

INTERVIEW WITH
Leonard W. Hall

on

May 19, 1975

for

Dwight D. Eisenhower Library

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
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This begins an interview with Mr. Leonard Hall at his office in Garden City, Long Island. This is David Horrocks of the Eisenhower Library, May 19, 1975.

MR. HORROCKS: Mr. Hall, for the introduction to the interview could you summarize your personal background?

MR. HALL: Well, I'm 74 years old. I spent 14 years in Congress. I spent 7 years in state legislature in Albany. I was national chairman of the Republican party. During all of that period, whether in legislative bodies or as national chairman, I've had a country law office

MR. HORROCKS: Are you native New Yorker?



MR. HALL: I've lived within six miles of where I was born. And I'd like to throw in this little item of urgent interest--my father was Teddy Roosevelt's coachman. So, he was the first politician. I got to know a little bit, but I still visit with, spend a lot of time talking with Ethel Roosevelt Derby. Many people who know of Alice Roosevelt Longworth, but they don't remember that Theodore had another daughter--that's Ethel who still lives in Oyster Bay. She's my godmother, and she's the most active woman I know who's 84 years of age.

MR. HORROCKS: Did your background or relationship with the

Teddy Roosevelt family influence you at all in Republican politics or help you at all?

HALL: Put it this way--yes. When I say I knew TR--I was just a kid going to school, but you would wave at him every morning as he went by galloping on his horse, and he'd come to our Christmas parties, and we knew him, and so I guess it was a little bit of osmosis there so far as politics was concerned.

HORROCKS: Was there ever any practical help?



HALL: Let me put it this way--not from him. He died when I was 16, I think, yes, no, when I was 17--but his daughter, Ethel, helped me get a position in a law office in New York in 1920. So far as she is concerned it's been a nice relationship, and I'm glad that I was one of those who helped to establish Sagamore Hill as a shrine.

HORROCKS: It is really beautiful there.

HALL: Yes. I'm proud of the fact that I am a recipient of the Theodore Roosevelt medal. I don't think I deserved one

when I look back and see where Ike had gotten one. Mine goes back to doing the job at Sagamore Hill.

HORROCKS: So you were active in the Republican politics from--

HALL: About 1923.

HORROCKS: --from about '23. When did you first meet General Eisenhower?

HALL: Met him during the period I was in Congress and met him -- I'd say sometime in the early '40s.

HORROCKS: And, when you were in Congress?

HALL: Yes.

HORROCKS: Under what circumstances did you meet him?

HALL: He came over to the Congress the first time I remember, and he had a great big map on a wall and he had a stick like a school teacher, and he told us what was going on and pointed and talked at the same time but without a note, which immediately impressed me.



HORROCKS: Was he effective both during the war and especially in the immediate post-war years when he was Army Chief of Staff-- was he effective in testifying before Congress?

HALL: I would say he had a great relationship with Congress at all times, and it was not only personality of Dwight D. Eisenhower. Those men who must do that job have to have assistance, and I think choosing the right people to be their left and right arms up on the Hill really determined whether that man back at his office is doing a job that should be done.



HORROCKS: Who in this post-war period would have been his left and right arms?

HALL: Well one of those very close to him was General [Wilton B.] Persons--He was with [General George C.] Marshall during the war. He was with Ike during the NATO situation, was with Ike while Ike was President. So I would say of all the people I know now, Jerry Persons--he knew the man, he knew the man; they grew up together in the service and every time that Ike got a position somewhere, he called upon Jerry Persons to follow.

HORROCKS: Was the General, when he would testify before Congress on things such as say universal military training or the defense budget, Marshall Plan, things like that, was he effective?

HALL: My answer to that is yes. The thing that struck me most, however, and it always makes an effect on me because it indicates the man really knows his subject,--to see a fellow like Ike get up there with no note, and he could do that. There were two men that could do that in the military field that I knew while I was down there and you couldn't beat either one--one was Marshall and one was Ike. All you had to do was give them the military subject, give 'em a map and a pointer and both of them were off to the races and would do a good job.

HORROCKS: And the congressional response to him then was usually sympathetic.

HALL: Oh, very much so, yes.



HORROCKS: Did you have any contact with him with regard to the 1948 convention?

HALL: No.

HORROCKS: Do you have any knowledge of what he was intending or was not intending?

HALL: Well the only thing that I recall about it was this: he got pretty peeved at President Truman because of President Truman's belligerence on certain things after he became the Republican candidate in '52. And I remember Ike, who was one of the last men I knew who grated his teeth when he was a little bit mad, and he would say, "Why goddammit, that man asked me to run for nomination on the Democratic ticket twice." That's all I know about his reaction to it.

HORROCKS: You were involved with the [Thomas E.] Dewey people in '48.

HALL: Yes.



HORROCKS: Were they concerned, seriously concerned, that Eisenhower might become involved.

HALL: Some, but not too much. In other words, I would say that, no, it wasn't one of our real worries.

HORROCKS: Did the General ever, in retrospect, speak to you about which Republican he would have preferred in '48, or discussed what had gone wrong with the '48 campaign?

HALL: No. In retrospect, he did have a talk about Dewey. But you could see that those two men wouldn't get along very well. This was after the President was elected.



HORROCKS: And what would have been the basis for this anti-pathy?

HALL: Well, varied reasons. I remember one thing, Eisenhower was a great person to be polite and do the right thing. On one visit to New York, he rode with Tom Dewey, and they stopped somewhere to get out of the car and go to make a speech. And Dewey said to his chauffeur in a crowded New York--,"Now, you be right here when I come back, 'cause this is where we pick you up."

I wasn't there, but Eisenhower talked to me the next morning, and he said, "What kind of a fellow is Dewey?"

I described him. Dewey was a self-appointing young man, and I said, "What do you mean?"

And he said, "Yesterday we left the car and when we came back, the car wasn't exactly where Dewey had said, 'Meet us.' I've given a lot of people hell in my life, and I usually take them into a room and talk it out there." He said, "Dewey gave this chauffeur hell in front of all New York." And you could see it really affected Ike and he remembered that.

HORROCKS: Would it have been really, the difference, of a matter of personality rather than of issues and--

HALL: I could put it just this way: Ike had a real kind streak in him; Dewey didn't. If I wanted to put it short, that's what I'd say.

