

Jim Martin interviewed by Bob Short
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BOB SHORT: I'm Bob Short and this is Reflection on Georgia Politics sponsored by the Richard Russell Library at the University of Georgia. Our guess is Jim Martin, former state legislator, former Commissioner of the Department of Family and Children Services, and a

candidate for the United States Senate. Welcome, Jim.

JIM MARTIN: Bob, thank you for having me.

SHORT: You were born in Atlanta and grew up in a family of six boys.

MARTIN: That's correct.

SHORT: That must have been fun.

MARTIN: That really was. My parents named us all -- our first names all start with J so there were six of us -- Joe, Jim, Jack, Jerry, Jewel and Jeff and we had a houseful and it was a great family and I'm proud of my brothers. My parents are deceased now but we had quite a time. My dad was a big democrat and loved the Democratic Party from Roosevelt. He had started work as a young man in the Depression so he was one of those folks who believed in Roosevelt. And so we had a great time and grew up in Atlanta and then I went to the University of Georgia.

SHORT: And actually that was your first political race at the University of Georgia. You ran for President of the freshman class.

MARTIN: That's right. Actually I had been involved in politics in high school. A wonderful

woman that I knew in high school, that we were co-Presidents of our high school, went on to be quite a figure in Georgia politics as well, Lillian Budd Darden, whose daddy was a Methodist minister, so we were all active in politics at Northside High School and that was at the same time that Northside was integrated, so we were part of all that activity associated with integration of the public schools. And of course we in Atlanta wanted to be proud of the fact that we were able to integrate without violence. Sounds kind of obvious in today's way of thinking, but in those days there was some concern about violence breaking out when the schools were integrated. So I did that but then I went to the University of Georgia and I ran for freshman class President and was elected. The *Red and Black* that has the story about me being elected also has at the top of the newspaper "Johnny Griffith resigns, Vince Dooley named as head coach." So it's quite a historic *Red and Black* that I have framed and sent to Coach Dooley that he's commented on. So yeah I enjoyed the University of Georgia. That was in what was called the 3-3 program, which is a program where you went three years undergraduate and your senior year of college was your first year of law school so you could finish an undergraduate degree and a law degree in six years rather than seven years. So I started out in that program and completed it.

SHORT: Good. You also served in the Army.

MARTIN: That's right. When I was at the University of Georgia I started the University of Georgia in 1963 and at that time because Georgia was a land grant college every school had to have an ROTC program and you were required to be part of that for at least two years. So I was

in ROTC and then went into what was called Senior ROTC which was a voluntary part component of ROTC but you got paid \$50.00 a month to be part of that. And so by the time I had finished law school in the 6th year curriculum, the 3-3 program, I was commissioned as an ROTC officer and in military intelligence and went into the Army and that was in 1969 when I graduated from law school.

SHORT: And you went to Vietnam.

MARTIN: That's right. You know it's hard for folks who weren't my age at that time to know how difficult the choices were for everybody and how people had to respond to the war in Vietnam. Some people used student deferments as much as they could just to postpone the decision to have to go into the service. Some went to Canada. Some were over conscientious objectors. Some people joined the National Guard which in those days stayed at home. There were no real good choices because most people my age understood that the war in Vietnam probably was the wrong war at the wrong time, but I went.

I was an ROTC officer. I felt I had that - - that responsibility as an American citizen to serve, so I did. I went to the Armor School in Fort Knox and they gave everybody a language test and they determined that all those folks who hadn't extended their tour for an additional year were really good linguists. And so I went to Vietnamese language school. Anybody who knows me knows that I'm not a great linguist, but that's what the test proved. Went to Vietnamese language school and then served in Vietnam as a military intelligence officer.

SHORT: Good. And you came back to -- did you come back to the University?

MARTIN: I sure did. What happened was I got to Vietnam. That was in 1971 and so the American involvement in the war in Vietnam was winding down and there was a program to allow folks to get out of the service early if you got back in school. So I got back in the University of Georgia to get a Masters of Law with Perry Sentell who is an extraordinary teacher of law in the local government at the University of Georgia. But to get my an LLM, he was the chairman of my committee. So I went back to the University of Georgia to get LLM and completed that in 1972.

SHORT: And then you went into your own law practice.

MARTIN: No, I had studied -- my thesis was property tax reform 1972. So I had studied property taxes in local government, all of course Perry Sentell, who is the authority on local government law, was sort of my mentor at the University of Georgia, at least certainly in my Masters program. And so he was able to get me a job in legislative council. So rather than going into private practice I went into work as a lawyer drafting legislation for the members of the legislature. That was 1972. And so I started basically as a nonpartisan professional drafting legislation for the republicans and the democrats, the liberals and the conservatives, urbans and rural, all those folks, and it was a great experience. I did that for five years.

Speaker Murphy ascended to the Speakership in 1973. So my involvement in the legislature and state government kind of parallels Speaker Murphy's tenure as Speaker of the House of Representatives.

SHORT: Then you ran for the state legislature in 1983.

MARTIN: Well there's actually an important part between that which was I was in legislative council's office for five years and I really enjoyed that. It gave me a perspective on the political process, technical abilities and drafting legislation, understanding how the political process worked and it really served me well through my entire political career to have had that staff position and that training and background.

After five years though I wanted to take a position on the issues. It was fine to be nonpartisan. It's important frankly to have professional people that help people who are elected accomplish what they think they were elected to do. I think that's critical to our democratic process, and I enjoyed doing it, but I wanted to start taking a position. It would have been inappropriate for me to do that as a member of the legislative council.

So I had two offers, one to go to work with Joe Andrews who at that time represented the small loan companies. He came to me and said after summer legislation he said, "You know, Jim, you'd be great working for the small loan companies." And I had an opportunity to go to work for Legal Aid to work helping low income people present their point of view to the legislature with the Atlanta Legal Aid and Georgia Legal Services program, and I chose to go to work for

Legal Aid and it changed my life. It gave me a perspective on how people in this state live, the challenges that people with low income face, the problems that they face in the political system in getting their voices heard, all that.

So for five years I did that. I represented low income people on issues associated with family income, at that time the program was called Aid to Families with Dependent Children, increasing benefits for them and housing reform, working with families who had children with developmental disabilities and changing the laws that affected mental health, consumer laws and fighting with the banks over interest rates and the small loan companies over excessive charges, and I did that.

The last two years of that I did that on a contract basis and started my own law practice with Ken McDuffie and the firm was called Martin and McDuffie and we started our practice basically a small general practice in Atlanta.

SHORT: So when did you get interested in running for public office?

MARTIN: Well all that had sort of, you know, I had had that involvement, student government. I had been involved a little bit in campaigns. I had worked for Legal Aid, worked for the legislature, and in 1983 Sidney Marcus who represented the in-town neighborhoods in northeast Atlanta passed away unexpectedly, and I knew having been involved for about 10 years in the political process that the time to run for office is when there's a vacant seat and it was not a good time. I had just started my law practice. We had three kids.

