

## **CENTER FOR FLORIDA HISTORY ORAL HISTORY PROGRAMS**

**INTERVIEW WITH: D. BURKE KIBLER**

**INTERVIEWER: JAMES M. DENHAM**

**PLACE: LAKELAND, FLORIDA**

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**D= JAMES M. DENHAM ("MIKE")**

**K= D. BURKE KIBLER**

Transcribed by Adrienne T. Southerland

D: This is March 31st and we're here to resume our interviews at Mr. Burke Kibler's law office at Holland and Knight in Lakeland. Today, Burke, we, last time we talked a little bit about the events of Lawton Chiles' first campaign for election and also we were just about to talk about the formation, on a parallel line, about ready to talk about the formation of Holland and Knight as we know it today in Bartow, and I think I'd like to start there, if you don't mind?

K: Surely.

D: Can you walk us through your decision and also thought process in the formation of Holland and Knight law firm down in Bartow as it was formed and as your involvement in the firm began?

K: Well, I think I had perhaps mentioned earlier that Spessard Holland started practicing in Bartow about the time of the first World War, either just before or just afterwards, and he had, he was a County Judge during that period of time and was elected to the State Senate all before he ran for Governor in 1940 but he had, his long-term law partner, was William F. Bevis and he, by the time I knew of the firm, really, it was Holland, Bevis, and McRea. The McRea, as I mentioned earlier, was Bill McRea, who was a distinguished and brilliant lawyer and had been a Rhodes scholar, he had been on Hap Arnold's staff during World War II, and he was a full colonel. He may have been a brigadier general at the end but, in any event, he, was a fine academician. He taught some and then Bill had ambitions for the judiciary and was the first federal judicial appointment of Jack Kennedy in 1961, so the firm, when I became involved with it, which was January of 1964, was named, had been named, Holland, Bevis, and McRea, but immediately prior to that it was Holland, Bevis, McRea, and Smith. Oh, I misspoke, it was, when I became involved it was Holland, Bevis, and Smith. Bill McRea's name was dropped when he joined the federal bench, and the firm was about 12 lawyers in 1964. Chesterfield Smith, who, I mentioned, who had grown up in Arcadia and practiced law there several years after he got out of the university in the late 40's, and he had built the firm. He became the Managing Partner of the firm after just being there a couple of years. He just was a natural leader and took it over. He and I had become pretty good friends and he talked to me about perhaps joining with him rather than building the firm that Mr. Bryant, my

father-in-law and I, had. He had had a partner and then his partner's son, Snow Martin and Snow Martin, Jr., and they left in '62, I think it was, and formed their own firm, and that left the two of us when we re-formed which had been Bryant, Martin, and Kibler, into Bryant and Kibler. Mr. Bryant was, at that time, in his seventies, and he, thought seriously about it, decided that he just would phase out his practice. It took a long time because he stayed active up until his nineties. But I joined, with his blessing and encouragement, joined with Chesterfield in 1964. I was either the twelfth or the thirteenth lawyer, I can't remember which, and we joined forces in a lot of common industry-type representation. My father had been involved in the phosphate industry and I had a lot of contacts there, and I represented two of the major phosphate companies. There were a lot more then than there are now. There are only about four or five that are actually active in the phosphate industry now. There were 15 or so then. And Chesterfield had been representing most of the others, some historical, some that he had acquired, and so we combined the representations and, from that point on, we had plans to expand and we knew that a firm that was becoming a specialist firm as we were then, had to have a broader base than just phosphate. At one time, 60-70% of our annual billings would be directly attributable to phosphate and so we went to Tallahassee and we also went to Tampa. It was a natural merging of a firm in Tampa that had represented the Tampa Electric Company and then was Exchange National Bank, which was the predecessor bank in Florida to what is now Bank of America. And the name of that firm was Knight, Jones, Whittaker, and Germany, and by that time, our firm was Holland, Bevis, Smith, Kibler, and Hall; and we dropped all the names except the Holland name and the Knight name and it became Holland and Knight. That was about 1967 or '68, '67 I think is when we did that, it may have been '68, and we kept that name; we institutionalized then and so we've never changed the name. The firm has grown from the time we were probably 25 lawyers when we put the two together – maybe 30 – and we've grown to, now it's something like over 1200, I think. But, did I give you enough on this or do you want some more detail?

D: Yes, yes, you even went into some of my follow-up questions in the process.

K: Ok. I tend to do that.

D: OK, so it sounds like, that when you joined with Chesterfield that his law firm that he had basically begun to manage was really poised to really expand and grow dramatically with things. So, your father-in-law was all for you doing this?

K: Yes, yes, yes, he...

D: He was very supportive of this?

K: He was supportive. I was always a little saddened that he did not come along. He would have enjoyed it very much. He loved young lawyers and he had a lot to offer but he decided that he just, that at that point in time he would not want to undertake a lot of the things that were involved. Well, part of it was kind of the bureaucracy of, as you get bigger, that just is there inevitably.