HORROCKS: This incident was soon before the '52 campaign?

HALL: It was in the '52 campaign.

HORROCKS: It was in the '52 campaign. When did you first become involved with Eisenhower in a political situation?

HALL: Well, when the talk started about Ike, Dewey really, well he didn't move around the campaign as much as he had in his own campaign. I would have to say that Tom Dewey's



support through all of these agents of higher conventions, was the lifeblood of the Eisenhower campaign, no question in my mind about that. I wasn't any lover of Dewey's, although I supported him every time, but it was his supporters, going back to the 40s, early 40s, that brought about the nomination of Eisenhower.



HORROCKS: Was the Frank Carlson-Harry Darby group, working out of the mid-West, very effective in this, or was--

BALL: Yes, I would say Harry one of the best. Carlson in his way helped, but he was not a man of influence like Harry Darby. Just to reel off a couple of names fast, I would say in '52 the key person on strategy was Herb [Herbert] Brownell. A good front man and was in the papers and was in contact with Eisenhower, did a great job in that respect, was [Henry Cabot] Lodge, but not the mechanic that Brownell was. And then another person who was key, after the President was in the White House, and I don't think anybody gives him enough credit--Lucius Clay, the General.

HORROCKS: Was Lucius Clay an active adviser to the President after the convention--did he continue?

HALL: I'd put it this way. I was chairman of the party, and I guess you would say as chairman I didn't run it. We ran, I'd say, by committee, and we called in certain people and not always the same ones. I remember, whenever we had a tussle with Ike, we'd call Lucius. So they'd come on down, and Lucius, I remember would say, "Well, sure I'll go in and see him. I'll try him out. I've been thrown out of his office before." And he would go and see him.

HORROCKS: I guess he was a tough character in his own right.

HALL: That's right, yes.



HORROCKS: Well, what would have been some of the specific instances in which you might have had a tough one with the General?

HALL: Oh gee, it's hard to--I could just see our meeting with Lucius before he'd go in, but--I might think of something.

HORROCKS: I think after the convention you and perhaps Brownell and some others went out to Denver to meet the General and plan the campaign strategy.

HALL: That's right. I voted for him. I was a delegate, and I had made up my mind I was going on the bench; so when he was nominated that was the end of politics for me. So I went out to Kalispell, Montana to spend a few weeks with a friend of mine, and I got out there and about two days, Arthur Summerfield wired me, "Come to Flint, Michigan. I have to talk with you." Art had been elected national chairman. So I went out there and we had some talks about what we do in this situation--what to do in that--I went back to Montana. I was in Montana about three more days and I got a wire from Eisenhower, "Meet me in Denver" such and such a time--and so my host said, "To hell with this." He said, "Pack your bags and go on home; you're not going to spend anymore time out here." So we did. We went out to the Brown Palace Hotel. Between the time we got the wires and the meeting in Denver, we gotten up one of these card situations where instead of just reading, you read it plus the card as a visual. We made a visual presentation of what we thought would be the campaign, what the issues would be and so forth.



HORROCKS: Can you describe what you did think would be the course of the campaign and what, at that time, you thought would be the issues?

HALL: I would say we were pretty confident that Eisenhower, in other words we felt that you just couldn't beat this man, and we came to that conclusion not only because he was the great hero but we had been around the country afterwards at meetings where he appeared, and people didn't just applaud or they didn't just - - . When they applauded, they jumped up and down, I mean really, this was something different. This wasn't just a fella who'd been nominated for President--here was a great hero and he was getting the benefit of all that. And so I would say that, one, we thought we had a winner. One reason why Ike became a Republican, at least he said one thing that helped him make up his mind was when [Franklin D.] Roosevelt tried to pack the Supreme Court. That left a bad taste in his mouth and that was--



HORROCKS: That kind of respect that he had for the separation of powers in the branches is--

HALL: That's right. And now this, I think I'm right on this but I wasn't there so I'm repeating--you better check on it, but it's an interesting thing too. When [Earl] Warren became Chief Justice, the story and I think it's accurate, was while Warren was going to be appointed to the Supreme Court, it was not intended that he be the Chief Justice. And so when the Attorney General and the President sat down together, of course there were a number of old men on the Court then--[Felix] Frankfurter, [Hugo] Black--and so they were immediately crossed off. And the name that came up at that time to be the Chief Justice was [William H.] Jackson. And it was brought out that he was the one who led the fight for the President to pack the Supreme Court; so that was the end. Finally there was nobody left but Warren.

HORROCKS: But Earl Warren was definitely not necessarily the original choice for Supreme--



HALL: That's right--to be Chief Justice. Now I say, check on it. This is how--I'd rather have another check on that--but I'm sure I'm right.

HORROCKS: Well, as for help with the story on this--where did you hear this?

HALL: I would say the fella that could give you the facts--
Herb Brownell.

HORROCKS: Would be Herb Brownell.

HALL: Yes.

HORROCKS: Were you involved at all with Earl Warren and the
California delegation in California during the campaign?

HALL: Only in the sense that California looked like a place
where they might have a hell of a primary, and if they had
the primary it would hurt us no matter which side won.
Goody [Goodwin] Knight and Warren hated each other, and
everything was being done to put off--stop if possible--any
primary contest out there.

HORROCKS: Was Richard Nixon instrumental in accomplishing
this?

HALL: Well I don't remember him doing anything about it.
He more than likely did have a part in it. It was a very
interesting situation out there. Even with Warren away,
when they were dividing up delegates for '56, I think they



gave Nixon as Vice-President a third; Goody Knight, Governor, a third; and [Senator William] Knowland, a third. It's a very interesting--California's a strange state. It doesn't follow the rules that most other states do.

HORROCKS: The cross currents and conflicts there.



HALL: Yes. And really it's two states, north and south. They don't even--they don't want to talk to each other--they don't even think alike.

HORROCKS: Well, San Leandro's stealing San Francisco water. Well, going back to the strategy or planning for the '52 campaign when you met in Denver, the planning really revolved around Eisenhower the individual, his character. Were there any specific strategies for winning the labor vote or ethnic votes.

