign headquarters on a swing through the state.

What amazed me about him was that here I am, though I had been in campaigns and worked in one of his, and worked with others in other campaigns, when we tried to help Mac and other political campaigns, but I'm not yet thirty-two years old and he's putting his whole career in my hands, and he did. But he made that judgment and then he gave me total control. He backed me up on everything I wanted to do. When I put everything together, and the people who we got involved, though I tried to stay in the background and had other people who supposedly were the campaign managers, but we ran everything from Washington. He all of a sudden decided that his future was in my hands and he was going to run with it, and he did.

That fall we did a lot of traveling. We went to the Glen Canyon dam, and to defense bases all over at various places, getting footage as well as putting together all the stuff that I felt was necessary for the campaign in '62. Then of course the interesting person he ran against that year was Evan Mecham, later our wonderful governor of Arizona. That was his first time out, and he did to the Republican party what he did when he later got elected governor of Arizona, he blindsided them. He got his vote out, and of course in the late '50s and early '60s, particularly in Arizona, there was a real swing to the right. The John Birch Society was very prevalent all over the southwest, particularly in Arizona and southern California, in Orange County, and all that. And to some extent the papers there were mouthing a lot of this stuff too, you know, sell the national forests and privatize everything. I took Mecham very, very seriously because I just sort of had a feeling what he might do.

I never told Carl Hayden this, but I had someone planted in all our opponents' camps, that were really working for me. Because we have a late primary, it comes in September, and you only have sixty days to get ready for the general election, that doesn't give you much time to regroup, so I looked at all the Republicans who were in the race, and I had looked at Mecham and thought that he was the one that could get the nomination, and sure enough he did. One of his key advisors was really reporting to me, and about the only thing I didn't know about his campaign was where he was getting all of his money, and that didn't bother me so much, because I had plenty for Carl Hayden. But there were no surprises.

The bad thing that happened was that the Cuban Missile Crisis came to a head in October, they had the late session, and then Carl Hayden got sick. Now, the only time that Carl Hayden was ever sick in his life was in his later years. He had had some colds, and things like that, but here's a man, what a physical specimen. He still had his original teeth when he died, never had a filling—I think in his last years he had a filling and he lost two wisdom teeth—incredible. But on one of our trips back home, down in Nogales, he got a urinary infection. And then in 1962, just before the election, he got a urinary infection. They were devastating for an older person. He ended up in Bethesda [Naval Hospital]. For a long time he was over in the apartment, and we had people sitting in our office, some John Birchers, demanding to see the senator. I had an ambulance over at the Methodist building taking him out the backdoor and out to Bethesda. Well, he was out there the last thirteen days of the campaign. I don't know how many calls—they'd tell me at the hospital that they had hundreds of calls from Arizona accusing the hospital of withholding information that senator was really dead and we had him on ice and we were waiting until the election was over so someone could be appointed, and we were playing politics.

This rumor campaign became so prevalent and bad that I had to get Lyndon, who was vice president, and Dick Russell, to come out to the hospital on Saturday before the election to get a picture of him to show that he was alive, and got the press there for a live press conference. There wasn't time to stage anything. They were up there on the seventeenth floor, and there was Lyndon and Dick Russell out to brief the old man about the Cuban Missile situation. Then they had a beautiful press conference, and the front page of the *Republic*—well, I have to get back and tell you about Pulliam because that was a coup in Carl Hayden's behalf—but on Sunday morning the front page above the fold was this beautiful picture of Dick Russell, Lyndon Johnson, and Carl Hayden, although he was in a hospital gown and all that, but he didn't look too bad. But he was alive.

I remember the night of the election, he was still in Bethesda and he asked me what I thought was going to happen. I said, "I think you're going to win by twenty-six or twenty-seven thousand votes." I think he won by 25,800. I forget the exact figure, but I was only 800 votes off. He said, "That's okay, just so long as we don't have to have a recount." Then that night, before the polls closed, he got on the phone and called

some of our key people out there personally and thanked them for their help. Half of them were crying because they certainly didn't expect that.

