

Regional Oral History Office  
The Bancroft Library

University of California  
Berkeley, California

Women in Politics Oral History Project

Pauline L. Davis

CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLYWOMAN, 1952-1976

An Interview Conducted by  
Malca Chall  
1977-1982

Underwritten by a research grant from the  
Research Collection Program of the  
National Endowment for the Humanities

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PAULINE L. DAVIS

*Olan Mills Studios*



23 September 1986

To: James Hart, Director  
Bonnie Hardwick, Manuscripts  
Vivian Fisher, Microforms  
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From: Willa Baum, Division Head  
Regional Oral History Office

Re: Deposit of oral history volume, tapes, and personal papers of  
Pauline L. Davis.

This final typed and bound copy of Pauline Davis' oral history is being deposited in The Bancroft Library. The interview and tapes are closed for research until January 1, 2010. Also for deposit are personal papers of Pauline Davis which are open for research.

Pauline L. Davis, California Assemblywoman, 1952-1976, 9 tapes. 1986,  
157 pages.

--shelf copy in ROHO pending file

WB:lj



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## PREFACE

The following interview is one of a series of tape-recorded memoirs in the California Women Political Leaders Oral History Project. The series has been designed to study the political activities of a representative group of California women who became active in politics during the years between the passage of the woman's suffrage amendment and the current feminist movement--roughly the years between 1920 and 1965. They represent a variety of views: conservative, moderate, liberal, and radical, although most of them worked within the Democratic and Republican parties. They include elected and appointed officials at national, state, and local governmental levels. For many the route to leadership was through the political party--primarily those divisions of the party reserved for women.

Regardless of the ultimate political level attained, these women have all worked in election campaigns on behalf of issues and candidates. They have raised funds, addressed envelopes, rung doorbells, watched polls, staffed offices, given speeches, planned media coverage, and when permitted, helped set policy. While they enjoyed many successes, a few also experienced defeat as candidates for public office.

Their different family and cultural backgrounds, their social attitudes, and their personalities indicate clearly that there is no typical woman political leader; their candid, first-hand observations and their insights about their experiences provide fresh source material for the social and political history of women in the past half century.

In a broader framework their memoirs provide valuable insights into the political process as a whole. The memoirists have thoughtfully discussed details of party organization and the work of the men and women who served the party. They have analysed the process of selecting party leaders and candidates, running campaigns, raising funds, and drafting party platforms, as well as the more subtle aspects of political life such as maintaining harmony and coping with fatigue, frustration, and defeat. Perceived through it all are the pleasures of friendships, struggles, and triumphs in a common cause.

The California Women Political Leaders Oral History Project has been financed by both an outright and a matching grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Matching funds were provided by the Rockefeller Foundation for the Helen Gahagan Douglas component of the project, by the Columbia and Fairtree Foundations, and by individuals who were interested in supporting memoirs of their friends and colleagues. In addition, funds from the California State Legislature-sponsored Knight-Brown Era Governmental History Project made it possible to increase the research and broaden the scope of the interviews in which there was

a meshing of the woman's political career with the topics being studied in the Knight-Brown project. Professors Judith Blake Davis, Albert Lepawsky, and Walton Bean have served as principal investigators during the period July 1975-December 1977 that the project was underway. This series is the second phase of the Women in Politics Oral History Project, the first of which dealt with the experiences of eleven women who had been leaders and rank-and-file workers in the suffrage movement.

The Regional Oral History Office was established to tape record autobiographical interviews with persons significant in the history of the West and the nation. The Office is under the administrative supervision of James D. Hart, Director of The Bancroft Library. Interviews were conducted by Amelia R. Fry, Miriam Stein, Gabrielle Morris, Malca Chall, Fern Ingersoll, and Ingrid Scobie.

Malca Chall, Project Director  
Women in Politics Oral History Project

Willa Baum, Department Head  
Regional Oral History Office

15 November 1979  
Regional Oral History Office  
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University of California at Berkeley

## CALIFORNIA WOMEN POLITICAL LEADERS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

- Frances Mary Albrier, *Determined Advocate for Racial Equality*. 1979, 308 p.
- Marjorie Benedict, *Developing a Place for Women in the Republican Party*. 1984 (edited transcript in The Bancroft Library), 143 p.
- Odessa Cox, *Challenging the Status Quo: The Twenty-seven Year Campaign for Southwest Junior College*. 1979, 149 p.
- Pauline Davis, *California Assemblywoman, 1952-1976*. 1986, 157 p.
- Ann Eliaser, *From Grassroots Politics to the Top Dollar: Fundraising for Candidates and Non-profit Agencies*. 1983, 306 p.
- March Fong Eu, *High Achieving Nonconformist in Local and State Government*. 1977, 245 p.
- Jean Wood Fuller, *Organizing Women: Careers in Volunteer Politics and Government Administration*. 1977, 270 p.
- Elizabeth Rudel Gatov, *Grassroots Party Organizer to Treasurer of the United States*. 1978, 412 p.
- Elinor Raas Heller, *A Volunteer Career in Politics, in Higher Education, and on Governing Boards*. 1984, 910 p.
- Patricia Hitt, *From Precinct Worker to Assistant Secretary of HEW*. 1980, 220 p.
- Lucile Hosmer, *A Conservative Republican in the Mainstream of Party Politics*. 1983, 200 p.
- Kimiko Fujii Kitayama, *Nisei Leader in Democratic Politics and Civic Affairs*. 1979, 110 p.
- Bernice Hubbard May, *A Native Daughter's Leadership in Public Affairs*. Two volumes, 1976, 540 p.
- LaRue McCormick, *Activist in the Radical Movement, 1930-1960: The International Labor Defense and the Communist Party*. 1980, 166 p.
- Hulda Hoover McLean, *A Conservative's Crusades for Good Government*. 1977, 174 p.
- Emily Pike, *Republican Party Campaign Organizer: From Volunteer to Professional*. 1983, 389 p.
- Julia Porter, *Dedicated Democrat and City Planner, 1941-1975*. 1977, 195 p.
- Wanda Sankary, *From Sod House to State House*. 1979, 109 p.
- Hope Mendoza Schechter, *Activist in the Labor Movement, the Democratic Party, and the Mexican-American Community*. 1980, 165 p.
- Vera Schultz, *Ideals and Realities in State and Local Government*. 1977, 272 p.

Clara Shirpser, *One Woman's Role in Democratic Party Politics: National, State, and Local, 1950-1973*. Two volumes, 1975, 671 p.

Elizabeth Snyder, *California's First Woman State Party Chairman*. 1977, 199 p.

Eleanor Wagner, *Independent Political Coalitions: Electoral, Legislative, and Community*. 1977, 166 p.

Carmen Warschaw, *A Southern California Perspective on Democratic Party Politics*. 1983 (edited transcript in The Bancroft Library), 450 p.

Carolyn Wolfe, *Educating for Citizenship: A Career in Community Affairs and the Democratic Party, 1906-1976*. 1978, 254 p.

Rosalind Wyman, *"It's a Girl:" Three Terms on the Los Angeles City Council, 1953-1965; Three Decades in the Democratic Party, 1948-1979*. 1979, 150 p.

Mildred Younger, *Inside and Outside Government and Politics, 1929-1980*. 1983, 353 p.

The Helen Gahagan Douglas Component of the California Women Political Leaders  
Oral History Project

Volume I: *The Political Campaigns*

Discussion primarily of the 1950 Senate campaign and defeat, in interviews with Tilford E. Dudley, India T. Edwards, Leo Goodman, Kenneth R. Harding, Judge Byron F. Lindsley, Helen Lustig, Alvin P. Meyers, Frank Rogers, and William Malone.\*

Volume II: *The Congress Years, 1944-1950*

Discussion of organization and staffing; legislation on migrant labor, land, power and water, civilian control of atomic energy, foreign policy, the United Nations, social welfare, and economics, in interviews with Juanita E. Barbee, Rachel S. Bell, Albert S. Cahn, Margery Cahn, Evelyn Chavoor, Lucy Kramer Cohen, Arthur Goldschmidt, Elizabeth Wickenden Goldschmidt, Chester E. Holifield, Charles Hogan, Mary Keyserling, and Philip J. Noel-Baker.

Volume III: *Family, Friends, and the Theater: The Years Before and After Politics*

Discussion of Helen and Melvyn Douglas and their activities at home with their family and among friends, and their work in the theater and movies, in interviews with Fay Bennett, Alis De Sola, Cornelia C. Palms, and Walter R. Pick.

Volume IV: *Congresswoman, Actress, and Opera Singer*

Helen Gahagan Douglas discusses her background and childhood; Barnard College education; Broadway, theater and opera years; early political organization and Democratic party work; the congressional campaigns, supporters; home and office in Washington; issues during the Congress years, 1944-1950; the 1950 Senate campaign against Richard M. Nixon, and aftermath; women and independence; occupations since 1950; speaking engagements, travel to Russia, South America, Liberia inauguration, civic activities, life in Vermont.

\*William Malone preferred not to release his transcript at this time.



## INTERVIEW HISTORY

Pauline Davis represented the First Assembly District in the California legislature from 1952 until she retired in 1976. Prior to her election she had become well acquainted with the legislature while she served as her husband's secretary during his nearly three terms in the assembly. Upon his death in 1952 she ran for his seat and, despite obstacles set up to defeat her, was elected and retained by the loyal voters of her district for nearly a quarter of a century. During ten of these twenty-five years she was the only woman in the legislature. Occasionally, she was joined by one or two other women in the assembly.

Because of her long-time career in California government, Mrs. Davis was invited to participate in the California Women Political Leaders Oral History Project. She was an assemblywoman during the terms of Governors Earl Warren, Goodwin Knight, Edmund Brown, Sr. (Pat), Ronald Reagan, and Edmund Brown, Jr. (Jerry); served with about a half dozen different assembly speakers; experienced the reorganization of the legislature from short annual legislative sessions to year-around sessions; participated in the change from part-time citizen to full-time career legislator, from small staffs to large office and committee staffs, and interns; and felt the effect of reapportionment following the United States Supreme Court ruling on "one-man one-vote."

Her legislative career and her special policy interests dovetailed well with the Regional Oral History Office's ongoing Government History Documentation Project which has been, since 1972, covering the administrations of Governors Warren through Reagan.

As a representative of a nine-county rural mountain district long considered the source of northern water inexorably destined to flow to southern California via dams, aqueducts, and canals, Mrs. Davis labored long and hard to protect the interests of her constituents in the historic water transfer battles. The Davis-Grunsky and Davis-Dolwig acts are two obvious legacies of her concern with long-range California water issues. The directors of the Division/Department of Water Resources knew her well. So too did legislators and administration officials handling the broad field of recreation, for Mrs. Davis took a strong interest in roadside rests, fishing, hunting, and other recreational pursuits common to her district. Fairs and expositions were another long-term interest as were education in small rural school districts, and a host of other topics. When Pauline Davis took hold of an issue her fellow legislators learned that they had better pay attention.

Mrs. Davis was pleased to be invited to participate in the oral history project but she requested that we delay starting until after she had retired and opened her antique shop in Sacramento's "Old Town." We met first, quite briefly, on January 22, 1977, in the lobby of the Hotel del Coronado, near San Diego, California. Here, the Western States Fairs Association was holding its annual

meeting at which they were honoring Pauline Davis for her many years of effort on behalf of fairs. I attended in order to accept, on behalf of The Bancroft Library, a copy of the documentary slide-tape show of Mrs. Davis's life prepared by the association which was shown at the luncheon honoring Mrs. Davis. "This is Your Life, Pauline" is an excellent, thoroughly professional documentary which has been deposited in The Bancroft Library. It provided many clues to Mrs. Davis's life hitherto unknown to me. Later that day, at sunset, on the beach behind the hotel, the association put on a most exciting fireworks display, with the final scene, high in the sky, an enormous portrait of Pauline Davis. This was her day; there was no doubt about that.

By prior arrangement, we met the following morning in her hotel room, which she was sharing with two close friends, to discuss possible contents for the upcoming oral history interviews and set a date for the first session.

One month later, on February 22, at about 7:30 p.m. we began the first of our four interview sessions. This and the subsequent three sessions took place in the large comfortable family room of Mrs. Davis's Sacramento home. She began by taking me outside to the other end of her backyard into a small two-room cottage, which now housed a dozen or more well kept scrapbooks full of neatly organized press clippings, pictures, and speeches detailing her career; her drawers of bills on which she had worked--all cross filed. She gave me a short handwritten list of topics which she wanted to be sure to cover during the course of the interviews. Then we began to tape record the story of Mrs. Davis's family life in Nebraska.

The following day, while Mrs. Davis was in her shop, I returned to the house and the annex and began my research into the scrapbooks. I put a stack of these into my car to be taken home and studied in preparation for the following interviews. Subsequently I sent her a tightly organized nine-page outline of topics which I felt would cover the significant aspects of her legislative experiences, many of which were not on her list. That we covered our outlines quite well can be seen by the range of topics listed in the table of contents.

Mrs. Davis invited me to stay in her home when I came again, and I was pleased to do so. Her home, enlarged and remodeled since she moved into it in 1949, represents a side of Pauline Davis which probably only her family and close friends know, and which I enjoyed knowing. Its handsome period furniture, antiques, accessories, and pictures attest to one whose home provides relief from the stresses of the day. The desire to establish an antique shop seemed a natural outgrowth of those interests which she had long held outside the hectic life in the legislature. Mrs. Davis's two daughters and one son grew up in this house, and it is home as well to a number of grandchildren, nieces and nephews. This warm, feminine, social side of Pauline Davis, one with a sense of adventure and sense of humor was probably rarely if ever seen by her fellow legislators, who usually thought of her only as a strong tough opponent (which she surely was) who fought hard for her constituents, with a single-minded purpose, and without much of a sense of humor. But when you are a single mother rearing three children yourself, one from infancy, and your job is on the line every two years, a dedication to the job and a tough armor may be required. Pauline Davis has it, but she has another side as well.



Two years elapsed between the first (February 22, 1977) and the second visit (May 19, 1979), and more than three years until the final visit (August 25-26, 1982). In the interim she fell in her shop and injured her back severely enough to require multiple surgeries; she sold her store; and for nearly a year she and her children were responsible for the care of four teen-aged relatives left orphaned by a tragic airplane crash.

Despite the delays we did ultimately finish the interviews, even when it became necessary for Mrs. Davis to lie down on the couch as we talked. We worked two hours during the second session, three on the third, and two on the final. By the time Mrs. Davis had completed reviewing the edited transcript of her nine tapes, the funds for the Women Political Leaders project had been spent, and her interview, the last in the series, could not be completed. Since she had decided to seal her interview until 2010, and it could not, therefore, be made available for current research, Mrs. Davis suggested that her daughter type the manuscript. Because there was additional surgery and much pain, she and her daughter were unable to devote much time to the task. But on August 22, 1986, the final typed copies were returned to the office, two years after the draft had been sent to her and nearly a decade since we had started the oral history.

We are pleased, however, that despite the severe difficulties under which this oral history developed, it was properly completed. As one might expect, Mrs. Davis put up the good fight and persevered until she reached her goal. We regret that researchers must wait so long to gain access to this informative volume but we feel sure that they too will be grateful for having it available to add to the gathering store of knowledge about the experiences of California legislators--and women--during the significant years of surging growth and change in California.

Malca Chall  
Interviewer-Editor

8 September 1986  
Regional Oral History Office  
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I. FAMILY BACKGROUND: VERDIGRE, NEBRASKA  
GRANDPARENTS & PARENTS: THE CZECHOSLOVAKIAN INHERITANCE

Chall: I have your birthdate as January 3, 1917. Is that correct?

Davis: That's right.

Chall: Verdigre, Nebraska. What kind of a little town was Verdigre?

Davis: Verdigre, Nebraska is a very small community, about 423 population, in the county of Knox. However, I was not born in the city per se, I was born four and a half miles on a pioneer ranch, outside of Verdigre, Nebraska.

Chall: What were your parents doing there?

Davis: My parents were ranchers.

Chall: From your name Vakoch it would appear that your parents might have been Polish?

Davis: No, they were Czechoslovakian.

Chall: Had they come as immigrants themselves?

Davis: No. Both my parents were born in the U.S. Both sets of my grandparents came over from what is now Czechoslovakia in the early 1800's. As a matter of fact, my son and I are putting a family history together. Both of them were pioneers. My grandfather, on my father's side, and his first wife, came over on a small boat, not knowing really what was going to occur on the high seas.

Chall: A sailboat?

Davis: No, a small boat. I have in my bedroom, which I will show you, a trunk that was handmade and possessed all of my grandmother's personal belongings that she brought to the United States.

Chall: What year do you think this might have been?

Davis: I can tell you in just a second. Grandfather - September 13, 1889; Grandmother - 1876.

Chall: These were your grandparents?

Davis: These were my grandparents. Have you ever tried to read this language?

Chall: No, I've seen Polish.

Davis: This is different.

Chall: We always like to have that kind of background. Did I understand you to say that it was your grandfather, your paternal grandfather, who came over on a small boat?

Davis: Yes, my grandfather Vakoch first, and his first wife. My other grandparents, which were my mother's parents, her maiden name was Kolar, came over on, shall we say, a larger boat. They didn't face the hardships that my father's parents did. However, both grandparents first settled in the Great Lakes region, in the State of Illinois. Both of them migrated to Nebraska.

Chall: Homesteading?

Davis: Yes, they homesteaded. My grandparents, on my father's side, were pioneer ranchers. As a matter of fact, the ranch today still has on its premises the sod house that was constructed by them, when they first settled on the pioneer ranch.

Chall: Is it in the family still?

Davis: No, it is not, unfortunately. I tried to purchase the area where the sod house stands and the family house stands, years ago. It is now deteriorating, because the man that purchased it some years ago is just farming the land, and he is letting all the buildings deteriorate. It is very sad. Years ago, I tried to purchase the living quarters and he was willing to do it. Then he decided to sell to another party who is also just cultivating the land. So, I guess I'm out of luck.

Chall: I'm sure you've taken pictures of it.

Davis: Yes, I have. Not the sod house. I don't, unfortunately, have a picture of the sod house. I should have, but I don't.

Chall: Did your parents, when they were married, take over one or the other of the grandparents' homestead, or did they set out on their own?

Davis: No. A large home, family home, was constructed on the ranch. My parents moved to the ranch with the understanding that my grandparents would live there also. They had separate quarters in the large ranch house. So, I was actually raised with my grandparents. My father was the eldest son in the family. In those years, the grandparents, when they became older, lived with the children. It was a responsibility that children just assumed in those days.

Chall: That was your grandparents' home, then. It had been theirs originally.

Davis: The sod house was. But when my father and mother married (1901), they built the large home and so it was actually theirs. And the ranch was given to my father. It consisted of 200 acres.

Chall: What about other children in your father's family? Did he have brothers?

Davis: Yes, he still has one brother who's living, who's in the 90's. My grandfather Vakoch, when he first lived in the sod house on this pioneer ranch, lost his first two wives in childbirth. So he was married three times, and the grandmother that I was raised with, was my father's mother. So, the family has a real history. He had half-sisters; he had half-brothers; but his only real brother is still living in Verdigre, Nebraska.\*

Chall: Probaby had children over a long span of time, your grandfather? Have you any idea what kind of background or education your grandparents had?

Davis: No, I really don't. I think it was just something they had to achieve themselves.

Chall: Did you know what brought them over to this country?

Davis: As I understand it, from hearing my mother tell about it, I can

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\*Died in 1981

Davis: recall that it was a migration of many people from the foreign countries coming to this land for a better way of life. Actually, their communication was through friends that came before them, recommended that they come to this country.

Chall: And they were the first ones of their families, as far as you know, to come away?

Davis: That's correct.

Chall: Was that small boat saga only that grandparent and his family? Did they set out alone?

Davis: I understand they did. I just can't imagine anybody doing that, but I presume they did. I've questioned this many times. I should have asked my parents if they had a compass, but I just don't know. I know that they suffered many, many hardships before they arrived in this country.

Chall: And even know how to sail?

Davis: My grandfather, as I understand it, knew a little bit about boats so that was not a completely new venture in that respect.

Chall: That makes some sense. Now what about your own parents? What kind of upbringing did they have, way out in the country on their homesteads?

Davis: You mean educationally?

Chall: Yes. They did speak Czechoslovakian?

Davis: They did at home, and I speak it.

Chall: Do you really?

Davis: Yes, I do. We were taught to speak our native tongue and, as a matter of fact, when I started to school the only two words that I could speak in English was "hello" and that my name was Pauline. However, my father was very, very firm if anyone was in our home, as a guest, we were not permitted to speak our native tongue at all. He felt it might be a personal affront to someone who was there who did not know the language. They might feel that we were conversing about them. So they both spoke English very well.

In those days, as I can recall my mother telling me, as far as

Davis: their education was concerned, they didn't go from grade one, two, three, and four. They went from one reader to another. They had readers. As I understand it, they both went through the eighth reader, which in those days, was equivalent to possibly two years in high school.

Chall: Was this in a one room schoolhouse?

Davis: Yes, it was. My mother used to tell us that, actually, sometimes she felt that it was an advantage to the children because you had different age levels and different groups together, and one was learning from the other.

Chall: So you think your parents then, probably, did at least get through what we would call grammar school, if not further?

Davis: Oh, yes. In fact, I would say they went further than that according to their ability in their business ventures, and also the way my mother and father were able to write. They didn't have an accent. They spoke English very well.

Chall: And was it because your grandparents were living with you that you spoke Czech? Had they learned English well?

Davis: Yes, but not as well as my mother and father. They understood everything and were able to speak.

Chall: Was there a Czech newspaper that would come to the homes?

Davis: Oh, yes.

Chall: So they kept up.

Davis: Oh, yes.

Chall: Did any of them go back to visit?

Davis: No. As a matter of fact, my sister and I were desirous of making a trip to Europe. We had given some thought to going back to Czechoslovakia and trying to locate the history of my grandparents. As you know, they're having quite a time there right now. I've just conversed with my sister two evenings ago and we decided that was not the thing to do. \*

Now my grandparents on my mother's side never were ranchers. When my grandparents, Kolar's, came from the State of Illinois and migrated to Verdigre, Nebraska, they lived in the community of

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\*Sister killed in a private airplane crash on November 29, 1979.

Davis: Verdigre, Nebraska. My grandfather went into the lumber business. He also had a stable for horses, and he groomed horses and shod horses, but principally, he was in the lumber business. They always lived in town.

As far as financial capabilities, they were in a better situation financially than my grandparents on my father's side when they came to this country. Then, as time progressed, my father's parents lived very well.

Chall: So your parents met, then, through the community, the Czech community, because they both came from the same part of the world?

Davis: I'm sure that you know that the State of Nebraska and, principally the City of Omaha, has a lot of Czech people in it. In fact, the southern part of the City of Omaha is almost solid Czech and Polish people.

Chall: I didn't know that.

Davis: The Swedes migrated to Minnesota and the Czechs migrated to Illinois and Nebraska. It's a very interesting history, if you ever want to read about it.

Chall: So, it was just a carrying on of the culture then for people who lived there?

Davis: That's right. Very much so.

Chall: Did your mother and father both go to the same schools?

Davis: Yes, they did.

Chall: So they knew each other practically all their lives before they were married?

Davis: Oh, yes.

Chall: Were they married quite young?

Davis: At nineteen.

Chall: They were both nineteen?

Davis: I think there was a one year difference in their age.

Chall: In your mother's family, did her parents speak Czech at home?



Davis: Yes.

Chall: She knew the language just as well?

Davis: Oh, yes. Very well.

Chall: What about the religious background in those two homes?

Davis: Catholic.

Chall: Was it Roman Catholic?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: Then you were raised as a Catholic, I assume?

Davis: Yes, but I'm not one now. I'm Episcopalian.

Chall: Did you give it up when you were married the first time? It must have caused a trauma in your family.

Davis: It bothered my father a little bit, but he was a very understanding man. There were five of us children. One we lost when he was a baby. My parents had three sons and two daughters. My father was very close to the two of us (two girls). So he was very understanding about it, really.

He was an alter boy until he got married when he was nineteen, so you can imagine it was a little difficult for him to accept.

Chall: Yes, that was a closely knit community, then--in every way--religious, language, culture.

Davis: It's very interesting.

You know, people say that the Roman Catholic religion--especially years back--you give a child to the church for seven years and they will always be Catholic. And, really, that's true. I found that I drifted back, after I was separated, and I raised my two daughters in the Catholic church. Then, when I remarried, Mr. Davis was a very avid Mason, and so I kind of withdrew again from the Catholic religion. I haven't gone back, although now I seem to be drifting to my son's church, which is very close to the Catholic religion, which is Episcopalian, as you know. I feel when I go to church with him that I'm more in a Catholic church than the Catholic mass is today. My daughters both remained Catholic, they married Catholic men and they're raising their children Catholic. So you see, that seed really did remain there.

Chall: I see. Yes, it did. Your son--how is it that he's not a Methodist?

Davis: Because I was always open minded about religion, I always felt that the most important thing was to worship God, no matter which religion you chose to utilize, and he just decided that the church he chose is what he wanted. He's very active in it, very active.

Chall: Was it his wife's church?

Davis: No, she was a Catholic. He married a Catholic girl, but she changed too. She joined that church about eight months ago.

Chall: It's a very interesting background.

Davis: Isn't it?

Chall: Yes. So you grew up then on a ranch.

Davis: Yes, I did.

Chall: And you had two brothers and one sister. Did the third brother die in infancy?

Davis: In infancy. Eleven months old.

Chall: Were you all close together in age?

Davis: Three years apart. Every one of us.

Chall: That's interesting in itself.

Davis. Yes, it is. That many years ago.

Chall: All things considered. The fact that you had Catholic parents--

Davis: That's right.

Chall: --that your mother managed to space them.

Davis: By the way, my mother was a Catholic convert when she married my father. Even though she was raised in a Catholic home, she did not stay with the church. I don't know for what reason she didn't, but I know she became a Catholic convert of her own choosing when they were married.

Chall: Is that right? So she came back into the church.

Davis: Yes, she came back into the church.

Chall: She may have had a more liberal attitude then, toward religion, do you think?

Davis: She was a very understanding mother. Of course, everyone loves their mother, I guess, but our mother was the trunk of the tree, as far as the family was concerned, but she never intervened in anything, unless she was asked for advice.

They were a very fine married couple. I was thinking this morning how unusual it is. I'm sure that they probably had a few minor spats, but as a child I can only remember one quarrel that my mother and father had.

Chall: Do you remember what it was about?

Davis: No, I don't.

Chall: Just heard loud voices?

Davis: Yes. I can remember just one quarrel, and that's unusual.

Chall: Yes, I should say. Who was the stronger in terms of the rules of the family?

Davis: My mother.

### Life on the Ranch

Chall: Did she do all of the chores, as most of the housewives did in those days?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: The vegetables?

Davis: Oh, yes.

Chall: And the meats?

Davis: Yes. And I had the chore of hoeing the garden, and it wasn't a small one. It was like half an acre. My mother and my sister would clean house and do other chores. We would trade off. But, as a

Davis: rule, I was the one that had the responsibility of hoeing the garden with my mother. Of course, in those days, everything was grown on the ranch.

We were chatting about this last night, my son and I, because of this family history. It's interesting that you're asking these things. We were just discussing them last evening. We even grew our own peanuts. We were talking about President Carter.

Chall: What did you do with them?

Davis: That's what he asked. Well, we roasted them. I can remember roasting them in the stove oven.

Chall: So that was something you ate?

Davis: Oh, yes. For our own use.

Chall: You didn't crush it and make peanut butter?

Davis: No. It was just something for the children.

Chall: You raised your own meats?

Davis: Everything. We smoked our own bacon; we smoked our own ham. As a matter of fact, I used to, as a child, object to the season when we were smoking ham and bacon because it was the children's chore to keep the smoker going. Of course, that smoke gets in the pores of your body, and goodness sakes, you had a very difficult time disposing of that scent on your clothing. Of course, we weren't the only ones. All the children in school had that particular chore, so we all smelled like smoked meat. We grew our own potatoes, everything imaginable.

Chall: Self-sufficient. But some things you bought. Coffee?

Davis: Yes. Coffee, sugar, and flour. The basic things. But as far as vegetables, meat, poultry and eggs, that was all on the ranch. Milk, cream, butter. We churned our own butter. Canned our own fruit.

Chall: Those must have been busy days.

Davis: Oh, they were. We made our own sauerkraut, made our own pickles.

Chall: Something always to be done.

Davis: Those were busy days, but people were extremely happy, I thought. I had a very happy childhood, a very happy childhood.

Educating the Children

Chall: Where were you in the scheme of five?

Davis: I was the baby.

Chall: You were the fifth, then?

Davis: My parents decided, although that little schoolhouse was still available to us, not to send us there. We went to school in town, in Verdigre, four and a half miles from the ranch.

Chall: How did you get there?

Davis: Buggy. Horse and buggy. The boys were old enough; they were the ones who did the driving. Then, after they graduated from high school, then my father didn't wish to chance us, to taking the team in ourselves, so we board and roomed in town.