I married Joan, my wife, when I was in the Army and we had had three children, and so I decided to run and fortunately I had, as you know, five brothers, more importantly five sister-in-laws, and they put together a campaign and a lot of my friends and people I had known through the involvement in government helped me. And there were 10 people in the race. I got into a runoff with a woman who had served in the legislature, Cindy Fuller, and won by 150 votes. So there if 76 people who voted the other way in that election in 1983, somebody else would be sitting here in this chair not me. So I was starting to serve in the legislature.

So here I was Jim Martin, Legal Aid lawyer from Atlanta, progressive, elected to the Georgia legislature in 1983, and everybody thought there is no way in heck that he's going to be successful in the legislature. He's just too liberal. He's too urban. He's just not going to make it, but I was bound and determined to prove them wrong. I knew enough about the legislature process to know the customs and traditions to know how to handle myself. I guess that's the right word. And so I worked hard, developed a reputation for getting things done and over time got promoted.

SHORT: Well as we all know most of the work done in the legislature is done in committees and you had several major committees. Tell us about some of the legislation you dealt with.

MARTIN: Well, I did. I knew that and of course I developed -- and having worked in legislative council I knew how to draft legislation. I always knew, and I learned this early on working with some of the best people that had been involved in Georgia government, that if you

get people to talk to you, if you sit down and talk with them, find out what their concerns were about a piece of legislation you could always come up with a provision to solve that, in many cases, a provision that would solve their problems and you could go ahead and pass your legislation. I developed the ability to do that. So it got so that people just didn't want to talk to me because they knew if they sat down and talked to me they'd wind up agreeing to something they hadn't intended on agreeing to. Because so much of politics, unfortunately, is the inability to discuss issues and discuss what's going on.

Lots of times bills -- particularly I learned this when I was working in Legal Aid -- lots of times bills are drawn so broadly that they have unintended bad effects on people that the purpose of the legislation wasn't ever intended to touch anyway and if you could get people to sit down and talk to you, narrow the focus of legislation, deal with the specific problem that caused the need for the legislation, you could prevent a lot of problems from occurring.

And so I developed that reputation. Worked hard, but the most important thing was that in - - when Bubba McDonald ran for Governor and Speaker Murphy was supporting Bubba, I as a member of the House supported Bubba. And it was kind of unusual because an urban legislator supported Bubba. There were a lot of other candidates and that was kind of unusual. And so after it was over I went to the Speaker and said, "I'd like to be Chairman of the Industrial Relations Committee." He said, "Well let me think about it." And I said "Well, you know, I don't have a whole lot of labor people in my district. I don't have any big mill owners in my district. I understand the law because I had been on the Industrial Relations Committee." So I made my request and I came back to his office, then I found out that Bill Dover had been

appointed Chairman.

And so I went to the Speaker and said - - no I didn't. I knew that he was getting ready to make the appointment so I went to see the Speaker and I said, "Mr. Speaker I understand you're getting ready to make the appointment." "Yeah I'm going to appoint somebody who doesn't have a lot of labor people in his district and doesn't have a lot of mill owners. I'm going to support - - going to appoint Bill Dover." I said oh my Lord. So after I composed myself I said, "Well Mr. Speaker can you appoint me to the Appropriations Committee?" And then I left sort of dejected and I got to the legislature the first day and discovered I was on the Appropriations Committee. So I developed a reputation or worked hard on the Appropriations Committee. And by the time I had supported Bubba MacDonald I had been on the Appropriations Committee long enough that I got appointed the Chairman of the Human Services Subcommittee for Appropriations, which is a position I really enjoyed because it allowed me to understand how government impacts the people who receive services from the state - mental health services, public health services, income benefits services, family protective services, Medicaid, all that.

And I did that - - held that position for a number of years until I was appointed Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee. And when I became Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, I knew I couldn't do both because they're two big responsibilities so I gave up my position on the Appropriations Subcommittee. Before that I had served as Chairman of the Ethics Committee and as Chairman of the MARTOC Committee, but the important committee was the Judiciary Committee and the last four years I was in the legislature I was Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee.

SHORT: Tell us about Speaker Murphy.

MARTIN: He was an extraordinary human being with great compassion. I wasn't close to the Speaker. I considered him my mentor and friend, but I wasn't a personal friend of the Speaker's so I'm not talking as a buddy, but I had great respect for Speaker Murphy. He certainly was my mentor, somebody that I looked to for advice and assistance, and he was very generous to me and appointed me to important committees in the legislature.

People couldn't understand how we had that relationship because I was perceived as being pretty progressive and he was conceived of as, and correctly so, of being conservative, but he was really more of a Roosevelt democrat to be honest with you. And we had both had great compassion and concern, he more than I, for children and for people who needed help. His own personal story was that he had - - his brother had been unable to walk and he had had to care for him as they practiced law together and he was very concerned about people who needed help. I understand a little bit of that because I had Polio when I was in the third grade in elementary school, so I understood a little bit of that so we had that in our backgrounds.

We also believed that there was a role for government to help solve problems. We also believe this, and this surprised a lot of people, that I was about as - - he was more so than me, but both despised the misuse of public money. Just hated it. I mean maybe it's because his daddy has been a primitive Baptist lay minister and I'm a Presbyterian, but we in our souls we hated the fact to see people wasting public money, and so we got along well.

Government should provide assistance to people who need help. They should have programs that help folks, but we ought to be careful how we spend our money. So I - - he and I agreed on that. We were absolutely in agreement. And he supported me. And he also understood that I wasn't in it -- I believe he understood that I was in it for the right reasons and could trust me. A couple of times he - - I got in kind of a jam and he helped me out and stood behind me, and I'm always indebted to Speaker Murphy for having done that. Now he wasn't perfect. I'm not perfect either. I'm not here to say Speaker Murphy was perfect, but I have enough wonderful experiences with Speaker Murphy to really hold him in really high regard.

After I had left the legislature I had become Commissioner of Georgia Department of Human Resources, and during the legislature I had worked to close one of the state house bill that provided care for people with developmental disabilities on the belief that people do better in the community and at the hospitals. We shouldn't just warehouse people. Speaker Murphy was really concerned about that because he'd been out to the hospitals, he knew the kind of very much involved condition the folks were in and was just concerned. But I convinced him, along with others that we need to close that hospital. We can do a better job in the community.

When I became Commissioner of Human Resources there were some articles written by the Atlanta papers about some of the bad circumstances some of those people were in living in the community and we had not done a good job as a state in providing that kind of assistance, and I was madder than hell and I called my staff in on Sunday morning and I said we're going to visit every one of those people that are in the community and find out how they're doing and make sure they're all right. And as a result, we had to change 100 placements. There were about

2,500 or so folks out in the state and made corrective action in about 100 more.

