

CENTER FOR FLORIDA HISTORY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH: E. Snow Martin, Jr.
INTERVIEWER: James M. Denham
LOCATION: Lakeland, Florida
DATE: April 23, 2004

M=James M. Denham (Mike)
S=Snow Martin, Jr.

M: My name is James M. Denham and I am once again at the Law Office of Snow Martin, Jr., on Lake Morton. Today is April 23, and we are here to resume our conversations and oral histories of Mr. Martin's own political and business career, as well as the career of Lawton Chiles. Mr. Martin, you mentioned last time that you were Assistant Solicitor of the County Court of Polk County, is that correct?

S: Yeah, we had a two-tier prosecution system. We had the State's Attorney who, in this county, did only capital crimes, and the County Solicitor did everything down from capital crimes, all through the misdemeanors. And that's what the County Solicitor here did, and I worked for Jess Wilson who succeeded Cliff Kelly as County Solicitor. Jess Wilson went on to be a Circuit Judge.

M: How long had he been Solicitor by that time, do you remember?

S: I guess three years.

M: Three years? And that would have been about 19 -?

S: I'd have to look to tell you. It had to be in the 1960s.

M: Okay, early 1960s.

S: Because he was succeeded by Gordon McCalla and I continued to work for Gordon. But somewhere along the line I quit.

M: Now, was that an elected post, or was it appointed?

S: Yes, it was elected.

M: So assistants were elected.

S: No, assistants were appointed by the elected County Solicitor. Clint Curtis succeeded Jess Wilson! Not Gordon McCalla.

M: So he essentially hired you after he had been elected.

S: Yeah.

M: Had you known him before Law School?

S: Jess Wilson?

M: Yes.

S: He was my father's original law partner.

M: And how many years was that after you got out of Law School, was that pretty quick?

S: About two or three.

M: Just 2-3 years? Now, Sheriff of Polk County at that time was Monroe Brannen. Do you have any interesting recollections of his first couple of years in office? He was elected, I think, in 1960.

S: I remember him when he was a –

M: Constable?

S: Constable! Yeah, before that. Monroe Brannen was an absolutely totally fine person and law enforcement officer. He was one of these people that didn't know how to do anything wrong. He did not tolerate corruption or mistreatment of prisoners or the public. He was an ideal Sheriff.

M: And you had a chance to work with him very closely, I guess, during those years.

S: Pretty much, yeah.

M: Do you remember how many years you served in that capacity?

S: It must have been like five, I think.

M: Five years? In a job like that, were you able to also practice law privately?

S: It was part-time. It was only two days a week.

M: Two days a week. Two full days a week you'd go down to the office and do what you needed to do.

S: Sort of two full days. Sometimes it was more than two; sometimes it was less. Essentially it would work out to about two days a week.

M: Were there any judges that you worked with at that time you considered outstanding?

S: Well Judge Roy Amidon was Judge of the Criminal Court of Record. He was outstanding. As a matter of fact, he may have been the original Judge of the Criminal Court of Record. But he was a fine person. But that was the judge we dealt with most often because he was judge of our court, Judge Amidon.

M: Was Scott Kelly Mayor at that time or was he Mayor a little earlier? Did you ever interact with Scott Kelly during those years?

S: We always opposed Scott in his various political races, until he ran for Governor and then we supported him.

M: Now, would you include Lawton in that group too as far as support or opposition? Of course Lawton was in the legislature with him.

S: Well Lawton pretty well minded his own business. He did not get involved in other people's politics.

M: Even though they were from the same county, and in the same delegation for the county?

S: Yes. Mmhmm.

M: So would you summarize their relationship as cool?

S: Cordial.

M: Cordial. Not warm.

S: Well, not unwarm, but cordial.

M: Did Lawton have a friendship or an acquaintance with Clifton Kelly?

S: Oh sure. He didn't live here a lot.

M: So Lawton of course by that time is in the Florida Legislature, in the House first and then later in the Florida Senate, and he was practicing law with Ellsworth, Carr, and Sinder, and Miller.

