

**Carl Sanders interviewed by Bob Short**  
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**Reflections on Georgia Politics**  
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BOB SHORT: I'm Bob Short, and this is Reflections on Georgia Politics here at Young Harris College. We're delighted to have you as our guest, and we're anxious to speak to you about yourself and your administration.

CARL SANDERS: Well, I'm delighted to be here and I'm looking forward to talking to you.

SHORT: Good. Before we get into a serious discussion about your administration, would you mind telling us just a little bit about your early life and family and growing up in Augusta?

SANDERS: Well, I was born in 1925. My father was with Swift & Company, the meat packing plant -- a salesman with them. I grew up in Augusta and I grew up in an even-handed family that was god-fearing and dedicated to doing the right thing. My mother was one of the most wonderful individuals that I have ever known. And so, I had a very fine childhood.

When I was about seven or eight years old, my mother took me down and enrolled me in the YMCA. They taught me how to swim. They taught me how to play football, basketball, baseball. Those sports were not in the public schools at that time. And later, as a result of that, when I went to high school in Augusta at Richmond Academy, which is one of the finest schools that I have ever attended, I had played enough football that I got a scholarship -- a football scholarship -- to the University of Georgia. Otherwise, I would not have gone to college. I was the first individual in my family that ever attended college, and if it had not been for the athletic scholarship -- if it had not been for that training that the YMCA gave me -- I doubt if I would have gone.

So, I grew up in a family that was not very poor, but was not considered to be well-off. I doubt seriously if my father ever made more than a couple hundred dollars a month. And back in the Depression, much to my -- without my knowledge -- everybody got their salary cut in half in the Depression, including my family. We had to give up buying a home and rent a home from the insurance company because of that. But I never knew that, because I always had a good, healthy family relationship. I had a brother. As I said, my mother was just absolutely dedicated to her two sons.

And I assumed the opportunities in leadership that I could at a very young age. I was captain of the school board patrol. I used to stand out on the corner and protect the children coming and going from school. I was President of my class in high school. As I said, I made the all-state football team. I had many good opportunities, but they were because I had a good family. And I always look back on my life and treasure my mother and my father for helping me grow up and grow up in an environment where I could continue to go on and do other things.

Of course, when I left the University of Georgia after a year, I -- World War II came along. There I was at Georgia, playing football, when I was on the freshman team of the University of Georgia's Rose Bowl team in 1943. And I went to Georgia because I was -- at a very young age -- because back when I was in school, you only had eleven grades. You didn't have the twelfth grade. So, I went into the University of Georgia at a

time when I was sixteen. When I became seventeen-years-old, the war had broken out, and I did what every red-blooded young American boy wanted to do -- I came over here to Atlanta, and enlisted in the naval air corps. They took my papers, filled them out, and after taking the papers, the Naval instructor said, "You've got a problem." I said, "What kind of problem have I got?" He said, "You're only seventeen years old. You've got to go home and get your parent's consent." So I said, "Ok." So, I went back to Augusta that weekend. I got to thinking about trying to land an airplane on one of those carriers out in the ocean, with it bobbing up and down! And I thought, you know, I don't believe I want to do that! So, I went out to the air force base in Augusta and enlisted in the army air corps, at eighteen years old. I went through pilot training. I went through World War II as a first bomber on a B-17 bomber, which was the largest air craft that we had there, except for the B-29 at the end of the war. I was the chief bomber. The first bomber. I had a ten-man crew. I was the youngest. I was nineteen years old, flying that plane. I was the youngest man on the crew, but I was responsible for the crew.

I -- the war came -- ceased in 1945, when we dropped the atomic bomb. I was headed to the eighth air force, having finished my overseas training, and the war ended. I had a choice -- either stay in the air force for four more years, or get out and go back to school. I chose to get out and go back to school. In 1945, I went back to the University of Georgia. I re-entered my athletic scholarship. My brother and I -- who had come up -- who was two years younger than I was, and had not been in World War II, but later went to the Korean War, he and I played on the 1945 Georgia football team. We went to the Oil Bowl, which was in Houston, Texas. We beat Tulsa.

