

generation is afraid of depression; and the crowd today don't know what a depression is, and they don't listen very much if you tell them. And I'm sure that we've had depressions before the 1929 stock market crash and the years of depression, which followed 1929--in October--but I don't believe that we had any as damaging to the economy of the country as that one. Of course, FDR had plans to get the economy back on its course and being a Democrat--our office holders naturally were Democrats, and I think they went along with him and pitched in and helped. Course, when he ran he was going to economize; he didn't stay on that economy program very long, but he ran on it in 1932. And then he began to prime the pump and they still stayed with him. And I think that's understandable from the point of view that something had to be done in the country.

CATES: So you think that's why Russell supported him, just out of necessity and--as did the other senators?

GRIFFIN: Yes.

CATES: Did you have any active part in any of Russell's campaigns like the 1936 campaign?

GRIFFIN: No, no, I didn't have an active part. Back in there in those days I was running myself and I was doing everything I could for my own wagon to give it a push and I didn't take too much stock in it. First time when I--they called on me--and I was delighted to do it--was in 1952. Of course, in 1948 Russell became a prominent contender for the Democratic nomination, not of his own choosing, but of the Democratic Convention of that year in Philadelphia. When (James) Strom Thurmond and Fielding (Lewis) Wright pulled out of the convention and formed a third party, Dick Russell was the leading--certainly Southern--contender in that Democratic Convention and picked up several hundred votes. Now, in 1952, all of us really went after that Democratic nomination for Dick Russell, and we had a fund-raising dinner at the Biltmore Hotel and raised thirty or forty thousand dollars for Dick's campaign. Senator George was there, (James F.) Jimmy Byrnes from South Carolina was there among other notables, and I was Lieutenant Governor at the time. In addition to the state-wide, fund-raising dinner at the Biltmore in Atlanta, various counties and sections or areas of the state put on barbecues and fish fries and sold tickets and sent the profits from the fish fried and barbecue dinners to Dick's campaign fund. I think I made seventeen speeches in Georgia that summer at these fund-raising affairs in every section of the state. I also made a couple of speeches in Alabama and four or five in Florida. As you remember, Dick swept the state of Florida till he got to the gold coast, and of course, (Carey Estes) Kefauver was the darling of the gold coast. And he had some trouble there. But the overall vote in Florida, why, Dick won out over Kefauver handily; but that one section had a right, of course, to get at its own delegates by virtue of who they voted for in the preferential primary. But he had no trouble anywhere else in the South. And at that time Texas was with us 100 percent; they were very fond of Dick Russell out in Texas. He had sort of also acted as tutor to Lyndon Johnson when he came into the United States Senate. And I--for one--in 1956, when I took the delegation to Chicago, I pledged that I hope we can pay back these courtesies and kindnesses that Texas had extended Dick Russell twice--once in Philadelphia and again in Chicago. But, of course, it didn't work out that way. I went up ahead of the delegation and had appointments and set down in conference with Governor (William Averell) Harriman, a contender, and the late

Adlai Stevenson. And then I went over to Conrad Hilton to talk to Senator Lyndon Johnson--of course, that was in 1956--and I asked him a question, if he was a candidate for the nomination; and he looked at me and said, "Well, I'm a serious candidate but not an active candidate." I said, "Senator, you'll have to explain that to me again; I can't explain it to the Georgia delegation if I don't understand it." And he smiled and said, "Well, I'd like to have the nomination, but I'm not going to get out here and actively campaign for it." And I told him, I said, "Well, I'm satisfied you know more about politics in a minute than I will in a week, but they always told me a draft is something will work if you work at it hard enough." And of course, it turned out that way. We put one or two--we put one of our Georgians up. Dick didn't want his name to go before the convention a third time, but he was certainly the choice of all the Southern states. And as Harry Truman said, I think, "If he'd not been born in Winder, Georgia, or in the South, he would've been elected President of the United States." And of course, that's a pity--a man of his ability to be denied the highest office that the people in the nation can give because he happened to be born in some section of the country that they are not enamored of--let us say--and of course, I always resented that when they talk about prejudice and other things. There's very little likelihood in my time or yours--and I don't see any relief from it in the future--that a man from the South can get the nomination or win the presidency.

