

2/20/92 (11?)

INTERVIEW: ROCHELLE CHRONISTER (REVISED)

Q: You have been in the House how many years?

A: Twelve years. I am starting my 13th session.

Q: Has it been that long?

A: Yes.

Q: I have a series of questions I am going to ask you about your service in the House and about yourself personally. I know you are a Republican; why are you a Republican and how long have you been registered a Republican?

A: I have been registered as a Republican ever since the first time I voted, although I started my early life believing I was a Democrat.

Q: Oh.

A: Absolutely. I had a grandmother who was very, very interested in politics and was a Democrat, lived next door to me and did her very best to raise me as a Democrat and a Methodist. She succeeded on half of it. I am still a Methodist but after I finished college and about the time that I was first married, discussed at length basically some of the philosophy of Republicans and Democrats at that time--that would have been the mid 60s--well, maybe a little earlier than that. I think probably about the time of the 60s. I don't think we were able to vote in the '60 election. I could not vote the first time I was eligible because my parents had moved to Chicago, and so the first time that I was eligible to vote I was not able to get registered to vote because of the difficulty with students at that time. I don't think that would be a problem now. So that first time that I was able to vote was probably '64 and I registered as a Republican at that time basically because of the more conservative philosophy that I thought I represented and what I was interested in.

Q: Your parents were Democrats?

A: No, my parents were Republican, but they were never really....

Q: Partisan types?

A: Yeah, that is about what it was. My grandmother was very vocal about what it was that she was. I remember when I was growing up listening to the political party conventions on the radio with grandmother.

Q: That is interesting. Seems like people to have someone who convinced them in early years. Your first time you ran, can you describe your election a little bit, why you decided to run?

A: Well, actually I spent ten years first as a school board member so I had some experience, although, actually, in my situation you don't really run for the school board. You kind of put your name up, as it is in many small towns.

Q: What school district was this?

A: Neodesha, School District 461. And the first time, then, that I ran, I had...the person who was previously in this position called to say he was not going to run for election and asked that I run. He knew that I was very interested in politics and that it is something that I thought I'd like to do sometime. I told him at that time that I didn't think I wanted to then because....

Q: What year was this?

A: That was '78. I told him I didn't think I wanted to because of my children. My son was a 5th-grader at that time and my daughter was...let's see, she would have been an 8th-grader or 9th-grader. She was a freshman and I did not think....I wanted to wait until they were older. Fred said to me if you don't run, somebody will run who will go and stay and this may be your best opportunity for an open seat, and we talked about it for quite awhile and visited with my family and decided I could do it and so I ran.

Q: So you did go ahead. At what point did you make that decision to run? What month was it?

A: April. Close to the deadline.

Q: What kind of a campaign did you run? How did you run?

A: I had been active in politics for a long time. I started in when Bob Dole first ran for United States Senator which was about twenty-two years ago--be about ten years at the time I first ran for the House. Had been active in Republican politics with candidates and also had been Vice-Chairman and Co-Chairman and active in Young Republicans, so I had some background. But I did not have any opposition within my own party. The Democrats ran a man against me who was a farmer and an older man and I spent the first six weeks that I was running saying...answering questions about what was going to happen to my children, what did my husband think of this. In '78 they were still asking that of women--rural women. There weren't very many rural women at that time, especially not from Southeast Kansas. There may have been in the past but

from Southeast Kansas, there was not. Once we had established the fact that I was not deserting my husband and children, my husband approved of this. I had family and my aunt had been my babysitter forever and she was going to be taking care of my children when I was gone. Well, then, it got to be okay.

Q: Do you think this played a factor, having children that age? Do you think there were some people who maybe that helped them decide to vote against you?

A: It could have at that time. I don't think it does now. But I think the question was, of course, raised. But I talked about it up front and I think that once we got past that they kind of quit asking that question. My opponent, I know, tried to use that--not in the open--but he tried to use it in a sub rosa more-or-less type of a situation. But probably more of a problem was the fact that my district is a very agricultural district. And I have no farm background. But I also talked up front about that. I told them I hardly know one end of a cow from another. I told them basically my experience and expertise was in the education area, but 60% of the state budget goes into education and I think that I can represent you well in that area and I expect you to help me when it comes to ag issues. Our conversation has been good.

Q: What other issues were prevalent as far as being interesting to your district at that time? '78?

A: I think probably the education issues were of the greatest interest.