Chall: That's the two girls?

Davis: That's right. The two girls. During the winter months. Now, during the spring, we used to, as a matter of fact, walk home, four and a half miles. This is just unbelievable when you say this to a child today, but we did. My father would take us in, in the morning, and then we'd walk home at night.

Chall: You and your sister, then, were close in age?

Davis: Yes, we were three years apart.

Chall: And how far did you go to school in Verdigre, right through high school?

Davis: No. Just through elementary. Then we moved away from there. I've had no formal education other than what I've picked up myself. It was in Fremont, Nebraska that I finished.

Chall: Did you say your parents moved away?

Davis: Yes. To Fremont, Nebraska.

Chall: They moved off the ranch?

Davis: Yes. Retired.

Chall: What did your parents retire to?

Davis: Actually, they felt they wanted to retire entirely. They found themselves too active as individuals and they weren't content. So, they converted part of their home for tourists. Then, as time went on, that got to be just too much so they discontinued that.

Chall: How old was your father?

Davis: When he retired? Let's see. I would be guessing at this. They were in their early fifties.

Chall: Were they in good health?

Davis: Oh, yes.

Chall: They were just tired of ranching?

Davis: They were tired of ranching. My father, in addition to farming, was primarily a cattle person. I don't know if you're familiar with the State of Nebraska; it is a heavy beef state. He was what we call a feeder. He bought cattle, fattened them, and would take them to the market--Swift's or Armour's packing houses in South Omaha.

Chall: Was that the reason they moved to Fremont?

Davis: Fremont is just a community, where farmers retire. It's a retired community.

Chall: Rather than moving to Verdigre?

Davis: That's right.

Chall: Is it far from Verdigre?

Davis: It's about a two and a half hour drive. It's a town that is very beautiful with trees, and many, many retired farmers. It just seemed as though they all would gravitate toward Fremont, Nebraska.

Chall: Now, what about your brothers? Did they stay on the ranch?

Davis: No. One of them now lives in the State of Illinois,\* and he has a motel that he owns. He and his wife have had that for years and years. My youngest brother,\*\* who is very, very ill right now--as a matter of fact, he's in the hospital in the City of Omaha--was in business in Omaha all his life until he retired, just three years ago.

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\*Died June 1984

\*\*Died March 1978

Chall: Did your parents, beyond expecting all of you to go to school and probably finish, have any other ideas in mind for any of you?

Davis: Actually, when you relate back to those years, parents never really understood--and they were innocent in this respect--that girls should have a formal educational background. So my mother and father concentrated on the boys, and both of the boys went to college.

Chall: Oh, they did?

Davis: Yes, they did.

Chall: Where did they go?

Davis: They both went to business colleges, principally in the City of Omaha. However, when it came to my sister and myself, well, you know, that belief just didn't exist. Whatever advancement both of us achieved we did on our own.

Chall: Had you any desire to go to college?

Davis: Oh, very much so. I had a great desire to go to college. As a matter of fact, there's a college by the name of Midland College in Fremont, Nebraska where, of my own volition, I would go and take adult courses. Just a spotty type of thing because I had a great desire of going on to college, and I have always regretted that I didn't have the opportunity of doing so.

Chall: Did you ask your parents? Or was it just understood?

Davis: Yes, I did, but I never really did pursue it as far as consistently asking them to be able to see their way clear to go to college, because it was just something that they didn't feel was necessary for a girl.

Chall: And that was true of your whole community?

Davis: That was true in those years, period. If you look at Nebraska in this day and age, Nebraska is about twenty years behind times of most of the states in the United States. It's an extremely conservative state; one of the most conservative in the United States.

My sister came out a few years back because she loves California, and she worked for the Bank of America. She's always worked in the banking industry. But she just could not stand the pace there. She said, "I don't know how you people survive." They're more relaxed.

- Davis: So, that's why I say, being in Nebraska, they just looked upon things that way.
- Chall: That was probably a cultural bias, too.
- Davis: I think so.
- Chall: Europeans, as a general rule, really didn't look upon girls as educable beyond high school.
- Davis: You'll find the same thing, I think, pertaining to the people of Minnesota, Swedish people. Probably if we had lived in California, that situation would not have been the case. But the midwestern states are still behind times.
- Chall: So you were expected to finish high school and --
- Davis: Get married. As a matter of fact, I decided before I was married, that I wished to strike out on my own. I went into the City of Omaha from Fremont and went to work. My father just couldn't understand that at all, why I wanted some independence.
- Chall: He probably thought it reflected on him, as a non-providing parent. So, that's when you were working for Swanson & Co.?
- Davis: Swanson & Co. And from there, I went to the Bell Telephone Company. That's how I came to California. I transferred from the Bell Telephone Company to California.

#### The Family's Interest in Civic Affairs

- Davis: I see on your outline here that in addition to education, jobs, religion, you have an interest in civic and cultural affairs.
- Chall: Yes.
- Davis: My grandfather Kolar, that was my mother's father, was a born leader. He was the instrument in the formation of a fraternal lodge in Verdigre, Nebraska, which is still in existence. The initials are ZCBJ Lodge.
- Chall: What does it mean?



Davis: In our native tongue it is translated as White Mountain Lodge. Both men and women can belong to this. My mother did. I have snapshots of her receiving her fifty-year pin and things of that sort.

He had the ability of being a great speaker in public affairs so he was consistently called upon to take care of the sermon at people's funerals. I can remember, as a child, he was always the speaker on Memorial Day at the various cemeteries. He was very active, civically.

Of course, as I told you, they always lived in the community of Verdigre so they were very active in that sense. It was a natural thing to him, to get up and speak. He had no problem at all. I sometimes wonder if that's where I achieved a little bit of my courage.

Chall: You used to see him doing this, then?

Davis: Oh, yes.

Chall: Almost like a model?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: Anybody else in your family follow this line?

Davis: No.

Chall: So nobody else has been active in civic affairs except you?

Davis: Well, they have been active in civic affairs, but not in that sense, as far as public speaking.

Chall: In what other ways have they been active, other members of your family?

Davis: They were active in church work, of course, and different social clubs. They were active in this ZCBJ Lodge, because they had community gatherings and picnics. Then, also, my mother and father were very active because of her father's interest, locally, in the election of the local officials like the mayor and the county board of supervisors--the political arena.

Chall: So they were all active in the community.

Davis: Oh, yes.

## II. PAULINE DAVIS MARRIES AND BEGINS A LIFE OF CHALLENGES

The Short Lived Marriage

- Chall: If I can remember from that movie, you married right out of high school? (1935) \*
- Davis: Yes. Certainly after high school. (1936)
- Chall: Can you tell me something about your first husband?
- Davis: I'd rather not.
- Chall: All right. You don't have to. Your children were born, your two daughters--
- Davis: They were born in Nebraska. Karen in January 1938, Marlene in December 1938.
- Chall: You lived where until you moved to California? Did you live in Omaha?
- Davis: Omaha.
- Chall: Were you working there most of the time?
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: Even while you were raising your little girls?
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: And always for Bell Telephone?
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: What did you do there?

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\*"With All Due Respect, Pauline." A film provided by the Western Fairs Association and shown at the association's annual meeting January 25, 1977 at the Hotel Del Coronado at which time Pauline Davis was honored for her efforts on behalf of county fairs in California.

Davis: A long distance conference telephone operator. I started out as just a long distance operator and then, apparently, they saw some ability for me to assume the responsibility of a conference operator. That is, where you have maybe ten or twelve business people chatting with each other at the same time. Of course, it was a responsibility because, at that day and age you had the plug system on the different switchboards. It isn't like it is today. God help you if you pulled one of those plugs by mistake. The whole conference was gone! So that's what I was doing.

Chall: So you did that right--

Davis: 'Till I came to California.

Chall: You graduated from high school during the Depression.

Davis: Oh, yes. Those were hard times. Very difficult times.

Chall: How were things, as you recall it, in Nebraska at that time?

Davis: Very, very difficult.

Chall: So you were fortunate, then, to have found a job?

Davis: Yes, indeed. It just paid \$17.00 a week.

Chall: And on this you were bringing up a couple of babies?

Davis: That's right. Of course, the cost of living was not what it is today. I was very fortunate to have that.

Chall: Yes. And you were probably better paid because you had a job requiring a special skill.

Davis: Oh, yes. In fact, for a period of time, because I had the responsibility of the two little girls, I suggested that I take on some additional night work--the graveyard shift--for which they paid me a so-called twenty cents an hour differential.

Chall: Who took care of your children while you were working?

Davis: My mother took care of Karen, my oldest daughter, and I had Marlene, my youngest daughter, in a nursery school in Omaha. I took her there every morning and picked her up in the evening.

Chall: Does that mean that your mother moved in with you?

- Davis: No, no, she was in Fremont. Fremont is just forty-three miles from Omaha.
- Chall: Karen lived with her, is that it?
- Davis: Yes, most of the time, until I came to California. And I went there on weekends, every weekend, by bus because I didn't have a car.
- Chall: In a sense, Karen was reared by your mother?
- Davis: To a large degree. I had her with me off and on. During the winter months, because Nebraska gets quite a bit of snow, that's when I would leave her with Mother and Dad in Fremont.
- Chall: Otherwise, it would have been quite difficult.
- Davis: It was a little difficult to get on the streetcar early in the morning with two tiny little tots with the snow up over your ankles and more.

#### The Move to California and Marriage to Lester Davis

- Chall: In what year did you come to California? After the war?
- Davis: It was during the war, actually.
- Chall: About what time?
- Davis: I have that date on my transcription. I can give it to you at another time. (1942)
- Chall: Then you went where?
- Davis: Stockton, California.
- Chall: And got a job with the phone company.
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: Did you have the job before you came out here?
- Davis: Yes, it was a transfer.

Chall: How did you decide to do this?

Davis: To transfer to California? Because my first husband was transferred to California. He worked for the Western Pacific Railroad here. Therefore, I felt maybe I should make another try at that marriage. I came to Stockton where he was also residing. I could see it wasn't going to work.

Chall: So you were here when you were divorced?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: How did you happen to meet your husband, Lester Davis?

Davis: Through some acquaintances. In fact, it was a blind date--the only blind date I ever had in my life.

Chall: And what was he doing? Was he in Stockton?

Davis: No, he visited Stockton quite often. He, too, was a Western Pacific engineer.

Chall: That's the railroad.

Davis: Yes.

Chall: You were married in 1947.

Davis: In Berkeley, California in the Chapel of the Flowers.

Chall: Had he ever been married?

Davis: He was married before.

Chall: Did he have any family?

Davis: Yes, he had one son. I have one stepson.

Chall: Where did you live, then, after you married?

Davis: Portola.

Chall: How did he happen to be living there?

- Davis: Because that was the terminal to which he transferred as a railroad engineer. Railroad people work on a seniority basis. Wherever seniority is greatest, it's a greater salary. So they transfer. He worked in Stockton, he worked here in Sacramento, and he transferred to Portola.
- Chall: Your two daughters, by that time, were still quite young.
- Davis: They were adopted by Mr. Davis, in the county courthouse in Plumas County.
- Chall: Your son was born on February 14, 1949. You then had three children. You weren't rearing a stepson too, were you?
- Davis: I was, yes. He was sixteen years of age when I married. He came along and lived with us. He was part of the family until he married.
- Chall: You had four children in a very short time.
- Davis: Very short.
- Chall: Did you continue working at all or did you take on the duties of a full-time housewife?

Lester Davis is Elected to Assembly

Pauline Davis is his Secretary (1949-1952)

- Davis: No, I worked. In fact, Mr. Davis was a legislator.
- Chall: How did he happen to decide to do that? That's interesting.
- Davis: As a railroad engineer, he was elected to serve on what they called a state legislative board, a railroad firemen legislative board. It was a statewide board. He was vice-chairman at that time and worked on legislation that affected railroad employees. That's how he got the taste of running for public office.
- Chall: He decided then to run for public office. Were you married at the time he made this decision?
- Davis: No.
- Chall: Was he a Democrat?

Davis: He was a Democrat.

Chall: And you?

Davis: I was a Democrat at that time.

Chall: Were your parents Democrats?

Davis: Both my father and mother were Democrats.

Chall: When you went up there, then, he was already in the swing of the campaign. Did you have any doubts about that sort of thing when you were contemplating marriage?

Davis: Yes, I did. As a matter of fact, I wasn't too pleased about the situation. He assured me that he wouldn't stay in very long so I went along with it.

Chall: In those days, there was a long session every other year; a shorter session in between.

Davis: We had a budget year in odd years, and a general session in the even years.

Chall: The general session was longer than the budget session.

Davis: That's right.

Chall: So you didn't assume he would be away from home too much.

Davis: No. As a matter of fact, I went to work for him as his personal secretary. That was one of the finest things we decided to do because other than that, the families are so separated. Then, too, at that time, you see, the salary was only \$100.00 gross. We also needed the additional finances brought in by my working.

Chall: He still retained his job as a railroad engineer?

Davis: Yes. He was on a leave of absence.

Chall: During the sessions?

Davis: Yes, during the sessions he would take a leave of absence. He would have to write in each time for permission to take a leave of absence so he wouldn't lose his seniority.

- Chall: He was elected first in 1946 and took office in January, 1947. When you say you became his personal secretary, does that mean that you went to Sacramento with him?
- Davis: Yes, I worked in his office.
- Chall: What did you do with the family?
- Davis: I moved them to Sacramento.
- Chall: Just for the few weeks?
- Davis: Yes, indeed. I lived in more rented homes during that period of time. This house was just half the size that it is now. We were in the process of purchasing when he passed away.
- Chall: What did you do with the children? The girls and your stepson were in school.
- Davis: I had a live-in housekeeper; I always did.
- Chall: What did you do about their schooling?
- Davis: They went to school here. My son started down the street at Theodore Judah Elementary School. That's why we were interested in purchasing this home, because of his education. The girls went to Sacramento High School here. They're graduates of Sacramento High.
- Chall: So they would just come in, stay for the few months, and then go back to Portola?
- Davis: That's right. They would change schools, until they were in high school. Then, I refused to change them because they were interested in taking a foreign language, typing and shorthand and in Portola unless there were sufficient children for those particular classes, they didn't teach them. So, I said I wasn't interested in that. That's when we decided, come September, we would move to Sacramento.
- Chall: So, they were just moved down to stay.
- Davis: Absolutely.
- Chall: What did your stepson ultimately do?



- Davis: He's in Reno now. He went into the lumber business. Bought a lumber enterprise in Portola, California and had that for many, many years. Then he moved to Reno, and he's working for a firm in the lumber enterprise.
- Chall: What's his name.
- Davis: Thomas Lester. Actually, Lester Thomas, but he would like to be called Thomas Lester. He didn't want to be a junior, so he reversed the names. But he really is a junior. You know how some boys feel about that.
- Chall: So, he's gone out on his own?
- Davis: Yes, he's married and has two daughters.
- Chall: Were you and Mr. Davis about the same age when you were married?
- Davis: No, he was eleven years older than I.
- Chall: What kind of background did he have, educationally?
- Davis: He had less education than I.
- Chall: I see. And what was his job as an engineer? Was that on-the-job training on the railroads?
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: Where had he grown up?
- Davis: In Missouri and the City of Omaha. Actually, we both were Nebraskans. We had a lot in common.
- Chall: Was his background the same? Did he come from an immigrant family?
- Davis: Yes, and from a farming background.
- Chall: Any other members of his own family out here?
- Davis: No, they were all in Iowa and Missouri, and still are.
- Chall: Your first view of the legislature was through his office. What kind of campaign did he run? Do you recall anything about that at all?

- Davis: Yes, I sure do. Because I was the one who addressed the envelopes. I was one of his campaign workers, so to speak, 'till all hours of the night and morning. The usual campaign responsibilities. That type of district is a very warm and personalized area. Campaigning involved extensive traveling, extensive correspondence, and personalized mailing; all the things that go along with a personal type of a campaign. It's entirely different than the metropolitan type campaigns.
- Chall: What was the district? Assembly District One?
- Davis: It was Assembly District Two.
- Chall: Was there a vacancy or was he running against an incumbent?
- Davis: There was a vacancy. The gentleman who was in office decided not to seek re-election, so there was a vacancy. The interesting thing about it, as I was telling my son last night, I had never mentioned it to him before, the two Democratic candidates that were seeking the post were both from Portola at that time. That was very interesting because Portola is a much smaller community than some of the other communities in the assembly district. Both of the Democratic candidates were from Portola. The Republican at that time, as I recall, was from Shasta, which is the most populated county, and still is, in the assembly district.
- Chall: Were there two Republicans and two Democrats?
- Davis: No, one Republican and two Democrats.
- Chall: They all cross-filed. Your husband must have had to win the Democratic primary.
- Davis: Yes, he did. He also won the Republican primary. There was no final. That was the end of it.
- Chall: He must have been very popular.
- Davis: I did likewise, three times.
- Chall: Those were the days when you could win it all in the primary?
- Davis: That's right. That's what was so interesting about the cross-filing system. It really was based on personality--how people felt about you and your background, and how dedicated they felt that you would be to their cause. They really looked at that very, very carefully, and still do in the rural areas.

Chall: Party responsibility, or party as such doesn't matter that much?

Davis: Not as much as in the rural areas. As a matter of fact, I often wonder whether it means that much in California. California is so unique compared to other states, as far as party label is concerned. It's principally in the rural areas that situation exists.

Chall: What kind of help did the Democratic party give him?

Davis: None. Just like what they gave me. All of those years--the Democratic party in California--until, I would say, the very few last years, concentrated their efforts on the populous areas, the South.

Chall: Yes, that's where the votes are.

Davis: They're just beginning to come out of the woodwork, as far as the rural areas. Even the governors make a very, very serious mistake by ignoring the rural areas. They have just always felt that their efforts should be in Southern California because that's where the vote was. We were on our own, frankly, that's the only way I can put it. No financial help, nothing.

Chall: How did you raise money?

Davis: Borrowed it from the Bank of America and then paid it back--if you were fortunate enough to win. It took you at least six months to pay back what you borrowed. I did that all of our political lives, so did my husband.

Chall: That was your main source?

Davis: That's right. My main source, which was not one of Mr. Davis', were the Business Professional Women in which I'm very active. I am going to a dinner tonight in Sacramento. They were my prime financial contributors. They were my first. They used to come in with \$5,000 or \$6,000, immediately.

Chall: Even in the late '40's?

Davis: Yes. They were my sole--my prime source of financial funds.

Chall: Was this a county group or state?

Davis: Statewide.

- Davis: The BPW women, I would say, were one of the prime movers in public office, as you know, long before the feminist movement. In philosophy, they really believed in women in public office, but they were not what you would say, involved, per se, in the philosophy of the feminist movement--such as a truck driver, or a bartender. It was primarily in the professional field.
- Chall: If you were in there, you deserved the treatment?
- Davis: Yes. And equal pay.
- Chall: Let's see. Your husband was a member of the legislature from '46 to '52 then?
- Davis: He passed away May 23rd.
- Chall: Those were six years, so that would have been three terms. In each of those, you were working with him?
- Davis: Oh, yes, indeed.
- Chall: When you got back to your county, between sessions, was there much work to be done?
- Davis: Oh, yes. Even when I was in office, the minute that I would get home to Portola, I would just barely get inside the door and the front door bell would be ringing. People that had problems.
- Chall: And did you handle most of that as if you were the administrative aid?
- Davis: Oh, yes.
- Chall: The field office was your home in those days?
- Davis: That's right. I never really had a field office. I really did this personally for myself and for my husband. That personal contact is really very rewarding, not only to the people, but I think to the public official, too. However, it's more work. You become so much better acquainted with what the problem is rather than having it relayed through an administrative aid.
- Chall: What kind of staff did you have?

Davis: In those days, we had very little staff. In those days, we only had, maybe, two people working for us, maximum. Of course, as you know, as times changed, our staff increased. Primarily, the majority of my staff was in my Sacramento office because, again, I took care of my legislative responsibilities myself as much as possible.

### The Concerns of the District: Natural Resources

Chall: What were the problems, then, the concerns of your assembly district in 1946? Can you recall what it is the people were most interested in?

Davis: The view on natural resources was one of the major things in that assembly district, and of course still is, and probably always will be. One of the prime interests at that time, when my husband was in office, were problems pertaining to fish and game. We were having some very heavy winters and some of the migratory deer herds that had migrated from the State of Oregon to California and into the State of Nevada, would be snowed in. My husband was attempting to carry legislation to make it mandatory, which is state law now, to feed deer when they were stranded in deep snows.

Another controversy was the killing of does during that particular time. That was a very controversial issue. He had quite a fighting challenge with the fish and game commissioners, who are appointees of every governor. As a matter of fact, the disturbance with the fish and game commissioners was one of the prime things that the physicians felt was a cause of his heart attack.

Chall: Is was that serious a matter?

Davis: Yes. It was because it's the natural resource in those counties; it is today, though it's been terribly depleted, unfortunately. Both my husband and I were trying to protect the population sufficiently so that future generations would have an opportunity to enjoy the same things that we did. With all due respect, so many hundreds from Southern California would come to that area, not really understanding the real need to conserve the natural resource in a manageable way. Many of the mom-and-pop little stores in those rural counties were solely dependent and would budget during the deer season for the financial capability that would be brought to the area by responsible hunters, if there is such a thing today. There aren't too many, I might say. It was both economically and from a conservation standpoint, something that was very dear to both of us. That was one of the major problems.

Davis: The problems of the lumber industry, as it is today, was one of the major problems. At that time, we had many, many problems in the dairy industry. There were quite a few dairies at that time in those rural counties, which now, is not the case. But it was at that time. Then, also, the problems of agriculture, generally, to make sure that there was an adequate water supply for the counties of origin.

All in all, most of the major things of necessity were in the field of natural resources. And fire prevention. Soil conservation. I carried soil conservation problems. That's another thing that's not on my agenda that I carried statewide. And the continuance and the preservation of the small fairs.

Chall: In those days? This was immediately after the war, so everything was sort of opening up again, wasn't it?

Davis: As a matter of fact, it was his legislation that created the Tule Lake Fair. He created a new fair while he was in office, and I created a new fair while I was in office.

#### Campaigning and Keeping in Touch With Constituents

Chall: Your main way of understanding these issues, then, was to drive around your district. What were the boundaries of your district at that time?

Davis: There were seven counties at that time. Plumas was our home county, of course. We represented Sierra for years.

Sierra and Lassen bordered on the State of Nevada. We had Modoc that bordered on the State of Nevada and Oregon. Siskiyou, that bordered on the State of Oregon. Shasta, Trinity. Those were the counties that he had and I had when I first came into office. More were added. I also went up to the north coast while I was in office.

Chall: How did you handle getting around in your district? Did you, in those six years, have some routine way that you met with your constituents?

Davis: Mr. Davis, as well as I, had speaking commitments before Rotary, Lions, Kiwanas, 20/30, Farm Bureau chapters, Grange chapters, BPW, Soroptomists, you name it. Every organization that you can think of. City councils, board of supervisors--you would go into their chambers when they met and discuss problems with them.

Chall: You just kept in touch.

Davis: We also spoke to chambers of commerce.

Chall: Now, when you say, "we," did the two of you divide some of this?

Davis: No, I guess I'm overlapping into the time that I assumed those responsibilities, because I had them for so long. But I know he did that. I was with him all the time, so, I became quite familiar with the discussions that were taking place, which was an advantage to me when I sought the office. That's the reason the district wanted me to seek the office, because I had some knowledge of the problems. I didn't start out, they felt, as totally a freshman.

But you were on the road, practically, all the time. In those years, you see, the sessions were not as long. It was really an opportunity to get personally acquainted with the district, which now the legislator doesn't have the opportunity to do because he is anchored here in Sacramento. I found myself anchored in Sacramento the latter years I served. However, by that time, I was sufficiently established and I was communicating by telephone extensively with people on a first name basis.

Chall: Was your husband's job in Portola, so that he didn't travel around in his job, or did he travel around on that?

Davis: No, his job was from Portola to Salt Lake City or from Portola to Oroville. It depends on where the railroad called that particular crew to go. That's something you never knew in advance.

Chall: How did you get around the district, then? On weekends? When you went to various parts of the district to speak before groups, would it be summers or weekends?

Davis: Mostly summers and weekends.

Chall: You were busy. Gone all the time.

Davis: Oh, yes, all the time.

Chall: Did you find this any kind of problem with the children?

Davis: The children traveled with us. Even when I was first in office, the children traveled with me, and just waited for me while I went in and spoke.

Chall: Did they complain?

Davis: Well, you know how children are. They were a little restless. However, I can remember my son, especially when he was a little boy, people couldn't believe how well behaved he was. He would sit in those meetings and just wait for me. Just sit there and be a little fine gentleman. You'd be surprised how many people would talk to him and try to find out little political things for the opponent. I chatted with him about it and he would never tell them anything.

Chall: He learned early.

Davis: Yes, he certainly did!

Chall: During the six years, I suppose your husband always had a Republican adversary, every time he ran for office.

Davis: No, he had a free ride, one time. So he actually ran for office just twice, because he didn't have any opponent one time, which was never my good fortune.

Although, I came very close to it. I didn't have anyone file against me about eight years ago, and that was when Governor Reagan first came to office. Stanley Young conducted a write-in campaign and he received enough write-in votes to be my opponent in the general election.

We decided to do a write-in, which is the only time that I ever attempted a write-in, which I was reluctant to do, but the people wanted me to do it. We felt that perhaps we won that write-in. The reason that I didn't challenge it is because there was an assemblyman by the name of Baer who carried a bill that became law the previous legislative session. The new law was just three months old.

It's now in the election code that you can write people's names in and those votes have to be counted. But the state law was so new to the county in the rural counties that most of the county clerks did not understand the new law. All were women who were my friends that I had established a personal acquaintance with so I decided I wouldn't challenge the write-in vote because perhaps they were giving instructions to the precinct captains to throw out those votes. It would have been very embarrassing if I had challenged the county clerks, because it would have definitely highlighted that they didn't keep up with their responsibilities.



Chall: Was this write-in during the primary?

Davis: Right.

Chall: I see, so they could even write in a Democrat's name in the primary ballot?

Davis: That's right. When cross-filing was the law, both candidates names were on both ballots. Only Democrat and Republican was written alongside your name.

Chall: No wonder they wouldn't count them then.

Davis: They kept saying, "No, you don't. You can't count those votes for Pauline because we don't have cross-filing any more." And they just kept throwing them out all the time.

Chall: But you felt confident about winning the general election anyway?

Davis: Yes. So I just went ahead. The only bad thing about it was the cost for the general election. Stanley Young, after his defeat in November, was appointed as judge of the Plumas County Superior Court by Governor Reagan.

Chall: Why is it that your husband had a feeling that you were going to be representing the district?

Davis: Because I found out later on that he had gone to the local physician and they told him that he would have to slow down. As a matter of fact, they wouldn't give him a clean bill of health--in addition to purchasing additional insurance coverage. When we were driving along the highway, leaving Redding, Shasta County, toward Siskiyou County, we were talking about politics in general, as you do, and he said--and I'll never forget it--"Well, you know, one day you're going to be representing this district." I said to him that it was a ridiculous statement. He said, "Well, why not? You know the problems of the area." The subject matter was just dropped.

Chall: And you didn't know that he knew that he was ill?

Davis: No, he kept it from me. It was a great shock.

Chall: It wasn't long after that he died.

Davis: Thrombosis. He was writing a speech that he was going to give in Beaver, California on Memorial Day. He was typing it on the typewriter.

Chall: At home? So that was a short marriage you had.

Davis: Yes, indeed.

Chall: It was a happy one?

Davis: A very happy marriage.

Lester Davis' Death and Pauline Davis' Decision to be a  
Candidate for his Seat in the Assembly (1952)

Chall: He died in May just before the primary.

Davis: May the 23rd.

Chall: Less than a month before a primary.

Davis: There was nothing in the election code that said that my name or anyone else's name could appear on the general election ballot for November. Even though he had passed away, he received the major portion of the primary votes. Then we had the cross-filing issue again.

The question arose legally and the Democrats in the district called a district Democratic Convention. It was held in Burney, California at the Oddfellows Hall. I'll never forget it. They insisted I come to that convention. I must admit I was a little bitter because I knew all about the ramifications in this fight in the fish and game controversy. So, I was a little bitter. I said, no, I wasn't interested in coming. They said, "Please come, at least to assist us in answering some of the problems, things that we face." I felt an obligation to do so, so I said I would.

There were four candidates there for consideration, even though they knew there was nothing in the election code that permitted them to put their name on the ballot, that they were going to have to run as write-in candidates. When I arrived, they immediately began to persuade me to be a candidate. I said I was not. I said, "I have all the financial indebtedness from the June primary that I have to worry about; I have the children to raise by myself, and one is an infant just three and a half years old." I said, "I'm just not interested." They kept constantly trying to persuade me to reconsider. I finally did with the understanding that I would leave there that day with a \$5,000 check. I said, "I just cannot, nor will I assume any additional financial responsibilities with all the

Davis: financial responsibilities I have from the June primary. They assured me that would be the case. I kept all the books from the financial obligations of the campaign. So I placed my name into a caucus. The delegates voted and I came out the nominee. Then I made my acceptance speech, which I have a copy of. I think you should read the minutes of that whole transaction. I'll pull it out for you.