But getting back to that, leading up to the election with Eugene Pulliam, I felt like a lot of Democrats that this was some sort of damn demon, right-wing fascist, that was running our state and abusing his power and all that. I had never met the man. The senator had, but he didn't pay too much attention. He just did his thing, Carl Hayden I mean. So this being '61, on one of my trips to Arizona I decided that I would go try to have a meeting with Mr. Pulliam, but before I did that I got together with some of the people in the Department of Justice and talked a lot about anti-trust problems and violations, they had a joint operating agreement there, the same as it was in Tucson with the two papers down there. So I had fortified myself with a lot of things that I thought we could make life unpleasant for Mr. Pulliam if he wasn't going to support the senator. I had a whole agenda worked out, not only with legislation but urging Justice Department action and all this other stuff.

I forget who set the appointment up, well, I know who it was, one of the men in Arizona set up this appointment and I went over to see him, all by myself. I had never met the man. I went into his office and was ushered in by his long-standing secretary, nice woman, and he had a crew cut, and of course I had a crew cut in those days. Everyone had a crew cut in those days, Rhodes, Udall, and Carl Hayden of course was bald. He invited me in, I sat down, he said, "Well, young man, what do you want to talk about?" I said, "Well, I'm here to talk about Carl Hayden, who is going to seek reelection, and I want to know where you're going to be on his . . . " that's as far as I got. He said, "I don't even know why you have to ask that question. Carl Hayden is one of the greatest men who has ever served his country. He will have the solid backing of this paper. Whatever we can do, we're going to do," and he went on and on. Well, I felt like a complete [expletive]! I'm sitting there with all this ammunition ready to threaten him, to go after his tail.

For some reason, starting right then and there, we developed this very close friendship. All he asked of me, I think, was to try to keep the senator out of some of the other races and only concentrate on his race. That's what I wanted to do anyhow, because I knew it was going to be a different campaign, and we couldn't get involved supporting whoever the gubernatorial candidate was going to be and others, that we

would have to concentrate on his race, mainly because of his age. He wasn't going to be able to run around like he did when he was younger. So that was not difficult to do, I could say that I was not going to get him involved in all these other races. From that point on, Mr. Pulliam and I had this very close relationship, and I think as a result of that I brought Carl Hayden into see him a lot after that, during the '60s, and he loved the old man. Where it really helped was particularly during the Central Arizona Project fight, because he thought Carl Hayden and I were the only two men that knew what the hell we were doing back here on the project, and he made no bones about that. I know Carl Hayden did, I'm not so sure I did, but certainly Carl Hayden did.

The reason I bring that up was because that picture that I got on the front page of the *Republic*, I had called Pulliam and told him I had to prove this guy was alive. He was a little concerned too, because some of their own surveys had shown that Mecham was a problem. Of course, Sam Goddard was running on the Democratic ticket and they were always trying to get the senator involved in their campaign and some of the others, so I was being maligned heavily for keeping the senator out. As it worked out, he wasn't out there anyhow, so we really didn't have to get him involved. But we wouldn't do joint statements or things like that, and as a result I personally got hurt politically in Democratic circles for just keeping Carl Hayden in his own campaign and not worrying about anyone else. It was tough to do because I really am, I think, a very good Democrat, and I felt bad about it. But also my first responsibility was to Carl Hayden.

This relationship that I developed, starting whenever it was in '61 when I first met Pulliam, really helped. He told me, "Just get the photo to me," and he had his people writing stories. His press people back here were at the press conference. So we got it there, and sure enough. The other thing in that campaign, I made a decision early on and committed—doesn't sound like a lot of money in today's elections—but I think I'm the first person on a statewide basis to use a computer to send a mailing to every registered voter, both Democrat and Republican, by using voter registration cards that I had access to. I made a commitment, we only had I think then maybe a total of 565,000 registered voters, but we put together a three paragraph letter. Computers weren't that personalized in those days, the ones I had access to, so the letter was a printed letter, but it looked pretty official. It was the fiftieth anniversary of statehood, so we used the Arizona commemorative state. I bought something like \$22,000 worth

of stamps, way back early in the year, and designed a special envelop that sort of looked official but not quite official, and then with this commemorative stamp and this message. We had them all ready to go and they hit every registered voter the Friday and Monday before the election, right into the house, first-class letter. I think I was the first one ever to try that on a statewide basis. I think the total project cost around \$35,000.