D: Yeah. It must have been very difficult for you to leave the firm – your father-in-law's firm. What was – let's see, that would have been in the - that would have been near Senator Holland's, an election for him, he would have run for the Senate in '64, I guess –

again, and gotten it. What was his role in the firm at that time? Was he a silent partner, would you say, or was he an actively involved individual?

K: Well, he was what we called a Class A partner – that's the status that I'm in now – but back at that time, members of Congress could be a member of a law firm and they separated out and didn't do work that had to do with their, you know, that the congressional duties would conflict with, or they couldn't represent anyone before the Congress, that sort of thing, of course, but the Senator had a very, very precise and high ethical standard. He wouldn't be involved in any practice of law at all; he felt it was just, while he was in the Senate the practice of law was something he should not be involved in, other than just lending his name to the firm that he had been maintained, and he was paid a small retainer. The Senator – we kept anything that was involved in the federal work, monies earned there, didn't go into the retainer the Senator got, but...

D: Did you have a shareholder situation too, with regard to profits, etc?

K: Well, we were not then, and are not now, a PA. We've always been a partnership.

D: OK.

K: And we are a Limited Liability Partnership now but the Senator – in answering your question more directly – he always had an office when he would come back to it but he didn't spend much time there because he was consumed with his senatorial duties and he was a very prominent Senator. He lived in Bartow; he loved Bartow; and he planned, when he retired from the Senate, to come back to the firm and be fulltime in the sense that that would be what he would do. That didn't mean that he was going to go trying lawsuits again or represent people in land transactions. He wanted to write and he wanted to work with young lawyers. Those are the areas that he had great interest in and the Senator, sadly, I guess, though, when he came back to us after the first part of 1971, after the election his term ended in, of course of, I guess, January of '71, and he, we had refurbished an office for him, it wasn't quite ready then, but we had it real nice, as he wanted it, in Bartow. He would not have thought of going anywhere else; he would have – Bartow was a very special place to him. And, as I think I mentioned earlier, he died – had a heart attack – while he was listening to a University of Florida football game in, I think, in November of '71, and he had a – I guess he knew that he'd had some heart problems but he didn't really – and that perhaps influenced to some extent – his decision not to run. I don't really know. Conversations with Chesterfield could give you greater insight into that, but...

D: I'd like to do that at some point perhaps. Maybe we could talk about how we could...

K: But the Senator was a very important part of the firm. I mean, he – it was – and he took great pride in the firm and all of the things we did. Chesterfield would always talk to the Senator about it, like when we changed the name of the firm from Holland, Bevis, Smith, Kibler, and Hall - didn't add names but became a new name. That was something that he – I don't know that you would have said he would have had a veto – bit probably he would have – but he didn't really approach things that way. But he was interested in it and he would make suggestions and he was also a little saddened that he had thought maybe Mr. Bryant would come with the firm. One of the things – just an aside – that may be a – although we didn't have to resolve it, but, is to whose name would have come first because Mr. Bryant and Senator Holland were lifelong friends and

Mr. Bryant had a year or two seniority in law, and Mr. Bryant, I think, if it got to it, I mean, he would have expected his name to be first, and frankly, I think the Senator would have agreed to that.

D: In those very early years, when you were with the firm, can you name some of the, maybe, let's say, three or four people that come to mind that you were working very closely with, besides Chesterfield, in those early years?

K: Well, there are some of us still there. Steve Grimes, who was – went on to the District Court of Appeal and then on the Supreme Court, and then, when he retired – mandatory retirement after 70 from the Supreme Court, he has been back with us now for five or six years.

D: Is he in Miami now?

K: No, he's in Tallahassee.

D: Tallahassee, that's right.

K: And he just received the award we give annually to a lawyer in the firm we think most represents the values of Holland and Knight, the Chesterfield Smith Award, and Steve received that this last, last month, in fact, at our Annual Partner's Meeting. Henry Kittleson, who is here in the office – he was one of those who was there from the beginning and is still with us. Bill Henry, who lived in Bartow for many years, he's still with us. He's in the Orlando office now but he comes back and spends some time in the Lakeland office. Some others that were there were Wofford Stidham, who was with the firm up until, maybe 12, 14 years ago, when he left, and he practices – he's pretty nearly retired now – he practices with his son; he's got two boys, John Stidham and Jeff. Jeff is with the Tampa Tribune and John is a prominent lawyer in – trial lawyer – in Bartow.

D: Now, Wofford, I think I may have met – big guy?

K: Yeah, big guy.

D: Yeah, yeah, I've met him.

K: He always needed to lose weight.

D: Yeah, I've met him, I think, in Bartow, yeah. There's a group of fellas that uh, (ring in background) I'll pause it, okay? Now, was – it was Homer Hooks a practicing lawyer or was he just an affiliate?

K: Homer's not a lawyer. Homer was a journalist.

