

INTERVIEW WITH

George Kinnear

by

Maclyn P. Burg
Oral Historian

on

April 24, 1972

for

Dwight D. Eisenhower Library



Gift of Personal Statement

GEORGE KINNEAR

to the

Dwight D. Eisenhower Library



In accordance with the provisions of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 as amended (63 Stat. 377) and regulations issued thereunder, I, George Kinnear, hereinafter referred to as the donor, hereby give, donate and convey to the United States of America for eventual deposit in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, and for administration therein by the authorities thereof, a transcript of a personal statement approved by me on January 19, 1976 and prepared for the purpose of deposit in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library. The gift of this document is made subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Title to the material transferred hereunder will pass to the United States as of the date of the delivery of this material into the physical custody of the Archivist of the United States.
2. It is the donor's wish to make the material donated to the United States of America by the terms of this instrument available for research as soon as it has been deposited in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

3. The material donated to the United States pursuant to the foregoing shall be kept intact permanently in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

4. The donor retains to himself during his lifetime all literary property rights in the material donated to the United States of America by the terms of this instrument. After the death of the donor, the aforesaid literary property rights will pass to the United States of America.

Signed George Keenan

Date: February 5, 1976

Accepted James B. Rhoads
Archivist of the United States

Date: February 17, 1976



This interview is being taped with Mr. George C. Kinnear who was Republican State Chairman, state of Washington, in the 1956 election campaign. The interviewer is Dr. Maclyn Burg of the Eisenhower Library. Interview being conducted April 24, 1972, and the interview is taking place in Mr. Kinnear's office in Olympia, Washington.

DR. BURG: Mr. Kinnear, could you start by just giving us a little bit about your own personal background; where you were born and your education and something about your career up to 1956?

MR. KINNEAR: Well, I was born and raised in Seattle, Washington, attended the University of Washington where I received an A.B. and subsequently an L.L.D. degree in 1931 and '34 respectively.



DR. BURG: Good years for coming out of an institution.

MR. KINNEAR: Then I practiced law in Seattle from then on down to 1965 when I came to Olympia with Governor [Daniel J.] Evans as a part of his cabinet.

DR. BURG: What was your war service, may I ask?

MR. KINNEAR: Well, I was in the Navy. I was a reserve called to duty in May of 1941 through the spring of '46, leaving active service as a commander, subsequently retiring as a captain. My political experience began in 1938. I was elected

to the state legislature, commencing with the 1939 session.

BURG: And what district elected you, sir?

KINNEAR: That was the 36th district, Queen Anne Hill. As a matter of interest, you can probably take it out of the record, I was the first and only member of a father and son team to serve together, my father being from another district in Seattle.

BURG: I see. I hadn't known that.



KINNEAR: Dad had been in for a number of years. I was re-elected again the following election and then went into the Navy which cut my experience there. After the war I took up again and was re-elected to the same district, this is in the House in 1946 to the '47 session. I'm talking about biennial sessions, '47 to '49 sessions. In the '41, '47, and '49 sessions I was the Republican floor leader in the House. I was the majority leader in '47 and also Chairman of the Joint Steering Committee that on a coalition basis guided both houses of the legislature in opposition to Governor [Monrad C.] Wallgren, who was then Democratic Governor. Well, that's about it until I became state chairman in early 1953 and remained in

that position through the '56 election into '57.

BURG: All right, we'll come back to that in a moment. Let me ask you, was your initial political experience with Governor Arthur B. Langlie when you were in the legislature?

KINNEAR: Yes. When I first went in, Governor Clarence Martin, a Democrat, was governor. Then I was one of the advisory group to then Mayor Langlie (Seattle) in his campaign for governor. We selected his campaign chairman and consulted with him on strategy and issues. I served with him, my first time as majority leader, in his initial legislative session.

BURG: So you were one of those who persuaded the governor to run for office?

KINNEAR: Yes.



BURG: May I ask you to speak to Governor Langlie--his characteristics, how you viewed him, how you would estimate his importance in state politics?

KINNEAR: Well, Governor Langlie came into politics originally in the Seattle city council and then became mayor, as the

record would show, in a reform effort. I don't like to use the word "reform" as such, since this was not a purifying of government. It was an effort of younger men organized into what was then called "Cincinnatus" to upgrade and improve government, improve the quality of government. It was directed at improved efficiency rather than clean government versus crime. He proved to be an outstanding mayor and he gained statewide support although Seattle mayors and Seattle politicians were previously subject to severe dislike throughout the rest of the state of Washington with the big city against the state.

BURG: We might point out the big city in the state of Washington.



KINNEAR: At that time, yes, it stood out materially above all other urban centers. But he had gained stature particularly in developments of, well, it was really a political power battle with the Teamsters Union (which was then Dave Beck) in the state of Washington and Seattle. He was a man of great courage, a man highly dedicated, not only in principle but a hard worker, a student of whatever problem he was faced with. He had a high religious influence in his

motivation which also provided this character in his dedication but also, as time went on past his first session and in the future years, was a limitation, particularly in his relations to his own friends both in and outside the legislature.