Then the other thing, we designed a tremendous brochure, I still have a copy of it for the senator. It was a fold-out, three-color thing. It was really well done. I had that printed back here, and then I got Flying Tigers to fly out fourteen tons of these brochures. All I could see was that damn plane going down somewhere over Kansas and you'd have those brochures all over the Midwest! We got that around to all the doctors' offices, and circulated by hand, so he was visible all over the damn place.

Then we did a documentary, and I don't think up to that time a documentary like this had been done. We did a thirty-minute documentary about Carl Hayden and what he had done for the state and the nation and all that. This guy who I hired was really good. It was beating all the prime time shows when we showed it, it was that well done. It appeared that Carl Hayden was all over the damn place, though he never got back to the state of Arizona, except for the opening of his office.

I nearly killed him on that trip. We had access to these various airplanes. I think we opened our headquarters in a swing during the July recess, over the 4th or something like that. But it was hotter than hell in Arizona. We flew out and we had set up the opening of the headquarters in Phoenix and we were going to make a swing of the state, in four days go around. And I got this damn B-25, an old World War II bomber that had been converted, and Carl Hayden was plugged into where the bomb bay was, they'd put the gunner on the sides. They had made that into an executive suite, and there was room for four people back there with a table in between, very comfortable, but you had to climb into it through the bottom hatch. Well, Christ, we left Phoenix and we headed for Page, and we found out that in a B-25 the brakes aren't that good. We flew from there to Page, Arizona, which is up in northern Arizona, and then we flew over to Kingman, down to Yuma, all in one day.

And the temperature—like when we approached Yuma, on the ground it was 117. In that damn airplane it must have been 130 degrees, and Carl Hayden is still in a damn suit with his coat on, and the rest of us are just soaking wet. I think I had my wife on that trip, and Mary Frye, who is working with me on this other project right now, she was with us, and old guy by the name of Jack Folsom Moore, "Fulsome Jack" Moore, who was editor of the *Brewery Gulch Gazette*, down in Bisbee, Arizona. But during the old days, during the '40s and '50s, was a lobbyist, the chief lobbyist for the mines, and sort of ran the state legislature in many ways back in the '40s and '50s. Most colorful, most wonderful politician I ever met in my life, just a super guy, and was he cagy!

We flew into Yuma, and in that heat we had an outdoor function at the airport, and then we got back in the airplane and headed for Fort Huachuca. Well—I don't know whether I should tell this story but I've never felt so sorry for a man in my life. We had gotten some bad food, we all had upset stomachs, but the old man got a sort of a case of the trots. Well, he had to go and they had a little john in the tail of the plane, but getting in there was really bad. He got back there and he got his suspenders caught on something, and before he could get his pants off he had to relieve himself, you know, he had diarrhea. Well, we tried cleaning up, and we're on our way between Yuma and Fort Huachuca, which is a base Carl Hayden built, and they were going to have an honor guard and all this stuff. I got the pilot on the phone and told him, "Call off the honor guard!" We just want to get in and get to the place so we could clean up because it was just a mess. You know, with that heat, and that odor, everyone was getting sick.

Well, we get to Fort Huachuca and Christ the general didn't pay any attention to our orders, he had an honor guard out there. So when we got out of the airplane we were all sort of standing behind him. He got himself together—it was just the one incident, he didn't have any more disasters. We did the best we could, and he did the best he could, but we had to wait there. But it was hotter than hell, it must have been 105 down there, middle of the afternoon, here all these troops are passing in review and the band's playing. And then—the flies came [laughs]. The poor guy's so embarrassed, and they're just hovering all around him. I don't know where they came from, just masses of flies, and we're trying to wave them away. And he only had the one suit

with him, because we were making this swing all in one day and then we're heading back to Tucson to spend the night and then go back to Phoenix the next day.

As I say, it was embarrassing to him. We finally got him over to the guest quarters, and then we had to send his suit out to the cleaners, so he had to sit around in his skivvies till we got it back, because we were going to a big dinner and all that. I remember going to that pilot, because these two pilots belonged to the people we borrowed the airplane from, and I said, "If I ever hear this story repeated anywhere, I'll have your goddamned license." In those days, I guess I could threaten. It was funny, we've laughed about it a lot of times, and so did he, after it was over. But this B-25, and here he's 85 years old and he's climbing in and out of this goddamned World War II airplane. We should have gotten a different airplane. Of course, campaigning in those days, cars were made available, airplanes. You didn't have to report all that. You could do things like that which you couldn't do under today's campaign rules. But that B-25 trip, I don't know that any plane in that weather when you're landing would have been very cool to begin with, even if it had the best air conditioning the world. But back in the B-25 it was hot!