Q: What educational...?

A: K through 12, as much as anything. Public education funding.

Q: Who were some of the people that encouraged you to run this first time and probably encouraged you in other elections?

A: The person who probably encouraged me the most to run was the person who was in the position at the time. He wanted very much for me to run. He thought that I could beat about anybody that would run on the Democrat side. And that...and my family was very supportive. I have a good close group of friends who have always basically said whenever it is time to stuff envelopes and write labels and do all of those kinds of things, we will be available to help. So I have had good support within my community.

Q: Were there any members who were particularly helpful and encouraging?

A: No, interestingly enough, my father was really not real encouraging. My father had always been a backer of anything I ever wanted to do, but he had a really poor opinion of politicians and he was not at all sure he wanted his daughter becoming a politician. He didn't try to stop me because he knew it wouldn't do any good. He raised a rather strong-minded daughter.

Q: Did your children help out at your campaign?

A: To a limited degree. My husband is a physician and is not, number one, interested much in politics and is a single solo practitioner of family practice in a small town so his encouragement is mainly to say "Yeah, go for it!" My kids have helped also in elections. My son's always been more interested than my daughter has been and he has helped pass out information and campaigned with me more than she ever did, really.

Q: You've had quite a few campaigns, too. Have they all been pretty much the same?

A: They have not any of them been very difficult campaigns, really. I have had only one person within my own party run against me; have at times had Democrats and other times not had. This campaign was probably the closest, probably as a result of the fact that I was state party chairman for one thing and told them up front that I was not going to campaign in my own district.

Q: So you think maybe this made a difference?

A: I know that it did, and they were ready for me to come home. They wanted me to come home and campaign, and I knew that, but there was enough latent good will to get me through this campaign. I won't do it to them again.

Q: In your other campaigns before this, what kind of strategy did you use? Did you go door-to-door?

A: Oh, yes. When I've had an opponent I have always gone door-to-door. I've done some mailings. I always do some newspaper ads. Very limited radio--although if I had ever felt like it was a very serious challenge, I would have probably done some radio. Never done any TV. TV just does not really work well for state legislature for one reason or another.

Q: How did the media treat you? Did papers in your district endorse you?

A: My newspapers have always been very supportive. All of them have been, as a matter of fact. I have had endorsements by any of them that do endorsements. I have never been...one of my opponents has never been endorsed by any of my papers.

Q: How'd you finance your campaign, especially the first one?

A: The first campaign, part of it I financed myself; my first campaign was a very inexpensive campaign. I can't remember what I spent now but it was not very much. Initially, as a matter of fact, I may even have filed an exemption. I may not have spent over the \$500 limit.

Q: That is highly unusual.

A: Yes, but part of it was a very deliberate decision on my part, because I am a doctor's wife, and I did not want to give the impression of buying my election. I made a decision to run a very low budget campaign with a lot of footwork instead and shaking hands and having material to pass out, not using a lot of direct mail. We weren't using a lot of direct mail in those days, as a matter of fact. So that was still the time when it was mainly go out and shake hands.

Q: Postage didn't cost near as much then, either.

A: I don't know what it was, but it would not have been as expensive.

Q: Did anyone in your family precede you as far as holding an elected office?

A: No.

Q: Not on either side of your family?

A: No.

Q: Now your district is...you live in Neodesha. What is the district? You say mostly rural? What percent rural and how would you describe your district?

A: My district is made up of two complete counties and part of a third county. That's been before and after reapportionment. The county has changed. Where I went north before I go south now into a third county. There are four major towns in my district and when I say major towns, that's from 1500 to less than 3500--pretty small. Then, a number of towns are in the range of 150-500 people probably, so it is a pretty rural district. But, interestingly enough, Neodesha--which is my home town and also where I was born and raised and bred through high school--is also an industrial town. We have a great deal of industry. We were an American Oil Refinery town for 70 years. They pulled out in the early '70s and at that time, put together an industrial park where we now...if we are fully employed in that industrial park, which is made up of about at least 1/2 dozen industries ranging from the largest one probably employing in the neighborhood of 300 people to some relatively small--under 50, but the town

itself has an industrial base of up to 1500 jobs. So for the size of the town, it has a high industry.

Q: So what are the issues and important industries? Industrial people? Industrial employment?