S: Yeah, later on it became Bentley, Miller, Sinder, Carr, Chiles, and Ellsworth.

M: Okay, good.

S: But it started out Carr, Chiles, and Ellsworth.

M: Okay, we elected Lawton to the Senate last time. Do you remember any specific interaction you had with him other than just on a social basis with regard to any kind of Senate business that he did? Do you remember going to Washington?

S: No.

M: Did he ever consult with you on issues that were coming up in the Senate?

S: No. No he wouldn't have.

M: Do you remember his election campaign? It would have been, I guess, 1976.

S: I remember those, oh yeah.

M: Can we go into those a little bit? Were those memorable to you? Because we've obviously done the 1970 campaign.

S: I remember the headquarters was out on the north end of town.

M: 1976?

S: Yeah. And we did fundraising, Tampa distribution, things of that sort.

M: Can you walk me through the fundraising process? How was it organized? Were there committee members?

S: You were given an assigned list and you solicited contributions from them.

M: Call them up?

S: Yeah.

M: People that you knew.

S: Mhmm. Try to intimidate 'em. Whatever appeared appropriate at the moment.

M: Would you say that Lawton liked that kind of thing? Did he like fundraising?

S: No, he did not.

M: He did not like it.

S: That's why he left it to Jack Pridgen.

M: How did this work? I mean, ten dollars. You called people up. Did you call people up for ten-dollar contributions?

S: Sure.

M: Okay, just called people for ten dollars a pop. A hundred phone calls is a thousand dollars, that kind of thing.

S: Mhmm. Well, it gave people an interest in voting and encouraging others to vote. I mean the small contributions also tended to generate other small contributions and indicated that Chiles was something other than an aristocrat.

M: Now, he obviously didn't go from Century to Key Largo in the next race or in the race after that, but he probably did some walking anyway in those campaigns, didn't he?

S: Yes, always.

M: Do you remember any specific instances that stick out in your mind either in that 1976 campaign or the 1982 campaign? Well, there were only two other campaigns.

S: Not really. They were successful.

M: What kind of impact do you think that Lawton being in the Senate of the United States had for Polk County, had also for Lakeland?

S: Well, you know, having had two United States Senators within the same century is a real achievement.

M: Really three if you talk about Park Trammell.

S: That's true. It's a real achievement for a town, a community of this size. It's just a good thing to have, you know, a United States Senator from down the street type thing.

M: Did you feel like you could call him any old time?

S: Yes.

M: Obviously you wouldn't call him all the time for any old thing.

S: Well, I didn't.

M: But you didn't have any concern at all. Was it easy for you to get through if you wanted to call him in Washington?

S: If I wanted to talk to him about anything, I got the phone number from Ellsworth, 'cause Ellsworth had the home phone. I think I had the home phone number too, but I was afraid of losing it. So when I had something I wanted to say, I would call the house and talk to him.

M: Did Lawton live in Lakeland the whole time he was in the Senate, or did he move, or how often did he stay here?

S: He lived on Coventry for a long while and he lived on Lake Hollingsworth for a while, and the time of the moving from each of those I'm not sure. There came a time when he didn't have a house here. I think his residence other than Tallahassee would have been Anna Maria, I think.

M: As a U.S. Senator, he obviously had an impact or involvement in appointing Federal officials, probably in Florida, that were appointed.

S: Yes.

M: Certainly judges, maybe prosecutors, those two primarily. Did he ever consult with you on any of those appointments as far as the fitness for those individuals that he was involved in appointing?

S: No.

M: Can you remember any of the people that he appointed?

S: Yeah, he appointed George Carr.

M: Can you reflect on that a little bit? Was that something that kind of raised some eyebrows?

S: Initially yes, but George Carr turned out to be one of our absolute very best Federal judges ever because he was diligent.

M: How much of a role do you think Lawton played in that?

S: In George being appointed?

M: Right.

S: 100%.

M: 100%.

S: Oh yeah, sure.