HALL: There had been a citizen's committee for Ike before the convention to get him the nomination. In Denver we worked out the strategy there with respect to how would the relationships be between the national committee and the Citizens for Ike, and there were Democrats for Ike and so on

and so forth, and I think we worked that out while I was out there, if I recall--my memories waver. Williams, Walter Williams was the person who was selected. The greatest help to us out there on that however was--he wasn't out there, but--Jock [John Hay] Whitney was great because you know there are a number of people who wanted to--to hell with the Republican party--let's run him as a citizens' candidate. But Jock Whitney said, "Now wait a minute. We got a Republican party." He worked with us on that, and, when we needed somebody just to say slow down, Jock Whitney would do it. I'd say one of the great men we have in the country. There were others, of course, among the citizen's group--worked with us and felt the same way Jock did.

HORROCKS: How exactly was the relationship structured so that you would have coordination?



HALL: The Citizens had an office in Washington and we had, we met. There was very friendly relationship, and, when it was a matter of the budget, we all sat together and fixed the budget--well, we fixed it for the Republican National Committee; we fixed the campaign budget for the Citizens for Ike. We had no trouble at all.

HORROCKS: What attempts were made after the election to bring the Citizens people into the Republican party? Or was there an attempt.

HALL: I tell you, Ike's campaign was really the first campaign that made a two party area out of the South. People speak about that happening when [Barry M.] Goldwater was nominated and so on--it started with Ike. He had more people for him than Democrats and Republican in the South than any candidate up to that time, or even now. And, so we did have, yes we had efforts in that direction. And to bring it about, particularly in the South, we had a hell-of-a-lot of rows too because the old party, the old Republican party, after we'd won, all the patronage was theirs. But we took the position, now wait a minute--we have Citizens for Ike and we've got to work out a fair distribution of patronage in the South which will include Democrats who came out openly for Ike. And we spent a lot of time on that, and the interesting thing is this--the man who helped us the most, because I was National Chairman and sat through it and there was blood on the moon some nights, the fellow who helped us the most was Bob [Senator Robert A.] Taft.



HORROCKS: Robert Taft helped the most.

HALL: He said, "Listen, these fellas in the South supported Ike and they're entitled to just as much as we are." So we worked out a--

HORROCKS: Great.

HALL: Yes, he was a great man.



HORROCKS: Well, was Lucius Clay and Governor [James F.] Byrnes helpful in this post-election period in developing the party in the South?

HALL: I'd say, conversation yes, we'd meet. But with respect to Lucius--Lucius never moved into anything because he wanted to. He wanted to help, and if you wanted him, he'd come and do anything--raise money and all--that's what I loved about him. But he wouldn't be in there saying, "I want this," or, "I want you to do that."

HORROCKS: Is this, what you're talking about, called "Operation Dixie" or was that something else?

HALL: Well I think "Operation Dixie" started for delegates even before he was nominated.

HORROCKS: Was there a feeling in the Republican party, this would be anytime in the 50s, that on the civil rights issue and the Negro vote, for the party to woo that would inevitably lead the party into a very activist, federal role, that was unnatural for it and therefore the party would be better off going for the southern vote?

HALL: I don't recall it being discussed as an issue at all. I do remember, and I felt sorry for him; when Ike came back before the convention--

HORROCKS: In '52?



HALL:--he'd said he wasn't coming back--yes--then it got tight. And I think Lucius Clay was one of those who said, "You gotta get back." So he came back, and I never will forget it-- between Ike and the New York City Republican delegates, particularly the blacks, they were there. Now here was Ike-- no way in the world how he would know the effect of legislation or pieces of legislation, and these people went after him.

They'd get rough, and finally Russ [Russell] Sprague, he's dead now, he changed the subject. But so far as these blacks were concerned at that time, there wasn't any--well this a great General, we'll be respectful. They went after him on the civil rights issue, and he didn't have all the answers.

HORROCKS: Would this have been in Harlem, going up into Harlem, or was that a later visit?

HALL: That was a later visit.

HORROCKS: That was later.

HALL: Yes.

HORROCKS: That was apparently a successful.

HALL: Yes. Oh, I think so. Some of these fellas that asked these questions had been briefed and brought in a taxicab to this meeting by, not by Bob Taft but somebody for Bob.

HORROCKS: Speaking of the Citizens for Eisenhower group now, it was thought that through them the Eisenhower people could win the traditionally Democratic ethnic and labor votes. Is that--



HALL: I'd put it this way, that it was felt that work today had to do him and would bring about the results that you were talking about. In other words, the Citizens were moving toward any open mind--any open mind--and if it was open then they would change that mind. It was a real citizens' movement. In other words, it was not directed by the Republican National Committee. We knew what they were going and so on, but it was a real citizens' committee, and we had some of the greatest names in the South working with us. Just one memory--we went into Houston, Texas. I may have these men wrong, who did what, but as I recall it, [Price M.] Daniel was Senator at that time, Democrat. It was the biggest meeting, outdoor meeting, I ever saw in my life. When we got up in the air leaving the area where he made the speech, every place you looked, every road was jammed--they were still trying to get to the--it was fantastic. But what I'm coming to is this: Senator Daniel, a Democrat, introduced [Allan] Shivers was a Democratic governor and Shivers was to introduce Ike. That's a pretty good start in Texas.

HORROCKS: Yes. While we're on Texas, was Robert Anderson involved actively in '52 campaign?



HALL: I don't remember him until after the campaign. He was very active with Ike, but I think he came into the picture somewhat after the campaign.

HORROCKS: To your knowledge was he, Robert Anderson, particularly helpful as a liaison say between Eisenhower and Lyndon Johnson?

HALL: I'd say, yes.



HORROCKS: Do you know of any particular issues in which he was particularly helpful?

HALL: No, I don't. But I would say that he was helpful, and I know he was.

HORROCKS: We were talking about the party and the citizens for Eisenhower work in the American South. Was there any particular special program for the Citizens for Eisenhower in the northern, urban areas? Were any particular groups targeted?

HALL: When you say targeted, I don't want to use that verb. There was a tremendous surge for Ike. It took on all forms. It took on all kinds of people. The men and women who were

in charge of the Citizens for Ike, they were smart enough to become a great funnel, and, as these voices and these people came in, they were given their spot. For instance, all over the country we had the, what do you call it--the Ike Bandwagon. Wherever Ike was, we'd have a bandwagon there. It might be different from what was in the city before, it'd be a new group. But we'd have these good looking girls with parasols, everything to dress it up. In other words, there they were, every place Ike went they usually preceded him, and if anybody wanted to work for Ike, come right in here and you're in it.