A: Economic development has always been an issue I've been interested in, but more to simply see that we do not create additional barriers. Highways have always been a hot issue in southeast Kansas and remain so; the School Finance Formula is also an issue and concern in southeast Kansas because we are wealth-poor and nearly all of the districts in that part of the state receive probably at least 60% of their budget from the School of [?] So those are all issues of concern. Higher education is frankly a lesser issue of concern. I have no community colleges in my district. I now have the President of a community college. In the past, I have been one of the few southeast Kansas legislators that did not have a community college.

Q: So did you focus on those issues in your campaign? Did you focus on any issues?

A: A lot of my campaigns have always focused on constituent service, communications with the district. That has always been one of my strongest points. It is still.

Q: During your years here, are the same issues remaining constant? Have other issues crept in and out of the picture?

A: I've always said that the legislature is inclined to go up and down in their interest over particular issues. For the first several years that I was here, education was a fairly high priority issue. That, in some ways, was the place for some of the economic development issues. In the last few years, higher education was the focus of the legislature. Taxes and taxing policies has always been a focus. The lottery, liquor by the drink and racing, those kinds of things have been in and out as side issues. The abortion issue was more of an issue last year. I believe it will continue to be probably in the future.

Q: You mentioned abortion. Are there issues that have been seen in the past and maybe still are seen as women's issues? Has this changed or how do you feel about it?

A: I think that there were issues that were seen as women's issues. I think that is not as true today as it was initially. People assumed that your interest was going to be in education; that your interest was going to be in public health and welfare. When I came to the legislature my interest was appropriations and the budgetary process.

Q: Is that because of your district that your interest is in that or...?

A: No, that is my personal interest. I think almost the fact that the appropriations process touches on all parts of the government and I have always been interested in the entire government structure.

Q: If you could label yourself and I don't like labels, but it seems there's some use at least in labeling yourself. Would you say you are a conservative, liberal, or combination or what?

A: I am probably a moderate conservative in many ways. A fiscal conservative and more liberal on social policy issues.

Q: As a freshman legislator, when you were coming up there, you had the person who had been in office for several years. Did you have any other mentors to help you out and help you get assigned to committees you wanted and that sort of thing?

A: I don't know as I could say to help me get assigned to committees and such. As far as mentors, I did have a mentor. Dr. Carlos Cooper, as a matter of fact, is the person who I consider to be a mentor of mine. He was the person who helped me learn how to really get a bill through the process. You know, he'd keep saying, 'well, now there is something else you can do, Rochelle, if you really want to,' or we can do this and we can do this. He is also the one that told me to sit in the seat and keep my mouth shut which was real valuable and for a freshman that's good advice. Dr. Cooper was always very helpful and I really appreciated him and still call him to ask him a question and get advice.

Q: What committees were you appointed to your first session here?

A: Local Government and Education committees first session. I was trying to think whether I had a morning committee or not, but those were the two committees I was on first session.

Q: Now, did you remain on those committees or have you changed quite a bit?

A: Oh, no. Local Government I considered the end of the world. For all of my sins. It was nothing I was terribly interested in. Education I was interested in, but I only served two years on that and the speaker asked me to go to Public Health and Welfare and serve as Vice chair of that committee, which I did, and then the next year--two years after that--moved to Appropriations Committee. I have also served on Governmental Organization, Economic Development, Computer Communication and Technology Committee--a wide variety of committees. I

have never done the Energy Committee or Federal and State Affairs, but I've served all the others.

Q: Describe your leadership positions. You mentioned you were assistant Majority Leader....

A: In the House I have been Vice Chairman of the Computers Committee, Public Health and Welfare, and Appropriations.

Q: Were you the first woman to have that position?

A: I was.

Q: Describe statehouse power structure during the 13 years you have been here. Has it changed? Has the function of the Speaker of the House changed or the ways things get done changed?

A: I think the function of the Speaker has...power of the Speaker has probably declined. I think it has been declining for as much as 20 years, part of that being that as the average legislator understands the system--has more access to information--they are empowered. Where at one time the Speaker and Chairman of Appropriations Committee and a very limited number of people understood how things worked and had access to information, as more legislators have that kind of information, the Speaker's power was lessened.

Q: Did you participate in any formal/informal coalitions or groups? Did you remain on those committees or have you changed?

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Q: Did you participate in any formal or informal coalitions or groups? For instance, I think of the women's coalition? Did you participate in that?