D: A journalist, OK.

K: He worked for the *Tampa Tribune* when he first got out of school. Homer may have gotten his degree – I think he did – before he went into the service. I believe he got it and he was in the Infantry, a platoon leader, and he came back and then he worked for the *Tribune* and then he worked for various citrus companies for a while and ended up being General Manager of the Florida Citrus Commission and then he was recruited,

really, by Chesterfield and me, to come and help form the first formalized Trade Association for the Florida Phosphate industry, which was called the Florida Phosphate Council.

D: Can you remember when that all happened?

K: About – it was – I was General Counsel for the Florida Citrus Commission from 1961 to 1965 – that was period that Farris Bryant was Governor.

D: And that would have overlapped with both of your firms then, I guess?

K: It did, it did – and I became – and then Homer, it was probably 1967 or '68, I think, that Homer - when the Council was formed and Homer became its first, we called it, I think, Executive Director, and later the title was changed to being President; that was just the fashion in trade associations to use the term – and he was there until he became 65 – and he, Homer is now – he just had his 82<sup>nd</sup> birthday – and so that would have been, what, 17 years ago. So, that's how long he's been retired from the – so we could subtract '72 from '93 and get pretty much the date.

D: So, certainly, phosphate in the early years was your major – and citrus – were your major clients, then, there. Or would you say phosphate even trumped citrus?

K: Well, well, phosphate is from a client base – of course, I had – the firm represented some important citrus interests but the – and they did some litigation things of that sort, for people in the citrus industry, but citrus wasn't organized in the same way the phosphate industry was. Phosphate was concentrated and very capital intensive; had a lot of problems that they tended to solve together. Citrus was bigger in many ways – more dollar volume – and it was scattered all over the citrus-growing area of the state, not just – even though Polk County was the largest producing county in the state. They were not similar as far as the legal opportunities and the representation the firm had in it. Phosphate was a much broader base as far as the firm. But they – but we did a lot of work for the citrus industry – I was – being General Counsel for the state job – that really denied you the ability to represent during that period of time companies that appeared before, so it wasn't something that at the time promoted the sort of representation – though later on, many people that wanted you because of your experience, like somebody working for the Internal Revenue Service – people that would have tax problems would come to them after they left the Internal Revenue Service.

D: Right. So, so that was a state job that you held then as...

K: The only state job I've ever held, I guess, was for the – was representing the citrus industry.

D: OK, and that was all...

K: It's now the Department of Citrus – this was before the re-organization and it was just, it was a state agency then – the Florida Citrus Commission – and it has essentially the same functions...

D: Was it centered in Tallahassee or was it...?

K: Oh no, it was always, always headquartered in Lakeland.

D: In Lakeland.

K: And it worked in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture...

D: OK, that's what I was thinking...

K: But it was a separate agency – it wasn't under the Department of Agriculture though - it was, in many regulatory matters the Department of Agriculture would have jurisdiction. This was all determined...

D: Was that an appointment by...

K: The Commission itself – the Commission was the same size, I guess it is now – I think there were 12 members...

D: But were you appointed by the Governor or...

K: and, well, the Governor appoints the Commission – they served – I guess it was three-year terms, four appointed each year, I believe – and the Commission would select their attorney.

D: OK, so that's...

K: So it had political implications, obviously because the Governor – and it has been one of those just historically sort of when Governors changed, the attorney for the Commission would change and I think to this day that's still to some extent true but it's so much larger now that – I was the only – I did all the legal work – they didn't have an in-house counsel at that time. Now, they've got a – I think, two or three lawyers that work for the Commission itself.

D: OK. What I'd like to do now is switch a little bit in course and go back to Lawton Chiles. I have here that he was elected to the House in '59 and, back then, biennial sessions, of course, '59, '61, '63, '65, and then an executive or an extra session in 1966, and also elected to the Senate in 1966...

K: The State Senate.

D: Right, State Senate – Senate District 26, and I'll go back, obviously, and get all the geographical parameters of when and how that applied. Can you remember – and then he served, of course, in '67, '68, and '69, and then '70 when he ran for the Washington Senate – U.S. Senate. Can you remember any of the major issues that you lobbied him on regarding phosphate, cattle, or any other issues that were important for your clients? Do you remember any of that kind of interaction with him on that level? Maybe walk us through the process of what it would be like to be in your position and to have a relationship with the local Polk County delegation?

