

Harold Paulk (Hal) Henderson, Sr. Oral History Collection  
OH ARN 04 Arnall  
Ellis G. Arnall Interviewed by Harold Paulk (Hal) Henderson, Sr.  
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[Cassette: Side 1, counter number 343]

HENDERSON: Governor, after leaving the governor's office in '42 [1942], well '47, there was a great deal of speculation every four years that you were going to run for the governorship. Why in 1966 did you finally decide to run?

ARNALL: Well, for two reasons. Number one, many of the reforms that I'd advocated had come about: such as, the right of the black people to vote, first-class citizenship for all of our people. I thought that that would be a tremendous voting strength for me. Second, I had practiced law and had been rather successful doing things, in the insurance business, the law business, director of many corporations, and I've made enough money to where I felt I could afford the luxury of getting back into politics. So, I thought it would be a lot of fun to be governor again. I always enjoyed it. To me, public office is a fun position. I always make decisions, irrespective of what I think is in the public mind. That's what you do as a leader. It was said [that] I was always ahead of my time, which I was, and that's the fun of it. If you just keep step with the people, it's not much fun. Holding office is no fun unless you can do things. And I thought now that these reforms that I'd advocated and the social changes and the political changes had come to fruition. I was no longer too far ahead of the people. So I thought I would get a substantial vote, which I did.

There was several unfortunate things that developed during the campaign. There was some racial flair-ups, riots, and whatnot which intensified the racial feeling. Second, I had underestimated the fact that even though on the books we had now recognized first-class citizenship for all our people and it un-handcuffed the blacks so they could vote--as long as they could not vote you could kick them, it was popular to kick them--but I underestimated the fact that hatred dies very hard. And while people were giving lip service to these advances that had been made politically and socially and economically, many of them still, in the privacy of the ballot booth, voted against me for having led the fight to give the blacks first-class citizenship. But, it was a lot of fun and I thought I was going to win, and everyone else thought so. We had all the newspapers in the state for us practically. We had all the heads of the labor unions for us. We had the financial interests for us. We had the educational groups for us. I used to say, in fun, that we had everybody for us but the people. [HENDERSON chuckles]

But I thought I could win. I did not believe they would think of electing the reactionary group that was running against me. And in truth and in fact, as you know, I led in the first primary. It is interesting to note that up until that year I would have been the nominee of the party. Carl [Edward] Sanders is a dear friend of mine, but I frequently say he cost me the governorship, because he changed the law to where you didn't get, whoever led the ticket didn't get the nomination, but you had to run over and get a majority and not a plurality. And I think that is the worst thing that ever happened to Georgia--not because of me, but I do not believe in run-off elections. It lets the politicians maneuver. But up until then I would have won, and I would have won even then, had the Republicans not invaded the primary. They held no primary. [Howard Hollis] Bo Callaway was their nominee, and

they thought that [Lester Garfield] Maddox would be easier to defeat than me, for him to defeat. So, they all voted for Maddox. And then as you know, some of my friends were rather infuriated about the Republican onslaught into the Democratic primary. And so they had a write-in campaign, which I did not encourage nor discourage. I had nothing to do with it. But, that kept anybody from getting elected governor. And then the legislature elected from the two highest in the write-in campaign that kept Callaway from getting a majority or Maddox from getting a majority.

I was in the run-off between Maddox and Callaway. I was for Maddox. On the theory that he was a honest man and was not too knowledgeable in government, and therefore his administration would just [have] been passing the time, so to speak, and yet he'd give the people a honest administration. I was considering that Bo Callaway, who's my dear friend, was too intelligent, too smart, and too knowledgeable to where he could have enslaved the state with shackles regressively and held us with his views where we would have eliminated many of the good things that I'd done and others had done. So, I was against Bo, because first he's a Republican, and my rule is a very simple one: the worst Democratic candidate is better than the best Republican candidate. I don't like Republicans. Most of my friends and all of my clients practically are. 'Cause they're rich people, and I have to play up to them to make a good living like I like. But politically, I just don't think the Republicans offer anything but chaos and regression and let the rich get richer and poor, poorer, and I just don't like Republicans. [HENDERSON chuckles] So, I was against Callaway because first, he was a Republican. Second, his crowd had knocked me off. And third, I was afraid that he would be able to enact legislation that would move the state backward for the next twenty

years. So, I was glad that the legislature elected Maddox. While he had no great impact on government, he was an honorable man.