And on Monday morning I went in to see the Speaker. I said, "Mr. Speaker you have every right to say I told you so. I'm here to tell you I'm taking action to try to fix this problem, but I just wanted to let you know that I wouldn't be surprised if you were to make it be known that you opposed this." And Speaker Murphy said, "That's not the way I work, son. He said you fix the problem and I'll support you." And so, I mean how can you not love a person like that?

There was another time when Governor Miller, whom I have great respect for, I always disagreed with, we fought each other, but I always had great respect for Governor Miller.

Governor Miller came up with this idea. He had found out at some conference that some states had used managed care to operate their Medicaid system and he just had that in his mind that he was going to do managed care. That was the way he was going to operate. And so the managed care proposal that was made was going to be that no public hospital like Grady could participate in Medicaid. Well the truth is it is that Grady Hospital, the public hospital in Atlanta, couldn't operate without Medicaid.

And so I went in to see the Speaker and I said, "Mr. Speaker I got this bill here that allows Grady Hospital to participate in this Medicaid program. Now if it goes to the insurance committee it ain't going to ever get out, but I need to pass it. It would allow Medicaid to participate in it. It doesn't mess up a thing." And Speaker looked at it just like I'm looking at this cup of coffee. Wasn't reading it. Just looked at it, said, "You know son this doesn't look like an insurance bill to me. It looks like a health and ecology bill." And he assigned it to the Health and Ecology Committee and that's how it passed.

So those are the kind of things, relationship I had with Speaker Murphy that made me realize what a great contribution he made to the state.

SHORT: He was often criticized for favoring rural areas over cities like Atlanta and Augusta and our bigger cities. You're from Atlanta. Do you feel that criticism was justified?

MARTIN: No. It was a complicated time in state government during those days. If you look at the way his committee appointments were made, for example, by and large they were for rural -- the leadership in the legislature was rural legislators. And so you could criticize him for that, although he made changes over time to appoint African-Americans and urban legislators like me to positions in legislature. But if you focus on that only you miss the point.

I mean Speaker Murphy loved this state, as I do, and sure you have the sense of place and your loyalties to your region, but Speaker Murphy understood that the problems of the state are state problems and that we're in this together and that the urban areas need the rural areas need the urban areas in order to provide the economic support for the state budget, job opportunities and the urban areas need the rural areas to be successful, otherwise those problems would come into the city.

And so he understood that and when he thought it was right he would stand up for it. He stood up for MARTA -- the creation of MARTA. He stood up for the creation of the World Congress Center and those kinds of things. And so I think he was fair.

SHORT: To Atlanta.

MARTIN: To Atlanta, right.

SHORT: Who were some of the other more effective members of the House?

MARTIN: Well there were a whole -- I know I'm going to leave somebody out so I hate to do this but I'm going to try. Let me rephrase that. Let me answer the question. People that I looked up to, maybe that's another way of saying it --

SHORT: That's better. That's a better question.

MARTIN: People that I kind of tried to follow, Robert Harris was one. I knew him mainly after he left the legislature when I was working at Legal Aid and we were trying to deal with consumer issues, and he and I disagreed on a lot of things but we agreed that there comes a point where there needs to be a regulation of the financial institutions and lending practices to keep people from being preyed on. So we agreed about that. But he was hardworking, smart as a whip, and did his homework, and had a quiet way of approaching problems which was much more powerful than a shouter.

Sidney Marcus of course was somebody that I had great admiration for who held this position before I did - - who held the legislative seat before I did. He understood how to work with rural

folks and would maintain his integrity and keep his position.

Grace Hamilton was a person that I worked with a lot as when I was at Legal Aid. She was Chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee that dealt with human services like I was, before I was. And she was committed to making sure that the budget process worked, these programs were adequately funded.

Georgiana Sinkfield is a friend of mine. We both came to the legislature about the same time, and we used to love the political process, and she had quite a resolve, courage I guess is the right word. We used to get in all kind of trouble.

One year Governor Miller had come back from some other conference and was going to have welfare reform. This was before Bill Clinton had welfare reform. Going to have welfare reform, and he proposed all this stuff. Governor Miller always had this idea, he always -- if he was going to do the welfare reform he had to do it one step better than everybody else, so his was kind of a draconian welfare reform legislation. In hindsight probably not as bad as it seemed at the time, but we -- Georgiana and I thought it was awful.

And so we fought him tooth and nail about it and we got down to the last -- it was the last bill on the last day of the session. Governor Miller's welfare reform package had been his bill the whole session. We were tied up in a conference committee. Speaker Murphy said you and Georgiana y'all go ahead and just do it.

And so we were sitting there. It was just about 9:00 at night and -- who was it? I guess it was Mark Taylor who was on -- Mark Taylor, Charles Walker, and one other member of the Senate. I can't remember who that was on the Senate side and then Thurbert Baker and Georgiana and

me on the House side. And somebody, Mark or somebody says something not nice. I forget what it was. I nudged Georgiana and I said let's walk out. So we got up and walked out and Thurbert didn't know what the hell to do. He was the Governor's floor leader. We were walking out, so he walked out with us. I said, "Don't worry about it. We got it taken care of. I've got the conference committee report already drawn up. We just come back and we'll -- they're just not going to get anymore out of this."

And so we went back and the conference committee report was put on everybody's desk. Larry Walker had come in who was no the Minority Leader -- Majority Leader, said "What's going on? We've all -- everything's been done. Y'all got to get this thing resolved." I said, "Don't worry, Larry. We got it taken care of." So we agreed to a conference committee report that went back to the original House position or very close to it.

And the conference committee report was printed and as you know generally the conference committee report has the bill attached to it, but all this conference committee report said was the Senate and House Committee agrees that the House version number such and such and such and such is hereby adopted as the conference committee report incorporated by reference. I don't know if anybody's ever done that before, but everybody was looking at this piece of paper wondering what in the heck it was but they knew they had to pass welfare reform legislation for Governor Miller.

So Georgiana Sinkfield is a woman of great courage. I had great admiration for her. Larry Walker I've already mentioned was very, very good at bringing people together, at developing consensus, working with people. Terry Coleman and I were good friends because he was

Chairman of the Appropriations Committee when I was the Chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee. Mary Margaret Oliver and I share the same interests and work together. Nan Orrock is another urban legislator that I have great admiration for. The three of us also got in a lot of trouble over time on the unemployment compensation benefits and tried to make sure those programs were adequately funded and that the laws were fair.

