

INTERVIEW WITH
Miss Helen Ackenhausen

by

Dr. Maclyn Burg
Oral Historian

on

November 2, 1972

for

Dwight D. Eisenhower Library



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This is an interview being conducted on November 2, 1972, with Miss Helen Ackenhausen in Dallas, Texas. The interview is being conducted by Dr. Maclyn Burg in Miss Ackenhausen's home.

DR. BURG: Now let me ask you this, where were you born? Were you born in Kansas?

MISS ACKENHAUSEN: Yes, I was born in Leavenworth, Kansas.

DR. BURG: And then moved down to Texas, when?

MISS ACKENHAUSEN: Oh, I think it was 1913, '13 or '14. I'm pretty old.

DR. BURG: Were you educated in Kansas?

MISS ACKENHAUSEN: I went one year to the Leavenworth high school and we moved to Dallas, Texas for my sophomore year. I went to the Oak Cliff High School two years, and then we moved to Ft. Worth for a year. I graduated from Polytechnic High School in Ft. Worth. Then I went one year to the North Texas Teacher's college in Denton. One year of college and that was all the college I had.

DR. BURG: And then did you teach?



MISS ACKENHAUSEN: No. I started a business career immediately after I finished. After I finished college, I took a

business course. At that time, it took you about six months to take one instead of these crash things they have today. And then I had various jobs in the business world.

BURG: Now when did you feel yourself drawn to politics and working with the political side?

ACKENHAUSEN: Well, I was first drawn to politics when I was a little girl at the Sacred Heart School in Leavenworth, Kansas during the [William Howard] Taft and William Jennings Bryan campaign.

BURG: Was this when [Theodore] Roosevelt ran?

ACKENHAUSEN: No, this was the election of 1908.

BURG: Well, I think it was 1912--

ACKENHAUSEN: It was 1908. Roosevelt ran against Taft in 1912, as a Bull Moose Party candidate.

BURG: Taft and Roosevelt, and I've forgotten now the third candidate.

ACKENHAUSEN: No, this was Taft's first nomination in 1908, I was for Taft against Bryan.



BURG: Bryan was a Democrat.

ACKENHAUSEN: But I held an election on the schoolgrounds--

BURG: Oh, you did!

ACKENHAUSEN: For the different candidates. I must have been only 10 years old. And my grandfather, Frank G. Markart, my mother's father, was in the Kansas legislature at one time.

And my people were all Republicans. My father was a Republican, and we were just kind of interested in politics, you know, in a smaller town. We had friends who were in local offices, and in those days people got out and campaigned. They even gave away overcoats and personal gifts to individuals, you know, who were working for them. So I was interested to begin with. But when we came to Texas--I'll have to tell you what my mother said; I think this is a real good remark. We came down here just before the war, the first World War. And my mother met a friend (Mrs. Jane Fitzgerald) who was the head of the Republican Women's Club and she said, "Now I know you're a Republican, Emma. You must join the Republican Women's Club. We want you."

And my mother said, "Now, Jane, I've moved to Texas. I've lived down being a Roman Catholic, so far. And I've lived



down having this long German name during the war, and I'm not going to get into the Republican Party." So that was mamma's idea right then and there. We could just skip all the jobs up until I started for the Republican Headquarters because that's where it all started.

BURG: All right.

ACKENHAUSEN: I had worked for a wholesale dry goods company, and one woman employed there was particularly interested in me, an older woman. She liked me and thought I had some capabilities. She left the dry goods company to work for an insurance man in the Southland Life Building. He had been, at one time, the director of organization for the Republican party of Texas. Colonel William Talbott was his name. The Republican Headquarters was looking for a new secretary. It seems as though the girl who worked in the office was getting married, and was leaving. So the man who was in charge then, Major Leonard Withington (I'm sure Roger mentioned him to you).

BURG: He may have. Withington?

ACKENHAUSEN: Withington, Leonard Withington. I started to



work for Leonard. He was discussing the matter with Colonel Talbott. He said, "I'm just desperate. I need somebody that I can depend on in the office." He had a couple of other girls; one of them was a bookkeeper and one of them a file clerk, but he wanted a personal secretary.

And so my friend spoke up and said, "I know the girl for you. I know the girl that you're looking for." She had secured another job for me in the early fall at the Dallas Evening Schools.