M: When he appointed Mr. Carr, do you think there were some hard feelings at all with regard to Peterson? Do you think Peterson wanted the position?

S: No.

M: No.

S: He would have preferred George to have it. As a matter of fact, he and George were practicing law together at that time.

M: Do you think that Lawton and George, obviously he's a Federal Judge and Lawton is a Senator, do you think their relationship changed at all after he became a judge, or do you think they still were on a very, very strong, positive, cordial and also social relationship?

S: Oh, I'm sure they were. There was no reason for them not to have been.

M: Do you remember if there were any, I'm trying to get some basic information about George so that I can ask his former wife some things, do you think that George enjoyed the bench?

S: Oh immensely. Yeah.

M: And he was on the bench from about 1972 up until the time he passed away, was he on the bench when he passed away or had he retired?

S: Yes [he was on the bench]. My sister worked for him. She went to Stetson and she worked for George, Cecelia Moore.

M: Was she a clerk?

S: Yep. When she was in school.

M: Oh that's right, you told me about her. Good. And he practiced right down, or rather he was –

S: On Lime.

M: On Lime Street, okay.

S: Initially they were in the basement of the Thelma Hotel.

M: Even as Judge?

S: Oh, no, no, no, no, no. When he was appointed Judge, he was in the Peterson Firm on Lime Street.

M: Did Lawton ever talk to you about Bob Graham during your conversations?

S: No, I knew Bob Graham independently of Lawton.

M: What do you think [Lawton's] thoughts on Bob Graham were? Do you think they worked together pretty well?

S: Well Bob Graham and Lawton Chiles were the same kind of persons. They're both just good guys, really. There was every reason to know that that pair always functioned well together.

M: By the time we get up into 1976, which is the second campaign that Lawton would have to run, that was the year, of course, Jimmy Carter was elected –

S: Right.

M: Do you think that, well he obviously would have supported Carter since he was a Democrat, but do you think he had any other feelings about Carter's candidacy or his Presidency that he ever shared with you? And feel free to speculate on that if you'd like, even if he didn't say it for sure.

S: I can't imagine that he would have any real intellectual difficulty with Jimmy Carter, frankly. They probably shared a lot of the same views.

M: Do you remember anything about that 1976 campaign that sticks out in your mind?

S: Other than Carter winning, you mean?

M: Other than Carter winning, I guess Lawton's campaign for the Senate.

S: Whom did Chiles run against in 1976?

M: I think it was Van Poole perhaps, or was that 1982?

S: Well in 1976, whoever it was was a nonentity I remember that. It was a shoo-in.

M: By 1982, his next election, he had become quite well respected in the Senate and of course was very much involved in the Budget Committee and I think it was in 1984 that he actually made a bid for the leadership against Senator Byrd. Do you remember any of those incidents, or did you follow that in the newspaper? Or did you ask about him?

S: Just in the newspaper.

M: Now 1984, when he lost that bid for the leadership and then he was on the Budget Committee, by that time President Reagan had been elected in 1980. Do you remember if he had any specific feelings about President Reagan that he ever expressed with you?

S: No.

M: Obviously he was involved in the budget difficulties, and of course we were running very, very large deficits. Would you consider Lawton kind of a deficit hawk or kind of a fiscal conservative?

S: I would judge him to be conservative really.

M: Fiscal conservative.

S: Mmhmm.

M: That was the time when everything was changing. Democrats were losing gas, losing steam, and everybody was turning Republican in this area particularly. Did he ever express frustration with that or did he ever talk about it openly with you?

S: No.

M: Do you think he was frustrated with the fact that a lot of this was happening in the south particularly?

S: I'm sure he would have been, really.

M: Can you summarize your own business activities during the 1980s, I guess? Was your practice changing at all? What were some of your business activities at that time?

S: In the late 1960s through the mid 1970s, I was in the condominium business. I maintained a law office. I was there periodically but for the most part, I was involved in developing condominiums in Venice and in Long Boat Key, successfully I might add. Then along comes the gas crisis in the mid 1970s and the second home business went straight into the tank. I then went back to practicing law full-time, but I did so after deciding that the best way for me to do it was to answer all my clients phone calls and turn their business out without them having to call and ask me about it. The trade-off for that was that I didn't have to wear a coat and tie. I instituted that and I had a tremendously successful 25, 30 years. It worked out well.