HORROCKS: Was there a similar problem in the North, as you just described in the South, in sharing jobs and appointments with Citizens people as well as--

HALL: Yes, but not as bad because--

HORROCKS: Not nearly as bad.

HALL: Not nearly as bad. But we had, in other words, some of my hair was lost in the fights down there because--you have no idea what happens in politics. For instance, in West



Virginia, we had the Republican leader down there recommend for marshal, in one of his districts in West Virginia, the same man who had been marshal when Hoover was President. In other words, the party didn't move an inch in the South, and Ike was the first machinery to come along which made it move.

HORROCKS: Was there any particular effort in making appointments afterwards to appoint people with an ethnic identification?

HALL: Ethnic?

HORROCKS: Ethnic identification.



HALL: Well, yes. I remember in New York, I called Tom Dewey who was handling New York, and I noticed that no Italians had been sent down from New York. And I called Tom and I said, "Tom, we got some good Italians up there. For god's sake can't you find one or two to send down here for a job?"

Well, maybe you shouldn't put this on there because his answer was, "Len, can we get anyone of them who will pass the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] test?"

But anyway, I forget his name now, but during that period we got two Italians. Yes, there was heavy consideration.

HORROCKS: Was it an organized effort, or was this sort of an intuitive thing where you intuitively noticed that there was this gap.

HALL: Well, I would say this with some of the ethnic areas, you wouldn't have to think about it--it would be drummed into your ears, I mean everyday. No you didn't have to think about those, but it was intuitive with me when I saw New York and didn't see any Italian name come along. Let me give you another thought about it, too. We had no Catholic on the Supreme Court when Ike became President. Soon there was a vacancy and one thing about Ike was this: you could call him on the phone, and generally speaking, he'd be on the phone with your secretary before you're on. Great, really. Always had to call in between seven in the morning and ten at night --always willing to talk on the phone. And I remember when [John Marshall] Harlan got the appointment. There was a vacancy and I called him and said, "Here's a good chance to put a Catholic on." And Ike was [unintelligible].



He said, "Leonard, you're late on this one." He said, "Herb Brownell has been in on this and Harlan has been agreed to." And he said, "But I'll think of it with the next one."

So I listened to the TV one morning and [Sherman] Minton, I think it was, had to resign. So I called Ike and Herb was over there, "Hey, Herb, now how about a Catholic on the bench."

And he said, "I'm already ahead of you." He said, "I've called Herb Brownell to get me a Catholic." And he said, "Maybe you'll disagree with me, but," he said, "I told him that I didn't give a damn whether it's a Republican or a Democrat--I just want to get a good Catholic for a judge." And that's how Murphy [William J. Brennan?] got on.



HORROCKS: Now in that period in the administration you had Brownell, a very important active political adviser to the President; there was yourself as chairman of the Republican National Committee, and Arthur Summerfield who had been chairman and was Postmaster General. Did you fellows end up competing with each other or have any problems?

HALL: Once in a while--not too much. And you forgot one

name that, in the middle of it after the election, Sherman Adams.

HORROCKS: And Sherman Adams.



HALL: You were bound to have differences, and once in a while the President would have to decide it. Not bad. I don't remember any time when it got down to where somebody had to get "this" or somebody had to get "that."

HORROCKS: What sort of efforts were made, through the '50s, to transfer the personal support of the public for General Eisenhower into concrete support for the Republican party on bread and butter issues?

HALL: I'll first tell you about the South. My feeling was that with Ike we could have a two-party system in the South. And I recall when we talked to him about running again, we had that famous meeting in the White House, we all talked about different things. And the burden of my talk was that-- give us four more years of you in the White House and we'll have a two-party system in the South, which would have been a great achievement. And he did it; we did it because since

that time the South has been wobbling all over the map. But when you get down to specific issues, which might be bread and butter issues, I think we tried--we did our best putting Ike over. And more than likely we failed in doing what you're talking about, because you always have opposition. And I recall we tried to--and we got away with it but it caused quite a rumpus--we talked about the Eisenhower Republican, or the party was going to be a big Eisenhower party. Well, you had no idea, even though he was winning, is that some of those old hard-shell conservative senators just raised the devil because we were going to make the Republican party the Eisenhower Party. "Nothing doing! We'll win with him, but we're not going to say he's the party."



HORROCKS: Was there any attempt made, in the party structure, to replace some of the old line Republican chairmen?

HALL: Yes. Yes, yes. We did that, and particularly in the South, particularly in the South.

HORROCKS: Was it done in any of, say, the mid-west or the Western States?

HALL: Generally speaking, the life of a leader isn't too long in some of these things. They change when the governor changes. So, more than likely when you're talking about the mid-Western states, a new governor'd come in and he was an Ike man and he'd see to it that a new man was put in as chairman, but the mortality rate is very high in those areas as far as a Republican state chairman is concerned.

BORROCKS: Well, was the party pretty successful then in building modern Republicanism into the party structure?



HALL: Not as much as many would have liked; not as much as I would have liked. Here's what would slow you down in that respect. With Ike on the top of the ticket, we did pretty well with the Congress. We carried both houses in '52. We lost them both in '54, and then and didn't regain them in '56. So you didn't have that last clinching arm we mentioned. With Ike, we can do everything and we can get everything. In other words, there was nothing truer than the fact that you can't transfer the popularity of a man to anyone else. You just can't. You can't transfer the popularity of a man like Eisenhower to the Republican party, and the party is better

because Ike is in the party. Now, when Ike's running, there is an effect, somewhat of a coattail, not too much; but when he's not running--no coattail, no nothing.

[Interruption]



HORROCKS: Well, was Eisenhower a very willing person to work for the Party, not just for the Presidency, his own office? Did he do as much as he could?

HALL: To my mind, in the first off year in '54, he worked harder for the election of the Republican senators and congressmen than any Republican President up and beyond the term of Herbert Hoover. And the reason why I know that, when I went over to see him and to talk to him about it, he said, "What have other Presidents done?" And you know, I thought that Roosevelt had campaigned, FDR, all over the place, Truman had done it--and they hadn't. So I got Ike, and I didn't fib to him, but I just didn't give him the report. I got him to do [unintelligible], but he did, he worked harder.