BURG: Would that include you too, Mr. Kinnear?

KINNEAR: Yes, yes, it did. Because he reached a point where his decisions--made alone--would become unquestionably right as far as the sense that he felt and expressed on some occasion that he'd been given the word, and nobody could sway him.

BURG: A higher word than the national Republican organization.

KINNEAR: That's right.



BURG: What denomination supported this belief of his, this religious strength of his, do you recall?

KINNEAR: I don't recall. It's my impression that it was a major protestant church, not any small offbeat group. It was just his own personal reaction and the way he was totally influenced.

BURG: Now, Mr. Kinnear, since we're on this particular issue, and I've heard this elsewhere, did it seem to you that ultimately this religious domination of his thinking, this rightness, this rectitude that he displayed, got out of control in the sense that he was affected by it, or was it merely a case of hampering things he might have done?

KINNEAR: No. I think it just hampered his broad judgement. By that I mean politically in terms of what is right or wrong, not a matter of ethics. His broad judgement was sound. It was when it came down to--well, for example, in my last session, one reason I had to get out was because I did not want to publicly split. There was an issue of an income tax for additional funds; the Republican legislators were generally opposed to it. And I had urged him [Langlie] not to use an income tax in preference to others. He made a promise, not just to me but to the Steering Committee of four or five legislators, that he would not introduce any kind of legislation unless he had conferred with the legislative leadership; this was the House leadership. He subsequently decided that he had to introduce an income tax bill. Politically he had a right to his opinions against mine, but he introduced

it in the Senate suddenly after my having told the House caucus, with the knowledge of these three or four other House leaders, that we had a promise that it would not be introduced unless we had been consulted. This, for example, created a very severe crisis within the House caucus. As a matter of fact, they met first of all to challenge me as to what I really had said, and then frankly voted unanimously to oppose the governor's tax money. And this all happened just bang, bang, bang, and of course it created a severe crisis at the moment which could have been avoided if he'd been willing to carry out his original agreement. Now I don't for a minute think that he had any sense of double-crossing, and he was sharply critical of the House for doing this and not following when he had a meeting with them subsequently. But this quantity of religious influence created a blind spot.



BURG: Now when you talked with him about this later, what was his response to I'm sure your impassioned, "What are you doing to us?"

KINNEAR: This of course should not be public record for the moment. But the entire House caucus went down, I requested

that they be there, and he proceeded to condemn the leadership, which is myself, the assistant leader, and the whip, for permitting the House caucus to go off this way. This was second action in my mind involving his blind spot on how to deal with people, not me but this whole group. And I was left no choice but to challenge the fact that he had made a promise and not kept it in front of them all. It was either that or I lost my leadership, which I don't say personally, but that would become a public matter that there was something going wrong. As it was, we did keep this fight from the press and from the public. It never got out. But it had to be a direct confrontation, and I had to make this charge as to his conduct in front of the full caucus.

BURG: Was he surprised at your reaction? Had he forgotten about his promise to you?



KINNEAR: Well he did not deny it. No, he was angry. He was just angry at the fact that the caucus was opposed to it.

BURG: Who was your assistant at that time and the whip at that time?

KINNEAR: Kim Comfort of Tacoma, who is now dead, was the assistant, and the whip was Perry Woodall. We didn't call him whip. I've forgotten but it was that type of thing--perhaps assistant floor leader. He is now in the state Senate.

BURG: Now you would not describe what Governor Langlie displayed as a fanaticism--that would be far too strong a term to describe the condition that prevailed?

KINNEAR: Yes. Well, I'll give you another example which doesn't have the political overtones that I'm mentioning or that I was involved in as another political figure. I want to point out again, this is not defensive--I'm just trying to describe the situation as far as any personal ambitions were involved--I stepped out of politics so that I would not be involved in an open fight with him. I knew I couldn't go back and have this carry on without it coming out and be honest with myself. Well, I remember a couple of instances that happened like this and in one only I can specify--it's clear in my mind. He had asked a group of the leading businessmen in the state, mainly Seattle, but highly respected community leaders who he was working with, it was his invitation, to discuss the subject and I think that it

was this same tax that we've been talking about, I'm not sure. It could have been workmen's compensation or one of the other taxes.

BURG: What would the year be, Mr. Kinnear?



KINNEAR: Well, this was in the '49 session; the July session I was in.

BURG: So both the events, the one you just described and this one, are '49 approximately?