Chall: Good.

Davis: I'll loan it to you because it's very interesting. This was an interesting point. After I was nominated and accepted the nomination, the people that assured me that before I went home I would have the \$5,000 stated backing away. I told them publicly, "Now, look, you gave me your word. I expect you to keep it. Unless you do, I will absolutely not turn in my papers to the Secretary of State. I'm just not going to do it." They said they didn't know where they could get the money today. I said, "That's your problem. You go right across the street to the bank and borrow it." They knew I meant it and that's just exactly what they did. So I came home with a \$5,000 check.

Chall: Was this a mid-week, mid-day, convention?

Davis: It started on the week-end and went into the Monday. This was not an easy matter. There were four other candidates, and they all were campaigning.

Chall: When they chose you, it meant that you had the backing of the Democratic party in District Two?

Davis: In that district. Didn't receive a dime from the state committee.

Chall: I wonder if the committee had any in those days.

Davis: They did for the Southern California campaigns.

Chall: But, locally, they got the \$5,000 for you?

Davis: That's right. The late Senator George Miller was the chairman of the State Democratic Central Committee at that time, by the way. He took it upon himself, and I've never forgotten it, to give me a \$300 check as his personal contribution.

Chall: That was from the State Central Committee?

Davis: No, that was his own.

Chall: His personal check. That meant you were going to be a write-in candidate.

Davis: I was a write-in candidate, and I continued campaigning as a write-in candidate. I took my papers down to the late Frank Jordan, who was then Secretary of State. I knew him very well from working around the capitol because he used to have legislative obligations with the Secretary of State's Office. I'll never forget it; Mr. Jordan said to me, "For goodness sakes, Mrs. Davis, let me have those papers. I know that I will be in trouble with my own party, but I just cannot stand what's going on."

Pat Brown was at that time Attorney General of the State of California. Assemblyman Laughlin Waters was then the Chairman of the Assembly Elections and Reapportionment Committee who, later on, through the Republican administration, became a federal judge, which he is no more. The legislative counsel's office earlier, at my request, ruled that I should be on the ballot and let the people decide. Pat Brown had an informal opinion written that said the same thing. However, that opinion was reversed, the informal one, and a written one was submitted saying that I could not be on the November ballot.

Frank Jordan objected to all this hanky-panky that was going on, and I always respected him as a decent individual for that. He said, "Give me your papers. If I accept them in view of this trauma, then the Republican party will have to assume the financial cost of taking you to court." So he took my papers. They did take me to court.

The late Bob Kenny, who passed away not too long ago, who at one time was the AG for the State of California, volunteered to be the legal counsel before the court, the high court in the state, in my behalf. Never charged me a cent. He was a Democrat. We won the case by only one vote. I have the history of that which you might be interested in reading. My son asked me for it last night. I can dig it out for you.

I remember campaigning. I was attending a dinner in Siskiyou County at Yreka, and the tables were all set with paper plates. When the decision of the court was called in everyone was so delighted that they threw the paper plates and cups--it was just a regular cyclone in that dining room in that hotel! I'll never forget it. I remember it was late in the evening, about eleven o'clock at night, when I drove back from Yreka to the City of Dunsmuir where I was staying overnight. As I was driving down the road--it was a moonlit night--I remember it was a beautiful evening. As I was driving, I remember crying, and tears running down my face with joy, that the

Davis: decision was in my favor because it was much more advantageous. I realistically knew politically that a write-in campaign, as a rule, is not successful.

Chall: It's pretty hard.

Davis: It's very difficult.

Chall: This meant that your name could be on the November ballot?

Davis: It was. I won the election by a little over 3,000 votes, which was not a large margin, but it was a real victory in view of the fact that the Republicans in the district were just laughing; they thought this (my candidacy) was a real joke. I'll never forget it. At Tule Lake I was a speaker there at Rotary. As I came walking down the street I remember my Republican opponent and the two men with him making fun of me and really laughing their hearts out as I was walking down the street. So, it gave me a great deal of satisfaction to be able to take the election, because they were so sure of themselves.

Chall: Who was your opponent?

Davis: John Bryant, a real estate man from Redding. He came from the populous part of the district, and nothing but money behind him.

Chall: Were there more Democrats than Republicans registered in your district?

Davis: Yes, although they vote for the person. You can't depend on the party line there.

Chall: Who were the most helpful people, personally, to you in this campaign?

Davis: There were so many people. One man was extremely helpful to me, who chaired the Burney convention--he just passed away about seven months ago--was Ovid Holmes. His widow now has been in touch with me and is very close to me, because I'm helping her over her trying time.

He chaired that convention. He was a very close Masonic friend of my husband. If it were not for Helen and Ovid Holmes, I could never have made it. Because the salary--there was no money coming in or anything--they invited me into their home, to stay there at night; and the meals, everything that goes along with expenses while you're on the road. In those days, for years and years, until the last few years, we paid for all our gasoline; we had to have our own car; that was all our out-of-pocket expenses.

Chall: Were did you say they lived?

Davis: Redding. She now lives here in Sacramento, by the way. She's having a terrific adjustment because of the loss of her husband. I'm trying to help her now.

Chall: Other people in other parts of the district, did they open their houses to you, too?

Davis: They did; I'll tell you, I've never seen anything like it. People in Siskiyou County--the Belcastro's--Mr. & Mrs. Pete Belcastro in Weed; people in Modoc County; people in Lassen County--Helen Smith and her husband in Lassen County. There was somebody in each county that insisted that I stay with them when I was in the area. Otherwise, I don't think financially I could have possibly made it.

Chall: And you always had one, or two, or three little children with you at the time, too?

Davis: Not always.

Chall: I suppose it was a help for you to pick up and go right on in this way.

Davis: Yes, it was. As a matter of fact, as far as the grievance is concerned, it didn't catch up with me for about three years, because I had so much responsibility with the children and my legislative responsibilities. I was so preoccupied.

#### Deer Controversy in the Assembly District

Chall: Can you explain a little bit more what this controversy was with the Fish and Game Commission?

Davis: It was primarily over the expense of feeding the deer, which the Department of Fish and Game did not wish to do in the State of California. The controversy was that if you feed the deer--they weren't accustomed to hay--they would die anyway. That's what the biologists said. However, the question that my husband had in mind was, well, you can't wait until they practically starve to death and then feed them hay because any animal will not be able to digest food that they're not accustomed to, although deer eat at the haystack all the time. And they did on my father's ranch.

Davis: So we knew better than that. But you can't wait until they're almost starved before you feed them.

The other controversy was the killing of the female deer. The biologists in the Department of Fish and Game. We've got to keep in mind that, even today, the State Department of Fish and Game's revenue comes primarily from the fishing and hunting licenses. They're not a general fund agency. That is stipulated in the Constitution, so the State Constitution would have to be changed before they could be a general funded agency. Therefore, the Department of Fish and Game, with all due respect, was interested in selling more licenses in order to enhance their budget, and were not necessarily totally, in our view, concerned about conservation, although they said they were. But we felt we knew better. It was a very emotional thing.

The sportsmen's organizations, which in that period of time in that assembly district, were well-organized, and came to Sacramento and testified heavily before the Fish and Game Committee, which then was a standing committee which I chaired for many, many years after I was first a legislator. That was the trauma of the fish and game situation.

Chall: It was really the sports people against the --

Davis: Against the department.

Chall: Against the department?

Davis: Yes. The department was more interested in revenue than it was with conservation.

Chall: It was one of the early environmental issues.

Davis: Right. The environmentalists, as we know them today, and as they are often referred to, which is their prerogative, of course, have been very critical of some of the positions I have taken and some of my questioning of them before the committees. But they don't realize that many of the state laws that are on the books today, I placed there, in the field of conservation.

The difference between those people that call themselves environmentalists today, and my philosophy in this field, is that they don't take all of the aspects into consideration. Their point of view is too narrow. That's where we part company to some degree. I would say that I'm just as much of a conservationist or environmentalist as they are, but I take into consideration other

- Davis: facets in this overall picture when I approach the subject matter, which they don't. They just go one way. I told them, "You have blinders on, you don't see other segments that you should consider in the overall picture."
- Chall: What might be some of those?
- Davis: Economics.
- Chall: Is there no meeting ground? Can there be a meeting ground?
- Davis: I would hope that there would be. I'm hoping that President Carter, where he has the commitment to the people of the United States to do something about the unemployment situation, that he might be able to broaden the philosophy of the environmentalists. However, his recent stand on the deletion of money for the Auburn Dam until the study is completed, to know whether or not it's safe, I'm a little disappointed in. I had hoped that he would wait until the study was finished before he would make that decision. What the outcome's going to be, I don't know.

#### The Woman's Issue in the Campaign

- Chall: When you were first campaigning, did you find, aside from the Democratic group that decided to go with you, that there was any controversy about the fact that you were a woman and would be representing the kind of district you were going to be representing?
- Davis: No. To some degree, I would say, the only place where controversy arose, was with women, not with men, which was very interesting. Of course, where it did arise with women, it was the green-eyed monster and was not necessarily related to competence. That green-eyed monster was principally in organizations, socially, that I belonged to, in my own backyard, not so much throughout the district. I think the reason that the controversy, as far as my being a woman from a rugged area, was not very prevalent was because of my background. I came from a ranching family. I came from a ranch where it was known to be part of the cattle industry; came from a pioneer family, and many of these people in those rural counties are of pioneer background. I really was one of them, you see, in philosophy, in understanding, and it just didn't matter that I was a woman.
- Chall: There had been some women already in the legislature?

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\*Elizabeth Hughes (R) Butte County. Elected in 1918 and 1920



Davis: There had been, yes. But not from that area. There was one woman who came in from Butte County, many, many years ago.

Chall: I'll check on that. I have a list of all those women.

Davis: Way, way back. She was one of the first. And she was from Butte County, which was very interesting. I can't think of her name right offhand. I would hope that I can find out more about her.\* You know, at one time, Plumas County was a part of Butte County.

Chall: And they separated?

Davis: They were separated.

## III. PAULINE DAVIS, CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLYWOMAN (1952-1976)

Chall: At the time you became a legislator, you were one of three women?

Davis: Yes, Kathryn Niehouse was on disability.

Chall: I knew that she was ill.

Davis: Dorothy Donahue came in my class. She was sponsored by the BPW. She was State Past President of the BPW women and was their guinea pig from Bakersfield.

Chall: She came in 1952, also?

Davis: Yes, she did.

Chall: Otherwise, Ms. Niehouse was in there all by herself?

Davis: Yes, prior to that time.

Chall: Was there much prejudice and antagonism toward the two of you when you came in?

Davis: No. During that particular period, the legislators that came to Sacramento actually stayed for quite some time. They were elected and reelected. Not like today. The changeover was not there like we know it today. So, quite a few of the men who were there at that time served with my husband and also knew me because I had been a staff member. They were very warm and accepting of me, which was very helpful. As a matter of fact, they even requested, if I didn't object, that I be seated where my late husband was, seated on the assembly floor. The seat was number sixty-eight, which I sat in all of these twenty-four years. I never did choose to move. The man who made this request was very gracious. I shall never forget that day. It was Assemblyman Lester McMillan, who is still living in Southern California.

Chall: What did he do when he came to you?

Davis: He was the one who asked if I didn't mind, if I would like to have the same seat. They all were very kind to me. Frankly, because of my being a previous staff member, the various committee assignments I requested, I received. I didn't have the struggle like most freshman legislators.

- Chall: Then your experience is different from Dorothy Donahoe's?
- Davis: Yes. She started out as a freshman. Which is understandable. They gave me leeway, which was helpful to the people in my district.
- Chall: Did you and Dorothy Donahoe work together in any way?
- Davis: Yes. We were very close friends. As a matter of fact, because the salary was so small, and she too, didn't have a great financial capability, I offered her my home and she lived with me for at least six to eight months after she became a legislator.
- Chall: That was a crowded, little household. That was good, I guess, for both of you.
- Davis: Yes. The house was much smaller then than it is now, but, anyway, I did open my home to her. So we were very close friends.
- Chall: Were there any particular hostilities toward you that you encountered?
- Davis: Oh, I encountered those when I became involved in the California water plan.
- Chall: That was in legislature.
- Davis: Yes, that was a legislative battle. That was not a personal battle.
- Chall: Otherwise, you were accepted like any other legislator.
- Davis: Yes. And I made sure of that, as graciously as possible. I didn't expect any special favors.
- Chall: You had to begin to round up a staff then. Did you have the same staff members that you had had with your husband?
- Davis: No. Because I was his staff.
- Chall: That's right. Wasn't there a stenographer, or some such office assistance?
- Davis: No, I was his staff at that time. I was it.
- Chall: I see. So that's why you had to find yourself a good staff.
- Davis: That's why I was so familiar with many of the problems in the district.

Chall: I see, right.

Davis: All I was able to have was one secretary, too. We really didn't have too much staff until Mr. (Jesse) Unruh became speaker (1961). That's when the change took place.

Chall: Would you hire somebody then, that you had for any length of time?

Davis: When I came into office, I hired someone that I knew was very competent, and that was the secretary whom I think may still be working there. Her name was Irene Anderson.

Chall: Do you have any choice in the people that you hire? I notice that some people stay on for many, many years and work for different legislators or committees from time to time.

Davis: I always interviewed my own staff and chose my own staff. The Rules Committee always preferred that they assigned you staff, but to be honest with you, I never permitted that. I preferred hiring and training them for the district because it was a unique district. I always felt that if I would chose girls that worked for a lot of other legislators, primarily metropolitan legislators, it would be difficult to change them, of necessity, for a rural district because the workload was much heavier and they might object to it. Therefore, I preferred taking somebody who was as new as possible and train her myself.

Chall: Then they'd stay with you?

Davis: Sure. They stayed with me.

Chall: In those first few years, were you still living here and in Portola?

Davis: In Portola, yes. I didn't dispose of my home until I retired.

Chall: Earl Warren was governor at that time?

Davis: Yes, he was governor at the time that I came into office.

Chall: And he had been governor all the time that your husband had been in office.

Davis: He was very gracious to me. When I became a legislator, he called me down to his office and he said to me, "Now, look, I know that you have the responsibility of your children, and I want you to know, Pauline, that anything I can do for you, just let me know. You're carrying a heavy load."

Davis: I carried legislation that was very anti-fish and game commissioners who were his choice appointees. It's very difficult to sign a bill against your own appointees. He called me downstairs. He had a policy that if he thought he was going to veto a bill for any legislator, he would call you to his office and say, "Now, look, I have this measure on my desk, and I'm inclined to veto it. But you have gone through the entire legislative process, it is here on my desk, so you must have some reason why you feel I should sign this bill. Now, would you tell me what that reason is." Well, he asked me that question of the fish and game commissioners, and I discussed it with him and he signed that bill against his own appointees.

Chall: That was one of your early bills?

Davis: That was one of my early bills.

Chall: So you just continued to carry on--

Davis: Yes, carrying on--theme of feeding the deer, and other problems in the fish and game field that finalized what my husband had started, including a bill to clarify the election code so that if a death ever did occur before the primary election it would be clarified, which it did. It involved Phil Burton of San Francisco when he was a young man and first wanted to run for the legislature, and also involved Bob Crown. I did not want anyone else to go through the trauma that I did.

Chall: Well, we got you into the legislature, and I think that's a pretty good start on your oral history.

## IV. AMASSING A BACKGROUND IN WATER LAW

Chall: Could you give me a little background, on how it was that you became as interested in water as you did become, to the point where you were writing bills and dealing with it as intensely as you were?

Davis: Well, perhaps it's because I was always interested in the field of natural resources. And, of course, water is so basic of all the other natural resources that I felt that it would be a necessity for me to go into the field as deeply as I could.

Chall: I see. Shortly, then, after you came into the legislature water became a really paramount issue.

Davis: That's right.

Chall: Where did you get some of your own background knowledge then of it?

Davis: Well, I was elected in the fall of 1952, and at the time that I was elected to serve the far northeastern part of the state things were not as hectic. By that I mean not as time-consuming--as they are now for members of the legislature.

I took that time and worked with the water attorneys in the legislative counsel's office. There were two men primarily that had expertise in the water rights field. One was George Murphy, who resides in Sacramento at this time, and the other was a gentleman by the name of J. D. Straus, a perfectionist in the water field as it pertained to water rights, and who, unfortunately, is deceased. So, every hour that I had to spare when I was in the City of Sacramento I spent studying with the water attorneys.

As a matter of fact, I did make application to McGeorge Law School with the understanding that I might be able to only take courses that pertained to the water field, primarily water rights. But I couldn't do that because it would have discommoded too many of the other class activities. So, I was not permitted to do that.

Chall: Whose class activities? Yours?

Davis: Well, the schedule was such that it just wouldn't fit into my specializing only in one particular field. There were other courses that I would have had to take in order to be a student there, and I couldn't do that.

Davis: So, therefore, I decided that I would devote even more time with the two attorneys. Whenever they had the time. So, actually, those two gentlemen are really responsible for whatever knowledge I do have in the field of water rights.

Chall: This is riparian water rights--

Davis: That's right. Riparian rights. And then also many rights exist which they call miners inch rights, and county of origin rights.

Chall: Yes.

Davis: These items were very interesting to me, a real challenge, and a real need for the representative of the counties of origin to become well versed. Of course, I never regretted it because I feel definitely that they have benefited from my taking time to become versed in the water field.

Chall: Yes. You say these men were with the state.

Davis: Yes. They were in the legislative counsel's office that worked for the legislature.

Chall: I see. What was their attitude toward your coming in and asking for this kind of help from them--that you'd like to have training?

Davis: Their attitude was very, very good. They admired any legislator that would want to take that much time.

Chall: Because it was their field, too.

Davis: No matter what a legislator would request them to do in any legal field, be it water or anything else, they'd have an obligation to fulfill that. But we grew to be very close friends, of course, with all the hours that we spent on this subject, either in my office or in their offices, principally in their offices during the daytime, which made it nice for them because they were not too inconvenienced.

Chall: You started immediately, then, to gain this background?

Davis: Oh, yes.

Chall: What other legislators, assembly persons at that time, were as concerned with the water field as you were?

Davis: In the house, there was Assemblyman Francis Lindsay who was very interested in the water field, and I served on his committee when he was chairman. \* Then also at that time we had Assemblyman Lloyd Lowrey, who was very interested in the water field. And then Mr. (Carley) Porter was very interested in the water field.

And then on the senate side there were three men that were primarily interested in the water field. They were Senator (Edwin) Regan, now Judge Regan, who served on the Third District Court of Appeals; the late Senator Howard Williams, who was Chairman of the Water Committee on the senate side; and another person who had forgotten more about water rights than most of us know, was the late Senator (Earl J.) Desmond from Sacramento. I have always said that if Desmond would have been alive at the time a final decision was made, water policy would be different today.

Chall: You mean the California Water Plan?

Davis: That's right. He was a very, very strong advocate of any issue. And the way the bills were written, and the Constitutional Amendment, and the way the power contracts were written--Senator Desmond would have never permitted it.

Chall: Where was his home base?

Davis: Sacramento. He was a water attorney here in Sacramento.

#### Working With the Legislature

Chall: And the attitude of these men, your fellow assemblymen, towards your interest in water--how did they respond to you and your concern? Were they glad to have another colleague, or did they resent your activity?

Davis: Well, very frankly, even today, anyone--I don't care who it is--that would say to me that the members of a governmental body--at any level--city or county or state or on the federal level--that they welcome women and have no resentment of a woman holding a comparable seat to them, is not telling you the truth because there is a chauvinistic feeling; it might be minor, but it is there.

The only way that you can cope with a situation like that is to learn the men's language, study their minds, and the way they work in the political arena and in the business field, and just go forward and not let it bother you too much.

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\*Committee on Conservation, Planning and Public Works.



Chall: How do men differ from women in the field that you know best, which was the legislature? I know that you have said this, because it was so stated in the article in the California Journal. \*

Davis: Yes.

Chall: And I wondered at the time what you meant by the fact that men think differently than women.

Davis: They do.

Chall: How does this show itself?

Davis: Well, they think differently. Number one, they love to get press coverage. They are always front-page publicity seekers, where a woman is not, although some are, but not necessarily. And I think, very frankly, that the men have a much greater ego which you have to work with than does a woman in public life.

It's good to know this, and work not through it but around it, so that they don't even notice that you're working around them to achieve your point, because they are, so sold on themselves that often-times they do not necessarily catch on to what you are trying to achieve.

Chall: Some women--I think Esther Peterson is one who said that if she had a very important position to put forward, she would always give it to a man, so that at least her position was put out in front, and it could be discussed, the man could take the credit for it. You didn't do that, did you?

Davis: I have done that on some occasions when I felt that the program that I was carrying could not be fulfilled because the person that would be my opponent in the senate had sufficient power to kill it. And here again we have to go back to the ego thing. I have gone to this senator on, I think, three occasions during my twenty-four years in the legislature, and have said to him, "Now, you know, you're the only one, Senator, that can get this program through. So, why don't you pick it up and run with it."

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\*Leah Cartabund, "Davis' One-of-a-Kind Versus the Leadership's Royal Flush," California Journal, September 1976, pp 303-305.

Davis: Well, they love to hear you say that because you have done all the leg work, of course, and they do take the credit for it. But to me it meant more for the program to become a reality than it did for me to get the credit. And it doesn't seem to bother a man at all when he stands there and beats on his chest verbally, so to speak, and takes the credit for something that maybe you have worked on for three or four years. It doesn't bother him at all!

Chall: Would they do that to another man? Would they take the credit for another man's--

Davis: They try. They do, yes. Yes, indeed, they do try. This happens very, very often. This situation does develop and, of course, there's a big fight over it.

Now, this happened to me on many occasions, but if I felt that the individual's opposition was not adequately strong enough, well, I didn't give in. I would not go to that person and have him carry it; I would fight it through myself. So, actually, for the twenty-four years that I was in office, I really feel that the three times I've had to do this was not a large number of times.

Chall: No, it certainly wasn't. But if it were necessary, then--

Davis: Yes.

Chall: I guess ultimately your colleagues decided you were one of them.

Davis: Yes, and that was after a ten-year period. I shall never forget it. We were having a Democratic caucus and the late Assemblyman Robert Crown asked for recognition and said that he had something he wanted to say to his colleagues. He presented me with a resolution that stated that they had now recognized and wanted to accept me as one of them. But it took ten years for them to make up their minds. It didn't bother me that in their own minds they hadn't accepted me before that time, but officially they accepted me after ten years.

Chall: Into the Democratic caucus?

Davis: No, as a legislator.

Chall: As a legislator. That's amazing. Would they have done that with a fellow legislator--a man?

Davis: No, of course not.

- Chall: And they had to make a special mention, a special resolution of acceptance?
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: He wasn't just joshing?
- Davis: No, not at all.
- Chall: He meant it.
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: And then did they treat you differently after that?
- Davis: Oh, yes, although even before then, you know, I didn't feel that I was mistreated. But I guess they felt strongly enough about it that they felt they wanted to make this a public record.
- So, that's why I say, any time any legislator tells you that they have no opposition to a woman in a public office, don't you believe it.
- Chall: What do you think is occurring these days, with as many women in the legislature as there are even though there aren't many?
- David: They don't truly like it.
- Chall: And the two women who are now in the senate?
- Davis: They don't like it.
- Chall: And that you know for sure?
- Davis: Yes. Because of various comments made from time to time.
- Chall: All right. Now that we've settled you in the legislature and we know what is going on--
- Davis: (laughter)

### The Feather River Project

- Chall: It wasn't very long before you were quite active in water; that is, by 1956 and 1957, water measures were very important. So the earliest--well, I'm not sure about the whole chronology.

Davis: Well, if we can go back into a little background. I would like to do that.

Chall: Yes. You take me into the background, that's a good idea.

Davis: The Feather River Project, as it is known--its main project in the Feather River Project is the Oroville Dam.

Years prior to 1952, the federal government was involved in very thorough investigations and studies to construct on the Feather River a minimum of three smaller structures rather than a large structure. Their work was all completed and records are available.

Then the State of California, for various reasons, primarily political, decided that they didn't want the federal government to become involved because of the anti-interests in the south concerned with the 160-acre limitation that would be placed on the farmers in the valley receiving water when it was delivered. And so the fight began. In 1952, Senator Ed Johnson, who lived in Marysville--and whether he still lives there or whether he's alive, I'm not sure at this juncture--introduced a bill to authorize the Feather River Project in the senate.

Chall: As a state project?

Davis: For the state to construct it. And, as I recall--it didn't pass the assembly.

So, the State of California did appropriate its first appropriation for studies of their own. They were not interested in taking any of the information that the federal government had available, which I thought in a way was ridiculous, because it's all tax money and our tax money that was spent at the federal level. So, a lot of money was then spent at the state level for evaluation.

Well, immediately my interests became aroused because here we were, counties of origin. And we really were in a very, very geographically unique situation because we didn't have any ocean to ever tap if ocean water could ever be converted to fresh water. So, actually, we had no one to turn to if we didn't hold back sufficient water for ourselves. The Feather River country was just one of those isolated geographical problems which had to be cared for.

### The Story Behind the Five Upstream Reservoirs

Davis: So, I immediately initiated and appropriated money for a study to be made in conjunction with the Oroville Dam study for five reservoirs upstream, and it took more than one appropriation measure. I did this through bills, and also through the budget process--line items.

As a matter of fact, I was instrumental in a study called the Northeastern California Investigation which comprised of more than just the counties in the Upper Feather River Basin, but took in counties like Trinity, Shasta, Tehama, and Glenn and, oh, there were many, many counties. In the final analysis, I think, there were seventeen counties that embody that Northeastern California Investigation.

I'll never forget; one day I spoke to the Chamber of Commerce in the City of Oroville and, of course, stated my position on the Oroville Dam. Of course, they were very adamant in opposition to what I had to say. However, after all of these years have passed there have been people that have come to me with tongue in cheek and have said, "You know, if we would have only listened," because I was trying to tell them that they were really going to be taken in the service area below Oroville Dam if they were not on their toes relative to the contract that would be signed for the amount of money that they would have to pay per acre foot for water. And that's exactly what happened to them. But at that time they didn't think that I knew what I was talking about.

Well, in addition to convincing the State of California and my colleagues to appropriate sufficient funds to study the Upper Basin area, I had another chore that was equally difficult. That was to convince the boards of supervisors, particularly in my home county of Plumas, to become interested in protecting their water rights in the county of Plumas. Part of that watershed also extended into Lassen, a small part of it, but nevertheless they had to come into the picture.

The Board of Supervisors were very, very reluctant to get into the water field; they were scared to death of it. But I persuaded them to do so, and they had to sign a contract eventually that they would buy water whether they needed it or not, and that was the one catch that they were very concerned about.

Now, of course, looking back, they're just very, very grateful that they have that reservation. What I insisted that they do is go to the Water Commissioner of the State of California which was formed

Davis: by a legislative act and issue and reserve a certain amount of water for Plumas county in the state water filings. The state acts as the custodian of all water rights in the entire state, everywhere, on every stream.

Chall: The commission does?

Davis: Yes, they're the custodian. I investigated the water rights applications that they had each legislative session. I found that there were many acre feet of unappropriated water in the state applications. So, I requested that sufficient water be assigned in that state application to the county of Plumas, which is the strongest water right that you could have if you are embodied in a state water right. No court in the land can ever take it away. It's even different from an individual water right by an individual, because often-times you find yourself in court and can lose it.

Chall: Were you doing all of this prior to 1959?

Davis: Oh, yes.

Chall: I see. While the whole early arguments were going through.

Davis: Yes. The water committee was traveling throughout the State of California holding hearings everywhere, which was advantageous because you would learn about the different areas' problems and what they were expecting of the state, which, of course, alerted me more to the necessity of safeguarding our water rights.

That was the beginning of my deep interest in the water field. From there, of course, I went on to appropriate sufficient money for the dams to actually be constructed in the upper Feather River Basin. There were five that were authorized. They were not authorized by a legislative measure. They were authorized by Harvey Banks when he was the Director of the Department of Water Resources. The water code has a section that was never utilized before by any director (other than Harvey Banks) giving him power to authorize the construction of any water facility. But he did so at my request, and I have that document.

However, I did have to appropriate through the budget and other measures sufficient money for the construction of the facilities, plus building the highways to those facilities so that people could get to them and enjoy them.

Chall: I see. (paging through notes) I'm trying to find something that I saw tonight which I thought--this was about those reservoirs. (pauses while searching). Would you explain to me again how you

Chall: managed to get these five reservoirs through? You say Harvey Banks had authority as the head of the Department of Water Resources to--

Davis: Yes. To authorize the construction of them.