HORROCKS: Well, that's surprising considering how frustrated he was, apparently, by 1954 with the Republican congressional support he had been getting.

HALL: Well, he was this kind of a man; this perhaps points it out more graphically than anything else. I just don't remember the--Joe McCarthy was a candidate (I think it was '52), and he was only one of them. I don't have to tell you, there were a lot of people saying, "Ike don't you be where that man is, and don't you do this, and don't you do that."

And you could see him set his teeth and say, "Now listen, is he a Republican?"

"Yes."

"Was he nominated to run for this, a Senator, by the Republicans?"

"Yes."

"Then I'm going to shake his hand if he's up on the platform where I am. I'm going to recognize him." In other words, this was Ike. He was not going to, just because a lot of his friends didn't like Joe McCarthy and maybe he didn't, he was the Republican candidate. That was enough for Ike.

HORROCKS: Now did he feel this way about William Jenner when he went into Indiana?



HALL: Mad as the devil when it was over because, when he got up to speak, Jenner introduced him, and there were three sides to the stage. Ike put up both hands and Jenner stood alongside him and put his right hand way up, which did not. As Ike moved to get away, he went over to one of the sides of the stage, put both hands--there was Jenner with one hand up. He went over to the other side--to get away--there was Jenner again holding one of his hands up. And he passed some remark afterwards, "That thing happened one more time, I'd have smashed the so-and-so."



HORROCKS: But now Jenner was a bona fide Republican nominee and at least in that case then, the General was certainly reluctant to shake hands.

HALL: No, no really--wasn't reluctant to shake hands. Jenner had introduced him--oh, the shaking hands had been done before that. But Eisenhower didn't like what I would call pawing or mauling. And Jenner was just--Ike knew what Jenner had said about him, and even though he shook hands with him and was courteous and so on, I imagine what was going through his mind when this fellow was grabbing his arm every two minutes--

HORROCKS: Just a little bit too much there.

HALL: A little bit too much but he did not--I don't remember any time, we travelled together some fifteen thousand miles, when he showed any attitude against a Republican candidate.

HORROCKS: I think we'll complete the '52 part right now. After the '58 election, Bob [Robert] Humphreys wrote you a long and rather despondent letter about what had happened to the party--downhill since Teddy Roosevelt I think he said. And one of the things he said in that letter was that you had a chance to build when Eisenhower came in, but some of the wrong people were making appointments and a bad trend had started. What was he referring to?

HALL: Well, Bob, I think was very incorrect. Bob was a conservative anti-commie, Taft-Nixon man if I could give you a picture of Bob. One of my best friends. And I have that letter somewhere still I think, or maybe I sent it out to the Library--I don't know.

HORROCKS: Well, we've got his papers, and I've seen a copy of it in his papers.



HALL: In Bob's?

HORROCKS: Right.

HALL: Let me, have you, for a minute--can I ask a question?

HORROCKS: Sure.

HALL: Among Bob's papers have you run across a poll taken in '56?

HORROCKS: No, I don't think the collection is fully processed, and I haven't been working on it. But I have not seen or heard--

HALL: There was a poll taken after Ike had called me over to the White House and said Nixon shouldn't run for the Vice-President.

HORROCKS: There was a poll taken and Eisenhower said that Nison should not run?

HALL: No--it was after Ike said that. Ike had a poll taken and I remember Bob said, "Let me." It was a different kind of a poll because we did it through a detective agency. Our



samples were made up of state chairmen, county chairmen, precinct chairmen. We put on the ballot--oh we had Eisenhower, and [Christian] Herter; and Ike. Bob took that and I never --to me, it's the only kind of a poll like that ever taken. And I don't know what the devil became of it.

HORROCKS: It may be there. Well, what were the President's reasons for saying that Nixon should not be on the ticket?

HALL: His statement was that he felt Dick would be better prepared and would be accepted more readily as a candidate in '60 if he came from the post of Secretary of State or Secretary of Defense. That's what he said, but I knew myself, and I'm not saying this about Ike, there were a hell of a lot of people out to get Nixon off that ticket, and my feeling was that if they ever got him off the ticket, he wouldn't be in the cabinet.

HORROCKS: Sherman Adams was--

HALL: One of 'em.

HORROCKS: Who were the others?



HALL: Oh, quite a few of the Citizens for Ike.

HORROCKS: What sort of concrete actions did Sherman Adams take to accomplish this?

HALL: Well, it's interesting to contemplate the thing now, but we went through with that situation with Herter and [Barold] Stassen, and I am satisfied, can't put my finger right on the last thing, but I'm satisfied with two things: One that Sherm knew what Herter was going to do, and two, more than likely had a right to think so. If that had gone far enough to get Nixon, I'll always believe that the candidate for Vice-President would have come out to be Sherman Adams.

HORROCKS: Sherman Adams was certainly thinking that.

HALL: Yes sir, that was, the talk was.

HORROCKS: Was President Eisenhower aware of what Sherman Adams was doing on this?

HALL: I would say, generally speaking, no. Sherm was a very interesting fellow, and I'll never know whether he ran the



type of shop he did to create power for himself or to protect Ike because he'd had a heart attack. I give him the benefit of the doubt and say he was protecting Ike, because, during that period, sometimes, Ike wouldn't get any mail of any substance at all to read. None. And really, we were worried about that. Sherm's keeping everything away and came to a point where something had to be done when Sherm Adams got out. Because, unrestricted -- when Sherm Adams got out, in came [Wilton B.] Persons. Persons went in with all the mail, or most of it, and Ike would say, "What the hell you doing with that?" [Laughter] And Jerry took the attitude, "Now Mr. President, if you don't want us to do it, you tell me and I'm going to do what you say. [unintelligible] But Sherm had gone the opposite direction.



HORROCKS: Does this "Dump Nixon" attempt by Sherman Adams, is this the source of the antipathy that some of the Republicans held for him to surface especially in '58.