KINNEAR: Yes. And he asked them to come down and give their ideas and opinions and reactions to his administrative proposal. They started out to talk, it was ten or fifteen minutes, but the key point is that he finally cut them off instead of hearing them. Remember, he'd asked them in. He cut them off and made a statement which I can't quote, I mean word for word, but it in effect said that he had been in contemplation on this that morning and had become convinced (I'm using general words on purpose because I don't want to overstate it). He left the impression with them, now this was discussed in sort of awe afterward, that he had the message that

his position was right; he didn't want to take any more time on it. Now this was obviously, I would say, the poorest politics. The very least he could have done was to have sat through and listened to them and then said, "Well, thank you, gentlemen; I'll consider it," and tell them, "No," the next day. It was obviously, when I say poor politics, harmful to himself because he antagonized these men by not listening to them. Yet he did possess a good political sensitivity usually.

BURG: And, as you say, they discussed this with awe afterwards. The man had obviously--



KINNEAR: They couldn't believe that he would. But it's the principle itself--whether you agreed with him or disagreed with him. It was not a principle involving some peculiar or odd or fanatical decision. It was something like a choice of taxes or a choice of the workmens' compensation plan, whichever it was. It was just a question of degree of soundness of judgement. His actions, his decisions, as I say, could be disagreed with, but they couldn't be called peculiar, odd, impossible.

BURG: He sought the guidance of God then in making decisions, and, in his own mind at any rate, he felt he had received some answers.

KINNEAR: The reason he took this action was his complete conviction that he did have a source of judgment and strength of judgment that the others didn't have. And it was so obvious to him that he, I guess, couldn't understand why others wouldn't see it too.

BURG: And no thought in his mind evidently, Mr. Kinnear, that you too might talk to God in those quiet moments in the night and might get some answers yourself.

KINNEAR: No.



BURG: He just never saw that. Well, it's good to have this opinion of yours.

KINNEAR: It was a serious weakness in a man who had outstanding ability beyond doubt.

BURG: What happened to you then was that you finally found that the balance between his superior abilities and this other

quality he possessed became something you could not live with?

KINNEAR: It wasn't a matter of my disagreeing with him on an issue; that's always going to happen in any organization. But it was a matter that his method of applying it was, like this one instance, when it threatened my being a leader or my ability to serve in leadership to a point where I felt that my value was being wiped out. If somebody else could accept this chair, then they had to move into it.

BURG: So his actions were impolitic in your estimation?

KINNEAR: Very poor.

BURG: Now with that in mind, because I think perhaps we'll refer to it later on, when you came out of World War II and returned to the state of Washington, had you at that time any knowledge of Dwight Eisenhower or Eisenhower's potential candidacy?


KINNEAR: No.



BURG: When can you recollect was the first time that you encountered the possibility that Eisenhower might run; that

this might be a man with whom you would be working to achieve the election? There was an election in '48, for example.

KINNEAR: Well, the first I began to learn of it at all was through the public channels, the press and the like, and the efforts of, I've forgotten who now, I think Henry Cabot Lodge was one of the first of the group that went over and called on the General when he was in Europe. In NATO, I believe, wasn't it? And anyway they were calling on him trying to talk him into this. I was in the same wing of the party; it was not a divided segment but a wing in terms of viewpoint. It was sort of a middle wing that had the highest respect for Senator Taft but was completely convinced that he would suffer, which I expressed at the time, in a campaign and if elected would be seriously handicapped by the type of people who were key to his organization and would thereby, as with any President, become key in his government organization, meaning the extremists on the right wing which were much more extreme than he ever was. At that point of time, my personal friends who were not active on the national level were more discouraged than anything else, and Eisenhower came on the scene gradually, as I say, through public activity. I've forgotten now how



Art Langlie got into his picture.

BURG: Would we be discussing a period around '49, '50, '51? Can you put a date to your feelings about this? You were yourself a state legislator at the time? You were in '49.

KINNEAR: Yes, I was. Well, my term ran through '50, we didn't have a session in '50, but I went out of office on January 1, of '51.

BURG: Now had you run again?



KINNEAR: Well, I made a wild stab in '50. The point was: either get into politics or out of it completely, not on a part-time job like legislature which just interferes with your law practice, or get out and be a lawyer. I did make an effort in 1950 to run for U. S. Senate against Senator [Warren G.] Magnuson which failed utterly. My knowledge of Eisenhower was slight. Having lost, incidentally, I stepped out of politics. I had to settle down and begin to consolidate a legal practice again.

BURG: How old a man were you, Mr. Kinnear, in 1950?

KINNEAR: Forty. So my participation in the Eisenhower cam-

paing development was in the rear ranks. My only part as an Eisenhower organization developer was in King County where I was just asked to sit in with them as an advisor. I had become, at the age of forty, something of an old hand. On this basis and because of my floor leadership in the legislature for a long period, I'd had to go out around the state more than an ordinary legislator from his district. And I had very wide contacts and my efforts in the 1950 Senate race consolidated my personal relations. I had very wide contacts in all segments of the party, the Taft group as well as what we called the liberal group which became the Eisenhower organization. So I sat in with the Eisenhower team in an advisory capacity in their executive meetings; I was not out in the state at all. I helped set up the precinct caucus plans in King County which, the record will show, swung this state for Eisenhower. The sweep of King County, with its material number of delegates was the decisive factor in the state convention.