M: So you didn't have to go to court?

S: When I went to the courthouse, my client was in danger, 'cause I didn't know what the hell I was doing. But I knew that so I didn't. No, I've been in the transactional business, oh

really since the early 1980s. It's either been television stations or it's been radio stations. I've done Walgreens, apartment complexes, office buildings you name it.

M: Primarily sales transactions?

S: All sales transactions. I've represented both the seller, the buyer, whatever it happened to be at the time. But I've done transactions all over the southeast.

M: Was politics something you were interested in, read about, or actively engaged in? Or would you say that most of your interest in politics was Lawton-driven?

S: In recent years, I've viewed politics as somewhat of a comedy play-out. I mean, the more things change, the more they stay the same. It's the same old stuff, it's got different names and different players, but it's essentially the same. We've got a war going on in Iraq, it's just like the one we had going on in Viet Nam, just like the one we had going on in Korea. You know, we shouldn't have done it; we did it, now how the hell do we get the hell out of there. It's the same stuff, you know, nothing changes, really and truly.

M: Well, we're moving now to the end of Lawton's career in the Senate. Did you have any sense that he was becoming really disenchanted with the Senate, after just casual interaction with him, maybe at a session or in conversations with him?

S: Yeah, I would think so, that enough had gotten to be enough. Chiles, I guess, like a lot of people in that era, thought he could do some good and make some changes, but changes are not inevitable. They're anything but.

M: Did he ever mention to you people that he really enjoyed working with in the Senate? Or do you have any speculation about who some of his favorites might have been?

S: Not really.

M: What do you think he liked best about being a Senator?

S: I don't know.

M: I guess that would be a question that would go to the whole notion of why he liked being in politics, almost. Maybe he just liked the interaction with people.

S: I just, I don't know. I don't know what ever got him into politics. Very frankly, it was probably more Rhea's fault than his. That would be my guess.

M: As far as his Senate career, do you think Rhea was involved in that even out of the elections?

S: Certainly.

M: Do you think he consulted with Rhea about issues, daily?

S: Whether he wanted to or not. And I don't say that critically, because she's extremely intelligent and Chiles not being stupid would listen to what she had to say about any issue.

M: Did she ever try to get you to help her with establishing the Florida House?

S: Oh, she had Sarah MacKay beat all of us up a lot. Yeah. Sure. Sarah's another one of those people you cannot say no to. Yeah, we all got involved in the Florida House.

M: Were you surprised when you heard he wasn't going to run again?

S: No. Enough's enough.

M: What did you think when he left? What did you think he was going to do? Thinking back on things, did you think 'well okay Lawton's had the 18 years in the Senate'?

S: I thought he was going to live at the beach and enjoy it, honestly.

M: Did you look forward, maybe, to being with him a little more and doing some fun stuff together?

S: Or seeing him down there, you know. 'Cause see all the Lakeland guys hang out at the beach in the summertime.

M: Were you surprised when you found out he was going to run for Governor?

S: No.

M: When was the first time you heard he was going to do it?

S: At lunch one day.

M: Did he ever tell you before it was announced?

S: Yeah. Ellsworth and I had lunch with him and he told us. I think he'd already told Ellsworth. Then he told me the same thing pretty much.

M: Did he express any specific disappointment or frustration with the current administration, with Martinez?

S: No, he just wanted to do it, you know.

M: Yeah, he thought he could do a better job with it.

S: Yeah, yeah. I think they would've knocked him off quite handily. Martinez shouldn't have been there. I mean, he's a good guy, but he was very successful in the restaurant business in Tampa and he should've stayed there, really and truly. He and his wife had a delightful restaurant.

M: Now what restaurant was that again? That wasn't the Valencia Garden was it?