CATES: Governor Griffin, I'd like to ask you this--without divulging who told me this--but one person that I've interviewed--a well-respected person--said that he didn't believe that Russell would have become President even if he were born outside of the South because basically he is a conservative type person and that the time was just not right to elect a conservative regardless of where he was born. Would you like to maybe comment about that?

GRIFFIN: Well, I think that would be true today, but I don't think it was twenty years ago, and twenty-two years ago; course then it begins to turn then. Looked like the gimme crowd was in the majority even then, but that's because the gimme crowd was in charge of the conventions. I don't think that folks would have a chance to vote. I was at the convention when they had just told old Senator (Alben Williams) Barkley, who was the Vice-President, "You're too old, get out"--and it like to broke his heart. I watched the salute that the Chicago police department gave him as he left the hall, convention hall, as a tribute to him; Chicago's finest had several hundred policemen with white gloves, and they formed outside when the Senator and his wife came out.

CATES: Talking about Barkley?

GRIFFIN: Barkley, yes.

CATER: Was this 1949, or 1948 rather?

GRIFFIN: No, no, he was elected 1948--

CATES: Early fifties?

GRIFFIN: --but I believe this was 1952.

CATES: 1952. Do you think that Senator Russell considered himself as a serious candidate in 1952?

GRIFFIN: Well, yes and no. He knew the pitfalls in this thing and he knew the inside strategy, but I think he figured if--you know, you can't ever tell when a spark's going to cause a forest fire and that's why politics is not an exact science, cause it's got too much of the human element in it. And I think if he could have gotten the nomination--of course, he may have been in the same shoes of Adlai Stevenson. This--well, when (Dwight David) Eisenhower--Eisenhower was elected twice and it was the man--not anything particular that Eisenhower had done except he was a great hero, the supreme commander in World War II. It was just one of those times. But it took Eisenhower and it turned down Douglas MacArthur, who was just a passing word. So, you can't tell what politics will do. But I think this, in 1948--right along in there--I think, he would have had an excellent chance of becoming President of the United States if he could have gotten the nomination.

CATES: How many ballots did he get--do you recall--in 1948?

GRIFFIN: Oh, four hundred and something, but I can't remember just what they were (unintelligible) national.

CATES: Some people have said that if he had gotten the nomination and if he had gone on to be President that he might have changed his political philosophy somewhat. Do you think that that would have been true?

GRIFFIN: Well, I don't know. I sort of believe--course, they say any man that gets to the White House and most Senators all contract a case of Potomac fever--and he may have. Course, that's just speculation, I wouldn't know. But you didn't scare Dick off his position too much. Now, he was smart enough as a politician to roll a little with the punches. He issued a statement during that 1956 campaign that upset Harry Byrd and his Virginia delegation no end. Thought that something ought--the Taft-Hartley law ought to be amended. Well, of course, that's the last thing they wanted, and they had to have some quick breakfast conferences to talk that thing out.

CATES: Now, was that in 1956 or 1952?

GRIFFIN: 1956.

CATES: 1952 or 1956?

GRIFFIN: 1956.

CATES: The reason I ask--

GRIFFIN: No, right, 1952.

CATES: I think it was 1952. Right.

GRIFFIN: He wasn't a candidate in 1956.

CATES: That's right.

GRIFFIN: It was 1952.

CATES: Did he actually issue this campaign, or was it a misinterpretation of maybe what he had said?

GRIFFIN: I don't know what it was, but it was a breakfast meeting that he went to see the labor tycoons.

CATES: I was going to ask you specifically about that--you were at the 1952 convention, were you not?

GRIFFIN: Yes.