A: I've never been much of a group joiner. I frequently attended meetings with women's groups. Never was really a Steel Magnolia and certainly never a rebel. I'm inclined to play it within the structure.

Q: What bills have you introduced and sponsored? I know there are several, but can you name a few of the more important ones?

A: Some of probably the most important legislation that I have dealt with is economic development issues, which was good for the district and for the state as a whole. Probably one my district was most interested in was at Deerville. That is another one of those things that you wished you'd never had to carry was the Fish and Game Bill on the floor of the House. Everybody had something to say about the Fish and Game bill. That was probably one my district was most interested in. Since that time economic development issues have probably helped make the biggest change in everyday life.

Q: Do you have any vivid memories of victories or defeats or legislation that you've started or worked toward?

A: Oh, let's see. County health legislation. Congresswoman Jan Meyers was a Senator at that time. She and I were kind of going at the same direction or same aim from different directions and Jan's pretty slick. She taught me a lot mainly to stay out of her bill. In a friendly way, but we were able to get the county health department funding passed. But I have some other interesting memories of that. I also had a bill one time--it was an economic development bill--that I carefully ushered all the way through the process, got it sabotaged at the last minute by one of the Democrats in a manner that I couldn't do anything but let it pass right up. So that's one of those things that happen that you remember.

Q: Do you have any funny, humorous incidents that you recall that happened to you?

A: I should have, but I'm not very good on remembering some of those.

Q: As a legislator, what do you think the main focus of this job is? What do you do that is the most important and what do you think should be the most important?

A: I think the most important thing, I have always said, was to try to help people in the district understand what it is that is going on. Try to keep them informed on what it is the

legislature is doing and to let them know also what it is that I do and how I can help them. That's what it is I hope I do.

Q: You have been in the legislature long enough that you realize that there's been a huge change in the number of women and we have done a little study on the numbers and, in 1975, the trend changed. Before 1975 there were never more than four women in the House at one time. Since then, there has been a growing number every year but you were there during that period. Can you make any comments on that? Why do you suppose 1975 was the turning point and why did this change?

A: I think part of it was that when I was growing up, the assumption was made that you go to college and get married and you have children and you stay home. That was in the '60s. In the '60s everything changed, the world changed. Women decided that it was no longer necessary for them to simply stay home, if they could afford to, and women began to develop their own careers. They began to say there is something more out there I would like to do. I think that the younger people started coming to the legislature. I think many times....I am thinking the women who were here when I came were nearly all close to retirement age I would say. In their fifties, anyway. Maybe not.

Q: Families were grown.

A: When I came, that had begun to change and I think women no longer believed that you had to wait where sometimes women had come before they had children, at a very early age. We went through a period of time when a woman didn't think she could leave and now that is no longer true. Interestingly enough, I think there are four women in the House pregnant now, so that is going to be an interesting situation. I think the sudden freedom of society had finally said...though, even at the time I first ran, the question came up about my family. That very shortly became the past. So I think that it is no longer true. I think that it is seldom a factor at all, anymore.

Q: Do you think that the women's effectiveness in the legislature has changed since you have been here?

A: Yes, I would say so. I say that because even when I first came to the legislature, people watched. I think that at the time I came to the legislature....

Q: I was asking if the women in the legislature were more or less effective, and why?

A: When I first came I think that women were closely watched and that a woman was still an object--an unusual object--and that you had to work exceptionally hard. I think that is no longer

true. There are enough women that women are allowed to be themselves, to make the progress that they can.

Q: That is interesting for you to say that because you have been here and witnessed it. This is true for you, then. You think that the expectations of other members of the legislature have changed?

A: Are beginning to even out.

Q: I think there are thirty-five women and now there are six or seven women. How many were in the House?

A: Might have been eight. Seems to me there were four Democrats and four Republicans. It's been interesting because the numbers all the time I've been here have been almost even.

Q: We haven't looked at that yet. That is interesting. Do you think that it could be, from your experience, that women were running for office before '75 and just were not being elected?

A: No, I think that some of them were running in preparatory offices. I think that they were just beginning to become mayors--they had been school board members, some of them. Although at the time that I became a school board member--that was for ten years--there were very few women school board members, but by the time I left that position, maybe 20% were women. Now, I would guess maybe as much as at least 1/2, maybe more. So, as women began to learn that they could win elections, that they were no longer simply the person stuffing envelopes and helping out, they could actually win elections, then they started running for the next level of office. I think that theory holds true all over the country. I don't think that is just Kansas.