BURG: In this advisorship to them, this informal kind of advisorship, who were the Eisenhower leaders at the time that you were invited to consult with them?



KINNEAR: Well, it's hard to remember all the key men in King County and probably not in terms of relative influence everywhere, but the fellow that had major strength in King County and became sort of a coordinator was Ray Moore, who was King County chairman.

BURG: Now Moore, as I understand it, had rather come out from a rather obscure background. He had never been notorious in the sense that his name was well known.



KINNEAR: No. We'd had a group of about thirty younger men, this is a group that came out of the war, some of them were in their late twenties up to my age; I was one of the older ones. We were a very casual group who operated in different directions from the group of individuals. It didn't come out publicly as a club although we identified ourselves as the Evergreen Republican Club and met frequently on a social basis including our wives. And Ray Moore was one of that group; as a matter of fact, that was where I first met him. We were quite effective, particularly in King County.

BURG: Now he was asked to be, as I understand it, King County Chairman. Was that job also offered to you about that time?

KINNEAR: No, I never was offered that, I don't think I know I never would have taken it. My wife became vice-chairman in that election.

BURG: So Moore heads up the organization and is perhaps the key man. Do you remember any other names of people who--

KINNEAR: Oh, well, Bill Howard. There's a guy to get in touch with if you want the tidbits of both of them. Howard is a fellow who has turned out to be, and this is way off the record, a not too reputable attorney lobbyist. Pretty much of a wild man . Always a great political finagler. And he knew how to play the game pretty rough and tough to a degree which is not typical of politics up here. And he was a field man; he was a fellow that did the dirty work out in front, when it had to be done. When I say dirty work I'm not talking about corruption.

BURG: Lining up delegates and--

KINNEAR: Yes. When he came into the King County convention with the decisive votes, it was nip and tuck. But in his district he was the district leader, this was a district that was supposed to be all Taft, and he took it and put a unit rule through. And that's typical of his value and use. And then he came in and decided the King County convention.

BURG: So he has always stayed clear of any difficulty with the Washington State Bar, evidently.

KINNEAR: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.



BURG: But business ethics that are questionable to some people?

KINNEAR: Well, yes. His legal practice is suspect to begin with. I don't know all but it included gambling and horse racing, a number of smaller unions--

BURG: Pin-balls, slots--

KINNEAR: Pin-balls, yes. had their field, but his legal practice is centered around that.

BURG: He's been described to me as a diamond in the rough by one person. Would you use a heavier term?

KINNEAR: I'll say this, he and I have been the closest of friends, and he is bitterly opposed to the present governor. I'm the only one in the administration he'll come down and talk to, and he, on a number of occasions has given us advice in terms of things that are going on--that he didn't like someone else worse than the governor. So I've had that kind of friendship, and ours is arm's length. I can trust him a hundred percent with me. He'll never pull anything on me. But it's one of those unusual relations that you sometimes get involved in.

BURG: Was he a U.W. [University of Washington] Law School graduate?

KINNEAR: Yes, yes.

BURG: A younger man than yourself?



KINNEAR: No, Bill is a number of years older. He slid through school on a long-term basis. He was out and back in.

BURG: So here then we have Moore and Bill Howard working on these matters. Do you remember any others that were of--

KINNEAR: Well, one of the leaders that was very influential statewide, extremely valuable, unfortunately is now dead, is Joe Pearson, an ex-Navy officer, in college same time as I. Jack Thomas was a younger man who was extremely capable. His business was as a liquor agent. You acquainted with that? In a monopoly state each company has to have a local agent to represent it before the board?

BURG: Yes.

KINNEAR: Only one customer but--

BURG: Right.

KINNEAR: --and he represented a number of companies. He had a very successful practice, but a younger man, eight years younger than I am. We had some better people too. These were real politicians--all volunteer . Well, Janet Tourtellotte, who became the national committeewoman was in this group early.

BURG: She was associated with the Eisenhower movement fairly early in '52.

KINNEAR: Yes. If I went back and saw a list, they'd come to my mind. It doesn't now.

BURG: Edith Williams?

KINNEAR: Edith Williams was in there, yes.

BURG: What is her husband's first name? Do you remember?

KINNEAR: Mike.

BURG: Not Andrew, is it?

KINNEAR: Andrew, yes.

BURG: Is it?

KINNEAR: Yes.



BURG: I had Andrew and then got worried about whether I was right.

KINNEAR: He's known as Mike, but Mike doesn't suggest Andrew. That's why I forget it myself. Yes, she was in it early. She, you know, is relation to Tegdy Roosevelt.

BURG: Yes, so I understand, granddaughter I think of Teddy Roosevelt.

[Interruption while cassette is being changed]

BURG: Now I don't hear the name of R. Mort Frayn .

KINNEAR I don't remember where Mort was in the original organization. I mean in this campaign. I'm sure he was, let's see--



BURG: He was the Republican Chairman for the State of Washington?