So Colonel Talbott said, "Well, tell her to come in." So I went down and had interviews with both of them, (Colonel Talbott and Mr. Withington), and that was when it all started in 1926 when we held the first Republican primary ever held in the state of Texas. I got in on that. You see, they'd had a very large vote in 1924 because Ma Ferguson (Jim Ferguson had been impeached), wife of Jim Ferguson was running against Dr. Butte, a very respected educator.



BURG: How does Butte spell his last name?

ACKENHAUSEN: B-u-t-t-e. George Butte. And that piled up the vote which threw us into a primary. Now I think every-

body has primaries, but at that time it wasn't compulsory unless you got over so many votes. Of course, that was real exciting, you know, to be in on the first Republican primary. We could hold them in our own homes. I guess I had a primary here in my own home and other precincts. Practically no one came to these first primaries we had because we had candidates that first year, 1926, who were, you know, not identified. But Butte almost won in 1924. Another thing, that was the only time in my life I believe that I voted the Democratic ticket. They attached the Ku Klux Klan to Butte, and I found out later that he really had nothing to do with them, but that was when the Klan was just flourishing in Texas. And he didn't disclaim it loud enough. And so my mother and I were just horrified about anything the Klan did, and we both voted the Democratic ticket that year. My father still stayed with the Republicans, but we voted the Democratic ticket that year. (John Davis vs Calvin Coolidge)



BURG: Although you had just taken a job with the GOP.

ACKENHAUSEN: No, I hadn't. That was 1924. I didn't take the job until '26.

BURG: Oh, oh, right. I see.

ACKENHAUSEN: I didn't tell them when I took the job that I voted against Butte. I didn't think that would be the thing to do, but afterwards when I became so friendly with Major Withington I told him. So he went to great lengths to explain it to me, and he wrote articles to the New York Times, the Watchtower section of the New York Times, explaining the Texas situation and everything. He was a newspaperman before he took the job, as Director of Organization. So he made me feel a little bit better, and every once in a while he'd write a letter or something and say, "Now aren't you sorry you didn't vote for Dr. Butte?"

I said, "Well, if Dr. Butte had come out like I thought he should have, I would have voted for him, and so would my mother."

Of course, the next election was the big election in Texas, 1928, you know, when Hoover was nominated. Of course that involved the whole state and all the Hoover Democrats. I was talking to Congressman Jim Collins, our present congressman. I'm no longer in his district; they redistricted me out of his district, but I talked to him not long ago. Went down to see him when he was here on a little junket, and we were talking. Something came up about the Democrats for Nixon.



I said, "You know, Congressman [James M.] Collins, I just hated your father in 1928."

And he said, "Why?"

And I said, "Well because he was a Hoover Democrat, and they got all the preference. We supplied all the money and all the work, and the Hoover Democrats just sat there and basked in our glory." Which was the truth.

BURG: And has happened since.

ACKENHAUSEN: Well, certainly. It happened in the Eisenhower campaign to a great extent. You know they took the organization, what was left of it, and just took it over. Fortunately, I think those people, a lot of those Democrats who voted for Eisenhower did remain Republicans. That gives me a little encouragement.

BURG: You think that some of them did?



ACKENHAUSEN: Yes, I have met quite a few, you know, at various times. Of course, these are older people now, you know. But I have met several of them. Then this new group, they couldn't have all been Republicans, you know, are the newer group of Republicans today, since 1952. So they must have

joined the party.

BURG: No longer a problem of presidential Republicans. You are now getting people that stayed.

ACKENHAUSEN: They had in '52, let me see, well, eight years to be conditioned, you know, to really make up their minds that they liked the Republican party, and then they began to run state candidates with a little more vim and vigor than they had before. And now we're doing real well. We've got a wonderful candidate running for governor this year. Oh, I just wish he could be elected.

BURG: Who is this, [H. C.] Grover?

ACKENHAUSEN: Hank Grover, he's just a fine chap.

BURG: Now did you take an active part then in that Hoover campaign?

ACKENHAUSEN: Oh, yes, I was right in the big midst. I went to the convention in Kansas City, the national convention, that nominated Hoover.

BURG: As a delegate, Miss Ackenhausen?