Q: Are you involved with any women's legislators organizations?

A: There are a couple of organizations of women legislators. I am not actively involved in them. I am still a party person in many ways. More than I am a separate....

Q: Well, you have been real busy with the position.

A: I think that the fact that I was always actively involved with the Republican party has made me....

Q: Well, your time has been busy. I want to ask you a few questions about yourself. Let's start out with the organizations that you have participated in prior to being a legislator. Did any of those prepare the way you think or lead you into the job? Being a school board member?

A: Oh, absolutely.

Q: How long were you a school board member.

A: Almost ten years.

Q: So, you have been elected 2 1/2 times? Are they four-year terms?

A: Four-year terms. Let's see, the first time I think that I ran...I ran three times. The first time when they needed a seventh board member, I was appointed. I can't remember whether I ran two or three times.

Q: Well, but that would be eight years of budget and money and school financing.

A: I became assured that I could be over the budgetary issues and as well as...as a school board member I served on a number of different kinds of education committees, including one that was a statewide federal advisory committee. A very interesting committee to serve on and had a lot of interesting ideas presented to it.

Q: Let's go back even a little farther. Were there any organizations that you belonged to while you were growing up? In school or out of school that led you into...?

A: It's kind of interesting because I am a microbiologist, actually.

Q: Are you really? I didn't know that.

A: Never had a political science class in my life. My education was science. I have always been interested in politics but never had any formal kind of education in that line but I think frankly that, when I was in high school, I was very involved in science projects, did a lot of public speaking. At that time we went through trying to catch up with Sputnik. And we did a lot of science projects. What was required basically was that you do the science project and then you'd write the report on it and then you made a public presentation. I happened to be lucky enough to be selected to go to some of those locally and statewide, so I had a lot of experience of that kind.

Q: Was this the science fair projects that we used to have?

A: Yes, it sure was.

Q: Did you debate in high school?

A: I didn't really debate, really didn't have time to debate. I was a Westinghouse Science Scholarship Scholar and went that route which I always kind of felt it would be fun to debate, but really did not have time.

Q: Well, did you go on to Nationals then and win Scholarships? Did you go to college in microbiology?

A: Yes, in microbiology. Worked for the Chairman of the Department, as a matter of fact, from the time I entered college and set on a career as microbiologist. Until I decided to get married and married a medical student and worked at KU Medical Center as a microbiologist for three years. Eventually moved back to my hometown and my interest had always been in research. I'd never been a medical technologist, and, you know, there's no call for research microbiologists in Neodesha.

Q: Well, that was all that you were really prepared to do by your education was Microbiology? Do you think you will go back to that? Do you have any desire?

A: No, no, there's no way I can become a microbiologist again. It would require going back probably for four years.

Q: Tell me a little bit about yourself growing up. What were you like as a young girl and what was your family like in Neodesha?

A: I am an only child. I grew up, though, in a family....My grandparents lived right next door to me, one set of grandparents. The other one was about a mile away.

Q: Which one was converting you to be a Democrat?

A: The one next door. I lived a very typical kind of life, what we think of as a very stable childhood. No real traumas in my childhood. Good student; always pretty successful. Head of a lot of organizations along the way. Terrible in sports. Could hardly walk across the room without finding some way to trip one foot over the other.

Q: Of course, girls weren't in sports.

A: No, they were not. I was never the cheerleader type.

Q: Did you belong to organizations like girl scouts or 4-H?

A: Oh, yes, I was a girl scout, pep club president and I sing. I've done singing groups.

Q: Performances would prepare you somewhat for things.

A: Play the piano--played the piano, I should say--and those kinds of things, acted in plays. A general ham, which is probably good political training.

Q: You mentioned your Dad was not real enthusiastic about your running. Is your Mother still living? How did she feel about it?

A: It was alright by her. She figured I was probably going to run anyway.

Q: And that becomes very personal when you're running from their hometown. So all their friends....

A: My father would never actively oppose anything, frankly, that I probably wanted to do, but it was just like he could hardly believe his daughter was going to do this. What is my little girl going to do, getting involved in this nasty, nasty world of politics and my father was a fairly educated man, but it was just something he did not want to see me do. But he accepted.

Q: How old were you when you were first elected to office?

A: Thirty-nine.

Q: Thirty-nine, that is right in...there's a little age bracket in there we're kind of finding.