K: Well, during the period that I represented – was the lawyer for the Florida Citrus Commission – one of my jobs, I discovered, was being responsible for the drafting of the legislation that the industry would agree upon – the canners and the growers all together

– and then present that to the legislature and, in effect, help, together with the people – Homer and the staff they had - in getting this through the legislature. And in doing that, I spent a great deal of time – I had never lobbied the legislature before. Well, in the process of doing that, I was told beforehand it was usually non-controversial and it had been, but it was very controversial. They had a Citrus Stabilization Act – the industry was bitterly – the growers, some were bitterly opposed to the way it was – well, the implementation of it, actually. Bob Rutledge, who was Executive Director of Florida Citrus Mutual then – they wanted the legislation but they were afraid they couldn't get enough votes and I had to give a legal opinion as to the method of what it took in order to implement this Stabilization Act, which, in effect, was another tax, and they didn't like my opinion because I followed what the law said – I didn't have any axe to grind – although – I just, but that, those are probably beyond what we want to do here – but Lawton was very helpful to me, since I was pretty much a neophyte in the mechanics of the legislative lobbying process, having a friend like Lawton that I could go to – and I had other friends like that - and many of Lawton's friends, as I said, like Wilbur Boyd and Eddie Gong and there were a number of his, that represented a group there that were far forward-thinking young legislators and the legislature, during this period of time, was thought of as being the most progressive in, perhaps in the nation, and a big change – it was that transition from the Pork Chop Day-controlled legislature when the Lamb Chop, as they said, came in to power and replaced the Pork Chop and so it became – you look back now and it was amazing how very few of the Senators, in North Florida mainly, though, how they just totally controlled the legislature. And Lawton and the group he represented was far and largely responsible for the affecting of that change when it took place – but it was – but Lawton was always someone I could count on to go and counsel with, help me with the practical problems you had in trying to get the legislative package for the industry through at that time and those were the two years that it was very helpful. And then, later, after I decided I didn't want to do that anymore – I enjoyed it but I didn't want to be re-appointed – when, I guess, when Hayden Burns was elected. I guess he was elected right after Farris Bryant – and that – but then, we were - I was representing the phosphate people and it wasn't, as it later became, one of my more prime responsibilities when I became General Counsel for the Trade Association. Chesterfield was at that time General Counsel, and I – I guess it was about 1979 or something like that – when he moved to Miami, then he resigned as General Counsel and they named me to replace him because I had a lot of involvement with the phosphate industry, a lot of contacts, and had represented some of the companies, and had a reasonable familiarity with the legislative process. But during that period of time, up until Lawton was elected United States Senator in 1970, he was always helpful because he was someone I could rely on, and we knew each other, trusted each other, and he knew I would never ask him for an advantage that I was not entitled to but, of course, the whole process of getting bills through the legislature is working with the people in the committees that form that legislation and finally go to the floor and get it passed, it's got to pass both houses, and then you also sometimes had to go lobby the Governor to keep him from vetoing it. And so all of this process was something that – it was contacts and then the reputation you had, and the credibility you had. (Oh, hey Calvin. Excuse us.)

D: What the process like as far as – how was it different then, as far as lobbying, than it is now? Obviously, you're not totally engaged as you were back then in it now, but how is it different? How was it different?

K: Well, during that period...

D: You might even say, before that even – you might even have some experience before that.

K: Well, well, my first immersion in the legislative process took place in 19 – I'm trying to remember whether it was even or odd-numbered years that the legislature met back then – it seemed like it was...

D: It's odd – I have odd down here.

K: Yes, it seems like it was odd-numbered because I was – because I became attorney to the Commission in January or whatever, February of 1971, and almost immediately the legislature then met in the first – in April, the first Tuesday after the first Monday, I guess, in April – the legislature would meet. And I had – and I'd never drafted a bill before – I didn't know anything about it. I was just told that I could – Ben Hill Griffin who was in the House then – he later was in the Senate – Ben Hill Griffin, Jr. – he later ran for Governor, as perhaps you remember – but he was Big Citrus – had more involvement in citrus than any member of the legislature – and he was the one from Polk County – I had known him all my life – I could rely upon him to shepherd everything through. Well, I found out that though Ben Hill was a wonderful executive, he had a great deal of experience in the industry itself, but he didn't really know the mechanics of the legislative process as well as I did – and I was just learning! He relied on others, you know. Not that Ben Hill wasn't very, very helpful; he was, and I spent a lot of time with him – but it was really the process then was relying on friends – or even Chesterfield Smith, who was then up there fulltime lobbying for the phosphate industry, he understood the legislative process probably better than anybody up there, and he was the one that kept me from making probably some horrible mechanical mistakes. But the process was different to the extent – in some ways it's always the same – but it was every-other-year biennial sessions then. They did not have at that time the professional staffs that just worked year-round and that, from a philosophical standpoint, I think, a lot of our problems now go back to when we have a professional legislature and staff who will control to some extent, and if then can to a very large extent, what policies are adopted and what legislation goes through because it never stops, it goes year-round. But back then, it wasn't that way. You had people that were temporaries; very few people had permanent jobs; they worked for the session; and then it was two years before they met again and they'd be – so, it was different – there was a lot more reliance, in some ways, upon the lobbyists then – the lobbying was different - it was a mixed, in my judgment, some lobbyists were very good and some were not good at all, and there were probably overall the quality of the lobbyists now is much more professional and they have to be very good because they lose their credibility. They relied then more on personal relationships, on entertaining – all these things still happen – but the legislature now. it's more like the federal process ...