ACKENHAUSEN: No, I was never a delegate. I was always working in the office, but I was a secretary. And they used to call me "Exhibit A" because we had big contests then between the Hoover delegates and another group of delegates; I'm trying to remember just who they were for. Was there a Governor [Frank O.] Lowden, L-o-w-d-e-n, from somewhere? [Illinois]

BURG: I don't remember the name, myself.

ACKENHAUSEN: Well, they were lined up against Hoover, and we had all this material and all the depositions and everything. We just had boxes and boxes; Mr. Withington was very thorough about investigating everything. So I would sit there all the time in the committee room, you know, guarding materials while they were having these contests. They didn't write the platform like they do today, but they did hear the contests earlier. So I was quite active in that campaign. And I went to the convention, again, in '32 when Hoover was nominated, the second time. And then is when everything fell flat. We knew we were stuck with Roosevelt for, forever, I guess. Many people saw the handwriting on the wall, and our funds were dissipated at headquarters. We had put on a rather active



campaign in 1932 for governor, Orville Bullington. But he ran not wishing to insult Roosevelt Democrats, I mean the Democrats that were behind the Bullington campaign didn't want to insult the leaders of the Democratic party; so they just played down their Republicanism except for the governor. They were always getting our money, borrowing, because they couldn't raise enough money. In those days they didn't have the big funds like they do today. So they found out that the headquarters had a little fund on hand. Well, I would say that it didn't amount to more than ten or fifteen thousand dollars, but back in 1932 that was a goodly sum. That would have tided an office over, salaries at that time, rent and everything for at least a year. So when they found out about this fund, some of the leaders who were supporting Bullington, some of the Republicans, just put the pressure on Mr. [R. B.] Creager so that he had to pay the debts. And so that just left the headquarters practically broke; and they closed the office. They kept one little office, and one man who had been the Director of Organization there as a secretary with small salary for about a year, and then they closed the office altogether in Dallas.



BURG: So this had occurred say about 1932, '33?

ACKENHAUSEN: This was at the end of '32. And from then on, from 1933 to 1936 when the headquarters reopened, I was not in a political office. I did work in some local Republican campaigns like one for the county chairman or something like that but no state. I wasn't connected with the state organization.

BURG: Now, Mr. Creager's position was--

ACKENHAUSEN: National committeeman.

BURG: National committeeman for Texas.

ACKENHAUSEN: He came in I think about 19, oh, let's see. He was there in 1924. When Harding was elected? Oh, my gosh, that's a long time ago. Harding must have come in 1920. Mr. Creager was made national committeeman in 1920. They got rid of the other national committeeman because he had not supported Harding. At that time the President had a great deal to do with who the national committeeman would be although he is elected, you know, by the delegates or recommended by the delegates. After all, the President gives a nod they usually put in whoever he



wants. So Mr. Creager was there from 1920 until he died.

BURG: When was that?

ACKENHAUSEN: Well, let me see. He must have died either in '49--no, he didn't die in '49 because I saw him then. Either '50 or '51 because, you see, he was dead when Eisenhower was running. And you know it's a strange thing, they were really close personal friends. They were down at that fort near Brownsville. Is it Ft. Brown or what is the name of the army post-- the Eisenhowers were down there, and they were quite good friends with the Creagers. I remember one time Mr. Creager came back from Washington during the war, and he used to dictate to me sort of a resume of what he did and everything. And I was so intrigued with this because I had never known of their friendship. This was before Ike was even thought of as a candidate. He said, "Sent Mamie Eisenhower red roses." She was in Washington at the time.

BURG: Yes, right.

ACKENHAUSEN: So they were friends. And then when Mr. Creager died, Mr. Henry Zweifel from Ft. Worth became the national committeeman.



BURG: And he spells his name, Z-w---

ACKENHAUSEN: Z-w-e-i-f-e-l. He's dead too. And it was a clash between Zweifel and the regulars, the old-timers. A lot of them were deserting you know, all along before the convention and Porter and the new ones. Now you want to get back when I started?