You know I worked well with republicans. Jim Tysinger and I were good friends. I used to draft his legislation when I was at Legislative Council. Now Jim Tysinger and I are probably as far opposed in the legitimate sort of philosophical politics than the old days when they talked about conservatives and liberals and that really meant something as anybody, but we were great friends. He had worked for Westinghouse where my daddy had worked and so I knew him from that. His daughter had had polio and so I had worked with him on drafting the legislation that allowed people who couldn't drive a car to get a look-alike driver's license so they could get their checks cashed and stuff like that. So we - - we stayed friends.

The first person I appointed to a Subcommittee when I was a Chairman - - when I was Chairman of the MARTOC committee was Jim Tysinger. I went to check with the Speaker first. I said, "Mr. Speaker I want to appoint Jim Tysinger to the Subcommittee of MARTA," so Jim is somebody I admired. Johnny Isakson is somebody that I -- knew at the University of Georgia and worked with. I worked with Sanford Bishop a lot, a wonderful congressman. So there are lots of folks.

I know I've left out some and I'm going to kick myself for not having remembered everybody, but one of the things that I've discovered about the legislature as I mention all these folks is --

and Addie Stevenson I think was the one who said this more articulately than I'm going to say it -- is that legislature you can't really expect the legislature to be any better than we are as a society.

In a certain sense the legislature represents the good and the bad in all of us, and if you were - - I used to say if you took your hand and stuck it into Atlanta stadium and picked up about 180 members of that, threw them in the legislature, you'd have probably the same kind of mix of folks you have in the legislature. You have some people you wonder how in the world they ever get elected to public office and some that are just will charm your pants off. Just a wonderful mix of people

There's some exceptions. African American representation historically has not been what it should be as a percentage of our population, that has changed. The number of women needs to increase. But with those exceptions it does kind of represent who we are. So I really enjoyed the experience, enjoyed people. Paul Coverdell is another person that I had great respect for because we shared constituencies, I in the House and he in the Senate. So there are lots of great people who are in the legislature.

SHORT: The Fulton County delegation, tell us about that.

MARTIN: Fulton County even now has a broad range of political philosophies. Ten percent of the population of Georgia lives in Fulton County. Ten percent of the legislature was from Fulton County. So the delegation was large. It's extremes of political points of view. Some would say

unmanageable. I think that was overstated. The people would like to shout and get in each other's faces, but it was an interesting group of folks.

Now what happened with the Fulton County delegation that a lot of people don't understand is that in rural areas the businesses and political leadership at the local level go to their local delegation to get their legislation passed - - important legislation. In theory that's true of the Fulton County delegation, but more than likely than not the businesses will go directly to the Speaker or to the Governor and local leaders as well. So the delegation was undercut a little bit by the practices of the people from Fulton County in not using the delegation effectively to represent their interests. Of course it then became kind of a circular problem because then the delegation didn't become as powerful as it should have been and then couldn't deliver like it should.

Sidney Marcus tried to change all that when he was Chairman of the delegation, and so I was involved in kind of the leadership of the delegation over time and became Vice Chair. There's also racial issues associated with the membership of the delegation. But I was Vice Chair and we tried to deal with the problems that affected the county in a responsible way and I think we did. The one issue that was always, while I was there, always one of great contention was the incorporation of the city of Sandy Springs. That was a matter that needed to have Fulton County delegation approval in order to pass, every member of the delegation, because the incorporation of a city in Fulton County affected the whole county.

And I was one of the people that believed that creating more new governments was a bad movement and bad step, that Atlanta already suffered from the fact -- the city of Atlanta -- from

the fact that it was a small core city, the smallest core city in an urban area in the country, and that that's not healthy and that a city needs to be -- about 50% of an urban area needs to be the incorporate city and 50% of it not. Now there are different models and times have changed and we now have a city of Sandy Springs in Southern California, for example, has made that all work.

So it could work, but at that we felt like that it didn't, it wasn't a good idea, and that it was going to hurt Atlanta for the city of Sandy Springs to be incorporated, so we fought tooth and nail over that. And one of the people that I fought with was Dorothy Felton who was the mover of the incorporation of the city of Sandy Springs. She and I were friends, you know. I went to her funeral. But we just disagreed about that and I did everything I could to keep it from passing. It made her so mad. But that was one of the contentious issues in the delegation is whether or not to incorporate the city of Sandy Springs.

I'm trying to think of other issues, other issues were the issues of buying -- allowing local governments to issue bonds with the creation of authorities, development authorities, those kinds of things. All those came before the delegation and frankly we tried as best we could to resolve those issues.

SHORT: Well you left the legislature in 2001 to become Commissioner of Department of Family and Children Services. That was quite an experience.

MARTIN: Well my background -- it was actually the Department of Human Resources.

SHORT: Resources.

MARTIN: Governor Carter in '72 right when I started to work for the legislative council, actually the year before, I started with the '73 session. I started in '72 but I didn't begin working until the '73 session. The '72 session had created the Georgia Department of Human Resources which was designed to be a look-alike agency with the federal Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and combined lots of the independent departments in state government into one agency. And I had been a big believer in that. I thought that was a great idea. I understood why it was created, how it was created, had been involved with it for a long period of time.

When in 2001 Governor Barnes was governor he called me and he said, "Jim the Commissioner of Human Resources has stepped down and I just want to let you know that and we will do a national search and just wanted to" -- generally you make those kind of phone calls to people that are going to give you trouble, you know, to let them know so they can't argue with you about not having let you know about it. I thought just a second. I said, "Well Governor, I think that's the right thing. You need to do a national search but I want to apply." And it was almost like the phone had gone dead. "Governor, are you there? Governor?" And I also, it was surprised me as well, I don't know why I said it. Really to this day I'm not sure why, and he said, "Let me think about it."

So, you know, a week or so later Bobby Kahn calls me up, who was the Governor's Executive Secretary. Said, "Jim, what in the heck are you doing talking about applying for the Department

of Human Resources?" I said, "Well, you know, it's just something I'm always interested in."

He said, "Well, you know, lawyers don't make good administrators." "Well Bobby, I, you know, when I was in the legislative council I went to Georgia State at night and got an MBA in management. I've got an MBA in management." He said, "Well let me think about it."

So then they called me back. I use that story to tell people who are working on their MBA that I'm here to tell you that having your MBA does make a difference because it made a difference in my life.

And so Governor Barnes appointed me, but he wanted me to stay for the special session that dealt with reapportionment. So I agreed to stay with the special session for reapportionment.

Got really ugly. Tough, tough, tough, and one of the votes at the very end was whether to adjourn or not. And the Speaker wanted to adjourn and Governor Barnes wanted us to stay in session to get the thing resolved. I voted with the Speaker and I called up Bobby and I said,

"Bobby look I had to vote with the Speaker. If y'all - - if y'all need to withdraw, you know, me being Commissioner of Human Resources go ahead and do it. I, you know." He said, "No. We want you to stay but we want you to resign right now." [Laughs] So I resigned and Speaker

Murphy came up to the swearing in up in the Governor's office and I was appointed.