KINNEAR: He was State Chairman. Yes. of course one fellow that was working in and out of the state but had a great deal of influence in picking up votes in the state was W. Walter Williams who became Secretary of Commerce you know or Under-Secretary.

BURG: Under-Secretary.

KINNEAR: Yes.

BURG: Now this is the man who headed up the Citizens for Eisenhower ~~Q~~anational level?

KINNEAR: Yes. And he came out and claimed a lot of credit which he deserves. But I've forgotten the details of it. While having developed the plan of controlling the state through the precinct caucus route in the big county. He participated with us, and when he saw how successful it was . And he took the plan down to Texas from Washington from the experience, yes. He can give you the details, mention that to him.



BURG: Yes. On my next trip here, I am to talk with him too.

KINNEAR: I'll jump then; maybe we ought to come back. I helped in my district lining up my precinct and my precinct committeemen; that was my size. My wife became county vice-chairman, not by election because she didn't want it, but the woman resigned or died and Ray Moore asked her to come in as vice-chairman to serve out the election year. She's no politician but she knew the game pretty well, and so she served. At the time of the King County Convention, I was not a delegate. Well I must have been a delegate. But anyhow I was on Navy duty in Portland for training duty and didn't

plan to go, and my alternate would take care of my position all right. No, pardon me, I was not a delegate; my wife was. Yes, and she was Chairman of the Platform Committee. Moore phoned me in Portland the first week I was there saying, "How would you like to be temporary chairman?"

At this point I was out of politics, and I didn't care, and I said, "Well, can't you get someone else?"

He said, "No, there isn't much to it--just call the meeting to order and have the keynote speech, and then you drop out. George Powell is going to be permanent chairman." Incidentally he was one of our group too. He is Janet Tourtellotte's brother. He'd been in the legislature with me, also.

So I said, "O.K., I'll do it." And I accepted it. It was a compliment, but I accepted it mainly as being part of the team, and they wanted to have somebody of their own in the position. So I flew up. I had permission to leave, actually AWOL, but the Captain closed his eyes for the weekend. And I flew up to take the platform as temporary chairman. The test votes in the battle, like on Bill Howard's district being seated where there was a competing delegation there, came up right away, and, as I say, I was



completely unprepared. I had no strategy. This all just hit me by surprise. I was in the chair until five o'clock.

BURG: So nobody contacted you on what maneuvering might occur?

KINNEAR: No, no.

BURG: Neither Ray Moore nor anyone else?

KINNEAR: Everybody afterwards charged that Bill Howard and I had planned this thing. Had a sidelight which was interesting to me. When I left the platform for lunch break, recess, about one, one-thirty, first time in my life my suit was absolutely dripping wet from perspiration, just black.

BURG: Interesting to hear. Whether that hall was hot or not, it was hot where you were standing.

KINNEAR: Yes, it was. Well, the major problem in terms of the state of Washington was we had this very closely divided convention. An early test vote showed that the Eisenhower forces would have it if Howard were seated with his district delegation.



I did have pretty extensive parliamentary experience and had confidence in myself that way, thank God. But I knew I had to play it just as legally as could be or there was every chance of a split followed by a separate convention and increasing troubles in the party going on into the election. So my own team gave me hell in the middle of the afternoon both there and later on in Spokane at the state convention because I was not moving faster in knocking down motions.

BURG: And you were on the Eisenhower team?

KINNEAR: Yes. Not publicly. See I hadn't been active. Not secretly but not publicly.

BURG: As a private individual you were an Eisenhower supporter.

KINNEAR: Yes. And so we came out of that with the Eisenhower people winning the King County convention, and the Taft leaders stating to the press that they thought it had been run fairly which was the thing I was trying to achieve.

BURG: Among those Taft leaders, Judge [Charles H.] Paul?



KINNEAR: Judge Paul and Stew Oles were the two. Oles was really the floor leader. Paul was state chairman but a very fine man, fine lawyer but rather slow thinker and not good on his political influence.

BURG: Yes. And Oles would be Floyd Oles son, Stewart?

KINNEAR: Yes.

BURG: Both men personal friends of yours? You know Judge Paul, and you knew Oles?

KINNEAR: Yes.



BURG: And neither man held any rancor to you that they expressed later on?

KINNEAR: Stewart, who was one of the floor leaders over at Spokane too, came to my office afterwards to congratulate me and say that he thought that I had done a completely top-flight job. And which was a great compliment because he is a man who is given to deep bitterness. He's not at all easy to oppose. No, we had good relations.

BURG: So what you tried to do in the King County convention was to hold things together and to handle these matters in an impeccable parliamentary way, letting things go as they would. Your recollection is that you did not steer matters toward your man but rather let the weight of--

KINNEAR: Well, the steering came in a couple of basic decisions like this one on the unit rule where I upheld them. And it was accepted in the state at the time, and so I don't have any embarrassment. I could have gone the other way and sought to have the convention support the other decision.