CATES: And someone had mentioned this earlier, and they had kind of led me to believe that it was really that he had not waived at all on this position, and that it was a misinterpretation by the press or--

GRIFFIN: Well, if you had eaten a man's bread at his breakfast you've got to say a little something encouraging in his atmosphere. And I don't know what Dick said, but he got back on the course anyway; but Harry Byrd and them got with him.

CATES: But you didn't remember waived that?

GRIFFIN: I remember the incident at the time.

CATES: Going back a little bit in time--I know in February of 1937, FDR asked for power to enlarge the Supreme Court to fifteen justices, and the same year in July the Senate defeated FDR's plan for increasing the Supreme Court membership. Did Russell ever discuss that with you in later life? I know you probably didn't know him too well at the time.

GRIFFIN: No, I don't recall that he did. But I think this: of course, that was really the first rebuff that the Congress had given. Now, the Court had handed him one or two on the PWA (Public Works Administration) and that sort of stuff and those recovery measures, but that's the first rebuff the United States Senate had given to Roosevelt, I think. And if you remember, that followed on the greatest victories that the President ever won. He carried everything but Maine and Vermont; he had forty-six out of forty-eight states, and yet, on that so-called court packing bill--that's what they called it--he lost it. But I can't recall ever talking--

BEGIN CASSETTE #105, Side 2

CATES: Governor, you will recall--and we've discussed it just a little bit--about the 1938 election where we had Senator Walter George challenged by Lawrence Camp. Lawrence Camp was, I've been told, a close friend of Russell; and, of course, Russell had worked with George for a number of years at that time as--both of them being Senators from Georgia. What was Russell's involvement in this campaign, either overtly or--?

GRIFFIN: I don't think Dick got involved in that campaign at all. You know, he could put his ear to the ground pretty good. He didn't tell me this, but I don't think he liked it very much when the late President Franklin Roosevelt came to Barnesville, Georgia, to make his speech to try to purge Walter F. George from the United States Senate. And while Lawrence Camp--Roosevelt's choice for the job--may have been a good friend of Dick Russell's, Dick always managed to look after Dick Russell's business first. And of course, the factor was the strength of Gene Talmadge, who was also running for the United States Senate; and Talmadge folks today will tell you Gene won that race in 1938, that they nipped him in two or three counties it was so close. But this I do believe: I believe if Roosevelt had not come to Barnesville and jumped on Walter George and challenged his right to sit in the United States as being a member of the horse and buggy element in our society, I think Gene Talmadge would definitely been elected to the United States Senate. Course, I know Talmadge folks--many of them--said, "Well, we like Roosevelt and we vote for Roosevelt for President, but he can't come down here and tell us whom to elect in a Georgia office." And so, they voted for Walter George, and normally would have voted for Gene Talmadge. So, those are things that you'll never be able to weigh in the balance and work out to anybody's satisfaction. Again that's politics, not an exact science. There's no way to determine what actually would have happened if something else had taken place. But I can't recall Dick Russell ever meddling with anybody else's politics but (only) Dick Russell's. And that's the thing that, I think, kept him out of trouble and kept him up on top. I can recall--in 1943, I was in New Guinea at the time and I was a battalion commander of a battalion of all Georgians for the most part, until we got replacements out of Nadzab (Papua New Guinea)--no, I believe it was John's Gulley at Port Moresby that time that Dick came over. But five United States Senators--Henry Cabot Lodge and a fellow named (James Michael) Mead from New York and Dick Russell and (Albert Benjamin) Happy Chandler. I don't recall the other senator, but there were five in the group; and they were visiting all the combat areas around the world where American troops were stationed and where American troops were fighting. And our brigade commander, who was a West Pointer, sent for me one day and said, "Do you know a fellow named Dick Russell?" And I said, "Certainly." He said, "Well, he's with the committee of senators and he's going to visit this area and he wants to see you and the Georgians." I said, "Well, fine." Well, it upset the General. I said, "Well, Dick Russell is not over here to be critical; he wants to assay the situation. He wants to get a firsthand view, and we'll have him out to eat with us in the jungle, and he'll enjoy seeing the fellows." And then I looked at him, I said, "Now, knowing him like I do, he's going to ask me for something that I don't have authority to give him." He said, "What's that?" I said, "A roster of these 800 Georgians I've got in my command and their next of kin and (their) address (es)." I said, "I don't have authority to give that to anybody." I said, "General, suppose I give it to you and let you give it to him because he's going to ask me for it." I said, "I know him, he doesn't miss a trick. He wants to be able, when he gets back to Washington, to have his staff write these 800 people and say, "Dear Mrs. Jones: I visited Willie's location in the jungle. The fellows are getting along fine. I went to check on him." And I said, "Of course, we will introduce him to as