HENDERSON: OK. Let me go back to a candidate who was in for a period of time and then because of a heart attack had to drop out. Mr. [Samuel Ernest (Ernie)] Vandiver [Jr.] was considered by most of the press at that time a leading candidate.

ARNALL: Right.

HENDERSON: You came out in '65. [You] said [that] you would indeed be a candidate for governor—

ARNALL: Right.

HENDERSON: --And you undertook a vigorous campaign against him.

ARNALL: Right.

HENDERSON: Why were so opposed to Mr. Vandiver?

ARNALL: Well, he was an appendage of the reactionary group, the old Talmadge crowd, who fought the black man and all that. Although, if you remember, I hate to say this because Ernie and I are very close personal friends. That's his picture right there. We're very close,

special friends. Time works wonders, heals many wounds. But, at the time, if you remember, I had built my reputation largely on fighting the railroads, equalizing freight rates that enabled the South to become industrial. And that's the most important thing that has happened in the South and the West. Steve [Alexander Stephens] Mitchell, who's the brother of Margaret [Munnerlyn] Mitchell, who wrote *Gone with the Wind*, somebody asked him, a reporter from New York, what were the most important things that had happened during his life in the South. And he said Only two things important happened: for one, the boll weevil, and second, Ellis Arnall knocking the freight rates out that enabled the South to rejoin the Union on the basis of full fellowship and full equality. Well, Ernie represented the railroads, so everywhere we started in that early campaign we played "I've Been Working on the Railroad," and we just gave him a rough time. And he had a heart attack and retired. Then I became the fair-haired boy. Everybody thought then I had it, and I thought so.

HENDERSON: When Mr. Vandiver withdraws on May the eighteenth, Senator [Herman Eugene] Talmadge announces in Washington [D.C.] that he may be a candidate. Was he announcing the possibility--and later on he says he will not be a candidate--but was that aimed at you?

ARNALL: Herman Talmadge called Brack [Daniel Braxton] Blalock, who was a senator from my district and a close personal friend of mine and his, and asked him to talk with me about withdrawing and let him come back and run for governor. If I had withdrawn, he would have almost gotten it. And I took the position [that] I wouldn't even think of

withdrawing. And I had too many commitments and too many friends and our philosophy was different. And I was in to stay and going to get elected.

HENDERSON: Now, was this after Mr. Vandiver withdrew?

ARNALL: Yes.

HENDERSON: OK.

ARNALL: You see, Vandiver—and I hold him in high esteem—now—we’re great friends—but he was part of the Talmadge opinion that I’d always fought. You remember [that] Ernie said, “No, not one.” Although, as it turned out it, was during his administration [that] they finally accepted integration--I mean outwardly; they had to. And Herman and Ernie were very close. It was all part of the same syndrome, if I may use that expression, that had affected our area and held us back.

My whole concept in my administration, and by the way, if you go to the state capitol, [there is] not a thing changed--everything over there is what I put in: constitution, Board of Regents; constitution, Board of Education; new constitution; removing the pardoning powers from the governor; state merit system; teachers’ retirement.... There’s nothing over there that’s not mine. [HENDERSON chuckles] Since then, while we’ve had many good governors, they haven’t done any structural change in the state government. And my theory was through the prison system--we’d been the laughing stock of the world in prisons--we put in a new prison system. Robert Elliot Burns, who was a fugitive from the

Georgia chain gang, came down and surrendered to me. He said that we had done so much. Well, so what I worked out, and if you'll read [Ellis Merton] Coulter's *History of Georgia* he will say that I reflect a great credit on the state. Now, I don't say *I* did, let me say this--the times were such. But I'm a rather troublemaker; I like to stir things up. So, it was just tailored-made for me to stir it up. But Talmadge did want to come back, or rather he wanted me to get out and give him a fair shot. And I sent word back [that] there wasn't a chance in the world.

HENDERSON: All right. On May the twenty-third, he announces that he will stay in the Senate.

ARNALL: Right.

HENDERSON: Why do you think he decided not to come back?

ARNALL: Because I would not get out of the governor's race.

HENDERSON: Do you think he seriously thought about coming back?

ARNALL: Yes, if he could have gotten to be governor with no trouble.