That was two weeks after 9/11. So the state economy declined dramatically -- historic decline in state revenues. So rather than doing the kind of things I really had wanted to do in DHR, I really had to work just to maintain the programs. We had to reduce the program or the Department's budget by \$150 million in a relatively short period of time. We did it quickly and I'm really proud of the way that we did it because we were able to do it in a way that preserved the

programs, made some changes that made sense. Certainly some people were affected, but we really mitigated and I'm really proud of that. Working with the Department of Human Resources people mitigated the impact, made difficult decisions.

It was a great job. Best job I ever had. I loved working with the people at DHR dealing with the problems that they had, making decisions. Everyday was a new crisis you had to deal with. Had support from the Governor and from Renee Bloomenthal who was the Governor's Policy Director in the area of Human Services. And was rocking along, getting things going pretty well, and then Governor Barnes was defeated and I said, "Oh my Lord what am I going to do now."

I had thought that I had given up politics when I became Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Human Resources. I thought I had gone into another phase of my life, but Governor Barnes was defeated and we went to this breakfast that Governor Perdue had, all the agencies and we were all wondering what in the world is going to happen. Here's this breakfast and I had eggs and bacon and all this kind of stuff. And he gets up, he's making a speech, and I don't remember any of his speeches except for this line. "And in order for me to be able to make a clean start with my government I expect all of you to submit your resignations," and we all gulped on the eggs. [Laughs]

And so I knew that the Commissioner of Human Resources is not technically appointed by the Governor. He's appointed by the Board of Department of Human Resources, although Governor makes that decision. So I submitted my resignation something to the effect that, "Upon the vote of the Board of Human Resources, I hereby submit my resignation." You know, accept my

resignation by the Board of Human Resources. I submitted it and Governor Perdue didn't take it and I stayed on for a year. We had the same financial problems, worked really hard to make sure we could continue programs. Had the support of Governor Perdue.

Unrelated to the Department of Human Resources, the Senate had changed, had become republican. And so unrelated to the Department of Human Resources, but directly impacting the Department of Human Resources, the Senate in the session I guess in 2003 had failed to confirm the nominations of a number of Board members.

And so the Attorney General issued an opinion that said the Board of all these Boards, including the Board of Human Resources, the members do not continue in office beyond their term. We all thought that a member of the Board of Human Resources continued in office until his successor is appointed and confirmed. It turned out that we had four members of the Board of Human Resources left.

So I said to the Governor, actually to Eric Tannebaum, that, you know, we need to have new members of the Board or he needed to be reappointed. We didn't have a functioning Board to pass regulations. I suggested these are the members of the current Board. They are most of them are not political people, you ought to consider appointing these people.

They had made appointments that were all republican and that's their prerogative. And they wanted a new Commissioner and so Jim Lientz called me in his office who was the Governor's chief operating officer. I thought he was going to tell me what a great job I was doing because I was doing a good job. Said, "Martin, Jim, you need to let this and this person go. And we, you know, we want you to stay on until we get this new Commissioner. We're going to get a new

Commissioner, probably will be done before the next session." I said, "Jim, I've got to let the people at DHR know because they've been wondering for a year what was going to happen."

And so he said, "Well don't say anything and let me talk to the Governor." So he talked to the Governor and said we're going to issue a news release that says that you and he have met and that you've agreed to step down, or something to that affect. I said that's fine. With the date unknown.

So I was working with the new Board trying to get them to understand what was going on with the Department of Human Resources. Some issues came up with the new Chairman of the Board over family planning and we had had to make some reductions anyway but an article was written criticizing him in the paper for some decisions about family planning and he called me, "Jim, I want you to write an editorial siding with me -- a response to this editorial." I said, "Well look, I will do that but I'm out of here on November --" whatever date it was. So I left.

Now at the same time there had been some tragedies with some children in DeKalb County and the newspaper was really playing that up. And so they started these stories about, you know, Jim Martin resigned after these children died. Well it was true as a matter of timing that it was after that, but the actual story is the one I just told. Nobody really cares or knows because the paper repeated over and over and over again and it wasn't factually incorrect. It wasn't because of but it was after those deaths that it looked like that was part of it. It was really more the result of change in the Board of Human Resources.

So I left DHR. Was really pleased with my public service. Thought that I was going to go into another phase of my life. I decided I could either travel or be fired -- I could either stay at home

being fired or I could travel being fired. So I decided we'd go around the world, which we did -- which I recommend to everybody. We went to New Zealand, to Australia, went back to Vietnam. I went to Istanbul to Turkey where I had been an exchange student when I was in high school, Paris and then back home.

As I was coming back I was having some discussions with the new Public Defender Standards Council, the new Public Defender program, and the state about going to work for them. And so when I came back, the day I came back I started to work with the new Georgia Public Defender Standards Council as the Chief Legal Officer and did that for 18 months. That program had been enacted in 2004 by Speaker Coleman, but it had not been funded and my job was to try to figure out how in the world to get it funded.

So the way the budget works is that the judicial branch -- the Georgia Public Defender Standards Council at that time was in the judicial branch, so the judicial branch budget cannot be changed by the Governor. So they had put in almost 30 million, a little over \$30 million to fund this new program in the Governor's budget. Most people knew that that wasn't going to stay. The House was going to jump on that like raw meat.

So the budget was introduced. And passed out of the House it said public for Georgia Public Defender Standards Council, "yes". No money, just yes. And I went to Dubose Porter. I said, "Dubose, what in the world is going on here? There's no money here. It says yes, but there's no money." He says, "Oh yeah, we're going to pass another bill that's going to create a funding mechanism."

Well the rest of the session was spent in developing this funding mechanism which was

increased fees for filing documents in court, increased fines and some other charges. The great thing about it is it came to \$57 million or 50-something-million dollars. So there was \$20 million for people to spend in the first year. We only needed 30. So that was going along fine. Governor Perdue put the money in the budget, showed that as new revenue source in the budget. It was going along fine.

And we got to the last day of the session and Harold Melton who at that time was the Governor's legal counsel and they were having trouble because they said, we don't like the fact that the judicial branch budget isn't subject to our scrutiny. And so with all this concern, the legislature adjourned with a budget for the Georgia Public Defender Standards Council in the budget, but without the tax. So there was a \$50 million hole in the state budget. And everybody said what in the world are we going to do about it?

This is where the experience of having all the people that I mentioned that I worked with in the legislature and all the mentoring that Speaker Murphy had given me and all these other folks really came to my assistance. So I went to meet with the Governor -- meet with the Governor's staff. I said, "What can we do about this?" "Well we're really concerned about having the control over this budget and it getting out of control." Went to talk with Speaker Terry Coleman and talked with Dubose and went around the legislature -- met with Larry Walker.