D: Right, very sophisticated.

K: Because it just goes on and never stops.

D: Yes.

K: And so, and that was in the times when I, and I spent a lot of time back in the eighties and the nineties in the legislature working with the industry, but, for the phosphate

industry, and the contrast was considerable then, back in the sixties – it was quite different then.

D: Talking about entertaining – was there socializing back then like there is today, as far as some of the things that go on...

K: Yeah, it was...

D: the junkets, hunting, fishing trips, that kind of stuff ...

K: they – all of that was true – they probably were not as elaborate in some ways but there were probably more trips that were unreported by some – I mean, the reporting wasn't as exact then, but there were - I think, a lot more money, probably, is spent now, even though they have more limitations on it. They didn't have really, when I was first there, I don't think - you were supposed to have reported what was spent – but I don't think there were any teeth in the law and there were no dollar amounts, you could ...

D: Were there any, who were the people that you remember were some of Lawton's most loyal supporters when he was in the State House, and were there factions that would have opposed him or been for him?

K: Well, the, Lawton's support came from his personal friends. They were Jaycees and those that, Lawton was pretty young then, and he had been active in the community and he was a young lawyer, and he was energetic, and he loved politics, had been really in politics, thought about it all of his life. As I mentioned, we were in the same military reserve unit and that's where we became close friends with active duty together. And, the ones like, you know, the reserve unit, Joe Fuller and I, Joe Fuller later had worked for the Democratic Party and ended his life in Tallahassee working, I think, I don't remember the exact division he had, but it was a State job that involved the legislature. But Joe was a good friend of Lawton and helped Lawton. He had defeated, as I started to say a minute ago, Roy Searles, who was a really very effective, very good legislator, who represented business interests that Lawton never quite identified with. Lawton was always, he wasn't anti-business at all, but Lawton was never thought of as being in anybody's pocket. Roy Searles was clearly, had interests that were just know, he did not deny, like after he no longer was in the legislature, S and H Green Stamps, which then was a powerful political force ...

D: I can remember those green stamps.

K: It's hard to think of that now.

D: I can remember that. I can remember those.

K: But it was, and they did a lot of lobbying and they had ...

D: So they were located here in Lakeland?

K: Well, well, S and H Green Stamps was out of, I think, someplace in Kansas, I don't know. But he was the most prominent, Florida was one of the big states when Publix became a purveyor, or whatever, of the green stamps and Publix was in Lakeland ...

D: I see, I see.

K: That became significant, and ...

D: And Mr. Searles was on top of that.

K: And he was on top of that. He was a very strong proponent after the legislation that allowed green stamps to be, there wasn't anything wrong with that, I mean, it was what Publix wanted and what Publix wanted, Publix was not nearly as big then obviously as they later became, but Roy, I know, represented, became the lobbyist for Sperry and Hutchinson after he left the legislature. He would be, he was tied to various interests. Now, the phosphate interest, he was a very strong proponent of phosphate and could be counted on in the House to introduce their legislation. But Lawton was always a friend of the phosphate industry, but there was a difference between Lawton's approach and Roy Searles and others. You never, you never could take Lawton for granted. Now, Lawton you had to go to and sell the bill or the position that you wanted, and Lawton would be inquiring, and he would listen to you and you knew, and he always, you know, was good to his friends. You could have access to him. But you couldn't ever get Lawton to commit on things ahead of time and you could not count on Lawton if you had anything controversial. He would look at it and he would end up, and I honestly believe that Lawton would always come down on the position the way he thought was fair and proper and what ought to be done. Now, he would always weigh in on the side of the local industry. It ought to be, that's what your representatives are for, and he would make those commitments that "I'll help you but I won't let you tell me what the positions are. I will listen to everything you want and I will try to give you everything you want as long as it meets the common good". And that was sort of the way he approached things. And he did that throughout his political career. I saw that very early with Lawton.

F: Do you remember who some of his closest associates were in the legislature? Obviously, we talked about Wilbur Boyd and if you'd like to say a little bit about that, but were there some of the others? And why, and how they got to know each other, and that kind of thing. But were there some others that stick out in your mind? Either here locally or maybe people that he had met in Tallahassee?