At that time, I had taken exams. I really had only -- as I said -- a year of college work before I went in the service. Georgia had an opportunity -- or gave me an opportunity to take exams -- as a returning veteran -- and anything I could pass, they'd give me college credit. I took enough exams that I was able to go to law school with one quarter's work as an undergraduate. So, I went into the law school, and when I did, I went to see Coach Butts, and said, "I can't play football and go to law school. It's just impossible for me to do both of those things." Plus, the fact -- I was backing up to Johnny Rauch, who was playing -- who was an All-American that year, so I was playing more defense than I was offense. So, it wasn't a big decision on my part.

SHORT: \*Laughter\*

SANDERS: So, I went to law school. And, the law school at that time was crowded with World War II veterans returning. The law school takes three years, normally, but they gave me an opportunity -- and others -- if we wanted to, to go around the clock. Twelve months out of the year rather than just nine months. I finished three years of law school in two years. When I was in law school, switching over to politics, there were lots of people that were already running for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and so forth. I had no interest at that point in politics, other than trying to get through law school, go back home, and get a job and go to work. But anyway, I went around the clock for two years. I took the bar exam before I finished law school. You can't do that now, but back in those days they would allow you to do it. I came over here with some friends who were taking the bar exam for practice. I lucked out and passed the bar exam before I got out of law school. Knowing that I was a lawyer then, and I could

practice law, I asked my present wife of fifty-eight years, if she would entertain a marriage. We got married in September of 1947, which was six months before I picked up my law degree. We went back to Augusta, and I entered a small law firm in Augusta, Hammett & Kennedy. It later became Hammett & Kennedy & Sanders. I practiced law, primarily trying cases in the court room in front of juries for two or three years.

Richmond County was in the control, back in those days, of what was known as the Cracker Party, which is sort-of like the Tammany Hall was in New York. One of the big participants in that was Roy Harris, who had previously been the Speaker of the House and the Georgia legislature, and who was an avowed segregationist in every way, shape, and form and fashion. Some of us that had served in World War II and were veterans, decided that we didn't like the idea of having the county and the city controlled by the Cracker Party. So, we joined the Independent Party, and took on the Cracker Party and beat them. That was my first election in 1955 to the House of Representatives. I came to Atlanta. I served for two years in the House of Representatives.

Vandiver was running for Lieutenant Governor at that time, and he was getting ready to run for Governor. I then decided to run for the Senate. I ran for the Senate, which was a rotation back in those days of two or three counties for each Senatorial district. My district was Richmond, Jefferson, and Glascock County. I ran for the Senate as a -- for Richmond County. I won the election. I ran for the Senate for Jefferson County. They gave up their right to have a Senator appointed, and I got elected again. I ran for the Senate for the third time for Glascock County. They gave up their right to have a Senator, and I served three terms in the Senate. I was Vandiver's floor leader. I later was elected President Pro Tem of the Senate, and that's when I then decided that maybe I ought to try to run state-wide.

Well, at that time, the Lieutenant Governor's position, of course, was not a very strong position, but it existed. The candidate of the -- of the Vandiver group, initially, was Peter Zack Geer, who was Ernie Vandiver's Executive Secretary. I was President Pro Tem of the Senate, so I announced that I was going to run for Lieutenant Governor and Peter Zack Geer announced that he was going to run for Lieutenant Governor. We started campaigning. This was in 1961 and '62, and while I was campaigning for Lieutenant Governor, I was down in Dublin, Georgia, making a speech, and the editor of the local paper came up to me and said, "Have you heard the news?" I said, "No. What's the news?" He said, "A retired Atlanta policeman, who's now a lawyer by the name of Carl F. Sanders, has just announced that he's going to run for Lieutenant Governor."