many as can leave the guns at that time." And that was the second thing that Dick Russell asked me: "Have you got a list of these Georgians in your outfit and their next of kin and their addresses?" I said, "(Brigadier) General (Robert H.) VanValkinburgh, (Jr.), has, and he'll be glad to give it to you. I'm not authorized to give one to anybody, Senator." He said, "Well, I can understand that." And of course, I had somebody call the General and he was over there in three minutes with it. He (Russell) stayed all day with us, and he ate supper out there in the bunker at night. And then the next day he invited me, in the presence of the General, to come down to the plane, that General MacArthur was going to be down there; and he said to me, "Of course, you know General MacArthur?" And I said, "Well, I know who he is, but like colonels, battalion commanders don't go sashaying up to (the) commanding general of this whole theater--a West Pointer like Douglas MacArthur." But the next morning we went down to the strip and (before) the B-24 took off; Dick introduced me to General MacArthur. And of course, General MacArthur himself was no slouch about having folks look up information for him. "Why," he said, "of course, I know the 101st (Battalion (CA-AW)). I know their battle record. They got (battle) streamers for the Papuan, New Guinea and the Netherlands East Indies campaigns." Now, whether he thought about that ahead of time or whether he--I'm satisfied he had somebody look it up, because one little measly battalion of 800 or 900 men you wouldn't expect a brass as high as Douglas MacArthur to know anything about them particularly; but he immediately told Dick Russell he knew about them and looked at me and told me something about the outfit. So, both of them were pretty tall when it came to integrity and sense.

CATES: Did you have any other observations of the two of them together and their conversations maybe with one another?

GRIFFIN: No, it was jovial and confident. I think the General had sort of worked on Dick a little bit about getting him more stuff out in the Southwest Pacific. Course, all of it at that time was being masked for Europe and we didn't have too much out there--as we did a little later on. But, naturally, MacArthur wanted to fight his way back to the Philippines--that's where he wanted to get.

CATES: How close did Dick Russell come to actual combat?

GRIFFIN: Well, not too close, because our raids then were sporadic. They tried to catch you eating breakfast or they tried to catch you just about the crack of dawn or late in the afternoon. It was surprise stuff from Rabaul and other places.

CATES: Do you have any other recollections of your association with Senator Russell during the war years? I believe at that time he was on the Armed Services Committee.

GRIFFIN: No, I saw him when I came back to the States. About the tail end of the war, I became Adjutant General of Georgia and I made a trip to Washington on the reorganization after the war for the Georgia National Guard as Adjutant General. I saw him several times then and he was always very friendly and very helpful, and if I had any problems I'd talk to him about them. I know when I went to Eisenhower's second inauguration--I believe that was in 1957, in January--the Georgia delegation that went up to attend the inauguration were at the Woodner

Hotel in Washington, and Senator Russell had a quarters, he had an apartment there in the Woodner Hotel. And we, of course, had a cocktail party down there; he came and visited with us an hour or two. Of course, I had marched with him in years past in Legion--national Legion--parades down at Miami. He and I marched in the rain one time at Miami.