HENDERSON: Uh-huh.

ARNALL: Yes. As a matter of fact let me say this to you: being in the Senate is a high, responsible position. But there are a hundred senators—in those days I think it was ninety-six. But there is only one governor. And, it's just more fun; you can do more. You know, you're the boss when you're governor, and when you're in the Senate, you're just in the Senate. [HENDERSON chuckles] So I think Herman had gotten a little tired of that anyway, and he enjoyed being governor and wanted to come back. And you'll be interested to know, too, in the last race for the first and only time I supported him and then testified on his behalf before a committee. And I attribute that to two things. Number one, his views, politically, shifted to my views. They've all come to my views. At the time, I was an apostate--very unpopular. I was anathema to the South, and now they're all singing the song that I was singing. So, first he had adopted my political philosophy. And second, the older I've gotten, the more compassionate I've gotten. [HENDERSON chuckles] The more I hate to see a fellow--The great mistake that Herman made, and all his troubles stem from his divorce. And I don't believe in divorce. Let me say this. I don't think he's right to tax the citizens, pay jurors and judges and courts where adults are concerned, and they can't settle their own trouble. I sometime say--now where children are involved--that's a different thing. But where people are grown, and they want to go to court and air their linen and argue it out, I think it's a shame to tax the taxpayers with that. I think if can't get along, they ought to take a gun and shoot each other.

HENDERSON: [laughs] [There would] be a lot of murders in Georgia, though.

ARNALL: Well, there ought to be. [HENDERSON laughs] Why tax you and me if people ain't got enough sense to get along?

HENDERSON: Let me back to some of these--

ARNALL: Now if they want to quit, fine, but I don't want them arguing in the courts and taking time and money. That's ridiculous.

HENDERSON: [chuckles] Mr. [James Harrison] Gray [Sr.] comes out--he announces for the governorship--as the Talmadge organization candidate. How do you assess his candidacy?

ARNALL: Well, he was a part of that same syndrome that I call. I never thought he'd get anywhere and he didn't. He wasn't known except for the Albany region as a newspaper editor. And you know sometimes I say [that] I'm all for people coming into Georgia from other parts of the country. I welcome them, I'm just delighted, and we want more and more of them. But actually I've observed that if you want to make a professional southerner, some times a fellow from New Hampshire, Vermont, or New York, he waves the flag and ...

[HENDERSON chuckles] And brother Gray was a professional southerner.

HENDERSON: How about Mr. Maddox?

ARNALL: Well, how do I assess what now?

HENDERSON: His candidacy.

ARNALL: Well, he ran for governor on the white supremacy platform. He had a baseball bat, depicted as one of the last who fought the court's decisions. And I've never understood how many responsible Georgians could set things back up as a supreme court and say the court was wrong and I'm right, so we defy the court. I've never quite understood the logic of that. Whether a court decision is a popular or unpopular, it's a sinew that holds society together. And if every man is going to be a supreme court, then no decision in the court would have any efficacy what so ever. So, I felt Lester was a--and by the way, he's changed too. They've all changed. And I'm just so glad to welcome them into the family.

[HENDERSON chuckles] And he's a good man. He and I are good friends too, good friends.

HENDERSON: Mr. [James Earl (Jimmy)] Carter [Jr.]---

ARNALL: He's [Maddox] having a dinner the fifth of June to try to raise money for his debt, and I'm going to be there actively. Look, I like Lester Maddox, and he's had a hard time. And he came a long way. He just rolled at the crest of the anti-black attitude, and then when he ran later to change, you see, he got called out. But he appointed a number of blacks to office and he's... I think that Lester's a good man. I'm glad to say that [as] I've become older, I've become more compassionate and understanding, and second, many of my old antagonists have adopted my views nicely.

HENDERSON: [chuckles] Mr. Carter runs for the governorship for the first time, and there is some speculation in the press that he would pull votes away from you, being a more moderate candidate than the others that we have discussed. Did you see him as a threat to your candidacy?

ARNALL: No, never did.