By the time he finished the four days out there he was really tired, and then had to come back to Washington. And that was the last time he was in the state until after he got out of hospital after the election in November.

**RITCHIE:** Did that play a role in deciding not to go back to the state? I mean, did you decide that campaigning was going to be too strenuous for him?

**ELSON:** Oh, no. It was a long session that year, and he had lots of things going. It was early in the Kennedy administration and there was the appropriations bill. He wouldn't go back until his work was done. And then he had two episodes of urinary infections, and as I say, they knocked the hell out of him and it would take him a little while to recover. He just didn't respond as quickly as a young person would. But no, that was not the reason for not going back. I don't think the session ended until the middle of October or something like that.

**RITCHIE:** And they all went home and then Kennedy called them back to Washington after that.



**ELSON:** Yeah, and then he spent those thirteen days in Bethesda, where the infection really knocked him on his tail.

**RITCHIE:** Why was it, do you think, that Pulliam liked Hayden so much?

**ELSON:** Well, first of all, he knew he was just honest as hell, and he probably couldn't do the usual job on him, I mean bull him or anything else. And then everyone he talked to, from the [William] Jenners and all his Indiana connections, and through Lyndon, because Lyndon Johnson knew him well, and everyone he talked to, and he knew what this man had done to build the state. He was not unmindful of what the federal government can do to help a state develop. He saw what it was doing and what it had done. Every place he looked he saw old Carl Hayden's hand. And Barry told him, Barry Goldwater, and they were really close in those days, he and Pulliam. They later sort of grew apart on lots of things, but in those days Barry would tell him about what a man Carl Hayden was and what he had done for the state and the West. And I think he got it from his reporters too.

**RITCHIE:** On the surface, you would think Pulliam would get along great with Mecham, but I don't get the sense that they got along at all.

**ELSON:** Oh, God, not at all. He thought he was a crazy Mormon, and he [laughs] sort of was. But I think it shocked everyone when he beat Steve Shadegg in the Republican primary, who worked for Barry, and actually worked for McFarland too in one of his campaigns, and wrote some speeches in 1956 for Carl Hayden. Though he claims in one of his books that he was Carl Hayden's campaign manager, that's a little exaggeration. He got paid for writing some speeches, but that's all he did. That's when he was a Democrat, Steve Shadegg I mean. I don't think Pulliam took Mecham as seriously as we did. He thought Shadegg would win, and he made it very clear to everyone that he was supporting Carl Hayden, so the Republicans knew that. It probably discouraged a more formidable Republican from running. And I think Barry discouraged, and John Rhodes discouraged anyone from running against him once he had made up his mind that he was going to run. And of course, knowing that Pulliam was supporting him, it would have made him the front-runner, even at that age.

And overnight, when we put on that dinner in November '61, all of a sudden that forty percent of the population that never knew Carl Hayden, knew who Carl Hayden was. That sort of got the momentum started, and then when we got the brochures out and started doing our billboards and running the whole campaign, we just ran on that momentum all the way until November. Then with Pulliam always giving him favorable position on news reporting, and by this time I had a press secretary and we were pumping out all sorts of stuff. So overnight, our surveys showed, we educated the entire state, and all with a very, very high favorable rating. I still have all those surveys.

**RITCHIE:** Were you all afraid of the Udall faction of the Democratic party before that?

**ELSON:** Oh, you mean getting into the primary?

**RITCHIE:** Yes, the primaries.

**ELSON:** No, because they knew also that they'd get killed in Maricopa County, and Pulliam would have gone out of his way to really cut up either Stewart or Mo. Because when I ran in '64, two years later, before I could run, though Carl Hayden sat in on the meeting—and the three men who talked me into running in the fall of '63 were Eugene Pulliam, this Jack Moore that I have mentioned to you, and Carl Hayden, the youngest being probably Eugene Pulliam, who I think was seventy-five at the time, those three old men, and I'm still thirty-two when they talked about it. But before I could run, Carl Hayden insisted that I go and offer Carl Hayden's support to both Stewart Udall and Mo Udall, that he would support them because he thought they had a better chance of winning, even though Pulliam might oppose them. But Carl Hayden would have had me working for them, in effect, out there with all of his resources to help them. He told me to my face, "I think they have a better chance of winning than you do." And I admitted that, because no one in the state knew who the hell I was. I wouldn't even have showed up on a poll if someone asked at that time.