D: I keep saying I will do this and I haven't done it yet, try to go through and get a list of these people. Eddie Gong, I mentioned. He was a Chinese and Eddie was from Miami, a very bright legislator, and then there was, oh, what was his name, his last name was Louis de la Parte. He was a senator and sadly he has Alzheimer's now, and I, I sound like I do too for forgetting his first name and I knew him pretty well. Of course, Wilbur. There were a number of South Florida legislators, I see a number two and three that Lawton, that were prominent. One a Speaker of the House, whose name perhaps will come to me in a minute. As I mentioned earlier, Mallory Horne was a very good friend of Lawton. They were always, he was a close supporter. Jimmy Kynes who later, I think, served maybe one term in the legislature from Ocala. He later became Attorney General and was appointed by Farris Bryant to serve an unexpired term, and then he ran and was narrowly defeated by Earl Faircloth. But Jimmy, and all of this took place in the '60s, so that was the very beginning, but Jimmy was one of Lawton's close, lifelong friends and Jimmy always had a keen political interest. Jim Walter offered Jimmy the position of being General Counsel for the Jim Walter Corporation and that was a young growing company then and that was a wonderful opportunity for him, but I've always thought that Jimmy, if he had it to do over again, he would have rather been Governor.

But he, but Jimmy influenced Lawton in many ways because they had been in school together and they were similar thinkers.

D: Now is he still alive?

K: No, Jimmy died of cancer 15 years ago. And he had a son, Jimbo, who was a lawyer, that also died of cancer. Both of them had similar, stomach cancer. And Jimmy was a very close friend of mine. I knew him, he was a football player.

D: Sure. That's why I know that name, I think as much as anything else.

K: Yeah, he was on the old Golden Era team, the team in 1946, that didn't win a game.

D: Yeah, yeah, and didn't he ...

K: And his son, I referred to as Jimbo ...

D: Right.

K: He was center and he played, now I think he might have been, he was a first string Florida player, and he had another son that played quarterback, Billy Kynes, that really became a, was a Rhodes Scholar, and Billy is in the ministry now. It was a very good family ...

D: Going back a little bit to locally here in Lawton Chiles' Florida House years. Were there any groups or people that were outspoken against him that you can think of?

K: Well, he always had opposition.

D: Yeah, that's I guess kind of a followup to that.

K: But I don't identify, as I was saying, now his supporters, Billy Elsworth, I mentioned, and George Carr, were both law partners of his and they were, they had been close friends and they were always heavily involved in political campaigns, and of course, they practiced law and they, in effect, sort of subsidized him because Lawton, though he was a good lawyer, was a trial lawyer, and didn't vary things, and mostly he did the trial work in their firm. And he was always involved with legislative, more than some because he just had a key interest, had a great ambition, and they were very tolerant about that. But, now those that opposed Lawton, there were from time to time, I can't really identify them by name right now, any one individual, but he was very popular. Lawton never lost an election and I can recall one of his first elections, after he was elected the first time, I think, I think Roy Searles ran against him again, I'm not sure, I'd have to check that, but he had, but I know I'd been down in Puerto Rico on vacation with Jim Wellman and a couple of other friends and their wives and we flew back and arranged this trip so that we would get back on a Tuesday in time to vote for Lawton and we got here just before the polls closed. We were, and that would have been in, oh, he was, when did we say he was first elected?

D: 59.

K: 59. So this would have been probably in 61 I guess.

D: Well, I can go back and check that out.

K: And that election, it was a contested, after that particular election, which I think is fairly normal, I don't remember him having meaningful opposition, I don't know that he was ever unopposed, but Lawton was always, he was popular and his campaign approach, as I mentioned, it was a big, big political upset when he defeated Roy Searles, but he and Rhea undertook to go and call on everybody in the county, obviously they didn't do that, but they tried. They mapped it out. They went and knocked on doors and introduced themselves, and they divided up and they worked, and he walked through the county just like he later, when he went into the Senate, and met people and talked to them. He liked doing that. He did it well, and they felt an identity with him. Now, as, now Charles Canady, as we mentioned, I don't know at what point he became involved with Lawton. He was certainly a supporter of Lawton back then, and teachers supported Lawton. He always had a good following in the teachers. But he will probably remember more of the supporters then. And I can talk to, I'll call Billy Elsworth who's still active and around, and Billy would probably remember some of his supporters.

D: You think there would be a possibility that I could talk to him at some point?

K: Sure, sure, sure. Oh he'd be happy to. I know he would.

D: Okay. Maybe I can get you to call in for me sometime.

K: Okay, alright, I'll do it.

D: Okay. Let's see. Was Rhea involved in his, she was involved in his first campaigns. Did she remain involved over the years, all the way throughout, up to 1970?

K: Always, always. Rhea became involved with Lawton when he was in campus politics at University of Florida where they met and there are those that knew, I didn't know Lawton very well back then, I just knew who he was. But there are those who were in school with him then that would tell you that if it hadn't been for Rhea's ambition politically, that Lawton probably, might have been diverted to other things. Now Lawton always loved politics, I mean as a little boy before he knew Rhea, but Rhea was one that focused and she always had innovative ideas, like the walk across the State--that was Rhea's idea. And the things, I think, of wrapping Lawton's picture around a newspaper and putting it on the front doorsteps, that was probably Rhea's idea.

D: When did you get the first inkling that Senator Holland was not going to run in 1970? How, can you kind of remember about your thoughts on that as far as, I'm sure everybody in the firm was kind of wondering about it and speculating about it.