Chall: Could it have been any kind of reservoirs? Did it just happen to be those five?

Davis: He had the power to authorize any water project in the State of California.

Chall: Any of them. And those could be built as long as the money was appropriated?

Davis: That's correct.

Chall: I see.

Davis: I had a bill for authorizing the construction of the five reservoirs after the studies were finalized, but my bill was stymied on the senate side. And there was a little game going on in the governor's office, because the incumbent governor at that time did not wish to expend any money on any development in the Upper Feather River Basin.

Chall: That was Governor Knight? Was it Governor Brown at that time?

Davis: (pauses to think) That was Governor Brown.

So, anyway, there was a senator, who is now in Congress, who had a bill introduced, which was a nothing bill, and that was the bill signed by the governor. (A meaningless measure).

So, I went to Harvey Banks, and he too could appreciate all the work that I had been doing in the water field. He didn't really need to utilize that section (of the water code), but he felt it was kind of dirty pool, frankly, so he went along with my wish and authorized the five reservoirs in the Upper Feather River Basin.

Chall: And you say that you had to get money through the budget bill, that means that he particularly would have to set them into the budget for the Department of Water Resources?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: As part of his budget?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: I see. That's how it was done.

Davis: Yes. Psychologically too it was very important to me that Harvey Banks did proceed to assume this responsibility of authorization, because he's the one that had to come in with sufficient money to justify the money in his budget.

Chall: And this was before the loans and grants that would have been allotted out of the Davis-Grunsky Act?

Davis: No, Davis-Grunsky has nothing to do with the Upper Feather River Project (or the Feather River Project); that's a separate issue entirely. Those monies were not ever applicable to the Upper Basin. In other words, the Upper Basin, the five reservoirs in the Upper Feather River Basin, became a unit of the Feather River Project.

Chall: I see. And so those reservoirs were part of the California Water Plan?

Davis: That's right. The Feather River Project is part of the California Water Plan, as well as Perre's Reservoir in the south and future development on the North Coast, and its possible transportation system of water to the south from the North Coast sometime in the future if monies are available from water contracts and the general fund. They are part of the Feather River Project, and that is a separate subject matter embodied in the California Water Plan.

Chall: Yes.

Davis: Actually, it was financed more by general fund money before Senate Bill 1106 and the general obligation bond ever became a reality. There was money appropriated for the construction of the Oroville Dam.

Chall: Wasn't it mainly preparation of the site and relocation of some facilities?

Davis: Frenchman Reservoir also was on its way at the same time, which was the very first on the Upper Feather River. The state had to purchase the land for the Frenchman Reservoir because most of that land was privately owned, and that involved a great deal of negotiation. As a matter of fact, this bond almost ended up in the courts. I went to the people that owned the land, whom I knew personally, and interceded. I pointed out to them the facts so they didn't have any court litigation.

Chall: How was the decision made as to where those five reservoirs were going to be?



- Davis: The decision was made by engineers that surveyed the areas to find out where the best place was to locate the reservoirs.
- Chall: Was it your idea that there should be reservoirs in the Upper Feather River?
- Davis: Oh, yes. Absolutely.
- Chall: At the time, in order to protect--
- Davis: That's right. In order to protect the water supply.
- Chall: Of that area.
- Davis: Yes. And the ranchers that received the water from Frenchman Reservoir had to sign a contract with the State of California for the use of that water.
- Chall: Did they use it for irrigation?
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: Can it also be used for recreation and fishing?
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: So, they were multi-purpose projects.
- Davis: They were multi-purpose projects, and I appropriated money to make them multi-purpose projects even before the Davis-Dolwig Act.
- Chall: I see. The idea of a multi-purpose project which could be used for recreation, for fish and wildlife--where did that come from?
- Davis: I've always been in favor of a multi-purpose project because, actually, by dovetailing in all the benefits from a reservoir, you make a facility much more feasible for adequate funds to construct it. The only thing that we could not find to plug in was power because there was not enough water impounded to generate power. But it was very important to have them made multi-purpose from an engineering standpoint, to justify. A single-purpose project always has a very, very difficult time revenue-wise.
- Chall: But many of the projects in those days were not really multi-purpose according to the ideas that you had?
- Davis: That's correct.

Chall: I mean, including the recreation, the fish and wildlife aspects.

Davis: That was a shortsightedness on their part.

Chall: How did you happen to consider this? Were you reading literature--Bureau of Reclamation material, recreation material--that pointed in this direction?

Davis: No, I really wasn't. It's very difficult for me to respond to that without sounding egotistical, but it's just the way that I thought things should be done. I always felt that a single-purpose reservoir just did not fulfill the people's needs. And I also always felt very deeply, which I think is a factual thing in anything you do, that if you don't plug in all the benefits at the outset, to come back later and try to correct the situation is so expensive that you can't really do it.

Chall: I've noticed in the '56, '57 legislative periods that you took the position that money should be appropriated for site work and construction, whatever was needed, in the Feather River area.

Davis: Yes.

Chall: Even though the whole idea was not terribly popular either among Northern Californians or, certainly, Southern Californians, who generally would block those bills.

Davis: That's right.

Chall: Inasmuch as you were opposed to the Feather River Project as a state project, what were your reasons for going along with the appropriations of monies for this?

Davis: You mean on the Upper Feather Projects?

Chall: No, I'm thinking about the Feather River Project. I mean, appropriations that were requested by Knight, for example. Now, those weren't for the Upper Feather River; they were for the Feather River Project, as such.

Davis: Well, at the very outset, I did not support the appropriations for the Feather River Project, even though they were giving me money to start the investigations for the five dams in the Upper Feather because I knew unless the state got their feet sufficiently wet with dollars and cents in the Upper Feather, I wasn't going to bargain with them at any point.

- Chall: You opposed any funding then for the Feather River Project all the way through those periods? That was for rights-of-way and things of this kind?
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: There was a move afoot to develop in Northern California a major district like the Metropolitan Water District. Do you recall that?
- Davis: Yes, I remember it well, and I wish they would have done so. But here again, the boards of supervisors had to be convinced, and they just couldn't convince them.
- Chall: Yes, that would have taken away certain of their own rights.
- Davis: It would have given them political power for the future.
- Chall: This was an attempt to balance the Metropolitan Water District in the south.
- Davis: That's right.

Other Concerns Behind Development of the Project

- Chall: So, up to that period, then, were you for a federally funded project?
- Davis: No, not necessarily. I should make it clear.
- Chall: All right.
- Davis: I didn't necessarily want federal or state money. That wasn't the question--federal versus state. The reason that I was inclined to go along with the federal concept is because I did not feel that a large structure should be constructed there rather than three or four smaller ones, because they were constructing it right on an earthquake fault, and it's an extremely large earth-filled structure, and if it ever gives way, God help us. I just felt that it just made better sense to construct three smaller facilities because when you have floods all the debris comes down. And when it comes down it just creates havoc because there's a lot of strength in water, and it does a great deal of damage to bridges, etc. If you had smaller reservoirs to catch this debris, it wouldn't cause as much damage.

- Chall: Was it felt that there would be enough water from several small dams to go down into the Delta and into the aqueduct to provide as large a supply of water as the Southern California farmers felt they needed?
- Davis: Oh, sure, sure. The same amount of acres would have been stored behind the smaller dams, and it's a better system too for fish life.
- Chall: This was a plan, then, of Mr. (A.D.) Edmonston's--in his office?
- Davis: Yes, it was. I shall never forget that gentleman.
- Chall: I do recall reading the reasons why they chose Oroville, but I've forgotten them now.
- Davis: Because it was the cheapest water in the state to develop. That's the real reason.
- Chall: The county of origin problem, of course, was paramount at that time too, and General Brown at that time worked with water attorneys and people on his own staff and came up with a county of origin opinion, which presumably gave comfort to the counties of origin; it indicated that the counties of origin had valid rights. Do you recall that?
- Davis: Oh, yes, I recall that very well. It's just like: Which comes first, the chicken or the egg? It was an opinion that certainly alerted and strengthened the position of the counties of origin, but, again, the responsibility to watch and safeguard those water rights rested with the elected county boards of supervisors. And if they didn't take advantage of the county of origin the county lost the water. That's what happened in the Mother Lode of the State of California. The water was taken away from them, and the water rights, because the county boards of supervisors just would not assume the responsibility or were asleep at the switch, as many of them are, unfortunately, as to what the needs of their people really are.
- Chall: They have to appropriate the water first?
- Davis: Well, they have to actually file a request for so many acre feet of water, and they have to be willing to pay for it, and they're always so frightened that their constituents will not want to pay for something. And my goodness sakes, I've always said to them, "You're dealing with liquid gold! You're not dealing with something that is a commodity that can be replaced, because once that water wagon leaves Northern California--" I used to say to them in this language, "--it just isn't comin' back!"
- Chall: They wouldn't listen?

Davis: And they wouldn't listen.

Chall: Were you in favor of a constitutional amendment? Were you concerned about that in the same way that the Southern Californians were?

Davis: Very much so.

Chall: What made that so impossible to work out over the years when various committees tried to come up with a solution? Were you on any committees that tried to develop a constitutional amendment?

Davis: I think it finally ended up before our water committee, as I recall, but I believe it was in the Elections and Reapportionment Committee, where all the constitutional amendments go.

Chall: Oh, I see.

Davis: Yes. That again was a political fight between the north and south, the wording of it.

Chall: Well, now, with respect to the reorganization of the water agencies, the rationale behind that, of course, was that ultimately California was going to build a large project.

Davis: That California was going to be in the water business.

Chall: Yes. And it would certainly need a change in the way it would be organized in order to do it, which I suppose made some sense.

Davis: That's correct.

Chall: Were you in favor of the revisions?

Davis: In the final analysis, yes.

Chall: And what was prior to the final analysis?

Davis: Well, of course, at the very outset, when you're reorganizing many agencies into one there are differences of language that have to be agreed upon. And there again, it was a north and south fight as to where the power was going to lie in this non-agency, whether it was going to be in the south or the north, or whether it was going to be independent.

Chall: One of the other points at issue toward the end seemed to be the role of the attorney general. Was that a concern of yours?

Davis: Not too much.

Chall: It was with the major water agency people, the Farm Bureau Federation, the irrigation districts. Of course, they were angry with Attorney General Brown because of the stand he took on Ivanhoe.  
\*

Davis: Yes.

Chall: But that was not your concern?

Davis: No, that was not my concern.

Chall: Did your concern have anything to do with the way the commission would be set up?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: There was some who felt it should be advisory, which it turned out to be. There were others who felt that it should be a policy board. Which stand was yours?

Davis: Advisory. And then I also carried legislation to increase the membership so that there would be a better geographical balance.

Chall: I see. It started out with seven, didn't it?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: And I know it was your bill that would turn it into nine.

Davis: Yes. I've said before, the state is the custodian of the water rights. I carried legislation every four years to renew those existing water rights applications for negotiation purposes for the north. Many people wanted to change that statute so it would not have to be renewed every four years. But as long as I was there, I renewed it on a four-year basis because I felt that was a political handle that I had on the commission, if they started bouncing somebody on these water rights. But what they have done since, I don't know. It wouldn't surprise me at all if they were permanent now rather than renewed every four years.

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\*Ivanhoe Irrigation District vs. McCrachon, 357 U.S. 1958.

- Chall: What exactly was renewed every four years?
- Davis: The state applications, and there are hundreds of them.
- Chall: Initially, did you feel that certain rural areas were left out of the commission?
- Davis: I think it was indicated in the measure, but didn't mention specific counties. I think it mentioned geographical areas, as I recall.
- Chall: Oh, I see.
- Davis: It's been so long ago; I can't remember specifically.
- Chall: Did you ever want anybody on that commission and make requests to have somebody appointed?
- Davis: No, just so that they would represent the geographical area.
- Chall: You were a colleague of Caspar Weinberger's.
- Davis: Yes. He's a very brilliant man.
- Chall: Did you deal with him with respect to the reorganization of the Department of Water Resources?
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: According to the hearings which I read, he seemed to have done a very, very thorough job in trying to understand how the department would be organized and what the issues were that people were so much opposed to in reorganization.
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: Did he consult with you?
- Davis: Oh, yes, because of the counties or origin.

Passage of the Davis-Grunsky Act

- Chall: Since the Grunsky Bill was passed--

- Davis: You'll have to call that Davis-Grunsky, because I absolutely refuse to let them have the credit for that!
- Chall: Yes, all right. Now, in this Western Water News (July, August 1951) that I brought you, it's talked of as Grunsky Bill, SB 2174. \*
- Davis: That's because it was introduced on the senate side after they dumped mine, because Senator (Donald) Grunsky was not interested in a program; he was only interested in one specific appropriation that he needed for one facility in his senatorial district. He couldn't have cared less about the entire program.

But it was Senator Stephen Teale that was and still is a very chauvinistic individual, and he just didn't want a women to get credit for something that was really as important an issue as that was.

But when it got to the assembly side, Senator Grunsky opened on his bill, and he couldn't explain it because he never did go into the entire program. Then Senator Teale tried to explain it, and he couldn't explain the program. So, Chairman Porter asked me if I would like to explain my bill, which I did, and then the late Assemblyman (Frank) Belotti from the north coast made a motion to call it the Davis-Grunsky Act, and it received a second, and it was approved by the water committee.

It passed the senate as a senate bill, unnamed until it got to the assembly. It was just a senate bill. (SB 425). It was not named.

- Chall: Now, did you do the background work on this and develop the concept of the Davis-Grunsky Act?
- Davis: You better believe it! I traveled throughout the whole state on the Davis-Grunsky and the Davis-Dolwig Acts.
- Chall: And Davis-Grunsky came first, as I recall.
- Davis: That's right.
- Chall: So, they deliberately left your name out of it. Now, why would it go to the senate first?

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\* This legislation has a long and complex history. I was talking about the early bill in 1957. Mrs. Davis was referring to the Grunsky Bill of 1959 which after amendment became part of SB 1106. See following pages.



Davis: No, you're misunderstanding. Senator Grunsky introduced a separate measure under a loan concept to appropriate, I think \$37,000 or a million--I forget the amount--for a facility in his district, okay?

Chall: Yes, I see.

Davis: And it was a general fund appropriation bill. And I had introduced the program under my name, just AB Davis, and it consisted of this loan concept, an interest rate of 2-1/2%, the lowest interest rate that you could possibly ever dream of; and very detailed. That went to the senate side, and Senator Stephen Teale killed it because he didn't want a woman to get credit for anything that important.

So, then they grabbed a hold of the verbiage in my bill that was dead on the senate side, in a senate committee, and amended it into Senator Grunsky's bill. They came forward with the wording of my program, but it was an unnamed measure; there was no authors' names on it, except Senate Bill So-and So, Grunsky.

Well, I told you what happened when they started to explain it. They didn't know the ramifications of the verbiage, they didn't understand it, and they looked like fools. I'll never forget it, and it tickled me to death when the chairman asked me to explain my program.

Chall: I see. It must have hurt you also when Stephen Teale--

Davis: Yes, it did, but I didn't get mad. I just got even with him as the years went on, and I did. (laughter)

#### Passage of the Davis-Dolwig Act

Chall: What is the Davis-Dolwig Act, and how did that come into being?

Davis: That came into being because of the point that you raised earlier of multi-purpose dams. In the feasibility studies, at the very outset when you're making feasibility studies, the Department of Water Resources had to take into consideration all facets of recreation; the acquisition of additional land for recreational purposes; the sizing of your facility, and what I mean by sizing--the size. The facility had to be greater so it would take care of all facets of recreation. And you had to allocate more water storage in that facility because you could not draw the water down and have it a sump where you were also using it for recreation as well as domestic and irrigation purposes, and flood control. So, that's what the Davis-Dolwig Bill is all about.

Chall: I see. That initially was again your bill?

Davis: That was mine, too, yes.

Chall: How did (Richard) Dolwig get into that?

Davis: He was the only one that I felt would touch a bill like that and was adequately familiar in water rights. He was like the late Senator Earl Desmond; he was very well versed in the field of water rights. I went to Senator Dolwig, explained the program to him, and asked him if he's carry it; and he said yes, he would.

Chall: I see. Then there wasn't as much trouble, or was there, in carrying this bill as with Davis-Grunsky?

Davis: There was--yes, there was trouble with this bill. The administration didn't want it. At the time the Davis-Dolwig bill became a reality, Governor Pat Brown was in office. And through my travels with my Committee on Fish and Game, which I utilized for fish enhancement and everything else, I had the support of the Farm Bureau because it was advantageous to them to have a larger structure because there was more water storage. The irrigation districts supported it. The State Grange was in support of it. The state sportsmen's associations were in support of it. The unions were in support of it because of the work it would bring about. I had every statewide organization endorsing this program.

Davis: However, the governor did not wish it. And Fred Rupp, who was then an assistant to Harvey Banks in the Department of Water Resources, who now is the Postmaster in the City of Sacramento by appointment from retired Congressman (John) Moss, was supposed to make sure this bill was killed in our Ways and Means Committee.

And, of course, prior to this time, I extended a courtesy to Governor Brown and brought all these gentlemen from these statewide organizations down with me to have a conference with him on this measure. He was extremely rude and was screaming at me like a fishwife, and he swore and said, "You know, if you don't stop this, you're going to find yourself hanging up there on the wall, and you're going to wonder how in the hell you ever got there."

And I said, "Well, Governor, now we understand one another. I know where you stand, and you best know where I stand."

Chall: Did he say this in front of all these gentlemen?

Davis: All these men. They were shocked, and they lost a lot of respect for that governor. I can assure you of that. They couldn't believe it.

Chall: Why was he so strongly opposed that he would use this kind of language?

Davis: He did not want any measure to cost any more money.

Chall: I see.

Davis: He wanted to run for reelection, and he didn't want to have these expenditures on record. Of course, I thought that he was very foolish in his interpretation because anyone, I think, with even elementary intelligence would have known by seeing all these statewide organizations there that he would not have any difficulty at all selling this program to the people.

I worked on it for two years before I ever threw the bill in the hopper. It wasn't something that I just put together and threw in. It took a lot of thinking and work.

So, it was supposed to die in the Committee on Ways and Means, then there was a game of musical chairs, at my request, without the administration knowing it. By that, various members left the room and absented themselves so that they wouldn't get chastised for letting the bill get out. I'll never forget it. The man that was holding the gavel was the late Assembly Glenn Coolidge, and a motion was made, and a second was made, and that bill flew out of there without anybody asking any question. I thought that Mr. Fred Rupp was going to have a heart attack.

He saw it on its way to the senate. Of course, I had already done my homework over there. So, he found he was a little too late when he got over there, because he never anticipated the bill would ever get anywhere. So, he did no leg work on the senate side at all. And he didn't anticipate this.

Chall: That he wouldn't have done it?

Davis: No. I anticipated he had not, but I wanted to be sure that I had.

So, the situation was that it went to the senate, was on its way through engrossment and enrollment, where he held it up, which is a very bad thing to do. The governor's office should never intercede in that fashion at all. They don't have the privilege. But they did.

So, I just thought, "Well, we need to have a signing of this bill before we recess." So, I suggested to Governor Pat Brown that he use a mock bill like he was signing the real measure, because--and it is true, the state organizations were so vitally

Chall: interested in this they would come down to get in the picture with him. So, we did this and I paid for the photographer. Then the state organizations released the picture, each one of them, in their next mailer. This forced the governor to sign the real bill.

Then, the following election, Pat Brown took credit for this program and made it part of his platform.

Chall: Now, I made a note of something I saw in your scrapbook. There was a picture of Pauline Davis--(quotes from scrapbook picture caption) "Pauline Davis standing by Pat Brown as he gets ready to sign her bill, AB 140, which makes recreational possibilities of any water project a must consideration before such projects are submitted to the legislature."

Davis: Yes, that's the Davis-Dolwig.

Chall: And that was in the paper on August 27, 1959. So, it was really the first year in Governor Brown's administration and just about the time when he was getting ready to sign SB 1106. So, this would have made his water bill more expensive. Is that correct?

Davis: That's correct.

Chall: That's the problem.

Davis: I also have a picture you will see as you go through my scrapbooks of both of us with hardhats on and both of us on the dynamite stick, ready to blow the soil into the mid-air on Frenchman Reservoir when the construction first began. And the comment, the caption under the picture, was (and in my address I said), "I want to call to your attention, Governor Pat Brown, when we explode this dynamite at this site, that you must understand that California does not stop at the Sacramento County line." (laughter) That was on the front page of the paper.

Chall: (chuckles) I see! Did he ever forgive you for this?

Davis: Forgive me? He asked for my forgiveness because he had a lot to do with the court case. I had to go to court in order to even be seated as a legislator because of Pat Brown. That goes back into another story.

Chall: Yes.

Davis: He's asked me to forgive him. I've told him time and time again, "I forgive you, but I don't forget."

Directors of the Division/Department of Water Resources

Chall: I see. In the very early days when you were working on some water legislation, particularly in opposing the major Feather River Project Bill, what were your relationships with (A.D.) Edmonston, who was Chief of the Division of Water Resources (1950-1955), but had had long service as an engineer prior to 1950?

Davis: Oh, Edmonston was a gentleman that just was not accustomed to women in public office, and certainly not in his field, which was water.

I had arranged an appointment with him in the building then occupied by the Division of Water Resources, and I can assure you he was most unhappy with me asking him or requesting anything in the water field. He banged his hands on the desk, his fists, and he just screamed at me, and he said no woman was ever going to tell him how to run the water situation in the State of California.

And I'll never forget, a gentleman by the name of Mr. (William) Berry was in attendance at that meeting, and he couldn't keep a straight face. So, he had to walk over to the window and look out the window when I shouted back to Mr. Edmonston and said, "Well, you will listen to this lady today and in the future! I know you're not going to like it, but you are going to be listening to what I have to say, because I represent those people, and I expect for you to extend some courtesy to me along the way," and I left. That was my first experience with that gentleman.

Chall: Was that early in your career?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: What was the special issue at that time? Do you recall?

Davis: Asking him to support an appropriation for investigations for the Upper Feather Basin.

Chall: I see. It was your Upper Feather Basin measure. He was out of office by the time it finally went through. It was Harvey Banks then who put it through.

Davis: Yes.

Chall: How different in approach and treatment was Harvey Banks from Bob Edmonston?

Davis: Oh, Bob Edmonston was, if you'll forgive me, what some people would call very quick-tempered, and it was unfortunate because I think that was his major problem in dealing with people.

Now, Harvey Banks was never like that. I can recall time and time again that we would drill that man during our hearings throughout the state and in the state capitol, and he was always the same, always courteous, and he really took a lot of abuse from us. All of us were deeply involved in this, we'd just come at him real hard. No, Harvey Banks is a very fine man, a very even temperment, and I think it took that type of a person at that time to follow Mr. Edmonston.

Chall: Also, it was Harvey Banks that had to set up the new department.

Davis: Yes. And then, of course, following Harvey Banks was Mr. Bill Warne, who came in and was needed to sell the California Water Plan and was the only man that I think could have done it at that time.

Chall: And to build it?

Davis: And to build it, and to make sure that his staff in his own department were going to do what they were supposed to do. It took that type of a personality, such as Bill Warne, to achieve that, and so in that sense he did a very fine job.

Chall: Were you able to convince him at all times of what it was you were trying to put across?

Davis: Oh, yes, yes. We disagreed very strongly on various points, but he was the type of a person that you could sit down and talk to. ~~He~~ He respected mine, and we worked very well together. But that isn't necessarily saying that I agreed with him, because I certainly didn't.

Chall: The members of the water committees that you served on at one time and another--did all these people take the same deep interest in water as you did?

Davis: Those that took a very deep interest in it were Assemblyman (John L.) Bud Collier, from the Los Angeles area; Assemblyman Frank Lanterman; Assemblyman Lloyd Lowry, from Rumsey; and myself; and Chairman (Carley) Porter. \*

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\*In the 1950's the Assembly Conservation, Planning and Public Works Committee dealt with water issues. Its chairman was Frank Lindsay. The Water Committee was established in 1959.

- Chall: I see. And over the years, then, you became water experts. Would you say so?
- Davis: Well, yes. I don't know that we would call ourselves water experts, but we had some expertise, shall we say, in the field of water.
- Chall: And concern.
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: When Pat Brown was elected governor, were you aware of the kind of water program that he intended to try to achieve?
- Davis: Oh, sure. I knew that because of the various hearings that we were constantly having throughout different parts of the state. We were traveling constantly, the water committee.
- Chall: Did you support Pat Brown?
- Davis: No!
- Chall: As governor, I mean, in 1958.
- Davis: You mean for election?
- Chall: Yes.
- Davis: (laughter) Hardly! When he didn't want me to be in office, I wasn't going to support him, when he forced me in before the State Supreme Court! (laughter)
- Chall: (laughter) I see! Oh, yes!
- Davis: He was a ba-a-ad boy!

Passage of the Burns-Porter Act: SB 1106  
And Other Related Issues

- Chall: So, when he came in with his plan for developing water on a statewide basis, which he felt would take care of this stalemate--
- Davis: He really didn't develop the plan; the legislators did.
- Chall: Who developed SB 1106?

Davis: Primarily the Director of the Department of Water Resources, in conjunction with the Chairman of the Water Committee.

Chall: They would be--?

Davis: Carley Porter and the Director of the Department of Water Resources.

Chall: Harvey Banks?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: Not Hugh Burns?

Davis: You know, Hugh Burns is a wonderful gentleman, a powerful position in the senate, at the time that he was there, when this all came about. Hugh didn't do anything in the water field, really. But they put his name on 1106, as the Burns-Porter Act, which I thought was very, very unfair because he didn't do any work at all. Carley Porter's name should have been first; it should have been the Porter-Burns Act.

It's really interesting, and I still don't know why the senate permitted the two measures that were of such statewide importance and significance--that they permitted my name to be first, before a senator's, on both the Davis-Grunsky and the Davis-Dolwig Acts.

Chall: You don't know why they did it, but they did it. Is that it?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: Now, with the Davis-Dolwig Act, wasn't it passed first by the assembly?

Davis: Sure. But it was just a measure then. It had no author's name on it; it was not entitled. It wasn't called anything. There was no title to it. It was just another assembly bill, just like Grunsky's bill was just another senate bill.

Chall: Yes, I see. They're not entitled, then--rarely--

Davis: Many of them are not. Rarely are legislative measures entitled. They have to be real significant programs ever to receive a title, any legislative matter, whether it be in the field of education, water, or what have you.

Chall: Are there many other bills of yours that have your name attached to them?

Davis: No. Those are the two majors ones. Those are the two, of statewide importance.



Chall: Yes.

Davis: The federal government even copied their recreational program after Davis-Dolwig.

Chall: I see. Yours came first, then.

Davis: Yes. And they started having the concept of multi-purpose then.

I had a gentleman in my shop today, because the water districts were meeting here for some reason or another, and he walked in, and he said, "Are you the Pauline Davis of the Davis-Grunsky Act?" (laughter) And I said, "I'm the Davis." He said to his wife, "I knew it!" (chuckles)

Chall: (chuckles) Really nice, isn't it?

It took quite some time in the legislature before SB 1106 actually went through, months and months.

Davis: Oh, my, yes! Hours and hours, and we spent months and months of hard work.

Chall: What was the work like? Did the committees have anything much to say about the final drafting, the final wording, of that bill?

Davis: Oh, sure. Oh, absolutely.

Chall: They offered amendments?

Davis: Oh, yes.

Chall: In reading Grody's article here, I have the feeling that after the bill was drafted there were a number of amendments that came through.  
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Davis: Oh, my, yes. Sure.

Chall: But if the governor, and Mr. (Ralph) Brody and Mr. Banks didn't accept them, then they didn't pass?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: Is that correct?

Davis: Well, yes, as a rule that's correct.

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\*Harvey O. Grady, "From North to South: The Feather River Project and Other Legislative Water Struggles in the 1950's." Southern California Quarterly, Fall 1969, pp 287-326.

- Chall: That's the way it happened?
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: So, were there difficulties in trying to get them accepted?
- Davis: Oh, yes. Sure.
- Chall: Is there much that you could add tonight to what Mr. Cody has written? You know, that article that I gave you.
- Davis: I didn't vote for SB/106. And I think that in another book--and I will locate it for you tonight; I don't know who the author--they have made that same statement that he did. I picked up on that immediately because I knew that I was a no vote. \*
- Chall: What was the feeling on the floor of the assembly to having Mr. Banks and Mr. Brody there more or less calling the shots and explaining the bill? Was that an unusual procedure?
- Davis: Well, yes. But we did that in order to give all the members an opportunity to ask questions, because if they didn't sit on the Water Committee they wouldn't have an opportunity to do that. So, what we do in such situations is we resolve the body into a committee as a whole--that's what we call it--and then any member of the assembly has the privilege of asking questions.
- Chall: Well, why at the end did you not approve SB 1106?
- Davis: Because it had too many goodies in there for Southern California, and there wasn't sufficient balance for the north.
- Chall: The \$130 million (Davis-Grunsky appropriation) was not necessarily totally for the north, but--
- Davis: That's the point.
- Chall: It wasn't totally--yes. Anybody could get the loans and grants.
- Davis: And they did. There are reservoirs down in Southern California that were built primarily out of the Davis-Grunsky fund. And I felt that if they were trying to sell me on the basis that they were giving something to the north, that it should not be for the entire state.