So I had to go to both, and that was not an easy thing to do, particularly when by this time Stewart and I had had so many fights. We were in the middle of the Central Arizona fight and we were disagreeing on all that. He had come out with the Pacific

Southwest Water Plan and that was screwing things up. It was really a bitter fight. First I had to go to Stewart and wait for him to give me an answer, and he said no. I'm sure that they thought that it wasn't timely for them. And then I had to go and see Mo and do the same thing with him. He finally said no, he was not going to seek it. So that's when I finally got into it. But that was really late.

**RITCHIE:** It strikes me as odd in a state where you have as many House members as you have senators—in those days it really wasn't until the early '60s that you had more than two House members.

**ELSON:** That's absolutely correct.

**RITCHIE:** So a House member had to run every two years over at least half the state.

**ELSON:** No, in Mo's case he ran in most of the state, everything but Maricopa county. He had the whole damn state. Well, Carl Hayden when he was the only congressman for fifteen years had the whole state. I'm sure that helped him later in the Senate race.

**RITCHIE:** But you would assume that they would naturally start to look at running for the Senate, with six year terms. It really wasn't that much more work to run for the Senate than it was to run for the House.

**ELSON:** And there's no question in my mind that both of them would have liked to have run for the Senate, but for some reason they never got along with Pulliam and they had seen what that press had done to too many others, they had labeled them as liberals. Pulliam was still mad because the Democrats didn't support Lyndon Johnson at the convention and blamed it all on the Udalls as head of that faction of the party, going back to 1960. He respected, I think, Mo particularly, Mr. Pulliam did, but I don't think he had any love for Stewart and there was not much Stewart could do about it. But Stewart hired some people that worked for the Pulliam presses, some very good people. Orren Beaty being one of them, who worked for the *Republic*. He was really an excellent reporter and was with him when he was Secretary. So there

was this "hate-Pulliam" crowd in the Democratic party around the state, blaming all our bad luck on the Pulliam press.

The tragedy, from my standpoint or the way I saw it, was I don't know why we couldn't work together. We all went to the university together. I was there at the same time they were there. Stewart and Mo were older. I'm going to be sixty come October, I think Mo's sixty-seven now, Stewart's a couple of years older. We were there at the same time, though they had been in World War II and I was just right out of high school. But to me the tragedy was—and I'm partly to blame for it, maybe mostly to blame for our not getting together, because we could have been a formidable force together, particularly with Carl Hayden.

We took care eventually of all the people who helped Jack Kennedy get the Arizona delegation, every one of them. Some we never even told Stewart. For instance, one he wanted to make a judge, we got him named an ambassador. But we took care of every Kennedy supporter that was really important in the state of Arizona, Carl Hayden took care of them. Maybe not exactly what they wanted. I remember he told one principal supporter who was very close to Mo and Stewart and who wanted to be a federal judge. Carl Hayden looked at him when he came in and said: "You'd make a [expletive] judge. You have no judicial temperament. But you would make a great ambassador." He got on the phone right then and said, "I want this man," Bill Mahoney was his name, "named ambassador." He called Kennedy on the phone right then and there. And of course, Stewart knew nothing about this, and that sort of pissed him off. Oh, that would be a whole new session talking about the fight, and to me the tragedy was that we were all young and we knew that eventually the senator wasn't going to be around.

At heart I think I was a better liberal in many ways than either one of the Udalls—well, at least I felt that way. As I told you, particularly when I started to run myself I realized that I had so submerged myself in Carl Hayden's personality that I didn't know who in the hell I was, except a clone of Carl Hayden. Then all of a sudden I started recognizing that I didn't agree with everything that Carl Hayden was doing, when I thought about it. So to me the tragedy is that we could have built the Democratic party into something like the Republicans did. Because I would have helped raise the money and do some of the other things, but we could never get together. Even in '68 when I ran again, we could never get together.