HALL: You're talking about who now? Surfaced against--

HORROCKS: Surfaced against Sherman Adams during the Goldfine--

HALL: Not only that. But Sherm was not one to make friends; he didn't try to. And he had done things which made more Senators mad than anybody in Washington, and I believe when this Goldfine situation came up, you couldn't walk on the Hill and get any voices for Sherm; so he was in a bad way as far as the Hill was concerned.

HORROCKS: Well, in '55 - '56, did he meet, have any particular senators or congressmen or party leaders who were especially cooperative with him in trying to remove Nixon?

HALL: I don't remember him moving close to anybody, just wasn't the nature of the fella.

HORROCKS: It was a doomed effort.



HALL: You know he was a cold New Englander. They tell a story which more than likely is true about him sitting alongside of a lady at a White House dinner. She says "Governor, how are your family?"

He says, "I have a boy, something like a sophomore in Providence." He stopped there.

And the lady said, "Well how wonderful Governor. Tell me about him."

He said, "I just did." And this was Sherm.

HORROCKS: When President Eisenhower told you that he would like Nixon to remove himself from the Vice-President's spot and take a cabinet post, Secretary of Defense, say--

HALL: He named State and Defense.

HORROCKS: State and Defense?

HALL: Yes.



HORROCKS: What would have happened to John Foster Dulles?

HALL: I don't know, but I'm giving to you what the--

HORROCKS: There's no doubt in your mind that at that time the President was forthrightly wanting to groom Nixon to run in '60.

HALL: Let me say this. Talking about the President, my answer is yes. But I have the feeling, myself, that others were getting his mind made up in one direction not with same purpose that Ike had in mind.

HORROCKS: Did you find when you were working with him that Eisenhower was the sort of person who could fall into these near manipulations?

HALL: He had friends, very close. I'd say if Ike had any weakness that I know--a rich man meant a great deal to Ike. It was something about a successful man, and he would listen to a Ben [Benjamin F.] Fairless or somebody like that, and we tried to keep them out of sight. Maybe it shouldn't be called a weakness, but if Ike had a weakness that was it.

HORROCKS: Would there be any particular issues that you remember where this was a special problem?

HALL: I remember--had something to do with the natural gas, control or rate price at the source, or something like that. And I have a feeling, did have the feeling at the time, in fact I was talking with Jerry Persons just two or three months ago down in Florida. I'm satisfied Ike was going to sign this bill which would have changed the law. A [unintelligible] I forget his name, Keck.

HORROCKS: How would that be spelled.



HALL: K-e-c-k

HORROCKS: K-e-c-k.

HALL: And keck apparently came to Washington on this bill, and, very hot for it, and made some statement to the effect, "Hell if this was California, I'd already have all the legislature." With the dough [dollar] sign. That got to Ike. I can't prove it, but I'm satisfied that was the end of Ike's support for the bill.

HORROCKS: I think I remember him writing something generally about that.

HALL: Yes, this was Ike. He was at once soured about this fellow because he just--the character of his would come out. He held the Presidency up, really. Don't you tarnish that! And, also, one of the great things that he never solved was this: How I can be President of all the people and leader of a segment of them. He never cleared that up in his mind. I had lunch with him before he took the job and talked about--he called me the leader. I said, "Wait a minute. You're the leader." "No!" And you could see it in his eyes all the



while he was President--how the devil he could--and I'll tell you frankly he was thinking of all the people rather than the Republican party. He was thinking in that direction.

HORROCKS: It must have caused you some difficulties in your job.

HALL: Well, yes it did.



HORROCKS: Did he understand the mechanics of how the Republican party and the chairman of the party operates? In other words, I've read where Eisenhower may have had a view where he could give an order as in a military structure, and expect an order to be handed down the chain of command, and did not understand that this would not work.

HALL: It did, in fact it came up one--I was chairman. He thought I should tell the chairman somewhere [who] had made some remark. Eisenhower had reacted to it; so I said to him, "All right, I'll tell the party chairman out there what he should do if you'll call the governor out there and tell him what he should do." In other words, people don't realize that we got this fifty hydra-headed monster let's call it, a good

name, but who can tell someone else down the line what to do. You might [unintelligible] get the job, use that type of method, but no we don't do that in either party.

HORROCKS: As time went on, did he reach a full appreciation of that problem?

HALL: I would say he was dissatisfied with it till he got out. Never, though he didn't have any answer. In fact sometimes he'd talk about--just having a drink with you--isn't there someway we could get the right people together and why should so-and-so be a Democrat and so-and-so a Republican? Let's reform this whole picture.

HORROCKS: Does he seek a classic approach to a problem: Let's get these reasonable people together and talk it out?

HALL: Yes.



HORROCKS: It always struck me that there is a contradiction in--and this goes back to Humphreys' letter also where he complains that the Republican party is too identified with large business and that it didn't rely enough on Eisenhower or use Eisenhower enough to build more support, and yet

Eisenhower, at least as much or even more than the Republican party, is fond and close to business interests.

HALL: He was. And as I say, I used the word and it's a simple one, "rich." A successful, rich man, he was, as far as Ike was concerned, he was in. And I remember one time when I went over to see him to tell him I wasn't going to stay on, even, I forget the reason, around that period, he and I talked and he thought Ben Fairless was the great chairman of the Republican party.

HORROCKS: Because he was a successful business man.

HALL: Rich man.

HORROCKS: Well, didn't this kind of contradiction--trying to broaden the Republican party from its label with a man who is the epitome of that label, really--doom the effort?

HALL: Yes. Well, let me say this. The two didn't go together. Ike was not a politician. Now he did some things, actually, which were greater than any politician would think of. He



didn't need any PR man around him to get good pictures or get some statements, so on and so forth. But so far as a fellow hewing to a line, this is a Republican line, let's all get on that line, let's all go--

HORROCKS: No. I believe you and Fred Scribner and Meade Alcorn and perhaps Herbert Brownell went out to California in '64 to speak to the General about William Scranton and Barry Goldwater. What happened?



HALL: It turned out to be ridiculous. I don't know; I'm not even sure that was the year, well anyway. I have a feeling that before we got out there somebody had said to him, "Now listen, General, these fellows are trying to get you lined up with somebody." I'm satisfied that happened because, after we'd had a sandwich and were talking, Ike said, "Let's all get a sheet of paper and start writing down combinations that we think would be good-give 'em some thought to so far as that convention." Well then, you know, the thing turned into just a mish-mash of talk. We didn't get beyond that.