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\*Erwin Cooper, Acqueduct Empire (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1968), pp. 224-225.

Davis: One hundred and thirty million dollars should not have been spent in the south, too, because that way they were able to dip into two sources of money for the south. That's the reason I voted no on that bill.

Chall: Is that the major reason?

Davis: Why, certainly! Oh, a lot of projects were built in Southern California with Davis-Grunsky money. However, a great deal of money went to my district. A lot of it went into the Mother Lode. The south did get a big chunk of it, but I never felt that they should, because none of that other bond money was going to be spent in Northern California, other than the portion of whatever we could get of \$130 million. I ran like a little beaver with that \$130 million! Why, I was over my district as fast as I could getting people to get feasibility studies in and get that money tied up for them.

The Ewing Dam, City of Hayfork, in Trinity County, would have been out of water with <sup>the</sup> a Davis-Grunsky project; the Box Canyon Reservoir, which they said would never be built, in Siskiyou County. Bill Warne says, "Nobody could have ever built Box Canyon but Pauline Davis." And it cost me a lot of money during the elections because politically the Republicans were always sniping at me because of the Box Canyon Dam, and that's a beautiful reservoir above Shasta Dam. And, boy, are they glad they have it now! But years ago, why, I was the worst thing that was ever born!

Chall: You had to convince their county boards of supervisors to take the responsibility for maintenance and supervision of the facility?

Davis: Oh, that's a long story, believe me! But it did get built.

Chall: I see. And why did it get built?

Davis: Because I insisted it needed to be built! (laughter)

Chall: (laughter) Despite the boards of supervisors, then, you insisted--

Davis: No, it just had to be built! There was no reservoir holding back water for Siskiyou County's future needs. It was all going into the federal project, the Shasta Reservoir, and that was all being diverted downstream to the valley. \*

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\*For additional discussion of the Box Canyon Dam see pages 19 to 25.

- Chall: What opinion did you have of Bruce Allen's concept that you could build this entire project on a pay-as-you-go basis? Do you think that was possible?
- Davis: Well, no, I don't think it was possible, because we tried budgets on pay-as-you-go and it's just impossible. The concept sounds good, but in reality it just doesn't work.
- Chall: One of the statements that you made in opposition to the bond measure was that once it was passed the legislature would have no say in developing the project, which, of course, was so.
- Davis: That's absolutely what happened.
- Chall: What do you think the legislature might have done, however, with it? Do you think that if the legislature would have annually had some kind of say in the way the project was to be built--?
- Davis: They should have had an overview at least of what the department was doing with the money.
- Chall: I see. Because the same thing might have happened as would have happened under Bruce Allen's bill; they might have tied up a part of the project annually. The north-south arguments might have returned.
- Davis: Then that would have been healthy.
- Chall: You think so?
- Davis: Why, certainly. I don't think that any one geographical area of a state should try to rob the very thing that keeps the other area of the state alive, because in the final analysis you're all going to sink. That's just wrong to do that, just like the Peripheral Canal argument right now, as far as the Delta people are concerned. \* If the Delta people don't win, God help them--that's all I can say--because all those benefits are going to the south. They're having the same problem as the counties of origin; they're really having a county-of-origin problem.
- Chall: Yes, it seems like the same kind of thing.
- Davis: Certainly. The same thing. And that should not happen. That's why I'm sympathetic to the Delta people, and if I were there I'd certainly be on their side.

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\* A referendum on building the Peripheral Canal, Proposition 9, was defeated in the election in June 1982.

Davis: For instance, the Perris Reservoir in the southern part of the state was supposed to be the very last facility that was to be constructed because they always called it "the tail that was waggin' th dog." Well, it's been constructed, as you know. It's a holdover facility for the Metropolitan Water District, and they said that would never happen, but it did. And I said it would happen, and it did.

And I always said to the senators that were pushing and said it would never happen, I'd say to Senator Collier, "O-h-h-h-, it's not going to happen," but it did!

Sure, administratively they play games, you know. Once the legislature's powers are taken away from them to any extent, why, the administration moves ahead. That's why I felt there should be an overview.

There should have been an overview of a lot of the departments in various fields; education is another field. And now, of course, they're introducing bills, sunset bills, and eliminating different boards and commissions.

Chall: What kind of overview? Working with each department?

Davis: That's right! What they do administratively after the legislators go home. The various state departments actually start to legislate. They themselves interpret what they want to do and move forward. Well, they move, we should be always posted on what they're doing; and if it's adverse to what the legislature actually intended in their bills, they should not do it. But there has been no watchdog doing that until now. They've finally awakened, after they're in trouble.

Chall: What about the drafting of bills? Are they generally done hastily, are they poorly drafted?

Davis: Well, they have to be done by the legislative counsel's office. Even if you're any attorney, you can't draft your own bill. You have to go down and give the concept of what you want to the attorney and so on and so forth. But the legislative counsel drafts the bill. No legislators draft their own bill.

Chall: So, then, by the time they're amended, revised, are they the same bills?

Davis: Not necessarily. I would try to find out where my opposition was going to be to bills that I would introduce if they were massive programs. Then I would try to nullify that opposition before I ever

- Davis: would have the bill drafted. Therefore, the bill doesn't have to be amended a lot, because psychologically immediately when they see a bill that's been amended a lot (they think), "There must be something wrong with this bill."
- Chall: Yes. Did you put through many bills? I mean, did you always have bills that you were working on in every session?
- Davis: I put a water district in all of the counties that I represented.
- Chall: Oh, you did?
- Davis: Countywide.
- Chall: A countywide water district.
- Davis: Yes. I did that so they could safeguard their water rights.
- Chall: And that water district has to have a board of directors elected by the people of the county?
- Davis: Yes. The board of directors are the board of supervisors, in that case. I didn't duplicate directors because I didn't want the additional expense on the taxpayers. They're the elected officials, and they're the ones that should assume this responsibility. Yes, the board of supervisors are the board members.
- Chall: The board of supervisors agreed with this, or did you--?
- Davis: Not necessarily, but I did it anyway.
- Chall: I see. Then you didn't file the water applications for them too, did you?
- Davis: No, they have to do that, legally.
- Chall: They do that themselves.
- Davis: They have to do that.
- Chall: You just urged them, once they got their district?
- Davis: Yes. Modoc County, for example--I found in my experience there that some of the families in rural counties--never paid any attention to their water rights, and a lot of their water rights weren't even on record in the courthouse. So, oh, there was so much work that I had to do, and to pick up the pieces. They just didn't realize. So, anyway, Modoc County was about to lose their water rights because the

Davis: ranchers hadn't take care of this.

So, there again, since I carried the legislation every four years to renew the state water applications where all the water rights on unappropriated water were held, I found five different state filings that we could amend Modoc County into. And I'll never forget it. The Water Commission had the hearing in Modoc County in the courthouse. (The courthouse is a very historical courthouse). The first floor is all marble, and they could hear my heels as I walked in, and I heard the ranchers say, "We knew she wouldn't let us down! Here she comes." And we did convince the water commissioners to embody them in state water findings, so Modoc ranchers never have to worry about their water rights to their ranches.

Chall: You really had to know your water law to handle all of that.

Davis: Sure.

Chall: Did you deal with the commissioners? Did you talk to them from time to time so that you could work out these problems?

Davis: Oh, yes. Very closely. Mr. (Ira) Chrisman I dealt with very much, and others, yes.

Chall: You would have needed help, I suspect, on some of these things.

Davis: Oh, sure. Of course, once you examine these water filings, and you find out that there's some water that is unappropriated there, they can hardly deny you taking it.

Chall: How did you find that out?

Davis: You just learned by looking at the figures, and also by looking at the figures that are reported to the commission by the watermasters. I also carried the legislation pertaining to watermasters.

Chall: I see.

Davis: (laughter) Shall we quit? I'm getting tired.

Chall: Yes. Let me see if I can just ask you one more question here.

It's claimed by Grody and others that Pat Brown pleaded, cajoled, and browbeat in order to get the bill (SB 1106) passed.

Davis: Brody was easy for me to work with. I've always been very fond of Ralph Brody. \*

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\* Mr. Brody is now deceased.

Chall: I see. How did this kind of activity show up among the legislators, or even with you, or did they just give up at a certain point?

Davis: They gave up on me.

Chall: Did they know how they were working on others, for the votes?

Davis: Oh, well, they would be called down to the office.

Chall: They gave up on you very soon?

Davis: No, not necessarily. But, I would say, much sooner than they did on the rest of them.

Chall: Yes. (chuckles) They never had you.

Davis: No, they never had me to begin with.

Chall: One final question before I leave tonight.

How did you work with Governor Knight?

Davis: Very well. He was a very congenial person to work with. He was sympathetic to the many hours and everything that the members of the legislature had to endure, and their problems. He appreciated a legislator having the responsibility to achieve what they felt was necessary. I found him one of the finest governors I've ever served with, and I started with Earl Warren. The worst governor I have served under is young Brown (Governor Jerry Brown) and I wish that on the record.

Chall: I see. It will be there. That was what, about two years?

Davis: Yes, two years.

Chall: Do you try to work with him on legislation directly?

Davis: With Governor Knight, you mean?

Chall: No, with young Governor Brown, in the way you had worked with other governors.

Davis: Oh, I had to, of course, because I was chairman of Subcommittee 4, which handled all of the administrative expenses for every department in the State of California. It was the heaviest committee of Ways and Means, and after I left they had to split it in two because none of the men wanted to handle that workload. I tried to resign three times, and they wouldn't let me.



Chall: Oh, I see. I didn't realize that. Well, that would put you in close touch with the governor.

Davis: Yes. And I had the responsibility of the state employees' salaries, too, and he and I went round and round on that one.

Davis: Now, we start. \*

Chall: It has been three years since I was here.

Davis: Yes, can you believe that? Time sure flies.

Chall: It's great to be back. We'll go on with water where we left off. I did want to find out how the Davis-Grunsky Act and the upstream reservoirs finally became an integral part of SB 1106.

Davis: At the time that the late Assemblyman Carley Porter was carrying the legislation, which was a bill all of its own, then, of course, the major portion of it became a senate bill, which is known as Senate Bill 1106. I carried an individual bill which enumerated primarily the five upstream reservoirs above Oroville Dam. At the same time, Senator Harold Johnson--now Congressman Johnson--also carried a bill pertaining to the upstream reservoirs and both of the bills arrived on the governor's desk.

This was during Pat Brown's gubernatorial period. My bill was vetoed by Governor Brown at that time and Senator Johnson's bill was approved, and it was meaningless. Of course, there was the whole intent of the bill, that it would be meaningless. So, of course, when Assemblyman Porter was successful in getting his legislation over to the senate side, the senators decided among themselves--and I discussed it with them also at that time--that in order for them to get some recognition for being in favor of protecting the water in northern California (since most of my five senators at that time were from northern California) that it would be best that they take over the assembly bill that Mr. Porter was carrying and amend it into a senate bill, Senate Bill 1106. So that is how the five upstream reservoirs were enumerated in Senate Bill 1106.

Chall: That was to ensure--

Davis: To ensure the people of northern California that the senators were sincere, I guess. That is ~~the~~ one way you might state it.

Chall: Otherwise, as I understood it, originally it was simply in the Department of Water Resources budget, which meant that it could have been taken out of the budget at another time, so this ensures that it was part of the whole water project. Is that the idea?

Davis: That is correct. So, actually, since it was rather meaningless in view of the fact that there was no stipulation of my financing for the upstream reservoirs, I was negotiating with the director, Mr. Banks of the Department of Water Resources, to take advantage

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\*This interview took place three years after the preceding section. There is, therefore, some repetition in order to set the scene to cover the story fully.

Davis: of a statute in the water code that permitted him to actually stipulate that these five reservoirs definitely would be constructed. So he did this.

It actually was the first and only time that that statute was ever used by any director of the Department of Water Resources that stipulated that without a doubt they were a part of the state water plan. So, actually the legislature in essence really didn't authorize the five upstream reservoirs. It was the Director of the Department of Water Resources, Mr. Banks. I don't wish to be egotistical, but I was the one who persuaded him to do this. As a matter of fact, until he actually commissioned this to be done, I don't believe any other legislators knew that he was going to do this.

Chall: When did he commission this to be done? Would this have been after the bond had passed?

Davis: No, it was before.

Chall: I see, it was in his department budget.

Davis: That is correct.

Chall: The north counties were assured of participation on the water bill, although Davis-Grunsky is for recreation and other purposes--

Davis: Domestic and recreational purposes.

Chall: For the whole state, not just the north?

Davis: Yes, the whole state. However, I will say that I worked diligently to make certain that most of the money of Davis-Grunsky went into northern California, primarily in my district and the Mother Lode.

Chall: How did you do that?

Davis: Just by appropriating the money through the budget process.

Chall: As the years rolled by?

Davis: As the years rolled by. Yes, indeed, I did that.

You were also wondering what the reaction was within the administration and the assembly on my no vote on Senate Bill 1106 when it came over.\* At the time that all the maneuvering

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\*Mrs. Davis is referring to a detailed outline for those final interviewing sessions which had been mailed to her to help her prepare for the interview.

Davis: was taking place pertaining to the five upstream reservoirs above Oroville Dam, which involved water rights questions pertaining to the counties of origin statute, I was insistent that they were going to assure me, by budgetary language, or language within Senate Bill 1106, that there would be financing for these upstream reservoirs. They were not willing to do this. So, of course I saw the game play and I told them not to expect me to vote for the bill regardless of them being enumerated by name only in the bill unless they appropriated the money or stipulated generally the year that money would be appropriated for them. So there was no question in anybody's mind that I was going to be a no vote.

Chall: Even though \$130 million had been put into Davis-Grunsky in the act?

Davis: That's true.

Chall: It wasn't enough?

Davis: The \$130 million was in Senate Bill 1106 when it came over but it was not called the Davis-Grunsky Act until it was entitled that on the assembly side in the water committee.

Chall: But you wanted guarantees for the upstream reservoirs?

Davis: That's correct, that is correct, and it certainly has proven to be the case. I fought diligently for Grizzly Dam to be constructed because Frenchman Dam actually was already on its way by separate legislation that I carried before the California Water Plan became a reality. So, Grizzly was the one that I finally was able to get sufficient money for through the budgetary process, with a great deal of effort, I might say. But the rest of them, of course, as you know, have not been financed. That is exactly what my fear has been and was at that time.

Chall: What were the attitudes of some of these northern senators toward SB 1106 and toward your activities?

Davis: Legislatively, of course, especially if you are a woman legislator, I have to say that there is a feeling of jealousy--the monster shows its ugly head. Other than that, actually, some of the legislators were very happy that I was carrying the legislation. For instance, one of the senators that was extremely gracious and a very competent man was Senator (Edwin) Regan, who is now a judge on the District Court of Appeals. Another one was Senator (Stanley) Arnold. He was very happy to see this accomplished. Senator Randolph Collier always said to me, "That's your field. I am not acquainted with it, I haven't made a study of it." So, really, I didn't have too much difficulty with them. There was a little feeling among some of the senators, but not necessarily those that represented the same area as I did.

- Chall: There were other problems that people brought up who were opposed to SB 1106 and I just wondered what your feelings were on a couple of them. One of them had to do with acreage limitation. Had you ever been--
- Davis: The extension of the acreage limitation?
- Chall: Yes to the state project.
- Davis: Actually, I felt the extension of the acreage limitation should remain as it was under federal law. At the present time, as you know, there is legislation pending in Congress to broaden that aspect of acreage limitation, and I think that probably the bill is going to pass.
- Chall: Yes, to increase the amount of acreage considerably.
- Davis: Right.
- Chall: Then there was the use of the so-called investment fund from the tideland oil and gas revenues that were to be applied to financing the project and little by little this was cut, as you first mentioned.
- Davis: It was utilized for other purposes.
- Chall: I noticed there was one in 1967. I probably caught this from your scrapbook. The Cologne-Miller Bill (SB 261) would have used tideland oil money, earmarked for education, for the water project. Apparently, you were opposed to that.
- Davis: I was opposed because it was taking money from the general fund. I was very much opposed to that stipulation in the bond proposal that if the financial aspect of the California Water Plan could not carry its own fair share that the general fund was obligated to assume the financial responsibilities. I didn't feel that should be something that we should impose upon the general taxpayers.
- The tideland oil monies at first were earmarked as a special fund and not part of the general fund and there were games being played there. One year it was, then it was not, and it was swinging back and forth. So there were times when, of course, I would be voting yes depending on whether it was not to be considered the general fund and then at other times it would swing back the other way. So it is difficult to really explain a person's voting pattern there.
- Chall: Would it depend on what it might be earmarked for?

Davis: That's right. I felt the tideland oil money should definitely be for the California Water Plan and not for other purposes because it was a natural resource and I felt that it should definitely be earmarked to enhance another natural resource. That was my concept.

Chall: That was what Governor Brown had said.

Davis: (laughter) Oh, really?

Chall: Now, in 1964, in '65, and '66, there were attempts to add money from the investment funds to Davis-Grunsky for recreation and other non-reimbursable features when the Davis-Grunsky money ran out. In 1964-65, the Porter bill (AB 17) was vetoed by the governor, but a less costly but similar one was signed in '66. (AB 12) Have you anything to say about that?

Davis: That was to initiate the recreational monies that should go for Davis-Grunsky projects with some of these smaller projects in the mountain counties, unless you could take into consideration the advantages of recreation to the project, they were not too feasible, yet recreation in the far northern part of the state is really an industry. Unfortunately, until now many people were not recognizing it as an industry like they did agriculture.

The Davis-Dolwig Act is a very, very important piece of legislation. What it did, it mandates that any facility in the California Water Plan, no matter where it is constructed, or by what entity, must be planned to take into consideration recreational features in that project. In other words, when a contractor submits his plan, he just cannot take large pieces of equipment like bulldozers and that type of equipment and go in just from any direction and tear up the countryside. He cannot do that now. He must have a plan and a road that he is going to utilize to bring his equipment in while he is building the facility. That road must be an asset for recreational features after the project is completed. So everything he does, he must have that in mind when he bids on a particular project. That's the Davis-Dolwig Act. He must consider fish life, the habitation of deer in all types of recreational facilities. He must also plan areas for picnic tables and areas of relaxation for people. All of those things must be taken onto consideration. He also must consider the evaporation in the facility when he constructs the dam. In other words, if it is a large facility, he has to take into consideration the capacity as far as the water content is concerned because boating is one of the features, also.

Davis: So, that's the Davis-Dolwig Act and that money has to be appropriated through the budget each time a state water facility is constructed.

Chall: How did you get that one?

Davis: That was very interesting. That has a long, very colorful story.

Chall: Let's have it!

Davis: That bill came to the Assembly Ways and Means Committee on which I served and I think the chairman at that time, as I recall, was Jesse Unruh. On that committee also was a member who was the head of the Democratic state party and that was Judge Munnell, then Assemblyman Bill Munnell. One of the members also on that committee was the late Assemblyman Glenn Coolidge. Fred Rupp, who is now the Postmaster in Sacramento, was the journalist and PR man for the Department of Water Resources and the governor's office.

This bill was supposed to be killed in the Assembly Finance Committee. That was the plan. Most of them were there in the front row counting votes, of course, and they had lobbied heavily, the members of the committee, so that bill would die in assembly finance. They didn't realize that I was also lobbying the bill very heavily, so when I presented the bill, what took place--and this is very interesting--Mr. Munnell was called to the telephone so that he could be absent. That was at my request.

Chall: Do you mean that you worked out this scheme?

Davis: Yes, I did.

Chall: They were for--

Davis: Yes, they wanted the bill, and we were personal friends. Assemblyman Unruh excused himself and handed the gavel to Glenn Coolidge. So, I presented the bill and before the department officials really had an opportunity to come in and do a real hard sell job to defeat the legislation, Glenn Coolidge asked for the roll call and he banged the gavel real hard and the votes were there and the bill just flew out of committee. I went out one side of the committee room and Governor Brown's henchmen went out the other side and they were actually in a state of confusion because the bill was supposed to die there.

I knew that they were going to definitely work very hard to kill this bill on the senate side. So, they lobbied extensively on the senate side to the extent that they couldn't get even one of the northern California senators to carry that bill on the floor if it

Davis: got through the committee, which it did.

So, I went to Senator Dolwig who was well schooled in the water field, and I asked him if he would carry it for me. He said, "Sure, Pauline, I'll carry it for you because I don't like to see what's going on." So that's the reason that it was named the Davis-Dolwig Act.

Water Resources: Governors Ronald Reagan and Jerry Brown

Chall: I wanted to know how you worked with the Reagan administration and particularly, let's say, with the Department of Water Resources Director, William Gianelli?

Davis: Fine; I had no problems with William Gianelli.

Chall: What about the wild rivers bill?

Davis: I did not favor the wild river bill.

Chall: Did you have anything to do aside from not favoring it?

Davis: No, I just never supported the wild rivers bill because in the State Water Plan there is an offset provision that has never been activated, that's to take care of the north coastal area as far as counties of origin. That offset provision there has to be financed. It is just the same concept as the other two Upper Feather River projects. Nothing will ever happen because they never made any money available for that offset provision in the State Water Plan.

The north coast has taken a horrible beating in flood damage, as you well know, and I just feel that flood protection is of great importance and it can be taken care of. There can be various--levies, small facilities, not necessarily large impounded reservoirs like Oroville Dam or Folsom Dam. I favor a series of small facilities because you enhance wildlife much better with them and you have less water evaporation. I am in favor, like I said, of the development of the tributaries. I would want the tributaries harnessed first before I would want any water exported from the north coast.

Chall: By harnessing, you mean--

Davis: The building of smaller facilities--just like the Upper Feather reservoirs; Frechman, Grizzly, Antelope, that kind of facility?

Chall: That could be used for recreation?

Davis: Right.



Chall: And some irrigation?

Davis: For domestic water supply; an all-purpose type of a facility. But I would like to see the Smith River and some of those tributaries harnessed.

Chall: Can they be harnessed at all and still protect what the people consider a wild river for rafting?

Davis: Oh, yes, if it's done properly, sure. If you build large facilities like Folsom, that's where you get the Sierra Club people interested in the wild river concept.

Chall: Have you had any contact over the years with Sierra Club members?

Davis: Yes, they are not very fond of me at all. (laughter)

Chall: You fell into controversy over--

Davis: My theory is conservation and theirs is just leaving things as they are.

Chall: When Governor Brown came into office he set up the Resources Agency.

Davis: Which Governor Brown?

Chall: That's Pat Brown and Hugo Fisher--

Davis: Yes, Hugo Fisher was the director.

Chall: Then Norman Livermore held that position during the Reagan administration. Did you have any contact with these Resources Agency directors for any reason at all?

Davis: Oh, sure. In the water field you work with all of them.

Chall: Fish and Game?

Davis: Oh, yes.

Chall: How did you get along with either one of them or both?

Davis: No problem.

Chall: Do you have any opinion about that kind of administrative technique.

Davis: That organizational structure? No, actually, I think the way it was reorganized, it was beneficial because otherwise it was very diversified and there were overlapping responsibilities.

Chall: How about Ron Robie?

- Davis: Ron Robie was for many, many years a consultant for our water committee, so I knew him very well and I worked very well with him. I knew Ron very well.
- Chall: And Claire Dedrick?
- Davis: I had no problems with her for the short time she was there.
- Chall: On the whole, what did you think of Jerry Brown's appointments in the field of agriculture and natural resources?
- Davis: I just don't feel that he uses very good judgment in his appointments. I think that has been one of his weak points as governor.
- Chall: Do you ever get in touch with Carlotta Mellon?
- Davis: Yes, many times. She's a very nice person.
- Chall: Do they bring recommendations to the governor or is it the other way?
- Davis: I don't think that they bring recommendations to the governor.
- Chall: What do they do, screen them?
- Davis: They screen and listen to the opinions of the different legislators if they have a view one way or the other.
- Chall: Is there anything else you want to say about water before we leave the subject?
- Davis: I don't know how many people really realize that the State of Arizona is coming into its own with the Arizona project. As you know, the Metropolitan Water District is going to have to look elsewhere for their water supplies, the amount of water that will be diverted to the Arizona project. I'm just not too sure that everybody that's in office really realizes how very, very serious that is. How soon that is going to be upon us remains to be seen.
- Like I said earlier, sometimes I just prefer not to check on these things because it just would worry me. I had that in mind when I fought so diligently for the counties of origin.
- Chall: Do you think that the Metropolitan Water District is going to come back up here soon for water in the north?
- Davis: I think they are going to have to. I don't know where else they would look. Certainly people like Henry Jackson \* from the State of Washington and elsewhere is not going to let the Metropolitan Water District (laughs) take any of the water away from the states of origin.

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\*Now deceased.

V. FISH AND GAME: AN OVERVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
POLICIES OF THE FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT

Chall: Let's go into fish and game. You talked a bit about fish and game last time having to do with the time you took office following your husband and the problems with deer. I wanted to go a little bit beyond that. You were Chairman of the Fish and Game Committee in the assembly for a long time.

Davis: Yes, we had a Fish and Game Standing Committee in both the assembly and senate when I first came into office. I held that chairmanship for many, many years. \* It is a very controversial position to be appointed to. No matter what you do, you're wrong, because every individual that owns a fishing license or a hunting license has their own views about fish and game, so all you can do is what you feel is right and let the chips fall where they may. It was quite an experience to deal with this problem.

Then, after I left the Fish and Game Committee chairmanship, the committee was abolished. Nobody really wanted to deal with the problem and it was also abolished on the senate side. It's unfortunate, because I think the fishery problem and other problems pertaining to fish and game have taken a back seat.

Chall: Where would it be, in the natural resources--

Davis: That's where it is and it gets very little attention. Very seldom do you see any legislation introduced pertaining to fish and game.

Chall: It was one of the major issues of the Peripheral Canal debate.

Davis: Absolutely. It was because with the Davis-Dolwig Act you have to take into consideration the fish and game resources. So, I at least took care of it in that way!

Chall: At the time that William Warne became director for a year of the Department of Fish and Game, there was some controversy going on between you and the Fish and Game Department. Can you explain some of that?

Davis: Director Seth Gordon was not accustomed to a woman in the field of fish and game. It's very difficult for a woman to come into this

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\*Chair, Fish and Game Committee, 1959-1963; Conservation and Wildlife Committee, 1965-1967.

Davis: particular field which customarily is a field that a woman would not be involved in. He had been there for quite some time and he just didn't like to have anyone express a different point of view. He was an individual that was in favor of killing does rather than bucks during the deer season, and our district was not in favor of that. So, therefore, we had a difference of opinion and it became a very controversial issue. That was the case with both Seth Gordon and Mr. Shannon.

Chall: Oh, both of them?

Davis: Yes, that was the policy of the department. Then when Pat Brown was in office he made the mistake of trying to utilize the Department of Fish and Game's friends. At that time, constitutionally, it was funded primarily from the source of licenses and he tried to use these funds to balance the budget. There was a constitutional restriction that that could not be done.

Chall: Somewhere--I guess it was in your scrapbook--I had read that you felt that Seth Gorth was spending too much on studies and not enough on access roads for hunting and fishing.

Davis: That's right. You can study things to death and they are also very costly. Of course, here again, my concept in the water field was to develop access roads so that people would have access to fishing and hunting areas.

Chall: When Warne went in, I guess he saw the problem somewhat similarly. \* He felt that Seth Gordon had brought in wildlife and fishery biologists--trained people--the scientific qualifications of the department, were interested more in the management of resources than in the law enforcement elements of the department. He felt that created hostility between the scientific management team and the wardens who were close to the field and the communities in which they operated.

Davis: That's right.

Chall: But, Warne said it was the decision to bell the coyotes to find out whether they ate lambs that caused an uproar in the press, ridiculed the deparment for that, and Gordon resigned as a result.

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\*See William Warne, "Administration of the Department of Water Resources, 1961-1966," in California Water Issues, 1950-1966.

Davis: That's right. What Gordon was doing, was "belling the deer," not the sheep.

Chall: I see, he wasn't belling the coyotes?

Davis: (laughs) No.

Chall: What was he belling the deer for?

Davis: He was belling the deer so that he could find out where they were, I suspect! (laugh) All you have to do is get out in the field and find out what is going on--which, by the way, I did when I was chairman.

Chall: Warne described and one only had to read the Blue Book of that period to get the understanding of the administration of that department. It was a rather unusual administration to say the least, with a commission over the director setting policy and then a Wildlife Conservation Board with some advisory authority.

Davis: Do you mean the Fish and Game Commission?

Chall: Yes, the Fish and Game Commission could have had more authority than the director.