In fact, in my first race I still blame Stewart. First of all he was the one who got the man who was chief justice of the Supreme Court, a guy by the name of Ranz Jennings to run at the last moment. I think there were eight of us in the primary. And then, I should have come out of Tucson, as a Democratic, with a plurality in that first race of fifteen, sixteen thousand, like most everyone else, because that's where I grew up. They sat on their hands. They actually hurt me down there, and that cost me the election, because I lost by thirteen thousand votes, but of those thirteen almost 5500 were absentee ballots, which I knew I was going to lose those for sure, because we got into that race so late. If I had come out like every other Democrat came out of Tucson, my home county, my home town, I would have won. Probably some of that was also the result of the way I ran Carl Hayden's campaign in 1962, there was a lot of leftover hard feelings, because Sam Goddard lost his gubernatorial race, and then won in '64. He won not by very much, but he won.

They all came out of Tucson the way I should have come out of there. I came out with plurality, but I think I only had four or five thousand votes, when I should have had about fifteen, enough to make the difference. Then if had really gotten close, Gila County would have come in the right way [laughs]—our Duval County [laughs]. The Indians would have brought me in, but I could never get it that close. So all those things, and I think they resented my relationship with Pulliam, and things were heating up all the way along the line, not only because of the patronage problems and the fights and those sorts of things, but in the total disagreement on how to approach getting the Central Arizona Project authorized. It really got nasty, I mean, it got brutal.

**RITCHIE:** It seems as if the real ace that Carl Hayden had all that time was that he was chairman of the Appropriations Committee.

**ELSON:** Oh, yeah!

**RITCHIE:** It must have struck a lot of people that they would be crazy to defeat the chairman of the Appropriation Committee.

**ELSON:** And of course, Pulliam, gave him credit in his papers, they had to point it out. Well, we could point to anything, the military, the water, the irrigation projects,

everything in the state, the highways, the Indians, you name it, you could point to it and you could actually come up with the figures. In fact, I think on this brochure that we put out we had a map of the state as you opened this up and then running down the side was an explanation of all these projects that covered the whole damn state. It just really hit home. Of course, Pulliam and the other papers in Tucson, the *Star* and the *Citizen*, and old Bill Mathews who was down there running the *Star* at the time, and even Bill Small, they all knew which side their bread was buttered on. So, yeah, it was really a case of just selling the new people on who in the hell he was and how important he was to the state. Starting with that dinner in the fall of '61, in November, from then on it was just all uphill, and the approval rating was something spectacular.

**RITCHIE:** It had to have occurred to President Kennedy that everybody who was going to follow Hayden as chairman of that committee was much more conservative on federal funding than he was.

**ELSON:** Oh, you bet. He was looking right down that long line of southerners. There was Russell, there was Ellender.

**RITCHIE:** John McClellan.

**ELSON:** And McClellan, all before you got to Maggie [Warren Magnuson]. But it was amazing when you think about it how quickly all those people came and went as chairman. They died in a hurry. Christ, in a matter of six years the chairman changed hands. . . .

**RITCHIE:** A half a dozen times.

**ELSON:** Yeah, or it seemed like it. But I'm sure Kennedy looked at that lineup. And Kennedy liked Carl Hayden. As I said, I loved Jack Kennedy, I thought he was great. I liked everything about him, but the other thing I liked was his respect for elders was real and genuine. There wasn't anything phony about that. I mean he really did care. I don't know whether it was because of his own father or what, but there was no doubt in my mind that that was a sincere respect for elders, and for what people like Carl Hayden had done politically. They got along. Jack Kennedy could

have had, from an appropriations standpoint, almost anything he wanted out of Carl Hayden, because Carl Hayden would support his president, particularly if he was a Democrat. It doesn't mean he wouldn't fight if there was something wrong with it, but he would lean over to help him. Kennedy won the nomination fair and square and he was entitled to his support. Every meeting he went to down at the White House, he came right back getting whatever Kennedy wanted. And he was exceptional at that. He would talk his southern friends into going along with it, too.