I kidded Herb Brownell a little after that, I said,

"Somebody has been talking with him."

And he said, "I think you're right." But it came to nothing.

HORROCKS: But he was personally anxious to have someone other than Goldwater get the nomination.

HALL: No question about that.

HORROCKS: I beg your pardon.

HALL: No question about that.



HORROCKS: And yet he wouldn't actively involve himself in an effort to change or stop Barry Goldwater.

HALL: They had that famous situation with the governors down in Pittsburg, I think, just before the convention in '64. As I recall it, Ike had, at least through Milton [Eisenhower] had been talking Scranton and when everybody arrived at Pittsburg, apparently George Humphrey'd gotten ahold of Ike and Ike pulled away from Scranton. And then, I believe Scranton's partisans had more fight in 'em than he did. Anyway, when that came out that Ike had done that, that made Scranton become a candidate.

HORROCKS: That Eisenhower had done what?

HALL: That George Humphrey had gotten Eisenhower not to come out for Scranton. "Stay out of this! It's Goldwater." And I think that Scranton was looking, hoping that he'd get at least a pat on the back by Ike and he didn't get it at the governors' meeting, and I don't blame Ike. Ike had quite a bit to do with Scranton during that period. We all tried to get him to move.

HORROCKS: If Scranton had gotten it together more on his own, given Eisenhower something more to work with, are you confident in your own mind that then the General might have come out more strongly?

HALL: I think if Scranton early had indicated a great interest, gung-ho, I'm going for this, it could happen because a lot of Ike's friends were for Scranton. But the trouble was you couldn't get Scranton to express any real interest in it. An impossible fella really. I recall when Fred Scribner and I met him in New York. He was going away for two weeks. And he said to us, "Fellas when I come back I'm going to give



you my answer." Well [we'd been waiting] [we weren't waiting] for the damned answer. On the day he was coming back, one of the Philadelphia papers said that Scranton was coming back and was going to make a "Sherman" statement. Well, we talked to each other on the phone. We thought, that's it, that's it. Then Scranton gets ahold of each one of us and says, "Don't believe everything you read in the newspaper." Now wouldn't that make you believe he's a candidate?

HORROCKS: Yes.



HALL: Why, then we started. We got smiles on again and started--we found out that this fellow had no idea of budging; he was just going to sit. In other words, you couldn't get him to make up his mind.

HORROCKS: So it was really wishy-washy; it wasn't that he was being overly coy?

HALL: Oh, no. He was just wishy-washy. In other words, I'll tell you it got this bad: Out at the convention, when he was out there spending a million or so to put on a

campaign that wouldn't amount to a damn so far as the results are concerned, I decided I'd go over to see him, friend. And I refused to come out for him because I said, "It's all over." I said, "Four months ago we wanted you; you wouldn't do a thing." So Fred Scribner wouldn't come out for him, Meade Alcorn. When I wouldn't move for him, none of these people would move for him. But we sat there talking at the convention and I said, "Now Bill I'm not going to kid about this thing. I think you know as well as I do that your campaign for the nomination's all over. But," I said, "I think we're going to lose with Goldwater in the national campaign. And I think right after election people will be looking for a young, attractive, able young man to get behind for the four years ahead."

You know what he said to me? "Len, will I ever be able to convince you that I'm not interested in being President of the United States?"

HORROCKS: That's amazing.

HALL: Amazing? Listen what we went through with him, you wouldn't hardly believe. But that's what makes politics really fun.



HORROCKS: Well I've overstayed my visit, but this is a fascinating--you're right, we could go on forever on this. Do we have time to talk a little bit more?

HALL: About ten more minutes?

HORROCKS: About ten more minutes? Okay, fine. Why did you retire as chairman for the RNC?

HALL: Well, I'd just been successful. I'd just ridden down in the inaugural parade, and what's a better time to quit?

HORROCKS: Yes.

HALL: You couldn't do anything better; so I did, I quit at that time. And not only that, I just can't imagine sitting around as national chairman too long.

HORROCKS: Were you instrumental in choosing Meade Alcorn.

HALL: Yes.



HORROCKS: How did that choice come about and did the President play a very active role--

HALL: Well he did. We got together, what I mean, I didn't alone. But a group of us got together and decided he'd be the man and I had made Meade the chairman, the title was Vice-Chairman of the Committee, but he really was the chairman of the convention organization; so he got to know everybody. Did a swell job, and that's was sort of a springboard so that you weren't bringing in any stranger.



HORROCKS: Wasn't that unusual about the way, the '56 convention, for the chairman of the party of have control of the convention rather than the President's campaign organization?

HALL: I'll tell you--it was an interesting time. I'm glad that Ike was the type of man he was, because I couldn't have done with a Nixon what I did with Ike. I mean, Nixon would have fired me. But Ike--I loved Ike for that reason. In other words, as long as you didn't lie to him and as long as you were fighting for something--even in disagreement with him--he didn't get red-headed about it. So, when you say the party had control of the convention, well generally speaking, at that time, the organization and Ike's people were one and the same. In other words, I was a red-hot Eisenhower fellow,

for instance; I was the chairman and I would say Fred Scribner --red-hot for Eisenhower. So you're talking about the same people.

HORROCKS: So, this had absolutely nothing to do with any questions about Nixon as the Vice-Presidential candidate.

HALL: It did right up into the convention.

HORROCKS: Oh, it did have a lot to do with it.



HALL: The fight kept going on because as you recall--oh, well it can't hurt to tell this. The story about that '56 pre-convention period is something that it'd take two and a half hours to tell because--very interesting period in our history.

HORROCKS: In these ten minutes, could you give us as much of that story as you could--at least the high points?

HALL: Well--I'll give you how it wound up. Everybody thought that, not everybody but a great many people thought, that it would not be Nixon. And there is, I don't know whether he'll show it to you but sometime--don't say I said it--

but I think that Herb Brownell has a list written on a paper of the candidates that Ike was thinking about at that time. But anyway, I met with Goody Knight--I was trying to cool down the fires; I knew Nixon was going to get it, no question. Goody Knight said, "I'm on that list."

I went to [Theodore] McKeldin who nominated Ike in '52. "Len, I'm not going to come out for Nixon; I got a chance for this thing."