K: Well, I think that it was not a last minute decision. I think that the Senator probably had told Chesterfield, who was closest to him on the firm that he would probably not run. That was completing his 28<sup>th</sup> year, 24 years, four terms, and I wasn't privy to his health conditions. I think maybe from conversations with Chesterfield, he may develop that Senator Holland did have a heart problem of a sort and that he, and that maybe influenced his decision. But from my recollection that it was sort of, it was sort of taken for granted that the Senator was not going, the last couple of years before, that he was

not going to run. Now, he had an active campaign for, I think it was, I think Claude Pepper ran against him.

D: Sixty-four?

K: Sixty-four. I believe that's who ran against him.

D: That would have been quite a struggle, I would imagine.

K: And it was. But, it's strange that that didn't stand right out, but Claude Pepper, I believe, because he was defeated in, it was ...

D: He was defeated for the Senate in fifty.

K: Fifty, I mean the year 1950, when he was defeated in 1950 and so then Claude, after a few years, of course he served in the House, and maybe I'm mixing up, my memory is confused. He might not have run against, the more I think of it, maybe he didn't. There was always some conjecture that he might because he became established in the House of Representatives, you know, after, after, and I know, I don't think he, and he would have, if he had run, he would have been running when he was serving in the House. I don't think, I think I'm mistaken about that, but, he did have a, I think, it seems to me he had, that that campaign was a vigorous campaign.

D: Okay. When it was pretty much determined that Senator Holland would not run, do you remember the speculation about who might try for it, other than, even before Lawton Chiles might have announced? Who were some of the other people that you remember, I remember myself going through the paper collections there at the University of Florida. There was, Bill Gunter was mentioned, I think, as a possibility.

K: Yeah, well, and Fred Schultz, I think, was, who had been a Speaker of the House and was perhaps someone. There was Farris Bryant. He clearly was someone. And Farris did get in, I think. I think Farris did get in, I think. I think Farris ran in that.

D: Yes, he did.

K: Because Lawton, and that was hard ...

D: They ran against each other and the runoff ...

K: Because they had been, Lawton had been a very strong support of Farris Bryant and Farris was, and Farris didn't decide to run until pretty late, and I was a strong support of Farris Bryant, and good friend, and Farris, I remember Farris calling me and wanting to know if I would support him, and I told him I was supporting Lawton and I said, "Now Farris, if you had decided earlier, I would have supported you and Lawton would have supported you, but you've let Lawton make plans, have a campaign group put together, you can't do this now". We weren't unpleasant, I mean, people are always unhappy when you don't support them, but Farris and I remain very close friends and, but he used all the pressure he properly could. He got, he wanted me to call Lawton and I wouldn't. He wanted others to call Lawton and some did, but...

D: There were also indications about Sam Gibbons running in the collection that I had looked at, there was a possibility that he was thinking about it. That is in a lot of the papers over there, up at UF that I was able to look at. Very interesting dialogue, but the way, that I was able to find between Lawton and Bill Gunter about, I think they were very close and very friendly ...

K: Yeah, I bet they were.

D: And they were both coming out of the legislature at the same time.

K: And this was before Bill Gunter had become State Comptroller, wasn't it?

D: Yes, yes. They were both, I think, in the legislature together, Orange County, Polk County. Okay. Besides Mr. Canady, were there any other people that you can remember that were very much involved in pulling together that race and helping him pull that together? I know Charles Canady was obviously the lead there, the key man, but were there any other people that were involved that you can remember?

K: Well.

D: As far as staff goes?

K: No.

D: Can't really remember?

K: I can't remember who the staff people, I mean, and Charlie was, I think Chesterfield was involved in helping Lawton in that initial, the senatorial campaign, because I recall that Nell, my wife, like Lawton, we were, Nell and I and Lawton and Rhea did a lot of things together and all . . . She was, a couple of times that Chesterfield, she made campaign contributions to Lawton that were very, very important to him. Now Chesterfield chided me and said, "Nell gave \$1000 here, \$2000 there".

D: It was Nell that did, right?

K: And, and I said, "Well Chesterfield, I've given..." but he'd say, "Nell's given more. You haven't given as much as Nell". I can recall that conversation.

D: That's great. Okay. What I'd like to do is save the campaign for next time because we've only got about, probably 10 minutes to go. I'd like to get your impressions, though, of a few people during those years that were involved in politics, governors and so forth. If you could just give me maybe, maybe a paragraph or two on each, verbal paragraph, that is. Doyle Carlton, Jr.