And so we came up with a provision that said two things -- that the Public Defender Standards Council would never ask for more money for their budget than was generated by this tax. And that the Governor in his budget could comment on that budget. He had to put the money in, but could say in his budget document, "I don't like this worth a dad gum," or whatever, could make a

comment on it. And that would be consistent with the Constitutional requirement of separation of powers, but also would allow him to do that. They all agreed to it.

And so we came in for a special session in five days, passed it and that funded the Public Defender Standards Council. Stayed on there for about a year and a half and had always thought and, believe it or not it's hard to say, that I'd run for Governor some day, you know, just a goal I'd always had. So I said well maybe I'll do that. I'm old enough in my life I'll just do it.

Unfortunately there were two people already running – Mark Taylor and Cathy Cox and they were pretty strong candidates. So I decided to leave the Public Defender Standards Council and started talking to people and they said, "You know, there's no way in heck you're going to win the Governor's race." I said, "Well let me think about it some more."

And about that time they said, you know, the only way you can win is if because of your understanding of state government, because you're progressive in the Tom Murphy sense of progressive position on issues -- the only way you're going to get people to hear that is if there's somebody on the other side who is a real stark contrast of that. Well it turned out that Ralph Reed decided he was going to run for Lt. Governor and I thought this is the chance for a candidate to run statewide who articulates a progressive point of view from the state against the old way of thinking and I have a chance.

So I left the Public Defender Standards Council, decided to run for Lt. Governor and learned a lot in that process. One of the issues that we talked about was predatory lending and the abusive practices by lenders in the sub prime market, and if the issues they have developed after that in the last year or so in 2008 / 2007 had occurred in 2005 / 2006, I probably would have got elected

because I was absolutely right. Practices were predatory, people were getting into mortgages they couldn't afford, people refinancing their house, but I didn't win.

It was a great run. Ralph Reed didn't win. Ralph Reed didn't win his primary. I won my primary in a very tough, tough, tough primary where I was accused of everything possible including being in favor of rapists. It was a terrible primary. The Democrats need to figure out how we can avoid that. And did a little bit better than Mark Taylor in the general election, but didn't win. Forty-two percent of the vote. And was fine with that.

I really wanted to be Lt. Governor, thought I could make a difference, and so then I took another trip. Went to Italy. Enjoyed that for about a month. Thought about it. Had a chance to read Arthur Slessinger's book about Robert Kennedy and his time and some other books and really had a chance to think about things. Came back and went to work at the Andrew Young School developing the Master Public Administration's program there. Realized that I had only been involved in amateur politics, that academic politics is professional and that this politics is nothing. But it was fine. I enjoyed it. It was a great school, great people, enjoyed it.

SHORT: That's at Georgia State.

MARTIN: At Georgia State University. But some people came to me said, "Martin you did such a good job in the Lt. Governor's race why don't you think about running for the Senate." And I said, "There's no way in heck I am going to run for the United States Senate." You know, if -- and people kept coming to me, but finally I did two things. One, I met with a guy named

Drew Weston who's written a book about how democrats talk about issues. And the premise of the book is that democratic issues -- the kind of things I've talked about and been involved with -- people want, just democrats haven't known how to talk about it, and they scare people and make people feel like they don't really understand where they are, talk down to people and that democrats need to figure out how to be able to relate better to the voters and they can be successful.

And the second thing is the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee asked me if they could do a poll to see how I would stack up against the incumbent United States Senator. And it turned out that incumbent had not used his incumbency very effectively. He was not well known or well liked. Had favorable ratings, but not over 50% which is something you really need to have. And that where my story, all the things I'd been involved with, the issues, trying to help people stand up for working class Georgians, all those things resonated with the people. Where they knew my story having served in Vietnam, having been involved in the legislature, having dealt with healthcare issues and all those things. My story matched up well with his so it became a statistical dead heat and where people knew both of us I won, and I was surprised by it.

So I went to Washington to meet with Senator Reid and Senator Schumer. And it was a great meeting. It was the day after Senator Clinton had won in Ohio and Texas, and so I thought well, you know, Barack Obama needs to be the candidate in order for me to be elected, so I'll go to Washington I'll have a chance to see some places in the Capital I've never seen before. It will be a fun trip. I'll just go.

And so my son Jay who had managed my Lt. Governor's race and did a great job. All my family

had been involved with that and of course my wife Joan has been my supporter throughout all this and just has been extraordinary in helping and all these things. Understands politics.

Understands the operation of the political campaign. Understands the financing of the political campaign.

So anyway Jay and I went to Washington. I was in the Majority Leader's office when Senator Reid and Senator Schumer walked in. I'm thinking, well this is neat. So Senator Reid who is a man of few words sits down and says, "Tell me about the Lt. Governor's race you didn't win." I said, oh my Lord this is going to be a tough conversation. And I explained how unlikely it was that one, I would run in the first place and how well I did in a very difficult circumstance in a very difficult situation, and that I was proud of the race I ran. We didn't win but I was proud of it.

He said, "Well, you're not a war hero are you?" I said, "No I'm not a war hero. Max Cleland is a war hero. And then the campaign that Saxby Chambliss ran against Max Cleland to win this Senate race was cowardly," and I just I believed that. And Senator Reid said, "You know, everybody--" bent over and looked at me in the face and said, "You know Jim everybody in the caucus hates the campaign that Saxby Chambliss ran against Max Cleland." I said well I'm making some progress here. And so then he said -- and I said something to the effect of, "You know, I really like my job at Georgia State. I like this. I'm not sure I really want to do this." And Senator Reed then looked at me and the only smile he did the entire time, a smile came over his face and said, "You know, this is a better job," which was true I knew.

And so we got to the end of the conversation and they said, "How much is it going to cost?" I

said, "Well I think it's going to cost about \$10 million." I raised about \$3 million in the Lt. Governor's race. I probably can raise five. I had no idea how I could do that. But I can't raise 10. And Senator Schumer said we'll help you raise the rest. Now I said I had been warned that was a Washington promise which was that if I was competitive, the race was running well, they provided money but if it wasn't that money wasn't going to develop.

So I left and we started the race for the United States Senate and it really was the culmination of all the things I've talked about. Now I hadn't realized it. It was a little bit like when I ran for the legislature the first time and I realized all the things I had done leading up to that had prepared me to run for the legislature and to be a legislator -- having been involved with politics for a long time, having contacts across the state, having good friends all over the state, having the reputation for standing up for people and on the difficult issues, loving this state, understanding this, "not either or", it's not urban versus rural. We're all in this together. All those things I just understood. I had learned over the process of my political year.