HENDERSON: Did you---

ARNALL: As a matter of fact he surprised me that he got as many votes as he did. You know the way it ran, I think in the primary, I led and then Maddox and then Carter not far behind him. That surprised me, of course. You know, when we talk about the black vote or the Catholic vote or the Baptist vote or legion vote or the labor vote, that's all for the birds. Nobody gets them all. And while I'm a very liberal, progressive guy and still am, I like to say I'm a revolutionist in the best since of the word, meaning not shooting people, but constantly improving government. And doing things that are shocking, from the standpoint of like, I want to be on the food stamp program. I just think that it's just ridiculous that we have two million people sitting in judgment on who's going to get Social Security benefits or whatever benefits, if they give us all those benefits and then let those who want to earn a better life and have a size family--we'd save a fortune, but it's too simple. [HENDERSON chuckles] You know that's the type thing I say I'm a revolutionist. Like the lawyers and the doctors all fought Social Security, and I led the fight. Well, those who led the fight to put us

on, I said Hell, we're paying for it, why don't we get some of the benefits? And now they all say it's fine. But you know change comes slowly. OK.

HENDERSON: So you did not see Mr. Carter as a threat to your candidacy.

ARNALL: No. He was a sleeping candidate to me; he slipped up. He did well, but he got beat.

HENDERSON: Mr. [Garland Turk] Byrd's candidacy simply collapsed.

ARNALL: Never did get off the ground. Garland is a good boy. See, he was a creature of the Talmadge administration. And there were others ahead of him, like Vandiver and Maddox and the same psychology. Although Garland, again, as time has gone on, his views have changed too, and he's a good man. [unintelligible] I don't have an enemy in the world. [HENDERSON chuckles] I like them all.

HENDERSON: In the primary you got 29.4 percent of the vote, Mr. Carter came in with, well he got 20.9. You put those together, it comes up with a little over 50 percent of the vote.

ARNALL: Right.

HENDERSON: If Carter had not been in there, do you think you would have got most of his votes?

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ARNALL: Yes.

HENDERSON: So in a way---

ARNALL: Not all of them.

HENDERSON: Not all of them, but still not enough to let you win the primary without a runoff?

ARNALL: I'm afraid that's true, and again I hate these runoffs. I've never seen one yet that they don't get together and maneuver. It lets the politicians control rather than the people. And what usually happens, whoever is the top man, all the others gang up on him 'cause their hurt that they got knocked out. And they say We're gonna knock him out. Now, getting back to Jimmy, after the primary was over I got in touch with Jimmy Carter and asked him to support me. And the word came back he would if I would make him chairman of the Democratic Executive Committee. And my position was I had my crowd to head that up. So, the word was he would vote for me, but he wouldn't be active, which he was not. Although in his presidential race, I was the first person in Georgia of any prominence that came out for him. And I made speeches for him in Florida, Pennsylvania, and I met with Charlie [Hughes] Kirbo and Phil [Philip Henry] Alston [Jr.] and helped get the papers to

support him. They weren't for him, but our position was he was a Georgian, we ought to be for a Georgian. And so I was enthusiastic for Jimmy Carter. He did not make a good president, but still it was a miracle [that] he got elected. He was an honorable man, a decent man, a sincere man, but he lacked the flair, the fire of leadership that makes people go—I saw Ronnie [Ronald Wilson] Reagan the other night on television. Ronnie's a good friend of mine. I used to be—I was head of the motion picture industry [Society of Independent Motion Picture Producers] in Hollywood when he was head of the Screen Actors [Guild], and we were close friends. He then was a liberal Democrat, and Jane Wyman [born Sarah Jane Mayfield] divorced him because she said he made speeches all night, crazy speeches [unintelligible] [HENDERSON laughs]. But when you saw Ronnie the other night, if you saw him, he could communicate; he had the fire. [There] wasn't anything he said any good-- I don't believe in his program--but he came across well. As a matter of fact, politics is somewhat acting. And Jimmy was never a great speaker, but he was a very sincere fellow. He'll go down in history as a honorable, fine president from the South, but his administration will not get high marks.

HENDERSON: Do you think it hurt you in the primary, your image as a liberal?

ARNALL: Oh yes, [unintelligible]. But I've never hidden it. I still am. When I was out making speeches [ARNALL chuckles] for George [Stanley] McGovern one of my rich clients called me from Buffalo, New York, and said What in the hell are you out making speeches with this crazy fellow, McGovern, who is a socialist and all that? And I said Well, I'm doing it not for me but I'm doing it for you. He said What do you mean? I said Come

the revolution, you're going to need a friend. [ARNALL and HENDERSON laugh] He said OK, yeah, sure. But let me say this: Anyone who has a conservative image they get hurt or a liberal image or a progressive image. But who cares? The only way you can be universally popular is do nothing and take no position, but it wouldn't be a bit of fun. I like to shake up; I like to stir it up. Yeah sure it hurt, but it helped too.