Davis: The Fish and Game commissioners are appointees by the governor, strictly political plums. However, in years past, the people who were appointed by various governors, both Republican and Democratic governors, were people that were knowledgeable in the field. However, since Jerry Brown has been there, that has not been the case.

The Wildlife Conservation Board is a very, very, constructive, efficient, and well-managed board. They have done just an exceptionally wonderful job in the field of conservation of fish and wildlife. They are primarily civil service people. They are not political appointees.

Chall: The staff?

Davis: The staff is civil service.

Chall: But the board--

Davis: The board consists of legislators--the Director of Fish and Game Department and chaired by the President of the Fish and Game Commission.

Chall: Why is it necessary to have a special board made up of legislators with their own staff and their own appropriations that is different from the department?

- Davis: Because their funding is different than the department. Their funding does not come from license money as does the Department of Fish and Game. Some of it comes from the general fund. Most of it comes from race horse revenue.
- Chall: It is an odd administrative set up.
- Davis: But it is a very fine program.
- Chall: It works?
- Davis: Oh, it works; it really does work and the people have really benefited from this.
- Chall: Warne indicated that he was a little surprised about this commission on the one hand and the Wildlife Conservation Board with its own staff and money on the other, and he tried to take some leadership in determining how the whole package would fit together at least so that one wasn't playing against the other.
- Davis: The Fish and Game Commission has different responsibilities than the Wildlife Conservation Board. The Fish and Game Commission sets down rules and regulations on fishing and hunting. In other words, they may change each year how many deer you could bag, how many trout you could bag, what is the fishing season--the time factor--to fish trout or to fish fresh water fish or salt water fish. They also are the ones that determine how many deer you can take out of a certain region in the state. The Wildlife Conservation Board has none of this authority or responsibility. They serve an entirely different field. They build boat harbors, ramps, in the ocean. It's an agency that actually is in the construction field for facilities to enjoy the outdoors. I don't know why Mr. Warne saw an overlap.
- Chall: He might have; I may just have read that into his statement.
- Davis: Yes, because they vary so that I don't know why he would see anything similar except interest in the field of natural resources.
- Chall: I think mostly he indicated that it took him just a little while to see where all of these pieces fit together.
- Davis: That may be. Of course, he wasn't the director of the Department of Fish and Game very long.
- Chall: Just one year.
- Davis: It was kind of a stepping stone, frankly, for him to the Department of Water Resources.

- Davis: When I left things were going along quite well. Now, what is going on, I really don't know. I was always close to the fish and game wardens. They were very knowledgeable as to what was really going on out in the field. They are responsible for law enforcement as far as fish and game.
- Chall: I don't have any other questions to ask you. Is there any more that you want to tell me about fish and game and what it was like to serve on that committee?
- Davis: It was more than a full-time job.
- Chall: You had several.
- Davis: Yes, indeed! Like I said, after I left the chairmanship, they dissolved the committee.
- Chall: I guess it then became--
- Davis: Natural Resources and Conservation Committee under (Edwin) Assemblyman Z'Berg.
- Chall: (George) Milias, I guess, was--
- Davis: Oh, yes, he was the first chairman and then Mr. Z'Berg.
- Chall: Is there a fish and game committee?
- Davis: No, not to my knowledge in either house.

## VI. ROADSIDE RESTS

Chall: All right, we have finished that one and we'll go on to the next.

The next subject that I have on my outline is roadside rests. The first time I saw reference to that was in a report of the Assembly Interim Committee on Conservation, Planning, and Public Works, Volume 13, Number 2--"The Roadside Rest Program for California." This was a report of the Subcommittee on Beaches and Parks; Pauline Davis was chairman. Could you tell me a little bit about the Lindsay committee, as that interim committee was called in those days. \*

Davis: It was a very powerful committee, a big committee. The membership was large. It took in and overlapped many fields. Actually, that committee had water under its auspices before there was a water committee. It also had land-use planning. It also had the soil conservation districts program. I was very active in the programs of soil conservation districts, of which there were at that time 172 districts within the state, and that came under the auspices of that committee. We also had a Soil Conservation Commission at that time, whether it still exists, I do not know. You see, I have been away from there over five years, so I have lost track.

Chall: Even so, we're talking about a long time ago. It will be difficult to remember it all clearly.

But it was a big and all encompassing committee, that Lindsay Committee.

Davis: Yes, I'm not too sure, but it seems like maybe it was the year when I chaired that subcommittee that we took over the Hearst Castle as one of the state entities. That was a very wise thing to do because it is one of the facilities that pays its own way plus making money for the Department of Beaches and Parks.

Chall: Do you recall any controversy over taking it on?

Davis: No, none at all. We held hearings at Hearst Castle pertaining to the takeover and, of course, it was to the advantage of the Hearst family for the state to take it over because of the taxes that were being imposed. As I recall, the Hearst family, two of the boys, kept two of the smaller cottages that are always available for their use.

Chall: Yes, I think that is probably true. The Lindsay committee, as I understand it, appointed Sam (Samuel) Wood to be its consultant.

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\*See interviews with Francis Lindsay and Samuel Wood in Land-Use Planning Series, Volume I, State and Regional Planning Initiatives, 1959-1975. ROHO, TBL, UCB, 1983.



- Chall: It was one of the first assembly committees to hire a consultant. It was a step forward.
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: Did you find that to be a valuable addition?
- Davis: Yes. It had many items of responsibility. Mr. Wood was very knowledgeable, a hard working individual, and very helpful to the chairman and to those of us that need information.
- Chall: The reports are certainly full. I don't know what assembly committee reports were like before this, but these certainly gave you a great deal of background.
- Davis: We did a great deal of interim work during that particular period which, I think, was very, very beneficial to the people of the state because we didn't stay in Sacramento and hold hearings. We would go geographically throughout the area in order to learn first hand what the problems were and to listen to the local constituency, not just elected officials. We also listened to them, of course, but also any private citizen that wanted to come before the committee.
- Chall: That isn't done as much any more?
- Davis: No, it isn't, unfortunately, and I'm sorry that it isn't because I think it's a loss.
- Chall: Now with a full-time legislature, it is not as easy to get around.
- Davis: That's true, although I think it still could be accomplished if the desire was there to approach it in this fashion.
- Chall: Usually when these reports came out, as I understand it, the committee had reached consensus so that if a bill went on into the assembly, it had been worked on enough so that everyone was in agreement. Was that the usual step?
- Davis: No, it just actually gave all of the members a better knowledge of what the bill was about. For instance, you would check back to the reports and read about it and what people had to say about it.

As a matter of fact, the Davis-Grunsky Act and the Davis-Dolwig Act, I held hearings throughout the state on those two programs. So that's the reason I had the consensus of the State Farm Bureau and the State Grange. I did that under the auspices of the Fish and Game Conservation Committee because when they renamed the committee to conservation, it broadened by authority enough so that I was able

Davis: to do that officially.

Chall: One of the early studies, the one I referred to, in 1955, was the "Roadside Rest Program for California" and you were the chair of that study committee. Where did you come up with the idea of roadside rests?

Davis: The roadside rest program, before I introduced it, was attempted by six previous legislators. I can't remember their names, but anyway, it was attempted, as I understand, six times prior to my time. Each and every time it was introduced, it was to be administered by the Division of Highways, and correctly so.

I took it upon myself to do some research as to why these legislators were unable to get this through the legislature and I found a great deal of opposition from the Division of Highways and, of course, I immediately recognized that they didn't want to do maintenance work. They didn't want to assume the responsibility of picking up garbage at roadside rests. They felt that it was beneath them to do that in the field of transportation.

So, I took it upon myself to do research, nationwide, through the various states that have roadside rest programs and, of course, in the majority of them it is under the administration of highways.

But, in order to get the program started, I persuaded the Department of Beaches and Parks to administer the program and I was able to get a line item in the budget for the administration as long as you gave the Division of Beaches and Parks the money. They weren't very happy about it, I might say, but they didn't fight me too badly on it. So, when the program became a reality, it was administered by the Division of Beaches and Parks.

The first one was established in the desert area. Then there was one established in Plumas County, and one in Lassen, and another one down in San Bernardino. But they were very simplistic types of roadside rests and I wasn't very happy about what was going on. So, I was just a little quiet about the situation and I started watching, with a great deal of interest, the different appropriations that were forthcoming from the federal government to California. The federal act called them safety rests, not roadside rests. I watched for quite a few years and, low and behold, I found that certain senators were taking this money and using it for the construction of highways, which was against the federal law.

Chall: This first report was dated 1955 in which you are asking the Highway Department, I believe, to designate them, clear the space perhaps, and for Beaches and Parks to administer the program.

- Davis: It took me a long time.
- Chall: The money, as I recall, was to come from the tidelands--oil money.
- Davis: The tidelands oil money.
- Chall: Did it when you--
- Davis: At first, yes, indeed.
- Chall: Now it comes from the state budget and the federal budget?
- Davis: That's right.
- Chall: There is still federal money in it?
- Davis: Yes, and highways funds for maintenance. Maybe you recall there was a great deal of state highway funds spent for the pick up of litter. Since the roadside rest program has become reality, it brought a great deal of savings. We have containers at the roadside rests and people aren't just throwing stuff out because there is a fine for littering. So actually, we didn't have to appropriate new monies for the maintenance of the roadside rests as far as maintenance because it actually just picked up what was being expended for the litter program.
- Chall: Sam Wood told me that one of the early problems of the roadside rests was the toilet facilities were not included.
- Davis: That is correct. That's why, like I said earlier, I was not happy with the simplification of those that were underway.
- Chall: Is that because--
- Davis: They were outdoor chemical toilets and I was not happy with that. Now they are not. They are very nice.
- Chall: Were they initially done that way because it would be cheaper?
- Davis: Yes, because I could only appropriate so much money at the very outset. But I had to get my foot in the door some way to establish the program. And California, being a big state, it was a shame not to have a roadside rest program because from the standpoint of highway safety, it's proven to be very, very helpful. They're real nice.
- Chall: Oh, yes, when we drive, we use them. Is there one named Davis, yet?

- Davis: I named one after my late husband, a new one in Plumas County. I had requested that one of them be constructed in Plumas County and named after my late husband. But after I retired, I thought, well, that's the end of that. But they have been just extremely gracious from the transportation district office in Redding--of course, with approval of the Highway Commission and the department--and they called me on three different occasions and said they were moving ahead. Then they told me when they were going to dedicate it and I was there for the dedication this last year. It is a beautiful roadside rest, just beautiful.
- Chall: Do you find roadside rests like this in other parts of the country as you drove around?
- Davis: Oh, yes, I can show you pictures of some that I have taken. Texas has beautiful ones. Texas does everything big, so they have huge decorative large wagon wheels. Oh, the roadside rests in the various states are beautiful and as you get into the South they are colonial. The architecture is suitable to the various states. No, the roadside rests are very nice.
- Chall: Probably the impetus came with the federal funding.
- Davis: Oh, sure.
- Chall: Whatever one can say about federal funding, it does move some things forward.
- Davis: Yes, indeed. We can't do it all by ourselves.
- Chall: I don't know when you finally got that all resolved, but I guess it was in the late sixties.
- Davis: Senator Collier took a lot of credit for the roadside rests program at the very tail end. Something was said about the roadside rest program on the floor of the assembly one day and John Knox stood right up and said, "I have to say that I know who is responsible and who should get the credit for the roadside rests and it's Pauline Davis!"
- Chall: Anything else that you want to say about roadside rests before we move on?
- Davis: No, although I just think it's a very nice program. I'm very happy with it.

## VII. FAIRS AND EXPOSITIONS

- Chall: All right, we're moving ahead nicely. We are going now to fairs and expositions.
- Davis: We're going to be through before we know it. You've got another whole day to spend with me!
- Chall: We might find something else to do. You'll be glad to get rid of me!
- Davis: (laughs) No, not at all!
- Chall: On fairs and expositions, you have given a great deal of effort over the years. I don't know when you began.
- Davis: I can't even recall when I was appointed to that chairmanship. First, there was a Fair Committee on the assembly side and a separate one on the senate side.
- Chall: A Fair Committee?
- Davis: Yes, in both houses and then it was combined and called a Joint Fairs and Exposition Committee and I chaired both when it was separate and joint. \*
- Chall: I suppose we'll be able to find that in the handbook.
- Davis: Now, my late husband was the chairman of the Fair Committee when it was the Fair Committee on the house side by itself. (1951)
- Chall: That goes back a long way.
- Davis: Yes, it does. I was the secretary to that committee.
- Chall: So, when I ask you what sparked your interest in fairs and expositions, it is almost like saying you were born with it.
- Davis: Yes, that is a very nice program, too. The fairs are so important, here again, to all of the people of the state, especially in the rural counties. Even in the metropolitan districts I have found--in the Bay area, the Oakland area--a lot of children, minority children and other children of lesser means, would never be able to enjoy seeing any animals or other things if we didn't have fairs.

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\*Mrs. Davis chaired the joint committee. Fairs Allocation and Classification, 1973-1976. The committee was organized in 1972 with Assemblyman Belotti as chairman.

Chall: You are probably right.

Davis: Oh, absolutely, and they see wildlife and things that otherwise they wouldn't have the opportunity of seeing. They learn about agriculture and horticulture, just everything you can think of is at fair time. So, I think it's a very worthwhile program. That, as you know, is primarily financed by horse race revenue and some from the general fund, but mostly from horse race revenue. There is a horse racing board, as you know.

Chall: Do they coordinate their activity with the fair?

Davis: No, their responsibilities are to establish the times of the year when horse races are going to be held in different parts of the state.

Chall: Oh, yes, and that's important.

Davis: It's very important because that is where the revenue comes from.

Chall: Do the fairs also require some funding from the general public?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: That is part of the problem?

Davis: Yes, that is part of the problem; but most of the funding is from horse racing, paramutual money they call it.

Chall: It's a productive source, isn't it?

Davis: Yes, it is. There is a Little Hoover Commission that wanted to close down some of the smaller fairs.

Chall: You had to work hard to turn that around.

Davis: I certainly did!

Chall: What did you do?

Davis: I served a subpoena on a couple of the members of the Little Hoover Commission that lived in Southern California and Sheriff (Peter) Pitchess from Los Angeles served the papers.

Chall: Why did you have to do that?

Davis: Because we had to bring them to the forefront to get them to come to these meetings in the less populous areas of the state so they could

Davis: understand what we were talking about as far as the value of those smaller fairs was concerned. Primarily we held the hearings in Red Bluff and we were able to convince the Little Hoover Commission that they should not consolidate. That's what they wanted to do--to consolidate some of the smaller fairs. I will never forget that presentation in that large community hall on the fair grounds.

Chall: At Red Bluff?

Davis: At Red Bluff. Those commissioners were really fussing with me. But we understood each other before it was over and I think it was very helpful to them and to me, too--to understand their point of view, and our point of view--and they just decided that it was best just to leave it alone because there was justification for keeping them.

Chall: Then there was an advisory board, set up for the fairs in 1973. I'm just taking the material from your scrapbook. What was that meant to do?

Davis: It didn't function too well, though. I don't know whether it still exists, I don't know. I doubt it very much. I set that up myself. That was my bill. It did accomplish a few things. What was happening was that with some of the smaller fairs the people on the boards would get busy and they would stay within their own community and not make a point to interest themselves to travel to other fairs to learn new things and get new ideas.

So, I created my legislative act advisory group. They were appointed from different geographical areas so that everyone would be better informed as to what all the fairs were doing. The reason I did that was because I thought it would preclude in the future a Little Hoover Commission or some other commission of that sort once again maybe getting the idea to consolidate. If everybody was adequately versed geographically in what the benefits of the various fairs were, that might not happen. Various geographical areas have maybe a specialty in wheat, or Fresno has more grapes, the South oranges--there is value in knowing that various areas have specialties which can be displayed at the fairs and which might not be done if the fairs were consolidated.

Chall: I read too that there was some interest in providing vocational training through fairs. Was that in your bill?

Davis: Yes, it definitely was. We actually had the various school districts interest themselves in having children exhibit their workshop items. We had an opportunity of getting the educators interested in cooperating with the fairs.

- Chall: In 1974, you were Chairman of the Joint Fairs Allocation and Classification Committee which I guess was a new--
- Davis: That was a joint committee, the senate and assembly together; senators and assemblymen.
- Chall: What is meant by allocation classification?
- Davis: It was the name that was given to this committee because we were the ones that sought allocations for the fairs, and also because we wanted to be sure that they were classified correctly instead of the Little Hoover Commission classifying them.
- Chall: I see. The Little Hoover Commission gave them classifications and determined--
- Davis: That's why they wanted to consolidate--
- Chall: Certain classes?
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: Has there been a changing concept of fairs and the use of fair facilities within the last few years?
- Davis: Yes, they are used more for community activities than used to be and, of course, rental is paid to the state for their use. For instance, there is a new building in the community of Red Bluff. They have just completed a beautiful building that is quite large and it is to serve all of Northern California for the livestock exhibitions. The local people contributed financially as well as the state and it is named the Pauline Davis Pavillion.
- Chall: Oh, there is one named after you!
- Davis: Yes. It's a beautiful building. They are having horse races there; they are having car races there; they are having livestock auctions there. It is just being utilized by all of the Northern California counties. The big bull sale is held there every year.
- Chall: In your scrapbook in 1974, there was an article about the governor's appointment--and this must have been Governor Reagan, I think--his appointment of fair directors.
- Davis: There is a board of directors for every district fair.
- Chall: Yes, you felt that some had no knowledge of fairs or interest in fairs.



- Davis: Yes, I held hearings on this and it was a hot subject because I felt that the people that were appointed to those fair boards should have at least some knowledge or interest in the fair industry rather than being just political appointments.
- Chall: You felt Governor Reagan's appointments were--
- Davis: Were more political. They started more political with Governor Reagan, right.
- Chall: How did he respond to that?
- Davis: I would say that some of them were changed.
- Chall: I have the 1973-1974 roster for all of the districts. (Agricultural Associations) There are fifty-two of them, so I guess there are some that are consolidated. Those are quite a few appointments to make. Does the governor--
- Davis: He makes all of those.
- Chall: Every single one of these?
- Davis: Yes, he does. It's a lot of political plums.
- Chall: I see, how are those made?
- Davis: The chambers of commerce make recommendations, the livestock industry makes recommendations. When I objected, and I held hearings in Fresno on this, and in Southern California, and in Northern California, I objected to the Democratic and the Republican central committees making recommendations unless they were people that were definitely interested in the fair industry. What was starting was that the Democrats and the Republicans--they were both equally to blame--were just putting people on boards just because they were members of the county central committees. I don't think that's correct and I still feel very strongly about it.
- Chall: Do they still do that?
- Davis: I really don't know whether they are doing that now.
- Chall: It is a way of getting some of your active members on to a committee because there are so many appointments, something like ten to each board. What about the State Fair and Exposition? Did you have much to do with them?

Davis: That was a program that was primarily shepherded by Senator Al Rodda from Sacramento and he did a very fine job. Al Rodda spent a lot of time on the state fair. Years ago when it was located at the old fair site, it was a very profitable and noncontroversial fair. Fred Links, who is now deceased, a very fine man, was the Director of the Department of Finance and he really kept his eye on the state fair. It was a beautiful fair. We had no problems at all. Then for some reason or the other, the late Senator Earl Desmond decided that we were running out of space. There was property where it is now located that was owned by two sisters, as I recall. He introduced legislation for the purchase of this land and the fair site was moved.

I had no argument with the relocation of the fair, but I did have an argument with opening the fair too early before all of the facilities were adequately furnished and ready for fair goers. When they opened the fair they were not ready and it left a bad impression with the general public, and it just kept going down, down, down financially.

The problem kept us going, as far as finding adequate funding through the budget process because it is a separate statute. However, it does receive some funding from the horse race industry. I'm not going to quote a figure, but there is a specific figure in the statute that is set aside from horse racing funds for the state fair separate and apart from all of the other fairs. Then the balance of it comes from the general fund and we just had an awful time trying to keep it going.

They have tried various things, as you probably have heard. The fair managers that the governors have appointed were not working satisfactorily. I haven't been out there. The fair opened, I think, yesterday or today, I forget which. They are starting a new approach back to agriculture. Many of us said it would not work if they make it a Disneyland approach. Advocating the Disneyland approach, during Reagan's time, was Mr. (Andrew) Lolli, and that's what created the problem. I understand by hearsay that the problem has been resolved and now the whole theme this year again is agriculture. So let's hope that it works out satisfactorily. But that's where the problem was created.

Chall: Kenneth Cory wanted it abolished?

Davis: Oh, yes, he's not the only legislator that introduced legislation to abolish it, but that would be ridiculous. I call it the hub, just like a wheel, and all of the spokes of that wheel are the other smaller fairs that work diligently. All 4-H children work with their animals, and they work with the goal that they are going to be able

Davis: To show them at the state fair.

Chall: There was a great deal of research done on that by the Stanford research group and a master plan was established, but one article I read in the California Journal in 1972, it seemed that somebody decided not to go along with the master plan. \* Maybe it was Mr. Lolli. He had a different idea. Therefore, the people who were critical of it when it began to fail, said it probably failed because the plan had been revised. It was thrown aside.

Davis: Yes, discarded. When Mr. Lolli was with the Department of General Services--which was a department that I never did vote to create; I introduced legislation to abolish it, but I wasn't successful--he signed a contract with an outside interest, outside of the State of California, for the functioning of the state fair. It just proved to be a disaster.

Chall: So is it run now by the state?

Davis: By the state.

Chall: Back to the state.

Davis: Back to the state; that's where it belongs.

Chall: I guess you turned the fairs back to being fairs instead of allowing them to wither on the vine.

Davis: That's right.

Chall: And this is the reason why the Western Fairs Association honored you?

Davis: Yes, that's right, you were there were you not?

Chall: That's right.

Davis: That was quite an event, wasn't it?

Chall: It truly was. It was an outstanding tribute to you.

Davis: I couldn't believe it! What really surprised me was when they had the fireworks in the evening. (laughs)

Chall: They were spectacular!

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\* "A County Fair by Any Other Name, Cal Expo Fails to Fulfill a Promise," California Journal, Volume III, No. 7, August, 1972, pp. 224-228.

Davis: The Silhouette! \*

Chall: The silhouette of you.

Davis: Yes, I just couldn't believe it.

Chall: It was a very exciting evening.

Davis: Oh, yes, that was a real tribute.

Chall: It surely was.

Davis: That was very nice of them.

Chall: It was unforgettable, really.

So, is there anything else you want to say about fairs?

Davis: No. It is one of my loves, let's put it that way. The water field and the fairs.

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\*The Western Fairs Association ended the day of meetings with a spectacular display of fireworks. The finale was a perfect portrait of Pauline Davis set in sparkling lights instead of the expected cascade of colors from the rocket.

VIII. THE LEGISLATURE: REVISING CHANGES IN POLICIES AND PERSONS

Chall: There are some questions on the legislature. As you know, you are sort of fitting into about three different projects, maybe four. One of them is the women in politics project. Others comprise the studies we have been doing on governmental administrations starting with Earl Warren. We have recently finished the Knight and Brown eras. We are now into the Reagan administration. You were a member of all of the these administrations.

Davis: Yes, I was.

Chall: Then we have the land-use planning project in which you also fit. So our line of questions goes beyond any one of them. (laughter).

You asked me about Silliman and (Luther) Lincoln, wasn't it?

Davis: Both Silliman and Lincoln were speakers. Jim Silliman did serve as speaker.

Chall: A short time, that's right, until he decided to run for what was it, lieutenant governor?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: I don't remember that contest, although I think Mr. Lindsay told me about it. I was interested in what speakers or constituents you might have back over the years and whether that made any difference.

Davis: Every single one of the speakers that I have served under, I backed. I was not on the losing side of any of them. Luther Lincoln was an outstanding speaker, a very kind man. Ralph Brown was the same. He was a very nice speaker. Jesse Unruh I had some differences with, but you had to respect him, he was very knowledgeable and a very tough presiding officer, and he really brought a lot of discipline into the assembly at the time. It was during his regime that he reorganized the assembly and brought in staff to assist the various legislators.

Chall: Did you approve of that?

Davis: Now, when he was there, the way he did it, I approved of it. At the present time, I feel that probably we have gone a little bit overboard.

Chall: How do you mean that?

Davis: I think there is sometimes more staff than is necessary at the present time. But perhaps it is a necessity because you can't do all of the workload that is brought to your office; you need people that will do the research for you, there aren't hours in the day or night for you to do it by yourself.

Robert Monagan was an outstanding speaker. Bob Moretti was speaker for a short period of time. I served under Leo McCarthy, served under him as assistant speaker pro tem, which is the first time that any woman was one of the presiding officers in a legislative house.

Chall: Did you leave--I guess you did--before Willie Brown became speaker?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: Was it just by chance that you happened to be on the winning side or did you just happen to like these people?

Davis: I just felt that they were the best candidates. I really feel that when you are looking for someone that is going to preside over a body like that, that you must look for their qualifications as far as leadership, and the best person regardless of party. However, I have always felt very strongly, and I still do, that I don't believe that any speaker that is selected and elected by the membership of the body should in any way impose something that is not to the liking of the legislators because he serves at their pleasure. In other words, I am not frightened of any speaker! I wasn't, and I respected all of them and I hope that they respected me!

Chall: It is possible to be punished, isn't it?

Davis: Oh, yes, but I never was punished. I wouldn't stand for that!

Chall: You always had good committees.

Davis: Yes, I always had good committees. I have no complaint at all.

Chall: Did you ever have interns in your office when interns became more fashionable?

Davis: No.

Chall: Is there any reason?

- Davis: I had so many counties that I had responsibility for and I had a very faithful staff. My staff stayed with me ten, twelve, eighteen years and so we really didn't have time to have any internship program. We were just too busy and we didn't have space in the office to begin with, so I never did participate in the internship program.
- Chall: Were most of your staff women?
- Davis: No, I had men, too. I had two men on my staff and the rest were women.
- Chall: What capacity did the men serve?
- Davis: One was a field representative and the other one was a consultant to the Fairs and Exposition Committee.
- Chall: You had no trouble working with them?
- Davis: Not all all. However, when they did come into my office I did have a policy that they were in no way to feel that the secretary was beneath the consultant. Everything worked out fine and I had no problems.
- Chall: Are some of them still in the legislature?
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: There were a number of attempts over the years to reorganize the legislature with various commissions and committees and propositions. I was just interested in your point of view on the change from the short budget session to the longer general sessions and then finally to the two-year sessions.
- Davis: I was a candidate that came in during cross-filing. For three terms, we had cross-filing and I was elected in the primary by both parties for six years. So I had an opportunity to see the workings of cross-filing and then the abolition of cross-filing and frankly, if I had my say in the matter, I would go back to cross-filing.
- Chall: You would?
- Davis: Yes, I certainly would because it would abolish the constant struggle that you read about right today between the two houses of the legislature, for power. During this struggle the people are the losers. When we had cross-filing everybody worked together. We didn't say, "You are Democrats and I am a Republican, so I am not going to let you have this bill" or "I am not going to let you have this because you are of another party affiliation." We knew what the

- Davis: problems of the state were and we all worked together as a team and the people received the benefits. As soon as cross-filing went out of existence, naturally it is only human nature for parties to vote for power.
- Chall: The idea was to give the parties more responsibility and make them viable as parties.
- Davis: So they gained the power--and when you get the power--then there is a power struggle. That is only human nature, whether it be in politics or in anything else.
- Chall: Do you actually think then that parties are of not too much value?
- Davis: They're of value. However, there was party identification during cross-filing. We had the identification as you do now whether they are Democrats or Republicans, so the people still have a choice if they wanted to stay with their respective party. I just feel that when you have cross-filing you do abolish that constant struggle of power. I had the opportunity of working under both systems so I was able to judge from that.
- Chall: How about the two-term session?
- Davis: Like I started to say, the workload constantly increased because the state was growing and programs needed to be considered on a much greater scale as far as time and workload. We could not do it during the short session. It had to be on the long-term basis. The only thing that I wish that we still would do, even though it wouldn't give the legislators any vacation time off and not too much time to campaign, I still would like to try to squeeze in a little bit of time for interim work geographically throughout the state.
- Chall: The number of bills introduced is still too many?
- Davis: Too many. I would like to see and, of course, I don't know whether it is ever going to occur because I know when I was there, it was attempted with no success, to stipulate the number of bills a legislator has the prerogative of introducing. Then, if something came up within the district that was an emergency--something that you felt just had to be considered at that time--permission would be given by the body itself. The cost of printing bills is just beyond belief and if they don't pass or even if the member chooses not to pursue them any further, it is just a waste of money. I have often wondered why the Sierra Club didn't challenge that situation. That is why oftentimes I would differ with the lobbyists of the Sierra Club because I just felt there were avenues that they should be considering that they weren't considering.