And so we started our campaign and right out of the box we surprised everybody by how much money we could raise which is the hard part of politics. Staying on the phone, you know Bob, calling people asking for their money, asking for a specific amount of money, all that, and you just hate to do it but you've got to do it in order to win. And you frankly got to do it in order to be a legitimate candidate because if you're not willing to ask people for help you ought not to be running in the first place.

And so we did well. We worked hard at it. We talked about what I had done before and then all of a sudden the economy took a nosedive. Because of what I had known was going on which

was the economic reality of the financial paper that was being generated by the speculative booming housing was going to bust. There was no way that that was going to be able to be sustained, and that people were making lots of money off of it, but it just could not be sustained and the responsibility was with the federal government for not having overseen the financial markets that created this problem, and the election changed because I could articulate that. I had a record of having taken a position on this before. I understood the issue and Saxby had no response. His response was, "Well the free enterprise system can take care of itself and that we hadn't really done it properly and people shouldn't have borrowed this money." That's probably not exactly the way he was describing it, but that was the way it was kind of being talked about, and I ran on that issue.

I had gotten through my primary by staying on my message which was that my opponent had voted for George Bush twice and there was no other issue I needed to raise other than that and I had gotten through a very difficult primary using that. Same thing happened in the general election. We ran on the idea that there is a role for government, like I had said earlier, there's a role for government in helping people. There's a role for government for taking our free enterprise system from abuses, and that Saxby Chambliss had not been there to protect us and those kinds of things. And we ran. That was when I thought it was a legitimate campaign on a legitimate issue, difference in philosophy. I believe that there's a role for government; Saxby believed there wasn't.

I also believed that in Georgia that we are much more concerned about our fellow Georgians than our leaders have led us to believe. I mean that we really do want to have quality healthcare

in this state. We do want to have a good economy for everybody. We do want to have good education and the government has a role to do that and a role in that. I tried to articulate that as effectively as I could.

I looked at some of the writings that had been done and referred in the later part of the campaign to the fact that, and this is what George Tindall had said in a book he had written that James Cobb mentions in his introduction to the New Georgia Guide, which is that for the South change doesn't necessarily mean that we lose our identify as Southerners, our wonderful identity, the sense of place, the love we have for this state. It means we find it. You know, to get rid of some of the baggage that we have, some of our history, which is not so good, and lift up the good parts. And so there was a good response to that. People across the state understood what I was saying and we ran an effective campaign and Saxby didn't believe we could do it. Frankly they took us for granted and we really hammered on that.

We got down to election night and I went to bed about 3:00 in the morning thinking that Saxby had won, but as it turned out he got I got 45% and he get 47% of the vote. No, 49 and 47. And there was a runoff. So I came that close to beating an incumbent United States Senate with a campaign that I think is a campaign that ultimately would be successful in Georgia. And got in a runoff and then race became one of two seats or three seats at the beginning, and then ultimately two seats, that would have made the difference between whether Congress -- whether the Senate 60 democratic votes or not, which was an important procedural number. I never ran on that. I didn't think that was important. I thought, and still believe, that the Georgia Senators have had a tradition of not necessarily supporting the Democratic Party or the democratic president all the

time as a rubberstamp, but rather of being independent.

And so we ran. There was a national interest in the race. President Clinton came to Georgia. Vice President Gore came to Georgia, other folks -- had a wonderful time. Georgia was the focus, the scene out of the attention about whether or not a Senator supportive of the new President, Barack Obama, was going to be elected or a Senator who he said he wanted to be a firewall against the new President. And I didn't win. Got 42% of the vote. I conclude all this by saying 42% of the people in Georgia really liked me. They voted for me for Lt. Governor. They voted for me for the United States Senate. That's just not enough to be elected, but I had no regrets. This is a great state. I respect the decision of the people, but I would not have traded any of this.

You know, a lot of this began with the fact that I grew up in Georgia and went to the University of Georgia and Georgia State and had Georgia in my blood, but this has been a great experience and a great privilege for me to be able to serve in public office.

SHORT: Jim, the outcome of your election for the Senate proved that that hole you mentioned was true, accurate, that you did have a great chance and that it was a very close race.

MARTIN: Well we were pleased with our campaign. I was very proud of the young people that worked in my campaign and the old people. Frankly I had a bunch of folks who -- what was really interesting was there was the great diversity in our age wise and racially and areas of the state.

One of my favorite stories is a guy who helped me in my campaign who was from a very rural part of the state, and I was meeting with him when I was running for Lt. Governor and he asked me about the Georgia flag. And I said, "Well, you know, I'm really glad the battle flag or the Army of Northern Virginia has been taken off our flag because and had been able to assume its appropriate place in history. Because I, very much a student of the American Civil War, love to study that, believe with Shelby Foote that it was the definitive event in American history, but I thought that -- and I think the flag had been misappropriated by people who were using it for the wrong reason.

And he took out his card and he showed me his card. It said his name, Sons of the Confederacy. I said, oh my Lord I've made a big mistake. But we continued to talk and we talked about the federal assault at Fredericksburg up that terrible ridge, just walking into this withering fire and we talked about the Civil War. We talked about 30 minutes about the Civil War. He realized that I really understood the Civil War and really valued that as a part of American history and he supported my campaign. Lt. Governor, supported me in my Senate campaign.

So I had a whole range of folks who were helping me because I had worked with them and they knew that even if they didn't agree with me they knew that my position was taken with integrity and with some reason and that I would stand up for the right thing. And so I was proud of the campaign we ran. We had all kinds of folks involved in it. I hope it showed people a campaign that can be successful in Georgia to move us forward in a progressive way for this state. Time will tell.

What happened in the runoff was that the biggest motivator in politics is fear. People have

always known that. And so there was a fear on the other side that the new President was going to take this country in a way that people weren't comfortable, and that I would be as United States Senator in like step support of the new President and so that fear motivated people. In some precincts more people voted in the runoff than voted in the general election in some republican precincts. So, that fear motivated people.

To his great credit the new President, President Barack Obama, has reached out to folks, even those folks who voted against him, and said look let's put all that aside. Let's move to a new kind of politics. One that's not based on I win, you lose, on the kind of divisive sort of politics, move beyond that to deal with the important issues and we need everybody to do that. So hopefully he'll be able to create a climate where that kind of fear won't be as important to politics.

SHORT: As you look back over that race can you think of anything you might have done in that runoff to close it up?

MARTIN: Well, you know, I've thought about it a lot and there will be a lot of people who will analyze the race and come to different conclusions based on their own perspective and own agenda. The reality is that republican voters are more likely to turn out in a runoff than democratic voters. That's a historic fact.

SHORT: Why is that?

MARTIN: Well there's lots of different reasons. I think Buddy Childers probably had the best idea when he created early voting. His assumption was that working people had trouble taking off work to go vote. So the easier it can be to vote, the more likely it is that democrats or working people who are whoever working people are going to vote for, that those candidates will come out better.