S: No, I can take you to the spot, but I can't tell you the name of it. I mean I could drive you straight there.

M: Yeah, it wasn't the Valencia Garden, though, was it?

S: No. No.

M: Okay, I've always suspected that was it.

S: That's another long-time Spanish place.

M: Is that restaurant still going?

S: Valencia Gardens?

M: No, his, Martinez's.

S: No.

M: They just broke the whole thing up?

S: Well, it had another name later on and I think it may have just disappeared.

M: Did you support Governor Martinez when he ran for Governor?

S: No.

M: Let's go back to that campaign. What did you think about the rumors, first, and then the information from Lawton himself that he was being treated for depression? Did you have any thoughts on that?

S: No. I mean it's understandable.

M: Do you remember how that played out in the campaign?

S: I don't think it was a real issue.

M: Probably because he addressed it forthrightly –

S: Dealt with it.

M: And then that was it.

S: Yeah.

M: What was the thinking here in Lakeland, if you had to go back to that summer of 1990? Were they saying 'well the old man is going to try to do this, he's got this ego trip' or was it 'alright, Lawton's getting back into politics'? Was there a general opinion here in Lakeland about it?

S: Well, I think everyone was delighted to see him get back in, yeah.

M: Were there those who said he ought to just give it up and not do any of this?

S: Not that I knew.

M: By that time in 1990, Lakeland and Polk County was really going Republican. Did Lawton have any difficulty getting his old base back together with campaign contributions or support?

S: Half of his friends and supporters were Republicans. I've been a Republican forever; just never have voted for one. Well, that's not true, I have. But essentially I've voted Democrat.

M: Well you must not be voting then at all now if you haven't voted for one, 'cause you might as well just lay out altogether, 'cause there's no Democrats to even vote for anymore.

S: Tell me about it. You know, when I registered Republican, what was so unusual, it came from a drunken bet frankly. A friend of mine had bet one another we wouldn't show up the next morning and register Republican. And at nine o'clock, we were there and we registered Republican.

M: Do you remember what year that was?

S: I don't know, we were on the front page of *The Ledger* it was so rare. It was something else. Teach you not to drink and make bets.

M: It must have been a pretty exciting summer with Lawton.

S: Oh yeah, sure.

M: Did you ever go to any of the campaign events?

S: Yes.

M: Rallies?

S: Yes.

M: Did you go out of the county for any?

S: I went to one in Brooksville, for example, and places like that.

M: Can you comment on Buddy MacKay's activities or involvement in the campaign? Do you know Buddy MacKay?

S: I roomed with Buddy MacKay at the Key Club Convention in Washington, D.C., in 1950, okay? Do I know Buddy MacKay? Yes.

M: How come we hadn't talked about this before?

S: Quite by accident.

M: Can we please go into some of this a little bit?

S: We ended up in adjoining rooms at the Key Club International Convention in Washington. His brother, George, was with him. But I've known Buddy MacKay since high school and

there never has been any finer person than Buddy. He was an ideal match for Lawton. I mean they were alike.

M: You would have been at UF at that time, in 1950?

S: Hell I was in high school.

M: Wow, high school you met Buddy. What about college? Did you know Buddy in college?

S: Yeah, sure.

M: In Law School too?

S: In college, I don't remember in Law School. See a lot of the guys went off into the service. I didn't. And I probably got out of Law School before Buddy did.

M: Can you summarize Buddy's involvement in that campaign? Do you remember anything specifically that you could comment on that would once again indicate that he was the right guy for Lawton in this –

S: Well he and Chiles campaigned independently, I mean, they didn't go together. And Buddy worked the areas of the State in which he had the greatest response, potential response, and Chiles worked the Miami Gold Coast area himself because that's where he had the best contacts. And they made a tremendous team because obviously they won.

M: Would you say that Rhea and Anne were close as far as collaborators? Did they get along pretty well?

S: I don't know enough about that to say. I can't imagine that they weren't.