- Chall: How did you function on all of your committees? The legislators seem to have quote "a number of committees they have to be working on." Did they give one committee more time than another?
- Davis: I gave a very high priority to finance.
- Chall: Finance you were saying was important?
- Davis: Very important, and I gave it very high priority. My attendance was good. Of course, I tried to attend the other committees, too, as much as possible.
- Chall: By finance you mean Ways and Means--
- Davis: Ways and Means.
- Chall: Did you work at one time with the Director of the Office of Planning and Research? That was Bill Press. When he was Director of the Office of Planning and Research he dealt with the budgets of all of the departments, although he may have dealt mostly with department heads.
- Davis: Yes, he must have dealt with department heads. That name just doesn't seem to register with me.
- Chall: In terms of the work of your subcommittee, you were dealing with department heads, too?
- Davis: Yes, they had to appear before our subcommittee and present their budgets--the Highway Patrol, all of them.
- Chall: Every one of them?
- Davis: Every one of them.
- Chall: Including the governor's office?
- Davis: Including the governor's office, including the state treasurer's office, including the secretary of state's office.
- Chall: Those were the days when there was a little more money available.
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: What is your opinion of the measure which allowed the legislature to set its own salary?

- Davis: That was a provision that was submitted to the voters for consideration.
- Chall: That's right, and it passed.
- Davis: It passed, so one has to assume that this was their desire. Of course, there have been occasions and more often than not, the legislature can and does not introduce a bill to increase their salary. The measure on the ballot said we can increase the salary by 5% every other year. I think it's every other year yet we have not always agreed to that. Then, of course, when you do increase it the people seem to misunderstand. But I think they have forgotten that they voted for it.
- Chall: The legislature had to give that to the people to vote on; I mean to came from the legislature?
- Davis: That's right. Now, when my late husband first came into office, the salary was \$100 a month, and then it went to \$200 gross a month, and then it went to \$500 when I came into office. So as far as I'm concerned, I was not one within the higher salary bracket. I enjoy my retirement that I receive every month and I feel I have earned it.
- Chall: The legislators are now professional legislators. They are not quote, "citizen legislators."
- Davis: That's right.
- Chall: Has that made a difference in the kind of people who come into the legislature do you think?
- Davis: I don't think it did while I was there, although some people claim now that is the case. I hear criticism to that extent. But I can't really say because I am not there. I have been gone now five years. I have heard some criticism of the fact that some of the staff people that have been consultants are now members of the legislature. That was not the case when I was there, so I have no way to compare that to see what type of legislator they are because no one while I was there came into being from that category.
- Chall: Bill Lockyer has been on the staff of Bob Crown.
- Davis: Oh, that's right, I guess; that's correct. But in the district, not Sacramento.
- Chall: That's right.

- Chall: We talked a little bit at lunch about reapportionment on a ten-year basis, as well as reapportionment because the law required it under Baker vs. Carr. Do you recall any of the struggles in reapportioning the legislature before Baker vs. Carr?
- Davis: Do you mean when the senate was reapportioned on area and the house was on the one man-one vote? I think it should have remained area and one man one-vote, I really do. I think it was equitable. That's why I had to struggle so hard, in the various approaches that I mentioned today and previously in achieving legislative programs for the rural area of the state. It was based by that time on one man-one vote and it was just a bit more difficult to get programs through.
- Chall: Too many other people to work with in the senate?
- Davis: You had thirty-two legislators from the delegation of Los Angeles along--just from one county in the assembly.
- Chall: The effect of decimal reapportionment that is required, we talked a little bit about that at lunch, the problems of jerrymandering.
- Davis: Yes, it's a shame that happens to that extent.
- Chall: You have come down on the side of having a nonpartisan commission handling this.
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: That is going to be a measure on the November ballot. We'll see what happens. \*
- Davis: Yes, it wouldn't surprise me at all if that passes. I was there when the court had to make that decision at one time and that's when I received a part of Butte County, City of Chico. It makes it very difficult. I am of the opinion that the courts really are not interested in assuming the responsibility of reapportioning the state. That is really not one of their chores so I don't think we should place them in that posture. It seems, looking at reapportionment this last year, there was more controversy about it than I've ever witnessed, at least through the press. I wasn't there--but just reading about it. I would assume that perhaps we definitely should try a special commission and see what good fortune we might have with reapportionment.
- Chall: It will be interesting to see how they work it out.

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\*Ballot Proposition #14, failed 45% - 50%, on November 7, 1982.

Davis: Yes.

Chall: But they do end up with some rather strange districts.

Davis: Yes. At one time I had to travel about seven hours when I left Sacramento to get to my district in Humboldt. And then during bad weather conditions, in order to reach the constituents in Del Norte, I would have to go through the State of Oregon into Del Norte County. That was when I saved one of the San Francisco legislator's assembly seats through this plan.

Chall: How did you do that?

Davis: Because reapportionment was based on population. In order to balance San Francisco, they gave me their additional area to represent.

Chall: You couldn't fight your way out of that?

Davis: Oh, the chairman of the Reapportionment Committee was Assemblyman Don Allen, and I still kind of kid him about that. \*

Chall: When they changed your district from time to time then, it meant getting acquainted with a whole new group of people, local boards of supervisors and others?

Davis: Oh, yes. One time I had ten boards of supervisors and county clerks.

Chall: It's a balancing act, isn't it?

Davis: Yes, it is. It's interesting in rural counties, so many of the county clerks are women. Have you noticed that?

Chall: Yes, I have.

Did you have to do much with CSAC and the League of California Cities?

Davis: Oh, yes, and Mr. Carpenter, he too was an outstanding third house man, Bud (Richard) Carpenter.

Chall: In what ways would he be working with them? On what kinds of--

Davis: On different county and city problems.

Chall: You were concerned mostly with counties though because even you had small cities in your district. I would guess the counties were more important.

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\*Mr. Allen died in 1983.

- Davis: Yes, but Bud Carpenter was a grand person to work with as far as the cities. Although I didn't have as many things to negotiate with him on as I did Mr. MacDougall, nevertheless he was a prince of a man to work with as far as the League of California Cities.
- Chall: I thought we would take up a couple of other legislative matters. We were just now talking about the third house when you talked about MacDougall and Carpenter. What about your dealings with lobbyists or the third house?
- Davis: I had no problems with them. Perhaps you might have heard, I was a very independent soul and the lobbyists that I worked with, I had no problems. Of course, I wasn't that close to a lot of the special interests, like the liquor lobbyists and the oil people. I wasn't very close to them because it wasn't a prime interest of my people. So, the lobbyists that I worked with were people that had a responsibility--like education, the small schools, agriculture--the Farm Bureau, the State Grange. I worked much more closely with them. Now, I am not saying that there was anything wrong with the other lobbyists, don't misunderstand me. But they didn't have a special interest in the problems of my district so I didn't work with them as closely as I did the others.
- Chall: What about the lumber and timber industries?
- Davis: I worked very closely with them--of necessity--for my district.
- Chall: Now, they were a strong lobby.
- Davis: Very strong, a very strong lobby.
- Chall: Their job basically, I guess, was to educate you so that you understand the meaning of bills that are going through the house that are important to them.
- Davis: I had to make a serious attempt to educate some of them, too, especially the large corporations in the timber industry. They were of the opposite party affiliation, very conservative, which is their prerogative, but nevertheless years ago they used to feel that they were so powerful that they lived in a little white castle and nothing could touch them. I used to say to them, "There will come a day when that will not be the case and you best come off of that perch." So, believe it or not, we really got along very well together.

They didn't support me financially, as much as they did my Republican opponents, because most of them were of the opposite party affiliation. Nevertheless, they did understand that I knew what their problems were.

Chall: What were some of those, for example?

Davis: Environmental problems. I really fought hard for them to make some sense out of the things that were being advocated in the field of environment. I believe in good environment, but I don't believe in going so far over into one direction or the other that you completely kill an industry and put people out of work.

Chall: Did you feel that the environmental programs--I guess it was the Forest Practices Act that was changed--that that really was very harmful to the lumber industry that was there?

Davis: Yes, the environmental reports?

Chall: Yes.

Davis: They were too stringent.

Chall: The EIR's (Environmental Impact Reports)?

Davis: Oh, yes, they were just too, too--that's when Claire Dedrick was there. I instigated some meetings in the governor's office on that very problem.

Chall: That CEQA bill or California Environmental Quality Act bill was carried by John Knox, but it was moved by the Republican party at that time when (Robert) Monagan was speaker. I guess it was the EIR reports that brought the loggers into Sacramento with their trucks?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: How did you resolve that or did you?

Davis: Very frankly, some of the problems were not resolved. As time passed, I think that some of the advocacies were softened. Of necessity they had to because they weren't realistic. Then again, another thing that was a problem with reports is it took such a long period of time for them to be finalized. In the meantime, nothing could occur. Work couldn't go on, people were being laid off, out of work. It didn't make sense.

Chall: I think they finally shortened that time period.

Davis: Yes, they did. There were improvements made, but it was a chore. This was what I was trying to tell some of the larger corporations.

Chall: Were you trying to tell them that they were not going to be able to be logging and cutting--having their own way forever?

- Davis: --Without working with all of the other people that were involved, yes, which affected fish life and what have you. But there was room for everybody to sit down and negotiate these various problems and that was what I was trying to tell them, but they weren't listening until these problems were upon them with these reports.
- Chall: What was the confrontation, if that is the word you would use, in the governor's office with the governor, Claire Dedrick, and some of the timber people?
- Davis: Yes, the conference room was standing room only more than once.
- Chall: Was that something you had to chair?
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: I just would like to get the feel of that.
- Davis: Of course, it was a very heated situation because people were out of work. There were loggers there that had families to feed. Of course, the reports were very disadvantageous for the company to continue operating. The reports, as I stated, were slow in getting settled. So it was a very serious problem and that's when Claire realized that something had to be done. The reports were speeded up. She was responsible for speeding up the reports after those meetings.
- Chall: Yes, the Resources Agency had to deal with the guidelines, develop guidelines.
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: By the time you left, was there a kind of peace between the environmentalists and the forest industry?
- Davis: Yes, the only thing they were unhappy about was at the federal level when Congressman Phil Burton put so many acres of the north coast area into the park system, which of course closed down a lot of mills.
- Chall: Did you have the Indians--?
- Davis: Yes, I did. I had the Pitt River, I had the Hoopa, I had the Modoc. I had quite a few Indian people in my district, yes.
- Chall: How did you deal with them?
- Davis: Very well. I am very sympathetic, very frankly, with the Indian. As

Davis: a matter of fact, I made quite an effort in Washington, D.C. successfully in establishing health facilities for them that they didn't have. California is one of the only states within the United States that does not have Indian treaties. I don't know if you are aware of that. They have rancheros and things like that, but not treaties. If you like, I would just love to loan to you a book on this and let you read it. You would see what happened in California. You won't believe it unless you read it yourself. If anybody was discriminated against, it was the Indian.

Chall: Did they come to you with problems or did you seek them out?

Davis: No, they came to me--educational problems. California lost their money for educational purposes for a period of years and we restored that by going back to Washington and fighting to restore them.

Chall: With the Bureau of Indian Affairs?

Davis: Yes, we did. As a matter of fact, our endeavors through Washington brought in a new director to Sacramento for the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Chall: From the national--

Davis: From the national level, that's right. My son and I were in Plumas County not too long ago and we were going through Indian Valley. It is called Indian Valley. We stopped at one of the ranches there because this one lovely ranch has cottages that they rent for people who like to come there for vacation. I said, "Why don't you stop and see what the rental is?" So he did and he went up to the door and he was asking about them, and I stepped out of the car and this gentleman looked up and he said, "Oh, for goodness sakes!" He came over and grabbed me; here he is--he is a very devout Republican--and he said, "Pauline, we will never be able to thank you for saving this valley. Remember, they were going to flood Indian Valley and you kept it from being flooded!"

My son said, "Mother, I never knew that." I said, "I have forgotten legislation that I have introduced." He said, "It's too bad you didn't keep track of all of this." I said, "Honey, that's just impossible!"

Chall: I see, that's Plumas. That is different from other valleys that were going to be flooded?

Davis: Right, but it is a beautiful valley. Indians don't live there. They just call it Indian Valley. It is a beautiful valley right between Portola and Quincy.



Chall: That is an area that I know nothing about.

Davis: Oh, really?

Chall: My husband and I are going to have to start taking trips into that part of California.

Davis: Oh, yes, you must do that. Northern California is beautiful. You are just going to have to take time out to do this. You will get a feel of my love for that area.

Chall: Yes, that's right. I was interested in something that I saw in your scrapbook from The News. It was dated February 4, 1960. Pauline Davis, it seems, returned two complimentary tickets provided members of the state legislature by the Olympics Games organizing committee. "It's not good business practice to furnish public officials with complimentary tickets, especially in view of the fact that the Olympic Games Committee contemplates coming before the legislature for funds."

Davis: That's right. (laughs)

Chall: That was one way of taking care of some lobbyists! Your scrapbooks are really most interesting.

Davis: Yes, they are. I haven't had an opportunity to finish them. I have a box of loose items that you haven't seen that I have to put into scrapbooks.

We really are making progress.

Chall: We probably have maybe two hours to go.

IX. OTHER IMPORTANT LEGISLATIVE ISSUES:  
EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK

Chall: Why don't we take up the bills and issues.

Davis: Education, death penalty and others?

Chall: That's right, and the other one we'll take up is legislation on clean water, sewer facilities.

As long as we have been discussing legislation and lobbying, why don't we just take up these matters now?

The FEPC (Fair Employment Practices Commission), of--

Davis: They have had problems again, very serious problems this year, I noted. But they survived.

Chall: They survived it, yes. They cut back on the budget, but I think they were planning to cut it out entirely.

Davis: They were and that was not unusual. That just seemed to be a usual process every year.

Chall: I have a date down here of 1953 when you put in AB 988.

Davis: That was the first time.

Chall: Equal pay for equal work.

Davis: Yes, that's right.

Chall: Than in 1955, Wanda Sankary put a bill in and Mr. (Charles) Chapel moved that one through one of the committees, but it was killed in a later committee. In 1955, that same year, I was amused to see that Clark Bradley put in a bill to provide that a woman who "unjustifiably leaves her husband" was not entitled to his earnings while she was away.

Davis: I remember that.

Chall: The three women in the legislature were in the minority against that bill. It passed 57 to 5. That presumably equalized the burden because the men who unjustifiably left their wives, I guess their

Chall: wives were entitled to their earnings. So you think that was your interest in FEPC rather than equalizing hiring on the basis of race?

Davis: Yes. In the racial issue my position always was--there should be no restriction at all as to who is hired if they are qualified. However, I did feel, and still feel that if they are not qualified it is unjust to them to put them in a position that they can't cope with because eventually they are going to find that they are going to have difficulty, and if the administrations change and that philosophy changes, then where are they?

So I suggested that rather than place them unqualified in positions just to balance the racial quota we should have a training program in different fields that they might be specialized in or be trained in. For a period of time they could be trained in that field before they are placed, so that no matter what might happen in the future they can care for themselves. That was always my position regarding that issue.

Chall: And it's always difficult to get training money, isn't it?

Davis: That's right.

Chall: While we are on the subject then of legislation for women, you say that you worked with the Business and Professional Women. What about other groups that affected legislation for women later on like the AUW ( American Association of University Women), and the League of Women Voters. Did they come to you?

Davis: Oh, yes.

Chall: And the Democratic and Republican women's organizations?

Davis: The same.

Chall: It took them a while to get on the band wagon.

Davis: Yes, but they did.

Chall: The BPW was really the first.

Davis: Yes, the BPW was one of the first.

Davis: As far as NOW is concerned, I had the feeling then and I have a feeling now that the movement of NOW actually hindered the goal that we set out to achieve in the United States. It was the approach that many of them used that I think was detrimental. I found that in speaking privately to other members of BPW, they felt the same. In

Davis: BPW, we approached it more on an even keel, a business-like basis, and we did not irritate the male ego when we tried to convince the various state legislators throughout the United States to give this consideration. I think by chaining themselves together in legislative houses and threatening legislators, that is not the approach to male legislators. I think it was damaging to the cause.

## X. THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT AND SOME RELATED ISSUES

Chall: Do you think that ultimately affected the ERA?

Davis: Yes, I do; I really do and I regret that this happened. I do feel that the policy of ERA is going to resurface again, hopefully, but I am hoping that approaches are a little different with some of the organizations. Even in visiting the legislative houses, the mannerisms in which some of them conducted themselves just gave fuel to the opposition.

Chall: They claim they may change their tactics.

Davis: I hope so. That's what they say and I certainly hope they do. It's too bad that this happened because we were so close.

Chall: Yes, so close for so long.

Chall: What happened in the state here? It took a while before the ERA was passed in California, about a year, I think. Some of the women's organizations and the labor unions were opposed to it.

Davis: Yes, the labor unions opposed the bill in 1953 when I introduced that bill. They were the ones that killed it and it's just the same old story. The labor unions just felt that they didn't want the competition for employment.

Chall: Some of the women's groups, I think even the League of Women Voters, for many years were opposed to the Equal Rights because they felt that some of the special legislation--labor--that was given to women in terms of how much they could carry and how many hours they could work before they were given overtime, that they would lose all of that.

Davis: I didn't agree with them on that at all. I know that was the argument that labor used against our bill in '53.

Chall: Do you think that was a specious argument?

Davis: Oh, absolutely.

Chall: Do you think it was more male--

Davis: Oh, sure, there is no question about it. I think it just took a period of time for other women's organizations to come around and see the value of ERA, and they did.

- Chall: There is a National Women's Political Caucus whose major aim is to get more women elected to the legislature, to Congress and state legislatures, as well as men who think as they want them to on women's issues. Have you been interested in that kind of a women's movement?
- Davis: I know of it and I read about it. I just watch the various things that they are advocating with interest, but I haven't taken any part in it.
- Chall: Do you think that it would be better for the legislature if there were more women--
- Davis: Oh, sure, I think that balance is needed.
- Chall: Did it make much difference when you had more women in the legislature?
- Davis: I was there fourteen years by myself. I didn't find it difficult, although it certainly was nice to have more women come in. Don't misunderstand me, I think it was great. But I didn't find it difficult at all when I was there by myself.
- Chall: Did it help when March Fong and Yvonne Brathwaite, and Leona Egelana, and Theresa Hughes came in regardless of party?
- Davis: Oh, sure, of course.
- Chall: As you worked all of these years in the legislature, did you think that it was more difficult for the women than men to cope with the stresses of public life? Not being a man, of course.
- Davis: I think it depends upon the individual--this would pertain to any level of elected public service for a woman; it depends upon what your private life consists of, your family, and your personal obligations. But other than that, no. It depends to what extent and what part of your life you want to give to public service. It really boils down to that because there are various things in your private life that you just are not going to or should not participate in if you are a woman in public life because you live in a glass house.
- Chall: But did you find that there are a lot of stresses?
- Davis: I think women can take stress much better than men.
- Chall: How did you deal with your frustrations and angers and stresses of which you certainly would have had your share.

Davis: As a rule, I just kept my anger to myself and I just waited and got even; that's my philosophy!

Chall: And bide your time! But you wouldn't come home and kick the cat?

Davis: No, I wouldn't come home and kick my animals--I'd come home and say a few words out loud to myself, but not in public.

I will tell you one little anecdote that I always refer to as a comedy. One legislator I know wanted me to vote for his bill and he was in a very powerful position. He was the speaker at that time. I said, "No, I am a no vote." I was on finance. He said, "You are going to vote for this bill." I said, "Apparently your hearing is not as good as it should be. I'm a no vote." Of course, when the roll call was called I was a no vote and when the committee broke up he was very abusive. He used very abusive language in the committee room which I thought was not in the best of taste. I did not respond to him. He walked down the hall using the same language and I just kept right on walking and when we came to the door of my office I hesitated a little bit and I called him by name and said, "Now, look, if you continue using this type of language--you are welcome to come into my office, but I must tell you that I will not guarantee that I will not slap your face." So that took care of that.

Chall: Would he have used that language to a man?

Davis: Oh, yes, that was his typical method.

Chall: And they might accept it?

Davis: They would have been concerned. He was the speaker and they would have been concerned that he would kill their bills in the future, which also he threatened me, and I said, "Just proceed to do whatever you like. I will challenge you on the floor and I will tell the story as it is."

Chall: So he didn't swear at you again?

Davis: No, and he never gave me a bad time either after that. Not on the floor or in committee.

Chall: He'd met his match?

Davis: Apparently, he knew that I would not abstain from stating the facts as they were. I had nothing to hide.

Chall: I see, in terms of this particular measure that you were voting no on, you had a reason for it.

Davis: I surely did.



# XI. EDUCATION: RETAINING THE SMALL RURAL SCHOOLS

Chall: All right, what about education bills?

Davis: I always safeguarded the small schools. They were always wanting and still want to abolish the little, tiny, small schools in the rural areas. For instance, in the mountain areas where we have snow during the winter time, children would have to stand from four-thirty in the morning to catch the bus in a snow shelter and get home maybe about seven or eight o'clock at night if we abolished small schools.

Chall: I see, they wanted to unify schools.

Davis: They wanted to unify school districts--almost every year there would be someone who would introduce legislation to abolish these schools and unify them. So I think the last four years that I was in the legislature, the man who just really said, "I am going to take this on as a real challenge and I am going to get these bills through," was Assemblyman Leo Ryan. But fortunately he lost each time. I remember the last year that he was in the legislature before he ventured on to Congress, he really thought he had that bill conquered and he did get it to the floor of the assembly, but I was able to kill it on the floor. So far the little schools still exist. That was one of my very important challenges in the educational field for my district.

Chall: I remember in the late fifties and early sixties, I think it was one of the major pushes. And I think Mr. Unruh had something to do with it. In urban areas, in suburban areas, this did make some sense.

Davis: But it didn't in rural areas and this was applicable statewide--even some areas like Kern County were affected. It was not only my district.

Chall: What happened then? In the bills, did you exclude certain districts or certain counties? Because there was a carrot-and-stick approach?

Davis: There was a carrot and a stick, but we always made certain that it was not applicable to certain areas and the stipulation of the number of pupils in the school. This concept was introduced by the late Senator George Miller (classroom size).

Chall: I see, that's how you managed all of these years to keep it out.

Davis: Yes.

- Chall: What was the attitude of Leo Ryan then? Was it a matter of economics? How did he view this?
- Davis: He was a teacher. His background was education. By the way, he taught in my home state of Nebraska. I have forgotten whether he came from Nebraska, I don't recall. But he taught there and he taught in small rural schools and apparently he was not happy teaching in small rural schools. All I can say is that he just had a kind of an anti-feeling against a real small school.
- Chall: There is some concern that they don't educate as well because there aren't enough students--
- Davis: Oh, they do though; they get personalized attention.
- Chall: When they go into high school and junior high they do have travel. So your concern is at the elementary level.
- Davis: That is correct.
- Chall: I also noticed in your scrapbook, I think it was a letter--I probably didn't bring it with me--I believe it was a card or a letter from Clark Kerr thanking you for standing behind him regarding the university budget bill one year. What was your concern there?
- Davis: I have always been sympathetic to higher education. Education to me is vital in everyone's lives. I am sure that many of us don't realize the responsibilities that people in higher office at the college level have to assume. It always looks greener on the other side of the fence if we don't have the responsibility. I thought he always presented his case very efficiently and so I was always in support of their budget requests.
- Chall: It was an interesting letter to find in your scrapbook.
- Davis: Oh, I don't even recall it.
- Chall: That's how I noticed it, that he had paid a special thanks to you.
- Davis: Apparently, I put up a good fight in ways and means.
- Chall: Yes, that was it. That's right. Here, I do have a note. It was in 1959. You were active in support of the University of California budget problems before the Ways and Means Committee, and you worked on bills to establish adequate funding.

## XII. THE COURTS AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

- Chall: Now, then, the death penalty. You were opposed to abolition. That comes up every few years, doesn't it?
- Davis: Yes, right. I am a supporter of the death penalty. I have consistently been a supporter of the death penalty. I find so many people say, "Let us incarcerate the person on a life term basis." It seems to me that if you are thinking of the philosophy of which is more cruel and the person has committed a real severe crime where they have taken someone else's life, in my own mind, I have come to the conclusion that it would be more painful to a human being to be incarcerated for life thinking about the crime that they have committed.
- Chall: Law enforcement people usually analyze it from the point of view of it as a deterrent. Do you think it is a deterrent?
- Davis: I think it is. I believe the violent programs on TV inspire various people to get into the field of crime. It encourages them. I feel that if we have a death penalty those people that are in that margin, it might sway them to think twice and say, "No, I better not do that because perhaps they may catch me and I might go to jail."
- Chall: You had on your own list a criminal case that you wanted to talk about, the Motherwell case--AB 1329.
- Davis: That is the Motherwell case in Sierra County. Sierra County is a very, very small county in population as you probably know, and this individual was courting this lady that was somewhat older in age than he was. She was quite wealthy and had some very expensive pieces of jewelry. He persuaded her to go for a ride, I guess, into Sierra County into the mountainous areas. He killed her in Sierra County and buried her there. Of course, Sierra County was responsible for dealing with the crime.

The cost was so great that legislation had to be introduced, which I introduced. This was the first time that this theory was presented to the legislature in the State of California to assist in paying some of the costs of holding these trials. It would have bankrupted this county. So we were able to get this legislation through and Sierra County was assisted by the State of California to help pay the cost of this trial. It's just the same now regarding other trials that you hear about.

Chall: Then the county has to ask the State?

Davis: Right, and they have to justify the request that they are making and prove that they can't assume the cost themselves.

Chall: There are many, many cases like that now that just go on and on for months and months and months.

Davis: Oh, yes.

Chall: Sometimes they have to move them into another county that has nothing to do with it except that it is the only way to prevent undo harm to the defendants.

Davis: Yes.

## XIII. LOYALTY OATH

Chall: Off and on over the years we have dealt with this subject of loyalty oaths. It was a major issue in the fifties.

Davis: As a matter of fact, anybody can sign a loyalty oath, and that doesn't necessarily mean that they are going to abide by it if they are that type of a person. It's not sincere. That signing of the loyalty oath isn't going to make any difference to them.

## XIV. THE CLEAN WATER ACT

- Chall: Now, let's move on to the rest of your list. We will take up the bills that you considered important, the issues.
- Davis: These are going to be difficult for me to remember. Like I said to my son, I introduced so many bills and did various things that I never kept a record of. We were just too busy. Like the Clean Water Act.
- Chall: Yes, but you will probably remember--
- Davis: Yes, I remember various communities didn't have the financial capability of putting in adequate water systems for domestic water supply; they received state money. It dove tailed in with federal legislation. That was a very important piece of legislation which still exists.
- Chall: That was your bill?
- Davis: Yes, it was.
- Chall: Who was Ray Whittaker?
- Davis: Ray Whittaker is a member of the legislative counsel that helped me draft the legislation. He was one of the attorneys that worked and still works for the legislative counsel.
- Chall: This bill, did it establish the ratios--
- Davis: It established a criteria for the justification of financial assistance to communities that health-wise needed the facility. Financially, they didn't have the tax base to accomplish this themselves.
- Chall: This was as a result of the need that you saw in your own counties?
- Davis: That's right, in the smaller counties. The cities just didn't have the tax base.

## XV. THE JUNIOR FIREARMS SAFETY PROGRAM

Chall: The Junior Firearms Safety Program.

Davis: The Junior Firearms Safety Program. Yes, that was my program, too. See, I would have forgotten all about these things.

Chall: They were important to you.

Davis: This still is in existence. Before you can acquire a hunting license, you must take a firearms training course.

Chall: Why is it called "junior?"

Davis: It started out as a junior firearms training program because the adults were somewhat offended that someone would question that they did not have the capability of handling firearms adequately. So, I started out with a junior program and now it's applicable to everyone. Before you get a hunting license, you have to go through a training program.

Chall: Is that so?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: Who was Kent Dechambo?

Davis: Kent Dechambo also was in the same category as Mr. Ray Whittaker. He was an attorney and still is. He works for the legislative counsel that worked in the drafting of the type of legislation that I was interested in. This has proven to be a very, very good program because we found that prior to that time, and ever since, there have been cases that have been tried in court where it was proven that it was not accidental, that it was actually a homicide where one or the other person felt that they would take advantage during a hunting season. Then also often-times when a gun is fired, a bullet will ricochet and it is unintentional. So, all of that has to be determined in court when something like this happens.

## XVI. THE COST OF LEGISLATION DECIDED BY BALLOT MEASURES

Chall: The ballot proposition.

Davis: This is, in the election process, one of my pets, and that is because for years and years there was no evaluation to inform the voter if they cast a positive vote on a measure whether there was any cost imposed upon them for this service. I had a very difficult time getting this legislation through, but we were successful. Now, on your ballot, if there is any cost involved, it so specifies.

Chall: I see, so if there was cost involved in administering the program--

Davis: That's right.

Chall: If it passed.

Davis: Yes. There will be a stipulated cost or it will tell you no appreciable cost.

Chall: Who opposed this measure?

Davis: Some of my colleagues because there were certain programs they were interested in passing which, if the costs were known to the local taxpayer, they wouldn't be too happy about.