SHORT: \*Laughter\*

SANDERS: I said, "You've got to be kidding!" He said, "No, it's on the news." So, I went back to Atlanta and I thought about how I was going to get people to distinguish between Carl E. and Carl F. Sanders. I knew that Peter Zack Geer and some of his friends had gotten that guy to get in the race. So, I said to myself, "That seems like an impossible thing." So, I said, "I'm going to run for Governor." And then all of a sudden these people from all over Georgia started coming in, saying, "Don't get in the Governor's race. We've got the county locked up for you for Lieutenant

Governor." And I said, "It's too late. I'm in the Governor's race."

So, I started in the Governor's race. Marvin Griffin announced -- who was the former Governor -- with Garland Byrd, who was the Lieutenant Governor, and two or three other non-descript candidates. And we started running in 1962, campaigning for the Governorship for Georgia. I opened my campaign in Statesboro, Georgia, which was the home of my wife. And, of course, I didn't know at that time how much it took -- what kind of effort it took to really run a state-wide race, but I learned very quickly. It took a lot of money back in those days, not the kind of money that it takes today, but it also took an all-out effort. The county unit system was still in existence when I announced. And I knew that. But I still believed that I could win. The county unit system in the middle of the campaign in 1962, the Supreme Court of Georgia -- of the United States, not Georgia -- came down with a decision outlawing the county unit system, and putting it on a popular vote. I campaigned, both under the county unit system and under the popular vote system. I won the election over Marvin Griffin. I would have won it whether we were under the county unit system or under the popular vote system. I would have won it if we'd been voting just with white votes. I would have won it if we'd just been voting for black votes. And I won it anyway you could win it. And, of course, that was a wonderful experience, and something that I'll never forget.

But, right after I won the campaign for Governor, the -- Vandiver announced -- or the courts announced that we had to redistrict the state of Georgia, the Senate, the House. And Vandiver said to me, "You are now the Governor elect. I don't have anymore time other than to serve out my term. That's your responsibility, not mine." I said, "You've got to be kidding." He said, "Yeah, you've got to redistrict the Senate." So, I had to take on -- before I became Governor -- I was still a member of the Senate -- the responsibility of recreating the legislative districts for the Georgia Senate. I saw men and women -- not too many women in the General Assembly back in those days -- stand up after I explained to them that most of them, when they were in their new districts -- would never again be able to sit in the Senate and serve, because they were -- their district wouldn't allow it. And I was able to get enough Senators to agree that we had to go ahead and redistrict the Senate, even though many of them would never come back -- to put that bill through the General Assembly. Therefore, that took me up to the inauguration.

At the inauguration, of course, we had the normal things that you have when a Governor. We moved from Augusta to Atlanta, and moved into the old mansion out in Ansley Park. The Ansley Park mansion was a -- recently had been a residence -- a home. It was a big rock house. And it was not the most delightful place to live. In fact, many of things didn't function that normally would function in a house. The type of labor that you had was prison labor. My wife, god bless her soul, said to Ben Fortson, who was the Secretary of State, "I don't know whether I would like to live in a house being manned by prison labor." Mr. Fortson said, "Well, if you don't want to do that, we'll hire some civilian labor." Well, he hired some civilian labor. He was in charge of the upkeep of the mansion. Of course, civilian labor came to work at eight o'clock in the morning, and got off at five o'clock in the afternoon. Prison labor came to work at whatever time you needed them in the morning, and didn't go back to the prison till sometime when you needed them -- when you finished later in the evening. So, after that short period of time, my wife said, "You know, I wouldn't mind going back to prison labor. See if we can

do that." So we did that. And, of course, we lived in that mansion through the four years that I was Governor. But we knew -- and I knew -- from the very beginning, that that was not the kind of mansion that Georgia needed for the kind of state that we were. So, I undertook while I was Governor, the job of building the new mansion, knowing that I would never live in it. Because you can't build a mansion for yourself, you've got to build it for whoever will succeed you. We were able, through my wife's efforts and the efforts of many other good Georgians, to put together the land out on West Paces Ferry Road to build a beautiful new mansion. While I was building that mansion, the biggest critic -- one of the biggest critics in our hair -- was Lester Maddox, who was writing a column in the Atlanta papers every week, telling me what an idiotic fool I was for building a new mansion. And the irony of it was that he wound up being the first one to live in it, and he never wanted to move out after he lived in it!