We were out there on the porch and I never will forget--I said--that was my third year in the Governor's office--and I said, "Senator, now, you know, when a Governor begins to reach the sundown part of his term, there are a lot of mischief makers and they'll probably be telling you that I'm thinking about running for the United States Senate." I said, "But, Dick, I supported you twice for President of the United States and I think that you're capable and able and should have been President of the United States; and that being so, you certainly suit me in the United States Senate, and I'm not thinking about running." He looked at me and he said, "Well, Marvin, I appreciate that." I said, "Now, you go on you won't have to worry about that at all, if you worried to begin with." I said, "I don't think you've worried very much. But if you were, you just forget about that. I don't care what anybody tells you; I wouldn't want to run against you for the United States Senate for two reasons: one is I think you're doing a swell job; number two is I don't like to get beat." And he said, "Well, don't you get upset about that; you're a young man, you still got time to run." He was that kind of fellow; you could talk to him. And he knew that I admired him and respected him and he knew that I thought he was doing an outstanding job--and he was. And he had lots of courage. I'll say this: he stood for his people and he stood for his section of the country; he was a champion of people's rights. So, of course, now some folks looking back, they don't want to put up a monument to him. They say he was narrow about this and narrow about that. I don't think so. He *was* our champion. He was a man of honesty and integrity. He didn't believe in this day-to-day change of government to this extent. He didn't believe in any instant nostrums that would change the society over night by the passage of an act in the Congress. That wasn't his idea. He believed in government for permanency just like the founding fathers did. You can have a shoot-out up there on Capitol Hill somewhere and the next morning they'd all run over there and want to take the gun away from everybody in the United States--instant nostrums to correct the ills and evils of society. He didn't believe in that. I think they ought to look a long time before they nullify some of the basic political philosophy of the founding fathers. That's my idea about it.

CATES: Going back in time, you were probably Adjutant General when Georgia had two governors. I know I was in the army and was overseas and I got a lot of kidding because of Georgia having two governors. Did Russell ever discuss this with you--?

GRIFFIN: No, he never opened his mouth about it; that didn't come within the scope and purview of his business. That's what I have said all the time. He may have within the confines of his own *boudoir* or his own office discussed it with good, close friends; but so far as making any public statement about it or doing anything about it, Dick Russell didn't get involved in that sort of thing.

CATES: You mentioned that you had an opportunity to see Russell with MacArthur. Did you have an occasion later to discuss with him or observe the Truman-MacArthur hearings at which time Russell presided?

GRIFFIN: Not too much, a little bit. And of course Russell had a great--he had a high regard and a great respect for Douglas MacArthur as a man and a soldier. Of course, Harry Truman's removal of MacArthur was strictly political. Harry made no bones about it. He said--like the old colored preacher who was riding a mule--the mule got to stepping so high; he got his back feet hung in his stirrups on the saddle, and said, "Well, now, if you're going to get up and ride, I'm going to get off." (Laughter)

CATES: Let's see--now, I believe in 1954, were you Lieutenant Governor at that time or were you--?

GRIFFIN: Yes, I was elected Governor in 1954.

CATES: 1954. This was the time of the historic Supreme Court decision--unanimously bans racial segregation in the public schools. Now, did Russell discuss this with you?

GRIFFIN: Yes, on occasion or two. But he didn't think it was a good thing at that particular time though he had no criticism of the Court much. His main complaint was that the line was getting too thin in the cities. At one time they had thirty-five or forty folks and then all at once they didn't have but about twenty. And that's the thing that upset him.

CATES: But he didn't actually discuss with you the implementation of this law, I meant this--

GRIFFIN: No, Dick fought these things as long and as hard as he could. He didn't advise anybody to disobey the law; that wasn't his way to do business. But he didn't think it was right--he could throw rocks just as fast as anybody else and with a little more effect.

CATES: What conversations do you recall, Governor that took place between you and Senator Russell during the time that you were Governor?