BURG: I was just going to say that in '32, '33 then you, in effect, were out of a job--

ACKENHAUSEN: I was out of the state organization. I was working at other things. I didn't work all the time. My father was living then, and I know I stayed at home one whole year. But I had various uninteresting jobs we'll say. Then I went back. They reactivated the office in 1936, and they hired Mr. John Philp who was in Hoover's cabinet. He was in the little cabinet. He was the Assistant Postmaster General in Hoover's cabinet. And he had been postmaster of Dallas during the Republican heydays, and I think he had run for governor one time. Well, they hired Mr. Philp as the Director of Organization, and they asked me if I would like to come back and be his secretary. Now I had no official title at



the time; I was just Mr. Philp's political secretary. At the State Convention, held in Fort Worth in 1936, I was elected Assistant Secretary of the Rep. State Executive Committee, as the Secretary resided in Brownsville. I held the title of Assistant Secretary until 1944, when I was elected Secretary of the Committee. In 1940, I was also elected Assistant Treasurer of the Committee, co-signing all checks with the Treasurer. I held that office until I resigned in 1947. I was also Assistant Treasurer of all Campaign Committees (i.e. Republican) from 1940 until the campaigns were over in Texas. And from then on I stayed until the end of the row which was '47 when they had another big fight in the party, and one group got control of it and decided to move the office to Houston. Well, I didn't want to go to Houston, and anyhow I wasn't too popular with the ones who won; so I left in 1947, in December 1947. But I did go to the National convention. They took me to the National convention in '48, and I worked in several different campaigns from then on until I got another job. I worked in the campaign of 1948 with the county headquarters. We had our county headquarters here and most of the activity from all over the state was taking place in our little



county headquarters. Then in '52 I worked for the pre-convention Taft group. And after Taft was defeated Mrs. Currie, who was running the Eisenhower headquarters in Dallas, asked me if I'd come over there and work with her. So I worked in the Eisenhower campaign headquarters until the election. I might add that our office in an old building did the real campaign work, while show offices were located in various parts of town. But they were not ready to open an office at that time; so I was out of politics again.

BURG: Well you worked on the [Alf M.] Landon campaign--

ACKENHAUSEN: Oh, yes. I served during the Landon campaign.

BURG: And the [Wendell] Willkie campaign again?



ACKENHAUSEN: Oh, yes. I was very much in the picture during the Willkie campaign.

BURG: And the [Thomas E.] Dewey campaign.

ACKENHAUSEN: The Dewey campaign. Two Deweys and one Willkie, and let's see, Landon, and that took us through 1948 to '52.

BURG: Now let me ask you about Creager as a human being. I'll also ask you about him as a Republican, but, as a human being, what kind of a man was he?

ACKENHAUSEN: Well, when I first started to work for Mr. Creager, I was a little in awe of him. He was a rather austere man. He was not really good looking, but he was very imposing looking, you know; he presented a wonderful figure of a man. Had a kind of a ruddy complexion. He wasn't the sort of a person who went around patting you on the back like politicians do. But the people who surrounded him were very fond of him and very close to him. I lived with that image, respect and admiration for what he was, for what he did. Several things came up. They had some investigations into our office and into Mr. Creager's political activities. In other words, I was always really gung-ho for Mr. Creager. I never felt like Mr. Creager had ever been guilty of indiscretions which, you know, politicians will try to dig up just like they're doing today--trying to involve Nixon in so many things.

BURG: These investigations were made by the party?



ACKENHAUSEN: Well they were made by a congressional committee that looked into election practices. It seems as though Mr. Creager had acquired, I really can't put it into words, but you see he lived on the border, Brownsville, right across from Matamoros, and there was a bridge that they built across there. Well he had quite an interest in this bridge, as an attorney for certain clients, and derived quite an income from his legal services. I don't know just what it was, but there was some little talk then, you know, about political influence and everything. And then, at the time, you see we were not in power, but they still maintained an office, and the way they got their money was through contributions. And everybody who had ever been an office holder and was still interested in the Republican party had hopes that maybe, if the Republicans got back in, he might get another job. Now, I'm putting this to you pretty cold turkey because that is the way it works in politics. Perfectly legitimate--but I mean that was how our office was maintained. You see during the Republican administration, we didn't depend on them [office holders] because we had big givers who were not office holders. But, I mean, you'd appoint a postmaster here--in those days he's so grateful for his job and wants to see the Republicans keep in office