SHORT: \*Laughter\* Well, there's no doubt, Governor, that you and your administration completely turned Georgia around. You were responsible for a lot of the programs and, particularly, the national image that changed while you were in office. Would you explain to us how the state of Georgia survived the great crisis of school integration and the loss of the county unit system?

SANDERS: Well, I think one of the most important decisions that I ever made was the decision that I was involved in before I became the Governor. Ernie Vandiver had run for Governor on a campaign of "No, not one. Not ever one in the public schools." Meaning, not ever one -- not having a black student. The Supreme Court and the federal courts had come down with the order of integrating the schools. The University of Georgia was under the gun for the admission of Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes, who were two black students. Ernie Vandiver called a meeting out at the Governor's mansion in 1961, I guess it was '61 or '62. And said to the group that was there -- and I was invited because I was the President Pro Tem in the Senate -- that, "I've got to make the decision of whether or not to close the University of Georgia. And I'd like to go around the room to find out what the sentiment is as to what I might want to do." There were fifty-some odd leaders from all over the state. He went around the room asking for an indication of what he should do. Forty-eight out of the fifty said close the University of Georgia. Myself and Frank Twitty, from Camilla, Georgia, who was a House member, were the only two individuals at that meeting that said to Governor Vandiver, "You cannot shut down the University of Georgia. If you did that, you not only would ruin the state, but you would create a generation of illiterates. And you shouldn't do that." He took our advice and the advice of the others, thought about it, and fortunately decided that he would not close the University of Georgia. So, that was a decision that was made by me, and I think it helped him. He -- he certainly gets credit for not closing the University. But I think the decisions and encouragement from me and Frank Twitty had a heck of a lot to do with him making the decision that he wouldn't go through with closing the University of Georgia. Therefore, that was a very important decision in the dynamics of the state of Georgia.

After I ran for Governor, and, of course, I ran on a ticket of what we needed to do for this state, not on a ticket of what we were -- shouldn't do so far as races were concerned. I have never run a political campaign, either as a legislator or as a

candidate for Governor of Georgia, and used racial division as the basis of my campaign. When I ran for Governor, every Governor that I've ever known prior to that time, had always had some racial card that was involved in their gubernatorial campaign. I don't know what caused me to think that way. Maybe it was my mother, maybe it was some co-chairs or maybe it was some people that I grew up with. But I just never had the feeling that there was a big difference between whether my skin was white and whether your skin might be a different color.

I had a paper route when I was a kid. Made seventy-five cents a week. Gave my mother fifty cents and kept a quarter. I didn't know how to throw papers -- to throw them up on the steps of the people. There was a -- a black paper carrier named Charles Butler, who told me how to fold the papers so that I could throw them. He later became the principal of the high school in Augusta, Georgia, and I put him on the state Board of Education when I was the Governor of Georgia. But I grew up with no bias, no prejudice, and I never had any prejudices or bias.

I have always been a strong supporter, as you know, of the YMCA. The YMCA eventually encompassed no racial division. I work out, now, three times a week, with one of the best friends that I've got. I met a black trainer by the name of Tony McKlinnon. He and I have been working out for twenty-five years, starting at the Luckie Street YMCA in Atlanta, Georgia. And I've got friends on all sides.