His last campaign—I've spent a lot of time talking about it—the thing that I think that was unique about it was first of all never having a chance to get home to really campaign, the tremendous growth in the state from the last time he'd run, and then I'm really sort of proud of the way we put the campaign together, knowing all these and how we overcame what were weaknesses. The surveys, when we did them, as we went along, the last one was almost like we had orchestrated it, it went so well. A lot of people said Mecham wasn't a formidable opponent, but they don't, I think, recognize what was going on in the state at the time, particularly the growth, the right wing, the Birch Society and all those sort of things, some of them really being hysterical. And Mecham was one of those hidden little things that you just didn't dare underestimate, because you knew most of the Mormons were going to go for him.

**RITCHIE:** What was the influence of Mormons in the state of Arizona?

**ELSON:** What is it? Well, it's very big. For instance, you take out in the northeast, and down near Safford, and Mesa of course, you've got a huge Mormon population there, and for the most part, though a lot of them are registered Democrats, they're mainly conservative in their political views. At that time you had McKay and all those people in the Mormon Church. But even in that area, even though Mecham was a Mormon, we were able to offset a lot of that because Carl Hayden's father had befriended the Mormons when they came into the territory, back in the 1860's and 1870's. The head of the church was always letting the word be known that Carl Hayden was okay as far as they were concerned. That didn't mean they were out working for him, but Carl Hayden was okay. But it's a big influence, and there's no question in my mind that the way Mecham became governor was because he could count on that hard core. He may get the nomination this year for that very same reason, even after being kicked out of office. It's incredible.

The interesting thing, talk about the '50s and '60s, is that the Republican party became organized and grew, and then they started having the same problems that the Democrats used to have. They'd have some of these vicious primaries. That's how Dennis DeConcini got elected, because Sam Steiger and [James] Conlan tore themselves up—that was really a nasty primary. Again, when you only have sixty days to regroup, there was so much animosity that Dennis won his first election that way. If the Republicans had unified on someone, I don't think Dennis would have won. Even Dennis has said to me that he didn't think he would have gotten elected had it not been for the turmoil within the Republican party. Because of their successes, and the growth of the state and the conservatism, they've had their problems. This coming primary is really going to be fascinating because of that reason, between Sam Steiger and Mecham and there's a third one in there. But back then they were having success.

The way that the state is cut up among all our new districts, and we're supposed to pick up a new one, it's going to be fascinating to see how it all works out. This is Mo's last term. Back then, Duke Senner was a member [of the House] for a short while, and I guess you'd call him a liberal. He came out of Globe, Arizona, and had labor support and that sort of thing. But Mo has been our big liberal over the years.

**RITCHIE:** He's the only Democratic member . . .

**ELSON:** Right of the delegation now.

**RITCHIE:** Of the House delegation. One other question, back in '62, when you raised campaign funds for Hayden. In those days did they come primarily from the state, or did they come from outside the state?

**ELSON:** Well, some of the seed money we got back in '61 came from outside the state, back here mainly from groups that we knew. That was interesting, because we had never had a \$100-a-plate fundraiser in the history of Arizona, and everyone told me it couldn't be done. Well, we raised something like \$135,000. Again it doesn't sound like much money in today's terms, but in those days it was. I think I raised us out of that dinner \$130,000 or \$140,000 clear. Jesus, that's more than probably three or four campaigns. Though everyone thought we had enough money, I went out and



raised another \$100,000. A good part of that came from labor, then I went to New York and L.A. and raised some out of state money.

That was another phenomenon. I remember going to see, in New York, some heads of corporations, in a shipping company or an airline. Before I ever went to see them I'd get all the stuff, about their industry—like I went to see a gentleman who was then the head of a big shipping company, and I was going to tell him all of what Carl Hayden had done for American bottoms, and if he didn't help raise this money, I was one who didn't forget, I'd soon get his [expletive] [laughs]. And every place I went . . . and I remember going into this huge corporate office on the ninetieth floor wherever this was in New York, and being escorted into this office that looked like the Senate chamber [laughs]. I started making my spiel, and he said, "Son, let *me* tell you what Carl Hayden has done for American bottoms," the shipping industry, and he went back through the '20s and the '30s and the subsidies and everything else, and I just sat there. I said, "Will you help us out?" He said, "Here's a check right now, how much do you need? How about twenty five thousand dollars?" Christ, I didn't know what to ask for, probably should have asked for a hundred thousand. And everywhere I went, in these unrelated industries—we didn't have any seacoasts or ports or anything like that, the airline industry, all these places, I just made up a list and then I would pick out someone in the industry. I never had to open my mouth to threaten anyone. The trouble was, I wish I had raised a lot more.