and keep him going; so they did contribute to the party. Now I don't know what the situation is today, in Dallas. I don't know anything about how their office is maintained--whether it's just voluntary contributions or whether they depend on any patronage contributions. But I think there are enough people with money today that they don't have to worry about those that are interested in politics. Now that was the way our office was financed, but it was really financed, according to today's standards, on a very small income. In other words, there were about three people hired. I think Major Withington got a salary then, in 1926 and '28, about ten thousand a year which seemed like the biggest amount of money that anybody could ever think of at that time, in '26. But he had scrupulously kept a record of everything, and we turned over every record in the office to the Brookhart Committee, (the Congressional Committee making the investigation) and Creager was given a clean bill of health. They found nothing wrong with our office; nothing wrong with anything that he had done. But as time went by, after Mr. Philp died, Creager depended more on the group called the West Texans who were a pretty hardy group. They were all good friends of mine, but they had their demands, too. So they were a little bit more demanding about some things,



and I think Mr. Creager changed considerably. He became more human or something, you know. He realized he had to get along with these people whereas before he could sort of stand off and depend on certain of his old friends. Now he has to get along with everybody to retain his power. Then was when he really began to appreciate me and realize that I did know something about what people might do in politics. It wasn't always the best thing, but I'd been there so long, and I had a sort of a sense of getting along with different groups in politics, and I did prepare all the materials and things for the conventions. Of course, I had learned all this from Mr. Withington. He wrote the original things like, the orders of business and for the different committees and things like that. Well, after Mr. Withington died and this young man from Brownsville came up for a while, he was a nice fellow, easy to get along with and everything, but he just didn't have the ability of Mr. Withington. So as the conventions rolled around, Mr. Philp came in, and he didn't know too much about forms and everything, I had all that to do. I loved it. It was sort of a repetitive job in a way, from one convention to the other. But, of course, you know we had two years to prepare for things. We had conventions every



two years. I was in the office an awful lot by myself when Mr. Philp was the state chairman. He wasn't too well, and he was out of the office a great deal, and I was in the office a lot by myself. So when Mr. Creager would come to Dallas or stop over from trips, he'd sit down and talk to me, and we became very good friends. It's just one of those situations that sometimes takes a long time to be real friends; I think it hurt him a great deal when I left. I'm sure that he felt, you know, a little bit bad about the way the thing turned out on my account because he hated to lose me and yet he had no alternative. He was caught in a bind between these conflicting forces, between the state chairman and himself.

BURG: Let me ask you, that was in '47?

ACKENHAUSEN: Yes, when I left the office in '47. You see, in 1946 they had the battle royal for the state chairman. Mr. Exum was the state chairman until 1944.

BURG: How, how does he spell that?

ACKENHAUSEN: E-x-u-m, Hugh Exum. E-x-u-m, from Amarillo. He was a real rugged individual, and just a wonderful fellow with not too much polish, but plenty of know-how. He ran



ranches and handled oil interests for big oil men. He was just an outdoors man. Well he had this little coterie around him, you know, these people from West Texas. We called them the West Texas group, of course, they weren't all from West Texas. So when Mr. Exum died, and he died in 1944, that was when Mr. Philp was elected state chairman. At that convention I was elected secretary of the committee, and I was the secretary of the delegation to Chicago. I might add that although I was never a delegate to a National Convention, I always managed to have a delegates badge and sat with the delegates. I also got many of my friends in with me. That was when Mr. Creager began to appreciate me because of the battles, you know, that we had. So I told him, "Now I would have never waivered in my support for Mr. Exum because I liked him, and I thought he was a good man, and he was a friend of mine. But now that he's out of the picture, Mr. Creager, I don't care what happens to the West Texans." In other words, as far as I was concerned, I was delighted that they made Mr. Philp the state chairman. But Mr. Philp was ill, and in 1946 he said he had gone just as far as he could, and he wanted to resign.

Well, the West Texans got behind a fellow in Dallas by the name of George Hopkins. He had been Collector of Internal



Revenue, you know, one of the first jobs of that kind that they had in Dallas. And he was a very domineering man--maybe you'd better keep this a hundred years--horrible at times. When I was talking to Roger I said, "Well, I don't think anybody cared for George Hopkins." But he was determined to be the state chairman. So my friend in Ft. Worth, Henry Zweifel, opposed Mr. Hopkins at the state convention for state chairman. Well, there I was caught in the middle because I knew that if Hopkins got it that that was practically the handwriting on the wall, and yet I didn't have sense enough to restrain myself, and I wouldn't vote for Hopkins at the delegation caucus. I may be bearing down on Mr. Hopkins too strongly. He did have some friends, who had worked in the office for him, when he was the Collector of Internal Revenue. He built up quite a little coterie, who continued to be faithful to him, but he never hesitated to ask them for a favor or let them forget his generosity in giving them jobs.