But I never did -- when I was Governor -- I never did get -- I kept Georgia from being dragged down the path and the race that took over in Alabama and took over in Mississippi and took over in Arkansas. I kept pointing to the future of Georgia as a place where people can come and live in peace, people can raise their children, people can get a good education. And those were the things that I kept focused on while all this other turmoil was going on all around us. And as a result, Georgia became the leader of the South. Georgia -- Atlanta still maintains, I think, the leadership in the South. People move into Georgia that wouldn't have moved in otherwise. Companies came to Georgia -- industries are located here. All of those things took place because people looked at Georgia as a different type of state in the South -- than you could find in other Southern states. That, I think, is one of the legacies that I have helped leave to the people of Georgia, and one that I am most proud of.

SHORT: You also opened Georgia on the national scene by cooperating, instead of criticizing, the federal government, which all your predecessors had done. You became a good friend to President Johnson and the national administration, which we all believed helped Georgia.

SANDERS: Well, I did become a good friend of Lyndon Johnson, because in 1964 -- when he ran for the Presidency -- and I was the Chairman of the Democratic Party and he was the Democratic candidate, the two United States Senators from Georgia -- Senator Russell and Senator Talmadge -- Senator Russell went to Spain and spent the summer in Spain inspecting military bases, Senator Talmadge went underground and wouldn't show up at any of the functions. So I carried that Democratic banner. And I carried it to -- to my political disadvantage, later in 1970, when I offered again to run for Governor. But I felt like -- that Lyndon Johnson had been good to Georgia. While he was President, we got the largest contract ever granted out in

Lockheed to build the C-5A transport plane. I got to be Chairman of the Appalachian Governor's Commission. We got all kinds of federal funds for hospitals and schools and other types of things in northern Georgia that we wouldn't have gotten otherwise. But you know, I -- I would have been an ingrate in 1964 if I had done what others had done and had refused to ride with -- step up with and vote for the individual who done so much for my state. So that's why I did it. Later, it was used by my opponent in 1970 as a way of defeating my campaign. But I don't regret one minute of it. I would do it over again if the circumstances were still the same.

SHORT: When you took office, your prime goal, as outlined in your inaugural address, was education. If I recall correctly, you said, "If there is a star in the show in the next four years, it will be the Georgia child."

SANDERS: You got that right! And I meant to -- and we accomplished that. And I'll tell you why I did that. To me, the most precious thing that any individual can have, is freedom. Freedom to think. Freedom to act. And the only way you can have freedom, in my book, is through education. Education creates freedom, and therefore, it was my intention to make sure that we had the best educational program that we could ever have.

When I was in the Senate, I went to California. I stood at the California community college system. I found that out there you could go to a community college any time you wanted to, tuition free. And I came back to Georgia and said if I ever got elected Georgia's Governor, I was going to create something similar to that. Because you couldn't put all the boys and girls who lived in Georgia -- either up in Athens or in Atlanta -- at Tech or the University of Georgia.

So, we built eight or ten junior colleges and converted four junior colleges into four-year community colleges while I was Governor. Those colleges allowed boys and girls to stay at home and go to the community college, and later go to the senior colleges if they wanted to, when in many cases, those junior colleges became senior colleges. And that elevated the educational opportunity for boys and girls in Georgia, to a greater step than they had ever been elevated before. I put sixty cents out of every dollar of revenue into education. No Governor has ever done that since, no Governor has ever done that before. I raised the faculty salaries of the University of Georgia faculty thirty-five percent. I built more buildings and more brick and mortar in four years, than had been built in the entire previous history of the University of Georgia system. So, education was primary in my administration. I was awarded the National Golden Key award, for the best education program in America at that time. It's in there on my -- in my conference room. And, of course, I had the privilege of taking my seventh-grade school teacher up to New York with me to receive that award. But I had been as proud of the education program that we put into effect when I was Governor, as anything that I have ever done.