M: Were there any people besides Buddy MacKay in that campaign in 1990, old legislators, friends that really stick out in terms of helping campaign? Let's begin with former legislators that they would have worked with. Were there any other really diehard, you know, out front tigers in a room full of tabby cats, let's say, that would have really been out there campaigning for Lawton and Buddy MacKay in 1990?

S: I don't recall any specific ones.

M: What about in the business community here in Lakeland or in the State? Were there any primary fundraisers that Lawton would have been able to call on, let's say in Miami?

S: There again, Chiles has always run these low-budget things, so he would not have gone after the major contributors. Now see Ellsworth will know more about that than anyone else 'cause he's always been in charge of finances for Chiles since day one, and he's provided for him quite nicely.

M: Okay. He ran against Martinez and they beat Martinez. Do you know Allison DeFoor?

S: I know who he is.

M: You don't really know him other than the fact that he ran as Martinez's running mate?

S: That's about all I know about him.

M: Okay.

S: That's all anyone knows about him.

M: Okay. Did you go to the inauguration?

S: No.

M: Can you remember anything specifically that happened in that first term? Were there any crises or instances that you can remember in those first four years?

S: No. He appointed my sister Circuit Judge, but I wouldn't judge that to be a crisis. She happened to be the best qualified.

M: Can we go into some of that? I know that here in Polk County, for example, there was some difficulty with a Sheriff we had, Dan Daniels, and I think Lawton removed him or had to place someone in his place, and that was Crow. Can you remember that situation?

S: I remember that happening, yes.

M: Do you remember anything relevant to it that sticks out in your mind?

S: Well it was something that had to happen because Lawrence Crow has then and now made a good Sheriff, there's no question about it.

M: The Tobacco Litigation of course didn't really kick in until the second term, and he was re-elected of course in 1994. Can you remember that campaign?

S: Who was the opponent?

M: Jeb Bush. On the first time around. Did you go to the Politics in the Park in 1994 when he was here?

S: Oh, I'm sure I did.

M: Do you remember the debate that they had in Orlando, the he-coon remark?

S: Yes.

M: How that struck you?

S: Yes. That was not the first time he'd used that term.

M: What popped into your mind when you heard that?

S: Chiles.

M: Vintage Chiles?

S: Yep. That's Chiles.

M: Did you think 'he's really hit a homerun, he's hit it out of the ball park'?

S: Well we didn't know until later and then we realized he had.

M: Did he use those phrases all the time?

S: Things like that.

M: In private, not just for public consumption, but in private?

S: Not on an ongoing basis, I don't think he made that distinction between public and private.

M: So he used that phrase before?

S: Mmhmm.

M: That was a phrase that you were familiar with that he had used before.

S: Mmhmm. And you can see how it sticks.

M: Okay. You said the other day that you didn't hunt. Do you remember, even though you didn't hunt with him, any of his hunting partners? I think I asked you about that the other day.

S: My only recollection of all that is one day in the back end of the ATO House, they were cleaning the dove they had shot, and they would clean 'em by first ripping the head off, and I had never been much of a hunter, but that absolutely solidified it forever, watching those dove have their heads ripped off. And it was Chiles and four or five guys from the Fraternity House. I don't know who all else was there. Richard Keating was probably there; he was a Circuit Judge in Orlando before he died. Bill Vines was probably there, an architect from Winter Park. But no, and I know Chiles hunted frequently, I just never could bring myself to fire a gun at something that was alive.

M: So you wouldn't really have known whom he would have gone hunting with, say in the 1970s or 1980s or 1990s really?

S: No. Burke Kibler down there on the ranch. Jim Walter.

M: Is Jim Walter still alive?

S: No.

M: In your legal opinion, you're obviously a lawyer and knowledgeable about these things, what was your thinking about the Tobacco Litigation, when you first heard that they were going to pursue this Tobacco Litigation against the tobacco companies?

S: Well, being a reformed smoker, I was all for it.

M: You were for it basically as a policy then?

S: Mhmm. Still am.

M: What was your thinking about the legal merits of the case, based on the way they were going to approach this?

S: I thought it was well structured, and obviously it was.