HENDERSON: I think you made a statement in the campaign that--something to the effect of your loyalty to the Democratic Party. I can't remember exactly what it was—

ARNALL: I said I'm a local, state, and national Democrat, and anyone who don't like it can go to hell.

HENDERSON: Do you regret making that statement?

ARNALL: No.

HENDERSON: If you had to do over again would you make it again?

ARNALL: Yes. That's the way I feel. Why hide it? Our biggest calamities right now [is] what's happening in this country with the multi-millionaire bankers and the Federal Reserve raising interest rates to an exorbitant level—going to break all the houses. People can't buy homes. Automobile people have gone. Business is gone. And they say [that] they're doing it to fight inflation, but they're letting you and me fight inflation and they're making more

money every day. If they continue that type [of] stuff, dividing the rich and the poor and decimating the middle class, it's just a matter of time until they're going to rue the day because we have so many social and political changes in this country [that] your head will shrink.

HENDERSON: What kind of support, to your knowledge, did Mr. Talmadge give Mr. Gray?

ARNALL: Well, I don't know. My whole feeling is that Herman and his crowd were watching and they would go support the strongest one of their crowd. I don't think they had any personal involvement at this time. I think they were for Vandiver until he got knocked out, I mean he had his heart-related health problems. Then I think they played around. I don't think they gave Gray much active support.

HENDERSON: OK.

ARNALL: Some, but not much.

HENDERSON: What would be the difference between your philosophy in '66 and Mr. Carter's? Was he—

ARNALL: I was more liberal than him. I still am.

HENDERSON: Now you emphasized in the campaign that you were a fiscal conservative.

ARNALL: Oh, I've always been.

HENDERSON: But liberal—

ARNALL: Social, social. In other words, even when I was governor, I did it both ways. One day I would have something very liberal to...like doing away with the poll tax, dropping to eighteen year-old voting, and all that kind of stuff. Letting the blacks vote in the white primary. And then the next day, I'd tighten up on the budget. You see, I'm the only governor to ever paid the state out of debt, without raising taxes. We've never been out of debt since and never will [be]. My budget was seventy-five million [dollars]. Today it's three and a half billion or something like that. But, let me go back. Money values are relative. When I was attorney general, my salary was fifty-five hundred a year, and I saved half of it. When I was governor, it was seven thousand a year, and I saved half of it. We now start boys off in my law firm, not dry behind the ears right out of college, at twenty-eight thousand a year. So, everything's relative in certain terms.

HENDERSON: In the run-off, Mr. Maddox, of course, defeats you.

ARNALL: And I didn't make a speech through that entire battle. I just couldn't imagine the people of Georgia supporting a fellow who was against law and order and supports baseball bats. I just couldn't imagine it. It was not Lester Maddox that defeated me, again, it was the Republicans.

HENDERSON: Mr. Maddox--I interviewed him yesterday--he vigorously denies that. He says [that] there wasn't that many Republicans around.

ARNALL: That's what he says, and he called me! Let me tell you this. We've talked about this; we have. If he was sitting here we would say the same thing. He called me one night at Newnan. He said Governor, you're gonna beat me in the election if you don't stop this write-in thing. And I said Lester, I didn't start it, and I'm not going to stop it. If you win or lose, I'm not going to have anything to do with that. I'm going to vote for you as a Democrat. And you would be interested in this, too. I say that saved him. He'll tell you he'd have won without that.

Now then, let me tell one other thing. I had a number of bankers and financial people who were backing me to win. See, they've changed all the rules. Now, you can't get no money to run for office. It's too involved, and I think were getting rather rich people to run for office. I figure it costs three million dollars to run for governor. Where are you going to get three million dollars unless you are a rich man? But anyway, when the primary was over and Lester Maddox got in against, was the Democratic nominee, against Bo Callaway. These rich people came to me, as bankers, and they had a statement prepared for me to endorse Bo Callaway. And then all my debts would vanish like the dew. And I ended up owing a million dollars, which I spent a million of my money, and then I owed a million when it was over. Now I never cried about it, I paid it off. It's a game, that's a hazard, anybody gets in something you may lose, you know, it's fun. But anyway, all I had to do was endorse Bo and all this million that I owed, roughly, to the banks and whatnot, would vanish like the wind.