We did many other things. You know, to me -- people ask, "Well, what does the Governor really do?" A Governor takes advantage of the opportunities that come before him while he's Governor of Georgia. And he either takes advantage of those opportunities and makes things happen, or he let's them go by and doesn't let them happen. And that's what leadership is all about. You have leadership, you've got to

take some risks and you've got to step forward and take -- take advantage of the opportunities when they come before you, or something's going to go by and it's too late to do it. I took advantage of every opportunity that I could possibly take advantage of when I was Governor of Georgia.

Another program that we got a great deal of industrial development out of was the building of airports. I campaigned in 1962, in a little single-engine Comanche airplane, because I'd been a fighter pilot in the war. We only had about twenty-five to thirty airports in the entire state of Georgia, and half of those were auxiliary fields in World War II. I landed on tops of mountains, in cow pastures, in other places that you've never dreamed about. They'd have to shoo the cows off the pasture for me to be able to take off! So, I said to myself, when I became Governor, "I'm going to look into what we can do about airports." I went to the County Commission Association meeting and the I said to the County Commissioners, "Wouldn't you fellows like to have an airport developing program?" They looked at me like I was crazy and said, "No, we are interested in roads, not airports." And I said, "Well, thank you very much." So I went back and I checked into the -- the airport funds in Washington, D.C., and I found out I could get a grant for a community airport provided that the state put up half the money, and then the national government would put up half the money, and all the County Commissioner would have to do is provide a strip of land -- three thousand feet long -- to build a community airport. My administration built seventy-three community airports in the four years that I was Governor. That was the number one airport development program in America for every one of those four years. What that did -- that allowed industries who were located -- were looking for locations in Georgia and who lived outside of the state -- to get in their King Air's airplanes, and fly to a community that had an airport. Probably a rural community that had an industrial site that needed a plant. They could fly in there, look at this industrial sites, fly back and make a decision. Before, they would have had to go to Atlanta, get in an automobile, drive two or three hours to the location. And they wouldn't do that! So, we brought in more new industry than we could have ever imagined, because we had those airports! You can't get ten thousand feet in Georgia today, and look around in an airplane, and not see an air strip in Georgia. We've got more community airstrips than any state that I know of, and -- that was a great program. We just had a variety of programs.

SHORT: Well, along with that, you created the Department of Family and Children Services. From the old welfare system --

SANDERS: I did do that. I did that because back in those days they'd take kids - - juveniles -- that had gotten into trouble and they'd put them in the common jail for the weekend with the hardened prisoners. And god knows what they would learn over in that three or four day stay. We didn't have juvenile detention centers. But I built juvenile detention centers in every one of the Congressional districts of Georgia, so that it was not a prison, but if a kid got in trouble, they could take him into the juvenile detention centers. We had psychologists there that could train them and work with them for the weekend. They weren't thrown into a prison with a common criminal. And as a result, we saved many -- many of the young people who otherwise would have gone down the road of the criminal life. But we made them productive and brought

them back into our society and gave them an opportunity to become good citizens.

SHORT: Another hallmark of your administration was the Governor's Honors Program.

SANDERS: That was another program that we developed. We took the top students from the high schools around Georgia, and sent them on down to Macon, Georgia -- I think Wesleyan College is where we located it -- and let them learn for the first time. They were sort of like me when I went to Georgia on a football scholarship. We had sixty freshmen football players. I thought, because I'd been an all-state football player, that I was one of the best football players in the state or in the southeast. When I got up there, I found out that it was -- a lot of them could outrun me, were bigger and stronger than I was, and that I wasn't nearly as invincible as I thought I was when I was playing football at Richmond Academy. I used that same theory on these high school students. Kids that thought they were the smartest kid that had ever come down the drain in their particular school went to Wesleyan. Went down there for eight weeks or ten weeks in the summer, and found out that they weren't nearly as smart as some of the kids in other parts of the state. They had to work harder, but they went back home with a whole different attitude about what they needed to do to improve their old situation. That was a very successful program.

SHORT: You had a great administration. You left office as one of the most popular Governors Georgia has ever had. But it was rumored at one time that you were considering running for the United States Senate.