We had a meeting out there one time and a good, old friend and I still say he's a great man--[General Nathan] Twining, said, "What we should do here is put a fight on Nixon just to create some excitement, interest in this convention."

Well, when I'm for a ticket and a candidate, I don't like to see any excitement except what's going to generate more votes and more enthusiasm for our man. So, anyway, we had this mood. So gradually the candidates for vice-president were dropping out and somebody said at the meeting, "Well, how about Dan Thornton, governor of Colorado?" So we had Tom [Thomas E] Stephens there, the appointment secretary for the President, great fella. So we said to Tom, "Tom, you"



(say this is on a Monday), "you go and talk to the Colorado people and come back here on Wednesday and tell us how much support Thornton has in Colorado."

We met on Wednesday and Stephens came back and said, "He hasn't got a goddamned delegate."

So that was the end of any scrapping. This was the conclusion of it--Ike came out a day early, and he called me over before breakfast and he asked me how things are going. And I said, "There isn't a delegate against Nixon."

And he said, "Well, what is [Harold] Stassen going to do?"

And I said, "Who in the hell can tell what that so-and-so's going to do."

"Well," he said, "Len, he's coming over here to see me this morning and when he comes, I'm going to call." (And I was up at the Fairmont; he was at St. Francis.) "I'm going to have Ann Whitman call you up when he comes, and you come on down here. And before I see that fella, I want you to have this thing straightened out."

So she called me up and asked me down there and you might as well talk to a wall as talk to that fella. About



an hour I call him a "damned fool," "do-nothing." So finally I just thought I'd try this out on him--Sherm Adams had spoken to him, Tom Dewey had talked. I said to Stassen, "You've got a date with the President this morning, haven't you?" Well that surprised him that I knew that."

And he said, "Yes."

Well I said, "I'll tell you, Harold, unless you walk in and tell the President that--yes, you want to second Nixon's nomination, you're not going to see him." Well, you know, he just looked; he stood up, no smiles of course. It seemed interminable, but more than likely only a minute or two. Finally he said, "I'll do it." That was the end of--

HORROCKS: Do we have time for one last question?

HALL: All right.

HORROCKS: The President uses cabinet, or I guess any President does, use the cabinet members as, well to help him politically, to help get the case across. How did Charles Wilson and Ezra Taft Benson work out on this, and John Foster Dulles?

HALL: Interesting story with each one of them. Ezra Taft



Benson wasn't worth a damn. I mean just impossible. He was too big to play politics; he wasn't going to try, about politics. Charlie Wilson, bless his heart, not knowing too much about it, but he at least would try to do something. But the biggest trouble in this whole picture was, it would have been much easier, and I blame the fellow who was secretary of air--

HORROCKS: [Harold] Talbot?

HALL:--Talbot. Because they were the ones getting together a list of people for Ike to select for this and that and the other thing, and I was amazed because I talked to Ike down at lunch one day when he was getting ready to go to Washington and I asked him what arrangements he had made about appointments. And he said, "What do you mean?"

"Well," I said, "the cabinet officers, not too many, but plenty of appointments."

"Well," he said, "Len," he said, "You're all too late on that because," he said, "I was told that the cabinet members should pick their own people, and I told everyone of them to do it."



HORROCKS: So he let all the department appointments powers go to the cabinet secretaries.

HALL: Yes, that's right. And then he told me to go ahead and see what we could do about it, but--

HORROCKS: He initially didn't want John Foster as secretary of state; he was interested in Jack [John] McCloy, wasn't he?

HALL: No, I can't say that. No, I can't say that. In other words, if I had to answer it just from talking with him, I'd have to say just the opposite. Because he always talked about Dulles and foreign policy, studying it since he went to college--you couldn't find a man who had more background for the job.



HORROCKS: They certainly developed a tremendous relationship.

HALL: Well I tell you frankly--two different people. Two different people entirely. I mean, nothing to draw them together. Golf, bridge, these were the instruments for people to use to get close to Ike. And Dulles, I think, was always so busy that he didn't have time even for Ike. But would always give way to Ike with statements and so on.

HORROCKS: Did Eisenhower ever speak to you about replacing Charles Wilson with his propensity for mistimed comments or especially Ezra Taft Benson?

HALL: He never--let me put it this way. He wanted some of them to create openings after his first term.

HORROCKS: He wanted--

HALL: Some of them to leave and create openings and he said to me, "What the hell, Len, do these fellows want to stay here for life?" For instance, one that was, well, take like the postmaster general. He would come up the same way.

[Arthur] Summerfield wanted to stay here eight years, yet Ike wouldn't ask him to leave.

HORROCKS: Wasn't that really a continual, critical problem with Eisenhower--a failure to remove people he didn't want, to take a more active role.

HALL: I'd say yes.



HORROCKS: I know your time has just about run out here-- tape has too.

HALL: Do you get to hear any of this, look this over; it may not amount to anything. But if you think it is something, why maybe we could meet again.

HORROCKS: Okay and--

HALL: I'd say you'll know better after you read this.



HORROCKS: I think it's been going along fine. Is there anything on this tape, now, at the end, that you particularly think is important to add?

HALL: Well I'm going to put something that you--again it makes Ike different than most political leaders and refreshing. When Stassen came out for Herter, I'm national chairman; I'm supposed to be neutral. But Stassen had already made me so damned mad that I couldn't be neutral the way he went. I knew if I called the President he'd say, "Len, stay neutral." So I got in my PR man; I got in Bob Humphreys and said, "Listen," I said, "I'm coming out for Ike and Dick. The hell with this Stassen or with this Herter." So I did--just that sentence. Then I called up the President instead of Ike seeing it. So I went over and Sherm Adams gave me a

little hell and I told him it was none of his business. And I walk in and I didn't know what was going happen with the President after talking with Sherm Adams. He looked at me with a sort of a smirk on his face and said, "Len, you're holding the reins a little tight aren't you?" That's all he said, and we never discussed it any more. Great fellow. Two human beings I met in my long political career--Al Smith and Eisenhower--they never changed.

HORROCKS: They're both fantastic characters.

HALL: Yes. But after you read it, it might not be anything; if it does and you want to follow through again, there'll be a hand to do it.

HORROCKS: Okay fine. Thank you very much; you're most kind.