And I said You're crazy. And I made such a bigger speech to this crowd [that] they ended up voting for Maddox. [ARNALL and HENDERSON laugh] But, I ended up with the debt, and that was interesting.

HENDERSON: Let's see...

ARNALL: See, Bo Callaway's father, Cason [Jewell] Callaway, was on my board of regents. He supported me very actively. The Callaway family and I been close friends. I got Bo out of the army. Cason said he needed him to, you know, and he was in the army so I got in touch with Walter Bumblom[?] and got him out. But that's, you know... [HENDERSON chuckles] And I like him. We're good friends. This is a rather interesting thing. My son Alvan [Slemons Arnall], who practices law with me, about five months ago had a little boy. And we were out at the Piedmont Hospital, they have a room there with all the babies. And Alvan was pointing out, and here was Bo standing right by me, who had a little granddaughter. So, Alvan said to me, he said Daddy, he said, When I came out here this morning earlier, they had the name spelled wrong. They had it A-R-N-O-L-D and I went in there and gave them a riot act, and they changed right. And now it's spelled right. And Bo said I know how you spell it. You can spell it seventy-four different ways. [HENDERSON and ARNALL laugh]

HENDERSON: Who was behind or who was organizing the write-in movement? You say you were not involved with it.

ARNALL: Not at all. I never touched it at all.

HENDERSON: But somebody was pushing it. Who was pushing it?

ARNALL: Well, I don't think any one. I think some of the people that did it, some of the newspaper people were active in it--not the editors--but I mean people that worked for the news. I think some of the black leadership was active in it. I think some of the voted, loyal political followers were interested in it, but to me it was a spontaneous thing. I don't know how it came around. They just didn't want Maddox or Callaway. They thought either one would be calamitous to the state. So, they organized a campaign, and they threw out, I don't know how many votes they ended up with, but they threw out hundreds and thousands of them because they didn't spell my name right or something, but anyway. [laughs] I don't know how to tell you about it.

I went to California. I represented many of the motion picture people--still--like Walt Disney Motion Picture Association [Walt Disney Productions]. I went out there, my wife and I, spent a couple of weeks and that was all fun. I didn't want to have anything to do [with it].

HENDERSON: So, you were out of the state while—

ARNALL: Most of the time.

HENDERSON: Most of the time. What percentage of the black vote do you think you got in the primary? Do you have any idea?

ARNALL: All that voted. They would walk the creek banks in a lot of the counties you could contribute to the black vote. I could go down the list if I cared. But the black vote counties along the coast of Georgia: Liberty, Long, McIntosh, down in some sections of my part of the state, Meriwether, Henry, Black[?] and on and on. I got the black vote. No doubt about that.

HENDERSON: If looking back on it now, is there anything you would have done differently if you had it to do all over again?

ARNALL: No.

HENDERSON: You would have done it at the same time--

ARNALL: Exactly. Again, let me give you a little history. When I got ready to run for governor, I was attorney general. And Governor James M. [Middleton] Cox, who--the Cox people own the papers now. At that time, he owned the papers [Miami?], Dayton, Ohio, bought the *Atlanta Journal* from the Gray family. And he was my "father confessor," I would really guess. He taught me all about politics. I used to go up to Dayton and spend the weekend, my wife and I with him and his family at Trails' End--that was his home. Well, both papers, for the first time in history, supported me. They were independently owned

then, Cox and Clark-Howard owned the *Constitution*, [and] that's the only time they've ever been together--up until they had joint ownership. But, when the Supreme Court came down with its several decisions having to do with integration, I went to Miami [Florida] to see Governor Cox, and I say--he had a winter home down there. And I say Governor, it's just a matter of days and weeks until I'm gonna have to take a position to either defy the courts, as Herman [Talmadge] did it and go to glory for years, or else I'm gonna have to say we accept the decision of the court, and we will enforce it (Supreme Court). Now I'm gonna tell you what I gonna do, so you'll be prepared. I'm gonna stand up to the court, and they're gonna put their whip on my back and it's going to be rough. If I came out defying the courts, I will be able to enjoy Georgia politics for the next thirty years. But I can't do that, and I want your help. And he said I'd think a lot less of you if you could do it.