SANDERS: That -- that rumor went around. It was rampant. It got so hot that President Johnson and Senator Russell called me up to the White House and said to me, "Would you like to be a judge?" This is my last year, I'm getting ready to get out. And they said, "How about the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals?" I said, "No, I don't want to be a judge." They said, "Well, how about being the ambassador to the Philippines?" I said, "What would I do in the Philippines?" They said, "Well, you'd help us get rid of those Communists over there."

SHORT: \*Laughter\*

SANDERS: I said, "No, I don't want to do that." And finally, they said, "What about something like the Secretary of Commerce?" And I said, "No, I'm not interested -- I'm really not interested in coming to Washington. What I would like is -- I'd like for the next appointment to the federal bench in the northern district of Georgia to go to Hiram Underofler, who I had taken away from his law practice in Americus to put him as the Revenue Commissioner. And I knew that after four years he had had difficulty going back home to try to recreate a law practice. Senator Russell said, "No problem. He'll get the next appointment." Well, the next appointment came up, and he didn't get it. I found out, which most people already know, if you don't get your half of the political deal up front, you better watch out.

SHORT: \*Laughter\*

SANDERS: You may not ever get to the other half! So, the appointment came up and Neil Redfield got it, who turned out to be a very good judge, and I had no problem with him. But I had been promised the appointment for Hiram Undercofler. Fortunately, I had in my coat pocket when that happened, the resignation of one of the justices of the Georgia Supreme Court. And I was able to put Hiram Undercofler on the Supreme Court. He later became the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and had an outstanding career.

But I never really wanted to go to Washington and serve in the Congress. Most of the Governors that I served with, when I was Governor -- who later went to the United States Senate -- said to me, "It's different. You're not in charge of your own decisions. You can't make the decisions like you made when you were Governor of Georgia. You sit in there with a body of 110 individuals, and you sit and vegetate for about twelve years before you get enough influence to be effective at all." At that time too, the -- my children were teenagers. My wife was not anxious to go to Washington. The hippie movement was moving through the country. I did not want to take my children and my wife to Washington during that period of time. I -- I didn't know what might happen to them, but I knew that if I stayed home and I looked after them and they looked after me, then I'd have a much better situation than I would if I were sitting in the Senate in Washington, D.C., waiting for my time ten or twelve years later to do something effective for Georgia. So, I didn't do it. I've never regretted it. I glory in the people who have done it and who have had successful careers in Washington. I made up my mind when I left the Governor's office, that I would stay in Georgia. That I would go back to the practice of law. And that I would look after my family.

SHORT: Well, in the interim between your leaving the office in 1970, you established this law firm.

SANDERS: I started this law firm in 1967 with two lawyers -- Norman Underwood, who you know, and another lawyer who graduated from the University of Georgia named Dale Schwartz. I moved into the commerce building with the two lawyers, and started to practice law. I could have gone into any other one of the big law firms in Atlanta, but I would have been just a partner, and I would not have been the originator or the founder. I chose to build the law firm myself, rather than do that. Some others have done that, and that's not a bad way to go. But I've always liked to build things and try to stay in charge of my own destiny. So, I started with the two lawyers. I continued to attract more lawyers to the firm. I was able to increase the business of the firm. Today, almost forty years later, we have 650 lawyers. We have offices all over the world. We're in Hong Kong, Shanghai, London. We're in New York. We're in Washington. We're in Richmond. We're all over Virginia, North Carolina, and Atlanta. And the truth of the matter is, it's gotten too big. I get on the elevator and I don't know whether I'm looking at a partner, an associate, or a client, or some fellow who just got on the elevator by mistake!

SHORT: \*Laughter\*

SANDERS: But it's been a wonderful experience to be able to go back to the field of law, the practice of law, and be able to find the heights that I've got now. And, of course, I'm now at the point in life where I recently told them, "Make me the Chairman Emeritus, and I will do what I need to do and what I want to do. And I won't be worried about getting up every morning -- early in the morning, and working till midnight at night. But I'm going to let the rest of you do that while I try to relax for a while."