GRIFFIN: Well, we had him down to address the joint session, I think, when I was Governor. And we talked to--oh, just general topics of conversation at that time about the government and I told him what I was trying to do, work out. It was 1957 or 1956 in there that Congress passed the public highway bill which set up the interstate road system throughout the United States and we began work on that. I talked to him about that on one or two occasions. He was very interested, apparently, in the rural roads program I had going. We had a hundred million dollar rural roads program going, and then Public Highway Act put the interstate on us at the same time, and it looked like it was going to tax our engineers' facilities over there. Competent and good engineers were hard to find. But the Public Roads Bureau said that we could employ certain engineering firms to do that work if we wanted to, if we'd submit them the names of the ones we wanted to employ. They must have had one or two black sheep in there that they didn't want. I just up and asked them who they were, I wouldn't get them. They said, "We can't tell you that." So we divided out some of this stuff. My highway department didn't want to do that particularly; but in the interest of time, I said, "Let's get one reputable firm and assign them a stretch of 100 miles on say, I-75, and let them work up all their stuff for the bridges and the roads and the levels everything else. Then, all we'll have to do is advertise for bids in the leftover segments along the

way"--and we finally did some of that. We must have had five or six working out there at one time, because you couldn't take your regular personnel--engineering personnel--from the State Highway Department and get very far with eleven hundred and odd miles of interstate--four-lane, limited access highways-with all the overpasses, bridges, cloverleafs, everything else.

CATES: Senator Russell was instrumental in helping you in getting the money for this?

GRIFFIN: No. Well, not so much the money but ironing out the little stuff--what I said about employing other engineers. I think he probably had something to do with the Bureau's policy that they established on that. We went on with our rural road program; and of course, we grabbed hold of a big segment of that interstate road--highway--but we also employed private engineering firms like Robert and Company, and Griner, and others for certain segments of it. Of course, that, you know, was paid for (with) ninety percent federal funds and ten percent state funds on the purchase of the rights of way and engineering and everything else.

CATES: In 1957 when Eisenhower sent army troops into Little Rock, Arkansas, to quell the mob and to protect the school integration, you were Governor at the time. Did you discuss this with Russell?

GRIFFIN: I can't remember that I did. I don't remember that that one particular thing--whether I discussed it with him or not--but I discussed it with thousands of other folks. I know he didn't like it; he thought it could have been done another way. And I did, too, and I still think so.

CATES: In 1960, the U. S. admitted that our U-2 plane was spying on Russia. Did you ever discuss this with Russell?

GRIFFIN: No.

CATES: You did not?

GRIFFIN: No, I did not. I was down here then for the most part.

CATES: In Bainbridge?

GRIFFIN: In Bainbridge--doing some politicking, but I didn't recall discussing that with the Senator.

CATES: Did you have any contact with him in the early sixties after you went out of office as Governor?

GRIFFIN: Well, no, not a great deal. I would see him from time to time. We'd have a Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner or something in Atlanta, or we'd have some other fund-raising dinner. When he'd come to the Capitol when I was Governor, he'd always come to the office--and believe that when I was out of the Governor's office I'd see him over at the Dinkler, I'd see him this place or that--and we were on very, very friendly terms.

CATES: I know you had mentioned that he never has become involved, or never did become involved, in anybody's political campaign. Did you ever ask him for support in various races that you ran?

GRIFFIN: Well, yes, I remember on one or two occasions I asked him for his good will and his support. And he about--told me he didn't take part in other folks 'campaign and that's why--no, he didn't. I never heard of a place in the world where he sandbagged me at all, where he had any comment to make one way or the other. He was very complimentary when--on certain occasions where I was there and he knew I'd been for him all the time and he knew what work I did. I got some nice letters from him after I made speeches in his behalf--letters of appreciation. I knew he knew about it. But I think we'll go a long time before we ever have another fellow in the United States Senate with the ability and the know-how that Dick Russell had.

CATES: Did you ever discuss with him later about the Cuban Crisis?

GRIFFIN: No, I don't recall that I did.

CATES: Or the assassination of John F. Kennedy and his serving on the Warren Commission?

GRIFFIN: No, no, I don't think--I don't recall. I may have, but I just don't recall it--anything specific.

CATES: How about, in 1966, when Carl Sanders was making noises like he was going to oppose Russell?