BURG: Precedent in this state was not for the unit rule, if I remember correctly. That had not been usually done in Republican politics in this state.

KINNEAR: Not usually, but it had been done.



BURG: Do you remember how you defended? Was there an attack at the moment when you defended the use of the unit rule? Do you remember how you might have defended yourself?

KINNEAR: Well, my position, however I expressed it, was simple--that we were bound by the action of the district

unless it were overruled by the convention, then I was bound to accept it. But even though some of them in the district opposed the unit rule, they did agree and admit publicly on the floor that there had been such a vote. I had to get that on the floor but fortunately one of them did. I remember there was a couple of instances where I extended things in order to get something on the floor rather than to act from personal knowledge. So that there was an open record of it, see.

BURG: You simply stayed up there waiting for it to come off the floor so that everyone might hear it, that it might be entered into the record, and eventually that is what happened. So the Taft people had no recourse there; they had allowed this.

KINNEAR: For instance there was a man came on the floor as a delegate, I've forgotten the grounds now, and he was in Howard's district. And Howard challenged him, saying, "They're not properly there." I was concerned about making a personal decision on Howard's statement as to whether it should come from the chair or should not have



been turned back to the credentials committee. And this fellow jumped up in anger and admitted his position. He said that by God, he was going to stay. He should because Howard had mishandled a district caucus. So I told the Sergeant-at-arms to move him out on his admission. That was the kind of details I utilized and got plenty with an order to--

BURG: Seems to me, like Governor Langlie, you had God with you that day, too.

KINNEAR: Then the Eisenhower fellows when we got through wanted me to take over the state convention of course.

BURG: Now was anything said to you again by Taft people, by Oles or by Paul, when it was bruited about that you were probably going to be the chairman at the state convention in Spokane in '52?

KINNEAR: No, nothing personal. I was recognized at that point as being an Eisenhower man; so they had their candidate up, and the real test vote came. Then I was named permanent chairman.



BURG: Of the King County convention?

KINNEAR: No, no, the state convention.

BURG: Of the state convention.

KINNEAR: Rather than temporary. See, when I left the county convention, it was all over but rapping the gavel, really. The permanent chairman had nothing left to do; all the decisions had been made.

BURG: Who was the permanent?



KINNEAR: George Powell. Mrs. Tourtellotte's brother. And at the state convention the real test came on electing me as chairman. Once I was in, there were a lot of motions, but the votes were there for the Eisenhower forces. And my problems there were on these special motions. I remember there was one very clever one that really threw me. I had to recess to talk to the parliamentarian, which I always tried to avoid doing. But the Spokane delegation was leading the Taft forces, and they had rented a hall a couple of blocks away and were all set to go and have a rump convention the minute that something happened to give them cause, within reason. That was

my fight there--to not let that happen, to keep them.

BURG: Who led that Spokane group? Is this Harlan Peyton?

KINNEAR: No. I think he was Eisenhower from the beginning. No, Bill Howe, who had been the former county chairman and very active over there, an older man, was the leader.

BURG: And so he was set to act in this way to break away his people to form probably a separate delegation to go to the national convention.

KINNEAR: Yes, and challenge--a complete delegation.



BURG: And do you remember the issue at point that especially worried you?

KINNEAR: No, I don't. I knew it was up, and they kept throwing various motions. They challenged the unit rule. Of course they challenged some seating in the beginning, but that was a credentials matter which was over with before the permanent convention was formed. But they challenged the unit rule in voting those people because there were Taft people within King County. See, King County voted the unit there.

BURG: Yes, a heavy number of ballots as a matter of fact that they--

KINNEAR: Well, yes, King County had run, oh, thirty-five to thirty-eight percent of the state.

BURG: Who was your parliamentarian, by the way? Do you remember?

KINNEAR: Mrs. Utter, she's dead now.

BURG: U-t-t-e-r.

KINNEAR: Yes.

BURG: And a Seattle woman I believe.

KINNEAR: Yes.



BURG: And if I remember correctly, somebody described her as being very good in her work.

KINNEAR: Very. She had given the parliamentary law classes for each legislature for, oh, I don't know, twenty, thirty years maybe.

BURG: So a woman who would probably be acceptable to the Taft forces too as someone just beyond challenge as far as ability was concerned.

KINNEAR: That's right.

BURG: Let me ask you this, were you sweating again at Spokane or did this one go in a little easier fashion for you?

KINNEAR: No, I wasn't, but I was prepared, that was the major difference. It was just as difficult but I was prepared for it.

BURG: I've heard some people in the Eisenhower camp say that certain things were done to see to it that the maximum physical discomfort occurred at the Spokane convention. It was in a hot part of the state. In fact, I believe I've been told that doors were closed so that the heat level would build up, and that by afternoon maximum discomfort was existing and the older Taft people, older Taft delegates, were so discomforted they tended to go. Do you recollect it as being that way?