So, you know, there are some things in this world that are beyond politics. You have instincts and you have feeling. You don't play the game always to win at the sacrifice of a basic principle. Now if it's some little ol' compromise or little thing here, there and yonder, I'm not averted to that at all. But where there's a fundamental involved and whether you take a position as the [founding] fathers did when they wrote the Constitution, "All men are created equal"--we have equality. To say we don't, I couldn't be a lawyer if I believed that. And that's a hell of a law.

Anyway, my point was that every position I've ever taken is correct in my view and time has proven so. If you'll take my book to [show to them this evening?], there's not a thing in there that I wrote years ago that I will change and that hadn't come true. If it hadn't come true, it will. Because this was the natural events that were coming. And of course the great problem with the South was that we--it was an economic problem, basically. After the

War Between the States [United States Civil War] we were the only subjugated nation--it was called the Confederacy Nation--that was ground down. And after the war, instead of trying to rehabilitate us, everything was done to keep us in virtual poverty. And therefore, in the South there were not enough jobs to go around. And the black man was an economic competitor to the white man, so in order to keep him in the ditch with our foot on his neck, we stayed in the ditch with him. And it was only when *Georgia vs. Pennsylvania [Railroad Company et al.]* came about--and this is a terrible thing to say--but I'll take full credit for the economic growth and development of our region. Had it not been for that we could not have done it.

Down in Dawson, Georgia, Terrell County, there is a peanut company down there called Cinderella Foods [then part of Stevens Industries; now Golden Peanut Company]. Ed Stevens operated it, when I was coming along. He's dead now. He was the guy that founded it. But, he could ship raw peanuts from Dawson to Chicago and have them made into peanut butter and ship them back to Atlanta, cheaper than he could ship finished peanut butter from Dawson to Atlanta. So, we were ruined, that's why we had sweated labor, where we had discrimination, we kept working people in [building?] and whatnot, in virtual slavery because we had to solve it someway. We couldn't compete. So, I say that the greatest thing like Steve Mitchell said that happened to South next to the boll weevil was that *Georgia vs. Pennsylvania Railroad* thing. So, I wouldn't change anything, that's correct.

HENDERSON: Right before the primary there was a racial demonstration—

ARNALL: That killed me. If it hadn't been for that, I would have won. Write-in [unintelligible]. And I think it was contrived. I've always thought so.

HENDERSON: Who do you think contrived it?

ARNALL: That I don't know. But I think had it not been for that, I would have won. I would have walked away with it, because, look, we had all of the--it's the first time in history that *television stations* endorsed a candidate. I can hear George Heald[?] of the WSB Channel 2 on the television saying [that it was] the only time they've ever endorsed a candidate and probably ever would, but it was to the welfare of Georgia and the South, the election. But, then that [makes "poof" sound] racial flare-up in the air, that was it. That intensified it. You've done some research on this.

HENDERSON: Yes, this is the last thing I'm doing, incorporating the interviews. Yes, I've spent many months reading newspapers and—

ARNALL: Done a lot of research.

HENDERSON: Yes. Well, I did my Master's thesis on the '46 election, which you are probably familiar with.

[HENDERSON and ARNALL chuckle]

HENDERSON: But, I have enjoyed the interview—

ARNALL: You know the '46 election, I supported Jimmy [James Vinson] Carmichael, and he got the most votes.

HENDERSON: Yes.

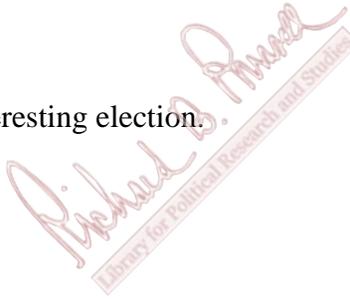
ARNALL: But the [county] unit system killed him.

HENDERSON: That's an interesting election.

ARNALL: Very, very good.

HENDERSON: Let's see, Mr. Arnall I think I have gone through my questions. Is there anything I'm leaving out that you think I should ask you?