Chall: Yes, that sounds reasonable. How about the legislative analysts who would have to determine the costs?

Davis: That was Mr. Post's office. Alan Post was very much in favor of this bill and that was helpful. He, by the way, is a very outstanding man. He is retired now.

Chall: Yes. Did you have much contact with him? I guess all legislators do.

Davis: I did. He surprised me because when I retired, probably you may have seen it in a scrapbook or perhaps you missed it, he wrote a very long, lovely letter to me, which I thought was very nice of him because he certainly didn't have to. All of the legislators liked Mr. Post. He worked very well with the legislative branch and he was very forthright. He was very gracious, but he did oppose bills and, if so, he had a rationale for doing so.



## XVII. FEDERAL RESERVE FUNDS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Chall: Now, we come to the federal reserve funds for school districts.

Davis: There are public funds for various school districts. I don't know whether Congress has abolished some of those funds or not.

Chall: For the impacted school districts?

Davis: Yes, that's right. There were funds, Public Law 375, which pertained to federally owned timber lands. That pertained primarily to areas like mine. Then also there was another separate law, a federal law, pertaining to areas that had military bases and I had one of those. Herlong. Then in the south, San Diego and those areas that had military bases. The federal government was constantly trying to abolish those funds. I don't know whether they have cut back on those since I have been out of office.

But without a doubt, Leo Ryan or someone like that was always introducing legislation to eliminate the utilization of federal funds for school districts. So, I really don't know, very frankly, where that program stands at the present time.

Chall: I would suspect that the Reagan government, the administration, has tried to cut back on it.

Davis: Oh, I wouldn't be surprised. But I remember prior to the Reagan administration this was a constant battle each time with each administration.

Chall: I remember because we lived in a small school district and every cent that you could get was important.

Davis: That's right. So, regardless of what administration was in power, it was just a constant battle from the time that I took office in 1952.

Chall: The federal forest lands. There would be no other way to collect money for the school districts.

Davis: That's right.

XVIII. PROTECTING THE DELTA LEVIES  
AUGMENTATION TO THE BUDGET

Chall: All right, now, river banks protection, 1967. What is that all about?

Davis: The river banks protection is the levy controversy. When I was in office there was a committee on which I served that Senator Al Rodda chaired. Jerome Waldie served on that committee, also. I forget who else plus myself and Mr. Nelson, who was then with the Department of Conservation on the state level.

Chall: DeWitt (Nelson)?

Davis: DeWitt was very active in this. We brought about, and I am sure it is available somewhere, a very fine report pertaining to the protection of the levy system. So, many of the levies are privately owned, too.

Chall: The Delta?

Davis: The Delta--this is the Delta we are talking about. One of the problems of the Delta system is that we have a constant rodent problem that undermines the strength of the levy system and that is to a great extent why flood damage occurs. Many of them are privately owned. It's very costly to maintain these levies and they are not maintained properly. Therefore, this erosion occurs.

Then, too, we had a feeling that as far as the Army Corps of Engineers--denuding all of the vegetation on the levies--we thought that that was incorrect because if you denude the levy system, you have nothing to hold back the soil. Trees and other vegetation held the soil together and gave it strength. But many of these have been denuded by the Army Corps of Engineers.

We made all of these recommendations. We worked very hard on this program, and nothing ever came of it, because of the financing.

Chall: What was your plan?

Davis: We were hoping for a cooperative agreement to be reached by the State of California and the private landowners in a share of cost of maintaining these levies.

Chall: I guess the federal government doesn't want to be involved in spending millions and millions of dollars on this presumably private enterprise.

Davis: Yes, I understand.

XIX. THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY: STRUCTURE, CAMPAIGNS,  
CANDIDATES

- Chall: All we have left, I think, is the Democratic party. We have covered some of that. I found that the only convention you had attended was in 1948. That is the Democratic National Convention.
- Davis: Yes, that was in Philadelphia.
- Chall: Was he a delegate?
- Davis: Yes, my husband was a delegate.
- Chall: I presume that you supported Harry Truman in 1948?
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: Is that the only national convention that you attended?
- Davis: Yes, the only one I attended. I was asked to attend others, but I chose not to attend because of the cost. The financial cost was just too great and during the time that I first came into office, as I mentioned earlier, the salary was not what it is today. It was far from it. So, I just felt that with the obligations of my children, that came first. So, of course, I chose not to attend. I did attend many, many state conventions.
- Chall: Were you interested over the years in who became chairmen?
- Davis: Oh, yes, indeed. When I first came into office, the late Senator George Miller was chairman of the state Democratic party.
- Chall: A strong man.
- Davis: Yes.
- Chall: On the State Central Committee, I was interested in the appointments that you made to the committee. Did you take these appointments seriously. You always had one woman and two men to appoint.
- Davis: Yes, and I always felt that they should be individuals that really were going to spend some time in behalf of the Democratic party. There was no point of appointing somebody that just wanted the honor to say they served on the Democratic committee.

Chall: Did you keep some of them on year in and year out?

Davis: Yes, I did.

Chall: They then are called upon to work in the --

Davis: Yes, in the campaign.

Chall: They know their communities.

Davis: Yes, they know their communities and they know the structure, the policy, and the platform, and so on and so forth. I think that is very important for the people.

So many people do take these appointments and never show and that's a disservice to everybody all the way around. So I just didn't choose people like that.

Chall: In the last few years they changed the structure of the parties and now they have many, many appointments. I understand that the State Central Committee meetings are like mini-conventions. There are so many people--thousands. I don't know how they function that way.

Davis: I don't think they do efficiently, that's the problem.

Chall: How about the women's division of the central committee. Were you ever interested in the women's division or found it useful?

Davis: I associated with them, of course, and was close to them, but I can't say that I was really very active in it because I just didn't have the time. There was no point in assuming a responsibility if you can't fulfill it, so I wasn't real active at all.

Chall: Did you think and do you know that the women's division serves a purpose in the Democratic party?

Davis: Oh, I think so. Oh, yes, because that way with the women's division, women receive recognition that they should receive. Otherwise, prior to that time, all that women were called upon to do was stuff envelopes.

Chall: Yes, there has been some concern over the years as to whether there should be or shouldn't be a women's division.

Davis: Oh, I know that. I realize that.

Chall: Now, the CDC (California Democratic Council), I think you told me recently--

Davis: Oh, I had reservations about the CDC.

Chall: From the very start?

Davis: From the very start.

Chall: Why is that?

Davis: Because I just felt that it was going to divide, which it has in my opinion, the Democratic party. I always liked the Democratic party as it was many, many years ago when all of the different philosophies--maybe one was more liberal, the other one was a little middle of the road, maybe one was even a little bit more conservative than that--but we always had the philosophy that it was a great big umbrella where all of us could come under that one umbrella. We all worked together and we were not just trying to establish divisions of "you're a liberal, you're a conservative, you're a middle of the roader," really put an identification tag on the individual.

I feel the CDC created a division away from that type of philosophy and I think that was a mistake. I think our party was stronger when we took everybody under the same umbrella, accepted them, and worked together. When you work together you have strength; you divide one another and you have weakness.

Chall: Yes, it was meant to be a volunteer organization that could go out and work for candidate, which the party people couldn't do as such.

Davis: I know, but it didn't work that way because what eventually happened, they started setting up their individual, regional caucuses and if the candidates didn't kowtow to what their wishes were, they didn't get their endorsement. They started the endorsement process, as you recall, instead of the Democratic party as a whole and it just created problems all over the place because it created divisions.

Chall: But the Democratic party couldn't endorse.

Davis: That's true, but they certainly could recommend, as you recall.

Chall: That did endorse from time to time but it was against the rules.

Davis: I know; it was under the auspices of a recommendation. I just didn't like the CDC.

Chall: In 1952 in the primaries, Estes Kefauver was opposed in the primary here by a favorite son and he (Kefauver) won. Were you a Kefauver supporter?

Davis: Oh, yes. I remember I went to Fresno to the convention he attended.

Chall: Then in 1956, Kefauver and Stevenson were candidates.

Davis: Yes, then I supported Stevenson. He was a very brilliant individual, but unfortunately, he just didn't come through to the lay person on the street, on TV. There was a bit of jealousy between him and Kennedy, which I thought was unfortunate.

Chall: Why did you support Estes Kefauver?

Davis: He really was, I thought, a very down-to-earth individual. He understood the working man's problems. I listened to him very carefully in Fresno when he was there.

Chall: That was the CDC convention.

Davis: Yes, that's right. I went to the CDC conventions, too. (laughs) I just felt that he had a feeling for the average person. He didn't support the wealthy. He was a very fine man, I thought.

Chall: It certainly divided the party here, that campaign.

Davis: Yes.

Chall: I noticed in your scrapbook that you were the campaign coordinator for Clair Engle in his 1958 Senate race?

Davis: Right, I was a very close friend of Clair Engle. I knew him from the time he was in Congress and then went to the United States Senate. He was a very capable man. He was a very good public official, hard working. It is just unfortunate what happened to him and I really had some very, very strong feelings as to the manner in which the Democratic party treated him after he was ill. I was on a business trip to Washington, D.C. on two occasions and I made a point to go see him and his wife. They didn't permit just anyone to come there, but I did. What he couldn't tell me, I can assure you he told me with his eyes.

Chall: Do you think he was going blind?

Davis: No, not at all. He had a brain tumor and it affected his speech. He couldn't talk, but he knew everything you said.

Chall: Do you think he actually could have campaigned again? Of course, he died in the middle of the campaign. How would you have dealt with that issue? How did you want the Democratic party to? They were quite divided on this.

Davis: Yes, they were divided and I objected to that because I felt that they should have been more loyal to him regardless of his health problem, at least as long as he was alive, for goodness sakes.

I object to either party when they descent upon a family immediately when a tragic situation has occurred. I know I felt this when my husband passed away. Even though I knew that the Democratic party in Plumas County was well-meaning, nevertheless they descended upon me immediately after the death of my husband whose funeral had not yet taken place. I have some very strong feelings about that and I found myself asking them to leave my home. It's just too great of an emotional thing for a family to accept. So, of course, I think for that reason alone, plus other reasons of friendship with Clair Engle, I felt very deeply about this. Maybe in my scrapbook you may have seen pictures of me with Clair when he was ill; large pictures are in the scrapbook that were taken for the press.

Chall: In Washington?

Davis: In Washington, D.C., yes. I just felt that they should have been more loyal to him. One of them was Alan Cranston. I resented very much his lack of loyalty to Clair.

Chall: Yes, that was an unfortunate campaign after all of that, wasn't it?

Davis: (softly) Yes. Yes.

Chall: Did you back Alan Cranston or Pierre Salinger when it came to making a decision in the primary? Did you vote for either one of them?

Davis: I voted for them, but I certainly wasn't active in their campaign.

Chall: Did you vote for Cranston or Salinger?

Davis: Salinger. I worked with Salinger when Salinger was here in Sacramento before he was elevated to the Washington scene. I was the secretary for the Democratic caucus here in Sacramento, the legislative Democratic caucus. He was the journalist that worked for the caucus, so we knew each other very well. He, as you know, was appointed to the balance of the term by the governor.

Chall: Yes, he was. There are some people who feel that others resented that.

Davis: Oh, I know, I know.

Chall: There are no ways sometimes in politics to determine what will work and what won't work.



Davis: That's right.

Chall: When you divide a party--

Davis: No matter who the governor would have appointed to that vacancy, there would have been a division, let's face it. One or the other camp would have been unhappy. .

Chall: Yes, this was a seriously divided party.

Davis: Oh, I remember it well.

Chall: It lost the California seat, actually.

Now, you were speaking a moment ago of the Democratic caucus. During '54 to '56 Elizabeth Snyder had established, she said, a weekly luncheon paid for by the Democratic party. \* As I understand it, sometime maybe ten years later or so, Unruh eliminated this caucus. He took it over and so the Democratic Central Committee couldn't fund it anymore, and then it became a legislative Democratic caucus.

Davis: I think that was something that was a personal thing for the southern party of the state between Snyder and Jess Unruh. I know there was some bickering going on, but I couldn't tell you the detail as to what the personal problem might have been. I really don't know.

Chall: By the time Unruh took it over from the party, I think it was Bradley who had been--

Davis: Yes, Don Bradley.

Chall: Don Bradley who had been more or less responsible for it.

Davis: He, too, has passed away. Don Bradley died in Nevada, didn't he? \*\*

Chall: A couple of months ago or six months ago or something like that. He was very ill. How active were you in the legislative Democratic caucus over the years?

Davis: Oh, we all attended.

Chall: Were you the secretary at one time?

Davis: Yes, of that Democratic caucus. That is the one I was speaking of where Pierre Salinger was also involved.

\*Elizabeth Snyder, "California's First Woman State Chairman," ROHO, TBL, UCB, 1977.

\*\*Don Bradley died October 2, 1981.

Chall: I see, that was in the early years.

Davis: Yes, that was in the early years. As a matter of fact, I took some good minutes. Th they finally decided not to take written minutes (laughter) because they didn't want anything on the record, so I lost my position real fast as far as putting the minutes in writing.

Chall: How important to the Democrats and for the legislation were the caucuses?

Davis: I think very important because it gave us an opportunity for all of us to get together and exchange points of views on legislative things and on party activities. I think it was very helpful. I am sorry really that they were discontinued.

Chall: Were they discontinued entirely?

Davis: Yes. That wasn't discontinued during Unruh's time, but it was discontinued after that.

Chall: Is that because the Democrats were so much in power that they didn't need to get together on legislation?

Davis: Apparently, and I think it's a shame. I think it was a loss.

Chall: In the earlier days, you were a minority party.

Davis: Oh, yes, how well I remember it. At one time, there were only eight of us and then the late Assemblyman Vincent Thomas was the chairman of the Democratic caucus. We used to have our luncheons and get-togethers over at the Old Park Hotel, if you remember that. That's torn down now. It's now the Woolworth store. Oh, yes, those bring back very happy memories. There was a comrade-ship that existed there that doesn't exist now, unfortunately.

Chall: It may exist among the Republicans.

Davis: It could be! It could exist among the Democrats.

Chall: Now, how closely to the Democratic party did you stay in your votes in committees and in the assembly?

Davis: My position was always that my district came first. If there was a piece of legislation that was very detrimental to my district, even though the party wanted it, for whatever reasons that may have been, I went with my district because I felt that was my first obligation. In other words, I voted very independently.

Chall: That would be true at all times?

Davis: Yes, and if there was a party vote that didn't affect my district, without a doubt I was with the party. But if it adversely affected my district, no. But it wasn't very often that that situation did arise as far as party. There were various pieces of legislation that my fellow Democratic legislators were hopeful that I would vote for that they wanted. They were Democrats; but it wasn't definitely a party issue.

Chall: Did you ever help draft or present opinions to the platform committee when they were drafting the Democratic party platform?

Davis: I served on the various committees oftentimes where drafting was taking place before it was submitted to the floor, yes.

Chall: Did you retire in '76?

Davis: In '76.

Chall: So it would be 1972 and 1974 you began to have serious competition. I wanted to discuss that with you in terms of whether there was a changing point of view in your district.

Davis: No, what I was saying, I was a very independent individual as far as votes were concerned. The CDC groups in my district that were much more liberal than I am in philosophy weren't too happy with this type of an approach, and they always made a concentrated effort to find an opponent.

Chall: But they didn't in those earlier years. I mean all of the years up until--

Davis: There was cross-filing for six years.

Chall: Cross-filing was eliminated in '58. After '60 then, that was when the CDC for awhile was strong. Did they put candidates up against you?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: Other Democrats did run against you in those years?

Davis: Yes; and they were always CDC Democrats. Not one was other than a CDC Democrat.

Chall: So you always won the primary, obviously.

Davis: Yes, I did.

Chall: Then what happened in '72 and '74? The CDC wasn't very strong in those years?

Davis: They still found--that same group of people always found a candidate and naturally they are still there. I know who they are and everybody that comes to me, if they do, to assist them in their campaigns, I immediately give them a list of these people so that they know where they are walking.

Chall: The person who took your seat is a Republican?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: Does that mean there has been a changing--

Davis: That is a very conservative area. If you check back in history, that area, regardless of its registration, was always--except for two years--was always in the Republican aisle until the Davis family came along. Then my husband had it for five-and-a-half years and I had it for twenty-four. I knew when I left, and a lot of the Democrats in the legislature knew that when I retired it would fall to a Republican because it is a very conservative district.

The reason I am sure that I was able to stay in office as long as I did was because I worked very, very hard in my district. In my own mind, it wasn't because I was Pauline Davis so that they personally loved me or anything. It's that I brought the bacon home so to speak and that's what I was sent there for. I knew at the time that this would happen, but I just felt that I had served long enough. As a matter of fact, I wanted to retire two years prior to the time that I did but I made the mistake of stating that in the district and they changed my mind for me, so I ran for another term.

The lady who ran in that election when I retired (Betty Smith) was from Chico and was an extremely liberal individual that rode in parades barefoot and dressed like an Indian. The people resented it very much and I was in no position to endorse her. Of course, some of the liberal Democrats hold that against me, but I just could not do it. The people in my district would have thought I had lost my mind, so I stayed out of the race completely.

Chall: I think I read in one of the many articles about you, at the time you retired, that she had also said that she would like to be able to contact you when issues arose that were important to the district and you felt that if she didn't truly understand the issues, she really didn't deserve to run.

Davis: She didn't.

Chall: Also, I think you told me yesterday when we were chatting before dinner that many retired people have moved into the area who are Republicans.

Davis: Yes, most Republicans from the southern part of the state, primarily San Diego.

Chall: That changes the--

Davis: The complexion, yes. As a matter of fact, I always felt and Business and Professional Women feel like this, that we don't support just any woman for public office. They have to have some competency. This woman that was running thought that she wanted to follow a woman because she was a woman, and she wanted me to school her completely in all of the issues. I said, "My dear, if you don't know some of these issues and don't have a position on them, it just isn't fair to the people for me to do that." So, I just wouldn't do it. She has since moved to the Bay Area. She is in the Bay Area somewhere.

XX. CONTINUING DISCUSSION ON THE LEGISLATURE  
THE GOVERNORS' RELATIONSHIPS WITH LEGISLATORS

Chall: Let's go on to some of the other aspects on page six of the outline that we missed before--the legislature. I know that some of the governors--Governor Brown, Governor Knight, and Governor Reagan to some degree--had social activities.

Davis: Yes, they entertained.

Chall: They entertained for the legislators.

Davis: They always have. All governors have except the young Governor Brown. He did entertain us a few times in his office and gave us a sandwich of alfalfa sprouts and I really did kid him about that. I said to him--because I've known him since he was a young man--I said to him, "Look, Jerry, I am accustomed to steak. Why are you trying to give me a sandwich of alfalfa sprouts?" (laughs) I said to him, "If you are trying to convince anybody, which I am sure you are not, it is not going to accomplish the purpose." (more laughter) He laughed. He was very jovial about it, he never did entertain the legislators. But all governors do and it is proper to do so. It's one way of getting acquainted with the legislators, establishing a liaison with them, which is of vital importance.

The late Governor Knight (I think I mentioned this to you perhaps before) had a great thorough understanding of the legislative process and the problems of a legislator because they are two separate branches of the government and are administered differently. They have different approaches. Warren, too, was close to the legislative branch. Reagan knew how to handle the legislative branch.

Chall: That is interesting because I was under the impression when he came in, he really didn't understand the legislators at all.

Davis: Oh, no, that is not true.

Chall: Did he do that through his aides?

Davis: He did this personally, just like he is doing in Washington, D.C., the same type of routine. That is why he doesn't surprise me at all. Things that he has been able to accomplish with the legislators doesn't surprise me and shouldn't surprise anybody that has worked under him as a governor.

Chall: He was savy then?

Davis: Oh, yes. He has a mannerism about himself when he is dealing with you that is appealing to anyone even though he may be your worst enemy and vice versa.

Chall: Did you ever talk to him--

Davis: On that basis? I never had to. Very frankly, all of the bills that I carried, he always signed. He never questioned them, so I really can't give you an evaluation of what I would have encountered with him. I know what I encountered with Pat Brown.

Chall: Governor Reagan had, as they all do, some legislative liaison people.

Davis: All governors do.

Chall: Did you work with any of them that you recall?

Davis: Yes.

Chall: Do you recall which ones? John Tooker? I can't remember the names of any of the others. I know his name.

Davis: He was one of them. I am trying to think of another one that he had on the assembly side. Oh, Ed Meese.

Chall: So you dealt with Meese?

Davis: Oh, yes.

Chall: Did you feel that Governor Reagan understood the issues in California, problems like taxes, welfare, education, all of the issues which he tackled trying to cut the budget?

Davis: I think he was in the learning process when he was governor, actually. I know this was in the sixties--and I recall when we were having the uprising with the young people at the universities he called out the National Guard and he took a very firm stand. So, I knew when he did this with the air traffic controllers that they weren't going to win, because I remember well his position during the time when he had this disturbance on the campuses. When he took a position, he didn't back off very easily from it.

Chall: So what was that period like for you and the legislature in general in those eight years?

Davis: I had no problem with him. I didn't have any real problems with any of the governors. Jerry is the difficult one. I remember him calling me by telephone pertaining to some measures in subcommittee four, on finance, and he said to me, "I don't want you to do that." I said, "I am sorry we differ, but my position is the same." He was quite angry with me and I said to him, "Apparently, you have a problem and I don't," and that was the end of the conversation.

Then, another time, Mr. (Julian) Dixon was carrying a bill. I was on the Rules Committee and he had to have a waiver, and I would not give Dixon the waiver. Truly, confidentially, I don't think he wanted it. But I wouldn't have given it to him anyway. But I know that the governor's staff people asked me to come down to the governor's office and talk to him about it. I said, "Of course, I will extend the governor the courtesy of coming down, but my position isn't going to change." So when I walked in, I told him, "I know what you want to discuss with me and this is my reason for my position." He looked at me and he said, "I can't argue with it," and that was the end of that conversation.

Chall: He didn't swear at you?

Davis: No, no, Jerry didn't do that.

### The Social Side of the Legislature

Chall: How much social and business activities were carried on in lunch and dinners, and how did you adapt to that?

Davis: I participated in the luncheons with different people and legislators. The evening participation--I just participated in those that I felt were necessary in behalf of my district because I had a family to take care of.

Chall: How do you feel about that in terms of moving legislation, getting to know your fellow legislators, and all of the reason why this kind of social life is considered important to the legislative process?

Davis: If you socialize with your fellow colleagues you find that it is advantageous to know why they have introduced a bill. You can read a bill and, sure, you see the language, but knowing why the legislator wants this bill helps you understand his thinking, why he feels this legislation is necessary. Sometimes you don't agree with him.



- Chall: Do you think that you missed anything by not participating in all of the social functions--
- Davis: No, because I think the luncheons are more of a business type of social get-togethers. The evenings are more of a relaxed situation and not as much business, so I don't feel that I missed too much in nonparticipation.
- Chall: Even when your children are older, you didn't change?
- Davis: No, I did not.
- Chall: What about socializing with lobbyists?
- Davis: The same type of thing; luncheons are what I did with lobbyists.
- Chall: Has that changed since the Political Reform Act?
- Davis: No, I don't think so, not too much.
- Chall: You don't think that has made that much difference?
- Davis: I don't think so.

- Chall: When the legislators were able to bring their families to Sacramento if they wanted to because of year-around sessions, did that change the ways in which the legislators, particularly the men or the women who gradually came in, could operate, function?
- Davis: I think from the standpoint of the pressures of flying or driving back and forth to your home residency, certainly it is helpful because you are able to spend more time with your family. But other than that, it just depends upon each family, how they want to function as far as their own personal lives are concerned.
- Chall: I understand there was a lot of socializing, a lot of drinking and a certain amount of philandering as there could be in any situation.
- Davis: You hear about it, but again, like I say, I did not socialize in the evening affairs, so I really can't comment with any real justification as to what, if anything, goes on. You hear about these things, but I was not a bar-hopping type of legislator so I just can't tell you.
- Chall: Do you think there is a double standard with respect to men and women and their behavior in the legislature?
- Davis: Do you mean their personal behavior?
- Chall: Yes.
- Davis: Oh, I don't know how a person would comment on that. I think that is an individual thing regardless of man or woman, really.
- Chall: I noticed in your scrapbook that at the end of the session there would be letters from other legislators, not necessarily of your own party, not necessarily people you have been close to, I couldn't tell--but they would often thank you at the end of a session for helping them.
- Davis: Yes, it was interesting for them to do that.
- Chall: I wondered whether this was common among legislators.
- Davis: No, I don't think it is.
- Chall: You really did get quite a few.
- Davis: I will have to look in those scrapbooks. I don't know to a great extent what is in there either because my staff was putting things in my scrapbook.

- Chall: I wondered if that was a common legislative courtesy or if it was something special.
- Davis: No, I don't think it is.
- Chall: They went back a long way. Since you probably haven't put everything in there, I just wondered whether that had continued. But you don't even recall much about it.
- Davis: I remember one legislator that is still in the legislature. I cannot recall what measure I must have helped him on. To this day, I don't know. But when I was in the hospital, he sent a contribution to a charity of his choice in my behalf. Then he also sent me some lovely flowers. Then he sent me a lovely letter too and he said, "I have never forgotten when I needed a favor, you were there to help me." It must have been a very crucial vote. To this day, I don't know what the vote was. That man is still in the legislature and some day I'll have to be courageous enough to ask him! I'm sure he thinks I know and it is embarrassing because I don't know what it was, but it must have been of vital importance to him and not adverse to my district.
- Chall: It's had a long life, that favor.
- Davis: Yes, that was interesting, wasn't it?
- Chall: Yes. Candidates often thanked you for help on their campaigns. Is that a common courtesy?
- Davis: As a rule it is.
- Chall: I found letters in which persons outside of the legislature thanked you for passage of legislation in which they had an interest. I may have noticed among them letterheads from lobbying organizations or groups that would have cared. Is that a common practice?
- Davis: Yes, that's a common practice.
- Chall: Now, you claimed in some of your press interviews that you had when you were retiring that the legislature lacks decorum, was beginning to lack decorum in the years before you retired, and others among your colleagues I noticed agreed with you. What do you mean by this and how do you think it has come about?
- Davis: Years ago, when the legislature was to convene like say, 10:00 in the morning, the legislature knew that meant 10:00 in the morning. It didn't mean eleven, so people were on the floor and rightfully so. Then also when they were on the floor, people weren't walking

Davis: around as much and visiting. They were very studious and paying attention. Then there was a greater courtesy when asking for recognition on the floor because there is a process and a verbiage that I properly used when you ask a question of someone on the floor, and the procedure and the mannerism in which you do it, so that you are not offensive. Those things have changed to a greater degree.

As you may have noticed in this legislative year, which concerns me a little bit, there were some very boisterous comments made. As a matter of fact, there were almost two fistfights. I just don't think that sets a good example for people that look at government. Those in office should show an example in leadership and I just think that the decorum, the quietness on the floor, has disappeared extensively, and the courtesy to one another.

Years ago, when a family had some personal problem in their home, there was no question, everybody rallied. Nobody said, "Should we do something or shouldn't we do something?" Nobody asked, everybody did. Now those courtesies just don't exist. Most legislators that have served there in the past will tell you this.

Even when I was on the Rules Committee, I tried diligently to establish a subcommittee identifying certain members of the Rules Committee to have the responsibility that when sadness, death, or what have you happens in the family that immediately we would move. Those of us that had that assigned responsibility would wait upon that family immediately--see what we could do, if anything, and any way that we could help with the service or whatever they needed. I couldn't get it passed. That's how times have changed.

Chall: It has changed throughout the culture.

Davis: I think it has and I think it's too bad.

Chall: That may be why you were surprised when you were ill in the hospital with the outpouring of friendship--

Davis: Yes, it certainly was. That's right. Even the family unit throughout the United States has changed so, which is unfortunate.

Chall: Yes, that's right. Well, do you know something, I think we have come to the end of this lengthy outline.

Davis: I certainly have enjoyed your participation--

Chall: I have enjoyed it and thank you for your hospitality.

Davis: --your friendship and getting to know you. It has been a nice experience.

Chall: It has been a pleasure on my side. Now, the hard part comes later when you have to look it over.

Malca Chall

Graduated from Reed College in 1942 with a B.A. degree, and from the State University of Iowa in 1943 with an M.A. degree in Political Science.

Wage Rate Analyst with the Twelfth Regional War Labor Board, 1943-1945, specializing in agriculture and services. Research and writing in the New York public relations firm of Edward L. Bernays, 1946-1947, and research and statistics for the Oakland Area Community Chest and Council of Social Agencies 1948-1951.

Active in community affairs as a director and past president of the League of Women Voters of the Hayward Area specializing in state and local government; on county-wide committees in the field of mental health; on election campaign committees for school tax and bond measures, and candidates for school board and state legislature.

Employed in 1967 by the Regional Oral History Office interviewing in fields of agriculture and water resources. Project director, Suffragists Project, California Women Political Leaders Project, and Land-Use Planning Project.