A: That was when I was first elected. I was twenty-nine when I got involved in politics and I was thirty-nine when I first ran for the legislature.

Q: It seems like between thirty-seven and forty-seven are the ages women usually are. Not all, but a lot of them. How did the legislature affect your children?

A: It has made my children probably more independent. It forced their father to become more a part of their lives when they were in high school.

Q: Because you don't drive back and forth from Neodesha?

A: No, they kidded me after I went on the Appropriations Committee. I had laughed and said I was a long distance mother because, basically, I called my kids every morning about 7:30 or usually about a quarter to 8 after I went on the Appropriations Committee. Our subcommittee met at 7 in the morning until usually after 8 and the standing order was, with George Teagarden who is now chairman of my Appropriations Committee....George would look at his watch and say, Rochelle, it is quarter till 8 and I would get up and go out and make my phone call. It was always interesting, too, because my daughter is four years older than my son and so she was driving by the time I became a legislator and my daughter was probably a typical teenage girl. Never got up in time. Had too many things to do getting ready, and my son got up early and got himself dressed and organized and downstairs

and ate his breakfast and watched the Today show. And I would call him and talk to him and he was also very typical. "Hi, how are you? What are you doing?" "Watching TV." "What's happening?" "Nothing." Like pulling teeth. Get my daughter on the phone who was, of course, always behind and never had enough time and could tell me in 30 seconds everything that was going on in town. Catch me up on what her brother had been doing and had not been doing and what it was she and her father were doing and Aunt Ruth had come here or had not...probably with a hair dryer in one hand and telephone in the other. But it made my daughter much more independent. My son probably is more grown up, although he was the youngest child.

Q: How old again were they when you were first in?

A: Eleven and fifteen.

Q: Who was it...a relative that helped?

A: My mother's youngest sister, a widow, and she had basically been the town babysitter. She'd been babysitting for quite a long period.

Q: Do you think there were sacrifices your family made so you could be a legislator?

A: Oh, yes. There were times when I could not be there although if there were any type of a major crisis, of course, you can be there. You just say, I'm leaving and you go home.

Q: How long a drive is it?

A: About two hours and 15 minutes. And there were times when I tried to drive home for many of my son's basketball games. He had a basketball team that went to state. I drove to Hutchinson every day after we finished the session in the morning and crawled in the car and drove three hours or whatever it is it would take to get to Hutchinson--watched the game, drove back and turned around and drove back the next day.

Q: What were the advantages for you family of you being in the legislature?

A: I think that it forced both of my children to take more responsibility.

Q: What about your husband?

A: I think that he is much closer to his children.

Q: What do you consider to be your main contribution to the state as a legislator and you have done many things.

A: I am not sure I have ever thought about that.

Q: Well, it is a hard question. What would you like for it to be?

A: Probably my economic development, actually--to make the biggest difference in the formation which was not but now is Kansas technology. Basically, Mike Meacham and I put together what became.... That is probably one of the early activities that I had. Now maybe my public...[?]

Q: Do you think that being in the House has changed you as a person?

A: Absolutely. Much more confident, although I never lacked confidence, more relaxed, able to talk to about anybody or make a speech at the drop of a hat.

Q: Do you think that the political role of women has changed over the thirteen years you have been there?

A: Yes, I would say that it has.

Q: You talked about the different expectations. What else has changed about it? The way the women see it? The way other people treat them?

A: Probably both. A combination.

Q: Do you think they are more effective now because of numbers?

A: To some extent because of numbers, but also their ways have changed. The fact that nobody considers it an unusual accomplishment now for a woman to be successful in the legislature. I think that's important for women.

Q: Is there anything I haven't asked I should have that you would like to tell me?

A: I would say probably what nearly every legislator would say. At least 99% of people who are legislators are good people who are not in it for their own benefit. Most of them probably lose money. It is certainly not a job you have to get richer. You have to have some who do it for the public good. The close friendships are good. It's amazing sometimes what we know about each other and what the interests are.

Q: And you will keep those friends forever probably.

A: Probably so. My attachment to the House is very strong. I like the House. It is boisterous; it is noisy; nearly total chaos, and it was a lot of fun. I've never had any interest in being Senator. Senators are inclined to be a bit too staid for me. They kind of consider themselves to be Senators, in quotation marks. There have been times when Senator Thiessen has said to me, I want you to run. I don't want to do that. I think that would maybe be what I would say.