SHORT: And then we come to the 1970s. You had made the decision to run again for Governor.

SANDERS: Correct. And I thought that it was a good opportunity because I still had some things in my mind that I hadn't finished, and some things that I thought I might want to do that had come to mind during the time that I was out of the Governor's office. So, I announced for Governor, and, much to my surprise and my gratitude, I got the endorsements of most of the newspapers in the state. I got the support of most of the business community in the state. And, of course, I found my opponent to be Jimmy Carter, who had previously run against Lester Maddox, and who was running again for the Governor's office. That didn't bother me, because I thought we would have a very solid campaign, and we would discuss the issues -- education, the industry, and things of that kind. But much to my surprise, we didn't have that type of campaign. He took the position that I was now an Atlanta lawyer, and that I was a friend of Lyndon Johnson, and I had had something to do with integrating the public schools, and that that was not the kind of things that you wanted in a Governor. He took the position that he -- that he believed in segregation, that George Wallace was his cousin, and that the segregated type of operation in government was preferred over the kind that I had stood for. I got positioned and politicked as an Atlanta lawyer, who was a friend of Georgia's integration policy. He positioned himself as a south Georgia redneck candidate, who didn't believe in that. But, contrary to everything else, people, when they voted -- because of the race card that they had been played -- voted in favor of his election, and not mine. I look upon that sometimes, as a disaster. But, in reality, I look upon it as an opportunity for me to do the other things that I've done in life -- in business and in law. Ironically, the inaugural address of Governor Carter was that if you've come to him to talk about segregation, you've come to the wrong place. Integration is here, segregation is over, Martin Luther King, Jr. is the man that I most admire and the things that I told you during the election, you forget about those, and discard those. They were just campaign opportunities. I'm a completely different person. And I think he is. And I -- as a result of serving as Governor, he didn't have an easy role, because Lester Maddox got elected Lieutenant Governor at the same time he got to be the Governor. So, everything that he tried to do as Governor was always a fuss and a fight with Lester over whether it could be done. But later he undertook the campaign for Presidency of this country. He got elected, much to the surprise of many of us when he first started. And, of course, he's been -- I think, a better ex-President than he ever was a President. He has gone out into the world and done some great things. And I admire the things that he's done.

I've come to the conclusion that politics, you know, is a tough business.

Sometimes it's dirty. But, you've got to be willing to take the good with the bad if you want to participate. And I've had a little bit of all of it. But, I've come out of it, and in good fashion. And I've still got my family and I've got my friends and my law practice and I've got my former political career. I'm not mad at anybody. I'm not trying to get - trying to take retribution on anybody who didn't support or didn't vote for me. I'm as happy as a clam can be. I'm 81 years old. My health is still good. My family is in good shape, except for the loss of a grandson a few months ago. But I thank the lord everyday for what he has provided me with, to do the things that I've done in life.

SHORT: You've been a great public servant. Now, may I ask you one more question? What do you think about today's party politics?

SANDERS: Well, it's hard to figure out what party is which party! When I was in politics, many of the so-called Republican party supporters were Democrats. Today, the Democratic party in Georgia is not made up of the same types and the same groups that it was made up of when I was in office. When I was in office, the community leaders – Ivan Allen in Atlanta and a lot of others all through the state -- they ran as Democrats. Today they would run as Republicans. I don't know how this thing is going to finally balance itself out. But, too often, people say, if you're a Democrat, you're a wild-eyed liberal. If you're a Republican, you're a conservative. That's a lot of malarky! People -- good people -- can be found in either one of the parties. But it looks like Georgia, for the time being, has taken the road that they're going to be Republicans -- for how long, I don't know, over the fact that the Democrats ran and ruled this state for a hundred years.

SHORT: Thank you, Governor.

SANDERS: Amen!

SHORT: Amen!