

Dean Rusk Oral History Collection  
Rusk HHH HHH: Part 2 of 2  
Ralph Beard interviewed by Richard Rusk  
1987 April 10

The complete interview also includes Rusk GGG GGG: Part 1.

RICHARD RUSK: Okay

BEAIRD: But I resent it to a certain extent. That fact that many people with whom I worked in Washington, particularly from the North East, had a very condescending view of the South, anyone associated with the South.

RICHARD RUSK: You, Lyndon Johnson, and Dean Rusk.

BEAIRD: That's right. And they didn't believe that there was any institution in the South that was worth its salt. I had an opportunity to get to know Lindsay Cowen when he was Associate Dean at Virginia and then later when he became Dean at Georgia and I did through Charlie Gregory who was the Labor Professor at Virginia, former Labor Department lawyer. And Lindsay invited me to come down in '65, '66 to visit Georgia. Take sabbatical from my position in government and I did. My wife and I enjoyed it. This is the time when the Law School was just expanding from the original Hirsch Hall and it became clear to me at that time that Georgia presented the opportunity for me to make whatever contribution I could to improving the quality of legal education in this region and thereby make a lie of the notion that there's nothing worth anything in the South. Lindsay and I--

RICHARD RUSK: I wonder if that's part of the reason my Dad came back down here.

BEAIRD: I think it may very well be. I happen to see the other evening a two-hour segment on Lyndon Johnson, *The One Man Show*, on public broadcasting.

RICHARD RUSK: Wasn't that a tremendous film.

BEAIRD: And I think he had a lot of the same feeling. I mean it's part of the inherent southern pride that you have when you're born and reared in the region. Your roots go deep; you don't want to be considered the tail end. You want to do what you can to make of the region everything that it's capable of being and I saw the opportunity to make probably what history will show as a very minor contribution but a contribution to establishing Georgia as one of the premier state-assisted law schools in the country. And I seized it. And I think that that may be part of the reason why Dean Rusk came. He grew up in Cherokee County and Georgia sure had a *long* way to go during his early years here. I grew up in Alabama and Alabama had a long way to go. (Rusk laughs) But as part of the Sunbelt we have an opportunity to really make a difference these days. His contribution is much more substantial, nationally, than mine. But I think when you start fitting the pieces together, the things that he did the things I've been trying to do, we've

all contributed to the growth and development of this Law School which was basically why I came.

RICHARD RUSK: And that's basically why he came. Anyone else on the faculty who--

[break in recording]

RICHARD RUSK: --Talk to the effect that the Law School is planning to build an addition that might house something called the Dean Rusk Center. What do you know about this project?

BEAIRD: Well the Law School has planned for a number of years to build a permanent Dean Rusk Center addition to the Law School. While we're proud of the converted Waddell Hall Center, it's limited in space. It's not adjacent to the building. We need the Center to be more accessible to law students, law faculty, so forth. We, through the campus planning office, planned to complete the Law Center concept of the Law School by adding an addition to the South wing of the building with the Rusk Center on the first floor facing the Richard Russell Library. We contemplated building a 30,000 square foot addition, which would house the Rusk Center, memorabilia room, a place for limited archives, another floor of an International Law Collection. The LLM program will be housed in that building as well as the Woodruff professor. And on the first floor facilities--and electronic courtroom facilities for mock trial, moot court--all skills programs that we're trying to improve here in the Law School. Last fall I asked several friends to see if they couldn't get planning money for that building in this past session of the legislature. This building was not on the interim president's list of priorities nor was it on the Regents list of priorities. If we had to wait for that it may be many years so I asked Speaker Murphy and Larry Walker, the Majority Leader and others to see if they couldn't do something for us with the planning money. Carl Sanders took a very active role in this. It's interesting that most of the people--Speaker Murphy, Carl Sanders, and others said they wanted to do something for Rusk, frankly, before he got to the point to where he couldn't appreciate it. They are aware of his sight problems and so forth.

RICHARD RUSK: The fact that my father's name is sort of attached to the project in a sense that it would be the Dean Rusk Center--did that have much of a bearing with these people?

BEAIRD: It was a primary consideration. They were willing to do something for him. They're all law graduates and they wanted to do something for the Law School but the primary consideration was they wanted to do something for Rusk to put it in their words, "before it was too late." And they appropriated \$100,000 in planning money. And for a number of years the Planning Office has been locating this addition on the south side. Much to my surprise a month or so ago a North Campus Preservation Committee that had been appointed by Interim President Stanford for some reason or another had recommended against any new construction on the north campus. I've met with one group in connection with this facility and I meet with another group on the seventeenth. I'm confident that the building will be built and it will be built where we planned to build it. It's too important to the Law School and its quality to be deterred by minimal environmental concerns. I'm confident that if we can get the building planned, the plans and specifications drawn that it can be funded next year. And one of my real regrets is that I will not be in office to fund it.

[break in recording]

RICHARD RUSK: Dean Beard I'd like to thank you for an excellent interview. Thanks for your participation.

[break in recording]

RICHARD RUSK: Testing, 1-2-3-4-5-4-3-2-1. Testing, Testing, Testing. Talking right here with this recorder sitting on my knee speaking at a normal tone of voice checking the recording capability of the tape recorder. How does my voice sound now?

END OF SIDE 1

[SIDE 2 BLANK]