And so he had a fixed day one day you had some early voting but not the kind of early voting we had in the general election, and republicans are more likely to turn out in those kind of races.

There was concern about the fact that there would be a veto proof Senate. Now I tried to, and I believe this, but I also tried to dissuade people from that point of view because I understood this seat.

You know when the Senate was created they wanted to have six year terms and they had to have staggered voting. So one class was elected for two years initially, one class was elected for four years and one class was elected for six years. Well this is the class 2C and it goes from -- begins with Abraham Baldwin through Richard Russell, through Sam Nunn, and through Max Cleland.

Those are the people who are in this seat so I used that as an example to say - - and Robert

Toombs was one of these, so I mean there's history of this particular Senator if you allow me this analogy or this concept, of being independent, you know, and so the best thing - - and I always say this, the best thing a democratic senator can do for a democratic president is to disagree with him when he's wrong because a democratic senator, or a republican senator for that matter, a senator of the same party as the president has a special responsibility and ability to disagree with

the president because it's not out of politics. It's out of opinion about an issue or a mater.

And so I thought that it would be inappropriate for a senator for me to go to Washington, for example, to be a rubberstamp for Barack Obama or any other president, although I supported many of the things he was talking about and used the example of the war in Iraq which I believe there should not have been. The legislative timetable for ending the war in Iraq. I believe we should get out, make a policy decision to get out and let the commanders in the field do that, but I disagreed with Barack Obama initially when he was more strong about a date to get out. And other candidates.

Now there's a difference between now he as Commander-in-Chief he has every right to set a date because he's not really a legislator. He's the Commander-in-Chief. That's different. But as a legislator I think that was wrong. So that's an example. But people didn't understand that.

They were afraid that, I believe, I would be more of a - - of a rubberstamp for the new president.

Now any Governor that I've served under knows that isn't the case. [Laughs] But, you know, so I think there was that.

You know, the money is always a problem. We raised a heck of a lot of it. We raised over \$7 million. We raised a million dollars a month. And we could, you know, we got outspent dramatically. I'm not sure we could have raised more money. I'm not sure we could have been the same campaign if we'd raised more money.

Some people said I got in too late. Probably there's a good and bad to that. If I got in earlier there would have been more controversy, more, you know, negative campaigning and stuff. So I'm not sure. I think I probably had an advantage to getting in late. You know, I just don't know

what would have made the difference. I do know this. I needed to win without a runoff and we came real close to doing that against an incumbent United States Senator, so I'm really pleased with that.

SHORT: Well you certainly had the support of most of Georgia's principal democrats.

MARTIN: I sure did. I really was honored to have that and appreciative of that. People who, you know, whom I have known over the years, worked with, really came out and helped. And what was really wonderful about this race was there had been a sense in Georgia for some period of time on the national level that we couldn't compete and then - - and when we became competitive a lot of people were reinvigorated about being involved with the Democratic Party. So I think that's a positive thing. People were more than generous financially and with their time and with their help in this campaign. We tried to build a grassroots organization around the campaign that the Democratic Party can use.

SHORT: I'd like to ask this question. You received, as did your opponent, a lot of advertising during the campaign sponsored by organizations that were not within your campaign structure. Is that effective?

MARTIN: Not in my case. Well it's hard to say. Some if it was effective and some of it wasn't. Whether on balance it was more effective than not. It's true that - - that local support is based in

part on whether or not the national people take you seriously. And so without the support of the national democratic party the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee and the democratic party at the national level I wouldn't have gotten the support I had in Georgia.

One of the questions I was asked was when is the national party going to come in and help you.

That said, the first ad -- independent expenditure ad the Democratic Senatorial Campaign

Committee was a disaster. They raised the issue of the fair tax which Saxby Chambliss

inexplicably to me is in favor of. It's a bad idea. It wasn't part of the campaign. The economy

is the issue; how we go about getting this economy growing again; how we go about solving the

financial institutional problems we've got and the regulatory issues, but they raised that issue and

it stirred up this local talk show guy, Neal Boortz, just because he is a big fair tax advocate and

just stirred up this hornet's nest of people on an issue that I wasn't running on, that wasn't

important to this campaign, people in Georgia didn't really care about, and made it a big issue.

So that's one situation where their help may not have been as helpful as they thought it was

going to be because for them it polls well among undecided voters. It didn't poll well with

conservative republicans, but with undecided voters the fair tax was a bad idea and it polled well

and that's what must have generated that.

There's a federal prohibition against our campaign or my campaign coordinating with or even

communicating with the "independent expenditures" part of the Democratic Senatorial

Campaign Committee. So we couldn't communicate with them to say, you know, directly to say

stop that ad. That's the craziest thing -- that's not helping. But some of it helps. Now, you

know, there were some ads done, independent expenditures, on Saxby's side that really, you

know, attacked me that I thought were unfair and some of the ads that Saxby ran frankly I thought were unfair, but that's part of politics. It's a tough, tough business.

SHORT: Well you certainly have had a great public service career thus far. What's ahead for Jim Martin?

MARTIN: I'm not sure. I want to work with folks to keep them involved in the political process. My children all have been involved in politics. I hope one of them will get in politics some day. They certainly have done a great job. Joan is entitled for me to spend some time, us traveling and that kind of stuff. I probably would like to teach if I could find a position doing that. I've considered going to work with the Obama administration if something becomes available, but, you know, one of the great things about life is the unexpected opportunities that come. You do realize as you get to be older that it's really not about the end of the race. It's about the race. It's, you know, no matter what I do in the future, most of my life has already been lived and I wouldn't trade anything for all that. You know, and so it's not how it's concluded, it's how the race kind of runs itself and that's been the great thing -- I have no regrets in that regard.

SHORT: Would you say never to elected politics again?

MARTIN: I -- gosh I hate to -- I don't want to be political about that. Let me tell you what my

thinking is on that. I have asked people to help me so much both as Lt. Governor and Senate race. I'd be reluctant to ask my friends to go through it again. I mean it's a lot of fun. They were very generous, but there comes a point where you've had your chance and there's also a point you see it. President Obama yesterday when he gave his inaugural address said something that was really correct and inspiring and encouraging. He talked about a new generation beyond the baby boomers. I'm a - - I was born in 1945 so I'm Bill Clinton, the George Bush, Newt Gingrich, we're all, you know, that age so we've had our chance. He's talking about a new way of politics. Maybe some of us can learn new tricks, but a new way of politics that he can see because his age is a little bit less and he has different experiences. And so I'm encouraged to see -- I'd like to see how that plays out.

SHORT: Jim Martin, we are delighted to have you on this program and I want to thank you on behalf of the Richard Russell Library, the University of Georgia and myself.

MARTIN: Thank you, Bob. Thank you so much.

[END]

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