GRIFFIN: Well, I never did think he would. I think that was just a little wishful thinking. It wouldn't have made any difference if he had, and I think Sanders was smart enough to know that.

CATES: Did Russell contact you for support at that time?

GRIFFIN: No.

CATES: He did not?

GRIFFIN: I don't think Dick Russell ever opened his mouth. I know he didn't to me, or nobody else has ever recalled--having said anything about it. I don't think so. I don't think Dick was worried about Sanders running against him, not only Sanders but also anybody else.

CATES: How about the 1970 election? Jimmy Carter claims Russell's endorsement or rather claimed Russell's endorsement during that campaign. Do you want to comment on that?

GRIFFIN: Well, I don't think there was anything to that, except when they got around to having to make a choice between a Democrat and a Republican down here. I think maybe Dick might have said something about the Democrat. I don't know. But I'm proud of that time. I'd bet a farm

he ain't opened his mouth in the primary; I'd wager a farm, if I had a good one, that he didn't open his mouth.

CATES: Between Carter and Sanders?

GRIFFIN: Yes.

CATES: In the primary?

GRIFFIN: In the primary. Now, I'm inclined to believe--knowing him as I think I knew him--that he called on the fellow to back the Party in the general election. I think he'd have done that for you or me if we were the Democratic standard-bearers. He was a Democratic himself. I think it's a matter of course he would have done that. And I don't remember hearing too much shouting about that.

CATES: So what you're saying is he really endorsed the Democratic ticket and not an one person or persons on the ticket?

GRIFFIN: That's right.

CATES: On the day that he died, you'll recall that Senator (Robert Carlyle) Byrd became the majority whip of the Senate and he had the proxy vote of Senator Russell. Would you like to comment about that?

GRIFFIN: Well, now, let me see.

CATES: That was on January 21 of this year. He defeated (Edward Moore) Teddy Kennedy you know--

GRIFFIN: Yes.

Cates: --for that position. And Senator Byrd had made the statement that had he not had Senator Russell's proxy vote, he would not have even attempted to obtain that post.

GRIFFIN: Well, I think that's right, and I don't see anything wrong with it. Of course, he--Russell was living at the time when Byrd brought his proxy in with him--just checking to see about it--and I think that's the way Dick would have wanted it.

CATES: Governor, what would you say is the most outstanding personality trait of Russell?

GRIFFIN: Well, his--I would say his political acumen. That's what the whole thing boils down to. He knew when to fight and he knew when to say nothing. He tended to his business and the people's business the best he knew how. He didn't get embroiled in other folks' affairs. He knew that change would come about; he fought some of it and some of it he didn't fight. But I think in

the long run it was his honesty and integrity--and he said that he learned most of those principles at his mother's knee--and he was a big man in my opinion.

CATES: One thing I failed to mention to you was, of course, in 1964 (Begin Cassette #106, Side 3) the U. S. Supreme Court ruled that the district of both houses and the state legislature must be substantially equal in population. Did Russell ever discuss that with you?

GRIFFIN: I don't recall that he did, but I don't see how they can set--they've got a double standard there. They don't have a single standard. They've got one house proportioned according to population in the national congress, but we can't do it in the state. And I'll tell you this; those left-wingers would change it if they wasn't afraid to try in the United States government. But there's no reason why both houses in the state got to be proportioned according to the population. Senators represent land areas; Senators of Georgia ought to represent land areas as well as people, sections, and so forth.

CATES: Did you ever discuss with Russell the various filibusters that he conducted in Washington on--?

GRIFFIN: Oh, we probably talked about them from time to time, and he would bemoan the fact that his line was getting mighty thin. I remember--again, I think he had the vision and the wisdom to know when to filibuster and when not to. And he didn't join Strom Thurmond. You know, Strom conducted one of about forty hours, but Dick didn't join that one. That was back in the fifties.