ARNALL: If you got me started, I could talk for hours on any facet of the thing. I had an unusual political career. I was the youngest attorney general. I was in and out of government before I was forty. I have done well in the law practice and business activities. The strange positions I have taken haven't hurt me. For example, when I tell you I'm an extreme liberal, a revolutionary democrat--in the best sense of the word--the reason is I love my country and I love the capitalistic system. And I want democracy preserved, because with all of its imperfections it's still the finest government in the world today. And I want



the capitalistic system preserved. I think it's still the best. But, I want the doors open so more people can be capitalistic and give more people a chance.

And I am very much concerned with what's happening in America today, where a cleavage is becoming more apparent between the rich and the poor. And when you get enough poor people drowned down, then the capitalistic system is in real danger. So, that's why, when I'm a liberal and all my views, I really think I do a great service to preserve and not to destroy the capitalistic system and our democratic concepts as well. At least that's the solace I have, that I'm making a contribution. And that is why I am sick and tired and provoked with Jimmy Carter and Ronnie Reagan, who let the Federal Reserve Board [Federal Reserve Board at Washington or Federal Reserve Board (United States)] wreck the country as they did. And every man on that board is a multi-millionaire. They don't know anything, but get all you can. Every bank in the country is making more money than they've ever made. Money funds, the rich are getting richer, you buy municipal bonds. I've got one client that's got eight million dollars worth of municipal bonds, doesn't pay a dime's tax, which is fine, except there ought to be a limit. They ought to pay some tax--not on the first million they make or hundred thousand, but they ought to pay. But, the same with all the tax shelters we've got. The rich are getting richer by the day and the poor are getting poorer. And that's not good. That's what my complaint is about.

The other thing I say is, that I'm provoked about, is that we don't go on to come to grips with the energy problem. We can never curb inflation as long as balance the budget or be unbalanced the next day, as long as we reduce taxes, that's meanness. Doesn't help poor people—it helps the rich, but not the poor or the old. But, what we need to do is to come up with an alternative source of energy. Now, I've talked about it 'til I'm blue in the face, and I

know I'm right, and in time it will be proven to be right. The Earth is two-thirds water. Water is two-thirds hydrogen. We've been sending the rocket ships out into outer space since the beginning with liquid hydrogen. I've been buying stock in companies that make liquid hydrogen. It is clean, no residue, like atomic energy. We can just put it back into the ocean, or wherever you get it from. And they say it'll cost a lot of money, which it will, but on a volume basis we will have it available and usable at a reasonable price for people. Now, I own some stock in oil companies and if you read the last quarterly report, all of them but one were losing money. Well, their getting smart, because why should they pump, utilize their inventory or their resources that are in the ground to sell now, when in time gas will be ten dollars a gallon. And yet, Reagan has cut the appropriation for a new source of energy. Jimmy never emphasized it. And now we're going around in circles until we come--you see, agriculture needs to be on wheels, distribution, wheat, everything [unintelligible]. And, damn it, we just talk about taxes and old-fashioned horse and buggy stuff. Well, so much for that.

HENDERSON: I found one more question that I need to ask you. Do you think there was an alternative to the legislature electing Mr. Maddox or Mr. Callaway? Do you think the legislature had to or knew one of the candidates got a majority?

ARNALL: That was the law and that's right.

HENDERSON: OK.

ARNALL: One final thing, I tell you though. I was telling you I've always enjoyed politics. Every time I've been in politics, we always get into a rhubarb. Do you remember the three-governor controversy?

HENDERSON: Yes.

ARNALL: It was a rhubarb. And they write in rhubarb. We always did this rhubarb, I did it sure enough. But, I think there was no alternative on the constitution of the state. The two highest men they select from the legislature. Lester was never elected governor and M.E. [Melvin Ernest] Thompson was never a governor, he was my executive secretary. I created in the constitution the office of lieutenant governor. Even my secretary--I appointed him revenue commissioner--he ran for lieutenant governor and was elected. But, when the courts held that I was governor for four more years, and as I knew they would because I talked to them. I said it's too important to take a chance. It is right or wrong or is it right. OK. But M.E. became acting governor--he was never governor. And Lester was governor, but he was never elected by the people. Those are two unusual things.

HENDERSON: OK, Mr. Arnall.

ARNALL: Well, you were nice to come and see me. I'm sorry—

[End of Interview]

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