KINNEAR: Well, let's say if anyone thought they were planning it, I knew nothing about it. But I would say absolutely, "no".


That had been planned in Spokane for long before. It was a matter of east-west side. It had been over on the west side the previous time, I've forgotten where. It was Bellingham the previous time; so the east-west shift was rather natural. It's the only hall that Spokane had at the time. It was a hot day, but you can't buy that. As far as windows being closed, I can remember very distinctly the fire escape exit off to one side of the platform being open and a lot of people wandering out there to get a breath of air occasionally. There were no effort to claim physical discomfort though a lot of people may have been physically discomforted. The only effort I do remember was a very positive one, which Eisenhower people were warned about the night before, to see that none of their people left before the end, which is typical of a state convention--people decide, well they don't need my vote; I'll head for home. I know my wife and I had something like eight or nine people sleeping on the floor in our hotel room that night. They had no place to go, and they had not planned to stay.

BURG: But they did stay on?

KINNEAR: Yes.

BURG: Would you describe the Eisenhower people as to age level, Mr. Kinnear? Or if, it helps, compare them with the Taft people, in a general sense?

KINNEAR: No, I can't excepting the leadership group in the Eisenhower area was definitely young, for the most part. Now this doesn't mean everybody like Walter Williams. By young, I mean I was one of the old men up around forty. But others, oh, people like Don Eastvold [Attorney General of Washington] who had turned sour too; he was the "young man with the book" you know at the '52 convention. There was another younger man, typical. But you had your Stew Oles on the other side, and there were younger people in Spokane that were on the other side. But the leadership of the Taft group started with the selection of Charley Paul, for instance. He naturally organized around himself the people that he knew best and had worked with. So that was a sort of a natural thing. I don't think it related particularly to a cross section of the public in this circumstance.



BURG: By the time you are in Spokane, were you personally happy with the choice of Eisenhower as a candidate?

KINNEAR: I, well, I would say, yes. I had no qualms although he still, in terms of whatever experience I had then, he still had not developed his program totally, but I was happy. Guessing backward now I think, probably my, let's say my satisfied judgment, rather than using the word happy, related more to my confidence in the men who were coming in around him.

BURG: Who would those men be, for example?

KINNEAR: Well, let's stick with [Henry Cabot] Lodge, I can't remember who all now was in there, but men that were his, let's say, type of thinking in the party. I've forgotten, Hugh Scott was there, wasn't he?

BURG: Yes, Scott.

KINNEAR: He was a man I knew personally quite well.

BURG: Of course, Ezra Taft Benson went on the cabinet, but would be perhaps one of the more conservative close advisers.



KINNEAR: Yeah, well, I didn't know him anyway. People like Scott whom I had opportunity to come know well and Lodge. No, I'd have to do some picking to go back, but I was relying on others very definitely because Eisenhower was just a personality without, well, none of us knew him. He had not been in politics; he didn't know his own political philosophy as such very well.

BURG: So with you it's safe perhaps to say that the man himself, you knew nothing bad about him. His reputation was good, and the reason you were content was to be found in the fact that his advisors were people that you knew and could respect.

KINNEAR: Well, that's putting it pretty strong because I go back to the point you made about Taft. Taft I felt was an extremely capable man. I was very much sold on him as a party leader. He was lacking in campaigning personality, a dry man, which was a problem; but I was deeply concerned about the type of people that surrounded him, starting right with our own state. As I said, I often declared then that, forgetting the question of election, if he were elected, that I feared for the party and the country because of the



bad judgment of the people that I saw and knew in the state of Washington around him, starting with the late Bill Howe in Spokane and others who, in my judgment, were dangerous. They were the type that ultimately extremed out in a John Birch area. And I'm overstating for some of these guys, but they were very close to them. The ultra-ultra anti-Communist who did actually see communism everywhere, branding other attitudes mere liberalism or mere socialism or communism, that kind of extremist. And I didn't want to see the party in the state work for that leadership. Any public leader, I don't care who he is, how able he is, when he goes into office has to recognize his team. They are his advisors; you can't bring in strangers in his organizational capacity and by-pass his own people; it's going to just be upside down. So I felt that Taft had put himself in a position with his hands being tied and not able to do his best, if you will. So, ergo, the reverse of the picture, seeing men in whom I had confidence centering around Eisenhower provided me with a contrasting confidence.

BURG: And you felt that Taft did not necessarily reflect all or indeed many of the things that his close supporters here--

KINNEAR: Absolutely not, absolutely not.

BURG:--reflected but you saw them going with him and point out quite rightly he could hardly be expected to deny the group.

KINNEAR: The outstanding evidence of that was the Taft-Wagner-Ellender Bill, and, I've forgotten the other one, but federal aid to education, both subjects of which are anathema to his supporters, these people I'm talking about. He had the vision to see the necessity for federal activity, and he was not an ultra-conservative. His people never understood.

BURG: Would you describe Barry Goldwater as standing further to the right than Robert Taft? Just a rough estimate for us.