K: Doyle I knew first when I was a freshman at the University of Florida and Doyle was, I guess, a sophomore. He was an S.A. I remember he was a good athlete. And he was the son of a governor and politically active. Doyle, strangely enough, wasn't a very good student. But we became friends and then I lost track of him until after the war was over, and then when he became, when he was in the State Senate. He was from Tampa. I think he was very kind. The family had connections, of course, in Hardee, and he later lived in Hardee County. He was married to Mildred Woodbury and the Woodbury's were

very prominent in the cigar industry, very, very, very socially prominent, as well as part of the economic royalty of the Tampa cigar industry. Mildred was a beautiful, beautiful girl and a sorority sister of Nell's. And I know that Doyle was Farris Bryant's opponent in the 1960 governor's race. I think that they were in the runoff together..

D: Opponent.

K: Yes, Opponent. And I forget. There were others in that campaign. I think maybe I don't know whether Brailey Odham was in that or not, but, and it was one of those things that happened, that Doyle never quite forgave me for supporting Farris. I had, I had kind of, I had more of a personal friendship and Farris, I knew, was older and in a family business and all, and I was, I liked Farris. I liked Doyle too. Doyle was more of a populist than Farris, but Doyle was, ran a vigorous campaign. I can still remember, I don't know why, that he said, "Put your name on my back." He said, "Put your name on my back, and I will never let you down". I never quite understood the symbolism there, but it was one of his slogans that still stays with me. And he was probably the favorite, and I'm not, it may have been that he was in the first primary and received the majority of the votes, I just don't remember, but, Doyle was, and he had been one of the religious leaders that was pretty progressive and had been prominent and used the family reputation quite well. And he was a force in the political community of Hillsborough County at the time. I don't, he never ran again for governor and I think the campaign, my best feeling is that he really believed that he was going to win and it was a great disappointment to him. But I guess that's true of everyone, but more so.

D: Do you remember what came up in the campaign? What was the big issue in that campaign between he and Bryant that might have swayed it one way or the other?

K: There was an issue there. I think that it was that he tended to side with organized labor more and that those campaigns from time to time would be more of an issue and then the phosphate industry, which I was attuned to, they tended to, of course most of them had organized labor was a prominent part of the workforce there, but someone that identified themselves as being pro-labor, they could see that this would create a problem. The industry was conservative. Back then it wasn't Republicans because we didn't have a Republican in the State, it was that part of, and the primaries, then, and it was true then, and Farris, he was the conservative Democrat and Doyle was more, as I say, the populist who tended to be more the liberal Democrat.

D: Would there be, would civil rights have been an issue in that campaign at all? I know that was ...

K: The first campaign that civil rights became an issue was, before me, was Roy Collins' campaign, and Roy handled it very well back then. This was, and of course later, when Roy became identified with Selma and all, that probably kept him from being elected senator because the State hadn't moved enough then. But almost all of the candidates then, particularly when they would be in this area and dealing with organized labor, of course, labor leadership was very, very much opposed to moving too rapidly into the civil rights area. It wasn't the dispute within the party there, it was only some of the forward thinking people like, as I say, Roy Collins, but the rank and file of labor was not, at that time, ...

D: Really ultra civil rights.

K: Uh-uh. Not, well, I'm, it's just that there was the, which always is part of it, there was then a lot of the economic competition in the workforce between blacks and whites, and that always influenced a lot of the labor.

D: What about schools? Were schools an issue in that campaign? Desegregation or segregation? Or did that come up in the campaign as you recall?

K: It must have because...

D: Whether we're going to do it, whether we're not...

K: It must have because of *Brown versus Board of Education, Topeka, Kansas*.

D: We're going to resist.

K: was in 64 and this was...

D: Well, that was 54.

K: I mean 54, yeah, 54.

D: In other words, I'm in favor of desegregation, I'm not in favor of it, that kind of thing, or we should resist, we should drag our feet? You know.

K: I don't, I don't remember.

D: You don't really remember that. Okay.

K: I don't remember that as being, I don't remember that being a campaign issue.

D: Well, Farris. Talk about Farris a little bit too in the minutes we have left. Farris Bryant.

K: Well, Farris was one of those individuals that, at first you would think that he wouldn't have the broad popular appeal. He was a Harvard lawyer. He spoke precisely and he was almost prissy in his mannerisms and speaking. He was a very, very good public speaker and he was a very, very bright fellow. He was wonderfully organized. His speeches were good and he, but he was, he was not someone that you would have thought would have had the popular appeal that he ultimately did have, and I frankly didn't think that he was going to win. I voted for him initially because I got involved with a lot of my friends that supported him, clients and older people that were his contemporaries, and we had been, my father had and I had been in business with the Camp family and he was, and he, and I'm trying to, his sister, I guess, was married to one of the, to Meg Camp of Clarence Camp II, and she died, had a, I think a stroke or something or she had a heart attack, and there was a relationship there. I have a lot of connections in Ocala because, as I had said, I had grown up in Marion County and been in phosphate relationships, and so Farris was someone that I sort of, in some ways I felt obligated to support but then I got to know Farris and I finally, I did support him, but he was, he did not seem to me, and I mean really this is my first recollection, that he is someone that would be, have enough appeal statewide.