Again, in those days you could get so much in kind. Like flying out the brochures, office space, typewriters, all that, cars, everyone had cars, and apartments. So when you put the in kind stuff as well as the cash, we obviously spent more money in that campaign than probably in all his previous campaigns for public office combined.

**RITCHIE:** Hayden must have been amazed at all this.

**ELSON:** Oh, yeah!

**RITCHIE:** He had done everything on such a small scale before.

**ELSON:** Oh, he couldn't believe it. But he had no conception of what some of these things cost, too. For instance, I don't know how much I spent on surveys, which

he had never done, ever. He just shook his head and just accepted it. Not that he didn't know what was going on, but I don't think he thought it could be done that well. I think he wasn't sure that I could do it that way. He was concerned that we were spending too much money, but I said, "Senator, it's your last damn term." Though, interestingly enough, I did a survey in '68, the last time I ran—well, maybe it was the fall of '67. It showed that he could have won at 91 and beaten Barry Goldwater, mainly because of the Central Arizona Project we were about to get, and everyone recognized that he was chairman of the Appropriations Committee and they needed the money to get that started. I tried talking him into it. He looked at me and said, "Roy, come on, you know I cannot do the job the way it should be done anymore. This is it." I guess that was in early '68, before I even filed. But I am convinced in my own mind that he could have won just on that issue because he had become "Mr. Water" and his name was in the paper every day, and he still seemed vigorous, though he certainly was slowing down. As I've always said, he had more sense in his behind than I ever did in my head. He'd forgotten more than I'd ever know. But he was very realistic about those things. But there's no question that his power, sitting on top of that Appropriations Committee, was just wonderful.

We always knew, for instance, anyone who came up, if we had problems with anyone—I remember with C.A.B. [Civil Aeronautics Board] we had a big fight with Alan Boyd. They wanted to discontinue some routings in Arizona. The senator wanted me to go down to one of the hearings and make a statement, that's all, just go down and participate. They were quoting rules that since we weren't out in the field hearings that a member of Congress couldn't come by. So there was a liaison officer at the time, a guy who was close to Scoop and Maggie, he came by and gave me this message. I said, "Well, you just go back and tell Mr. Boyd that that's fine with us, if you don't want to let me come down to represent the senator and make this statement, and you're going to hide behind your rules, well you tell Mr. Boyd that there's no reason for him to come and appear before the Appropriations Committee to make a reclaim on what they cut from him over in the House. We'll just take the rule on what the House sends over and that will be sufficient for our record. Tell Mr. Boyd that he doesn't have to appear, we'll just cancel that." Well, needless to say, not only did I get to make my statement for the senator, but we also didn't lose the route for service to Kingman, Arizona.

We always knew that if we had a problem, and I think everyone downtown knew, that "okay, you don't want to play, but you'd better be prepared to answer some very penetrating questions when you come up here for your hearings on your budget and your bill." It didn't matter what department it was. And we'd do that occasionally. When they got up there, we'd have some very interesting questions to be asked, and occasionally we'd cut a little, just to get their attention. Not very often.

**RITCHIE:** So, in other words, the real power of the Appropriations Committee is not having to exert the power. It's there, and people know it, and you don't have to flaunt it.

**ELSON:** No, and then if you do on occasion, at least in those days, it just emphasized the point. It was more the fear of having to give an explanation that might not look too good on the record, than it was necessarily having to do with the moneys involved. Where they might be able to say that to their legislative committee, but when you're up there talking about appropriations—the great thing about appropriations, you could ask questions about anything. You weren't limited to the interests of the legislative committee. You could ask them just anything. You weren't limited on any question you could ask. Or you could go anywhere to get information. It was very rare not to be able to get it.

The great thing about this town, I still marvel at it, it's the greatest city in the world when it comes to information. Somewhere, someplace in the guts of the government, some guy has been working on whatever remote thing you might be interested in, you know, the sex habits of some fly or something like that. If you find that guy, he's probably spent his whole life studying it, and when you find him you can't get him off the phone, he's supplying you will all this information, and it's all free. Finding that person, the expert, has always been to me the secret to Washington. They'll all talk. It's wonderful.

**End of Interview #6**