KINNEAR: Yes, I would say so.



BURG: Which leads us to questions that we may ask later on too about still later campaigns. Well, now let me ask you this, Mr. Kinnear, once the convention has occurred, once Eisenhower has been given the candidacy at the national level, what was your estimation of the amount of help you now got from Taft Republicans in winning the election in November?

KINNEAR: Well, in winning the election I would doubt, now this is highly general, I can't remember the details, I would doubt that there was much. I think they voted Republican; I don't think there was a tendency to sit on their hands that some conservatives talked about in a more recent election. But that was a two-way situation because the Eisenhower people in the state were pretty cocky and pretty decided to run their own show. And they weren't insulting anybody, but they weren't really asking anybody in.

BURG: I see. So you think perhaps if there was any lack of Taft participation in the campaign, it might have been generated by the Eisenhower people themselves in their attitude.

KINNEAR: Pretty sure of it, yes.



BURG: Did you take an active part in the campaign yourself?

KINNEAR: Not heavily. Mort Prayn asked me to take on the very enjoyable position of handling all national speakers coming into the state, arrangements, advance, their personal, well, traveling with them personally in the state. Doing whatever was necessary. It was sort of a plush job and most enjoyable.

BURG: So you couldn't comment then as to how much money was made available by the Republican Central Committee for the campaign?

KINNEAR: I didn't know that side.

BURG: Ever hear anything much about that during the fight for the nomination in this state? See, I've heard that the Republican Central Committee was most niggardly to the Eisenhower crowd.

KINNEAR: No, you'd have to talk to Frayn about that. I may have known about it, but I wasn't sitting in on the executive committee; I wasn't worrying about it day by day. It was just casual information, and it just didn't stick with me.

BURG: May I assume that one of the men that you met as an important visitor of the state was the candidate himself?

KINNEAR: Not that year, no.



BURG: Not that year.

KINNEAR: My wife had a chance to meet him. When he came out, she went up to Everett and boarded the train, being the vice-chairman of

King County where he was speaking. I just stood with the crowd.

BURG: Do you remember her comments to you afterwards as to how she had been impressed by Mr. Eisenhower and by his wife?

KINNEAR: Of course, she was not one of the real VIPs, but she was very much impressed with him as a personality. But she didn't have more chance than that.

BURG: So the campaign was over, the election won. Did you have any contact--

KINNEAR: She found out right there how tough and difficult Ed Eisenhower was going to be.

BURG: Oh, did she? This was before the campaign really got going.

KINNEAR: In the parade in Seattle, she was stuck in a car with Ed and his ~~then~~ wife.

BURG: Lucy?

KINNEAR: Yes.



BURG: You shake your head--

KINNEAR: Well--

BURG:--your wife evidently remembers this--

KINNEAR:--I came to know them so much better afterwards. All she said at that time was they, well both of them, just bitching like hell the entire way up the street because they were put in the third car or fourth, I've forgotten which now, and they should have been up with the President.

BURG: I see. Now you had not known Edgar Eisenhower until about this--

KINNEAR: At that time I had not known him. He was an older lawyer than I, and I was too much younger to make--

BURG: And he was a Tacoma lawyer.



KINNEAR: Yes. And I came to know him very well afterwards.

BURG: Afterwards being four years afterwards or--

KINNEAR: Well, sometime during the four years. In 1956, it was the next election, the President was going to speak in

Tacoma and Art Langlie was going to introduce him. He was speaking in Seattle and then Tacoma. Ed Eisenhower said that, "My God, I asked my brother to come here, and I am going to run the show, and Langlie (who was then governor) can not be on the platform." And that's when I came to know him best. I'd met him before, but I had to go over there and talk him out of that. That was one of the toughest jobs I've ever had.

BURG: You were running the 1956 campaign?



KINNEAR: I was Republican State Chairman. I went over there with Eisenhower's advance man who was a fellow by the name of Hoagland from Boston and the Secret Service advance security man whose name I can't think of now, and that started in with Ed about one thirty. I told him, "We just can't leave here until he says, 'yes.'" And we talked until almost five o'clock. We went beyond five.

He kept saying, "No," and I kept coming back, and I wouldn't leave the office. He finally said, "Oh, hell." I've forgotten what all he said. "You talk too much; I maybe have to do that, but we'll talk to my partner." So he went into Chuck Hunter's office and brought him in and said,

"Well, I hope I never have to go to court against George. He's too tough to compete with." I finally got him to say, "O.K."

BURG: Your view being that the Republican governor in a Republican state, it was pretty vital to have him there.

KINNEAR: Well, my case was that you (Ed) just can't talk about this as your own. "This is your brother. But," I said, "Not just your brother, this is the President of the United States. That's what we're talking about, not the governor." I said, "You can not do this to the President of the United States. He has the privilege, and you have the responsibility, as well as the governor having a responsibility, to have the governor present in respect to the President." That was the thing.