M: Did you know any of the lawyers that were involved in that litigation?

S: Yeah.

M: Can you comment on some of them?

S: Got a Law School's named for them.

M: Levin.

S: Levin. Which I thought was a mistake, naming a Law School for him for ten million dollars. Holland and Knight have paid fifty.

M: That's Spessard Holland.

S: And no one should have their name on it. We're going to get to the point in this world if we're not careful we're going to be naming toilet seats. . . It's next. This naming thing has gone berserk.

M: So, were you surprised that they won the tobacco litigation?

S: The Tobacco Litigation?

M: Yeah.

S: No.

M: Even with all of the years and years and years of this kind of thing being attempted and for years and years and years the courts really –

S: The time had come for it.

M: So it was basically a timing kind of thing.

S: Yeah. I mean the capacity to pretend that smoking was good had been diminished to the point where a lawsuit was timely and appropriate.

M: Can you comment on any of his other appointments to the bench? He appointed lots and lots of State judges. Can you comment on the quality of those appointments?

S: Other than a generality, Chiles would not have appointed anyone who was not qualified. Now when I say qualified, I'm talking about qualified intellectually. In addition to that, I

suspect, as with any governor, you had to be qualified politically also, although I'm sure there were judges appointed who had absolutely zero political involvement with any of it. But things being what they are, if you've got friends that are qualified, you're going to appoint the friends first. I don't know of any nincompoops that were appointed.

M: I know this is probably just off the wall here, but who were some of the best that you can remember as far as the best appointees, just on your own opinions?

S: I'm not sure I can give you a name specifically.

M: Or were there any that you said 'oh wow I'm sure surprised about that one'?

S: No. No. You've got to remember that my involvement with things judicial has been minimal since the early 1980s, so that if I went into the courthouse now, I'd get lost real easily. My courthousing was all in the old courthouse.

M: Well, we've basically kind of run through pretty much everything. I don't want to take up much more of your time. Is there anything that you'd like to reflect on either overall personally or whatever about Lawton, your friendship with Lawton, or any memories you've had since he died?

S: Well, he was the sort that just doesn't come along every day. I mean, I told you the first time we met that I met him in second grade and I bonded with him at that point and held him in high regard from that point on. There was never anything he did that diminished my regard for him, my appreciation of him. And I'm not just saying that to be nice because when someone's an asshole, I'll say that very quickly, but Chiles just was a constant sort of good guy, really and truly. You could count on him. He was dependable. When the time came to show, he showed. He was that sort of guy. He wasn't the smartest, the sharpest knife in the deck, but hey, who is? You know.

M: So his strengths would have been his personality –

S: His character.

M: His character.

S: Yes. Yes. Chiles was smart enough not to ever be dishonest. And that's an achievement. 'Cause most people think they can devious around and do this and that and the other, and Chiles knew he couldn't and never did.

M: Thinking back on things, what would you attribute that to, some innate notion of right and wrong, or was it his upbringing or his surroundings?

S: I'm told that moral sense somehow or another is involved genetically. Although it is not an inherited characteristic, a lack of moral sense is one of the helixes in the x-chromosome drops down a little bit. It gets complicated as hell, but some people are innately dishonest and others are without, or intuitively honest, and he was one of those. There are some people in this world who would rather lie, cheat, and steal, not because they want to, they just feel like they're almost compelled to. I'll withhold on those names for the time being.

No one could ever, ever, ever, ever say that Chiles was an asshole, okay? Never, did he engage in the conduct that would have earned that epitaph. That's probably more than you want to know.

M: Do you think that he got this sense from his mother, his father, his relatives?

S: All of the above, 'cause his sister was the same way. He has a cousin named Alfred who's the same way. They're just good, decent, honest folks, really.

M: Okay. Are there any people that you would recommend, have I shown you my list yet?

S: Have you talked to Bud?

M: Oh yeah.

S: How about Ed?

M: Oh yeah.

M: I haven't done the interviews yet but I've spoken to them on the phone and that is on the

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