CATES: Governor, what can you say to future researchers and historians that would better enable them to know something about the human qualities of Senator Russell? I mean what he did in the Senate is a matter of public record and well documented, but as far as knowing his human traits and characteristics, what can you say about the Senator?

GRIFFIN: Well, the Senator had the hamlets and the branch heads and the boondocks and the little people--farmers, merchants--he had them in mind as the controlling factor in our government. Now, he didn't believe in tycoons in anybody's business--I say tycoons--he fought big labor at times because he didn't believe it was good for the country. He fought encroachment of federal power because he didn't think that was within the scope and purview of our constitution and what this democracy of ours should be doing. I don't think he ever believed that the rabble should run the country anymore than he would believe that a dictator should run the country. The man was human. I said he had the small-town approach to major problems. You say, "Well, you can't simplify them like that"--but basically, I think that's what endeared him to the rank and file of the folks.

CATES: He had a knack--what you're saying--for getting to the heart of the matter, and even a complex problem he could see through it in so many instances and cover the heart of it?

GRIFFIN: Get to the meat of the nut right away.

CATES: Governor Griffin, I really sense a keen responsibility in talking to somebody like yourself who knew Russell dating back to the 1930 period, and I certainly don't want to terminate an interview and leave anything unsaid that you might want to say about him. Can you think of anything else that you might want to add at this particular taping?

GRIFFIN: No, again, something comes to mind. I visited with my children one time up at Gettysburg, (Pennsylvania), spent Sunday up there at the battlefield; and I came back in a week or so, and I sat down and wrote a little feature article on Gettysburg. I had checked in up there the number of Virginia and North Carolina regiments that were committed to (George Edward) Pickett's charge, and they didn't have--something like thirty-eight Virginia regiments and nineteen North Carolina regiments were committed in that charge--wasn't too many Georgians. Now, there were a lot of Georgians that belonged to these regiments but I mean Georgia regiments as such. Dick read it and wrote me a letter. He didn't like (it), too much.

CATES: Didn't like your article?

GRIFFIN: Well, he didn't think I gave Georgians enough credit for it. And I wrote him back and I said, "I'm satisfied that in the Virginia and North Carolina regiments there were plenty of Georgians, but I was talking about numbered organizations that--the regiments that were committed in that charge." And he wrote me back again and said, "Well, I can understand that"--but he thought--he said and he put a question mark--he thought this Georgia regiment and that Georgia regiment was in that charge. But the plaque didn't say so at Gettysburg. So, he was a keen student of history. I don't know who showed him the piece. Oh, he wasn't salty about it; he said--I must have found something he didn't know and I suspect he did some checking on his own. I mean that's the kind of fellow he was. He didn't say I was wrong, because the way he put it "I think" and put a question mark. That's just one of the things that would endear a public servant with as much responsibility as he had. I think it would make a fellow feel, "Well, now, we've got a real man there."

CATES: Do you have any idea why he never married?

GRIFFIN: No. Now, I didn't talk to him about that at all. (laughs)

CATES: Some people--I guess I read it--where he was married to the Senate and married to various jobs that he held over the years--the governor and then senator, and I just didn't know if he had ever commented to you about that or not.

GRIFFIN: No, no. His old Daddy lived out at the mansion with him. He was a bachelor--I mean Dick was.

CATES: Yes.

GRIFFIN: Somebody did jump on him--as well as I can remember, it was back in 1932 in his Senate race--about his daddy eating the sustenance of the taxpayers by living out at the mansion, or staying out there with him. And, brother, they cut that out right away. He got on them like

white on rice. He says, "Yes, my Daddy fed and clothed me and he sent me to college, and he"--about fourteen children, you know. And he said, "He was a good Daddy and worked hard and he fed me and anybody that don't like it--me feeding him--got me to answer to." (laughter)

CATES: Well, Governor Griffin, I certainly appreciate this interview, and if anytime you think of anything in the future, I'll be glad to put it on tape.

GRIFFIN: Well, fine, I hope I could be of some service to you in compiling your work there.

CATES: Well, you have, and I appreciate it very much. Thank you.

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