Mr. Creager said, "Well, Helen, you better just not go to your caucus if you're going to vote against Hopkins."

And I said, "Well, I'm not going to support him now. I'm just not going to support George Hopkins." So Mr. Creager



found out that the West Texans were about to desert Hopkins.

[Interruption]

ACKENHAUSEN: There was quite a lot of objection to Mr. Zweifel because Mr. Zweifel who had been Bullington's campaign manager had, following the 1932 campaign when Bullington lost, and they took the funds to pay off their debts and everything, Zweifel kind of drew in his horns, and he just wasn't going to be interested any more. I mean he wasn't going to be active in the Republican party of Texas. So a lot of them resented Mr. Zweifel getting back into the picture, you see, at this time. He had told Mr. Creager, "Well, Rennie [Rentfro], if you ever need me, I'll help you out." But they finally persuaded him to run against Hopkins. Well, he just didn't have enough delegates to beat Hopkins. So Mr. Hopkins was elected State Chairman at the convention, knowing that I was against him, sitting there in the office with him. In order to get him out of office they employed a new director of organization, one of the West Texas group, and hoped that Hopkins would just stay out of the office and not antagonize everybody, and that Hobart McDowell, who was the new director, and myself could run the headquarters. Well Hopkins had no intention of



leaving the office. He was there every morning before anybody else could get there. He just really made it so hard on us. So then they decided that Hobart was too expensive, and they weren't exactly satisfied with what he was doing. And Hopkins decided that they didn't need Hobart, in order to get rid of Hobart and Hopkins, they decided to move the office to Houston. Of course, I could have gone; it wouldn't have been pleasant probably, but it would have been out of Hopkins' dominion. He couldn't have come to the office every day if it was in Houston. He'd still be the state chairman, but he couldn't stay in the office, and the office could run without him. So when they moved to Houston in 1947, it was in December 1947, that was when I left the Republican office.

BURG: So you were caught there in a tactical move that--

ACKENHAUSEN: It was hard for a woman at that time. Now of course they have women's lib and all that kind of stuff where people don't mind getting up and saying anything, but if I had made a fight for it, it would have been damaging. I mean, it was just hard to do at that time. My brother, in the meantime, had moved in with me (he had had a separation from his wife); so it was just easy to give up and stay home until I could



find something else that I liked, and that is what I did.

BURG: Now these West Texans, Miss Ackenhausen, what was motivating them? What was it that they wanted out of the Texas Republican situation?

ACKENHAUSEN: They were just like any other political group; they wanted power. Mr. Eugene Nolte, Mike Nolte, who is still alive; are you going to San Antonio?

BURG: Yes, but he's ill, Miss Ackenhausen.

ACKENHAUSEN: Oh, he is.

BURG: I won't make an attempt to contact him this time, no.

ACKENHAUSEN: You won't get to see Mike. Well, Mike was a, oh, one of these hail fellows well met, and he gave big parties. He just spent money on all of them you know, just entertained them and everything. So they kind of rallied around Mike, you know, for a while.

BURG: The West Texans?

ACKENHAUSEN: The West Texans did. They wanted power, and they pressured Mr. Creager into putting Mike on the ticket,

to run for governor of Texas. Mike ran a night club [Olmos]; he had been married several times and at that time Mr. Creager just didn't think that he was the type of person to run for governor.

BURG: Nolte's money came from that kind of work?

ACKENHAUSEN: No, his father was a very wealthy man, and I'm sure he inherited quite a bit of his father's money. He (the father) was a banker in Seguin, and I guess they still have financial interests there. But Mike has been a very successful business man in his own right. He is still interested in the bank in Seguin. He runs the Olmos club in San Antonio, and has a catering service. At one time he was a distributor for Grand Prize beer. I don't know whether he's still interested in that or not. But anyhow, what he had inherited, he made good use of. He didn't dissipate his father's money.

BURG: Mr. Creager felt that the image--



ACKENHAUSEN: The image at that time--big entertainer, night club operator and his associates.

BURG: --was not going to be good.

ACKENHAUSEN: --was not too good. But anyhow, he went through with it and accepted Mike. So in gratitude, I guess, or Mike was smart enough to know that between Hopkins and Creager there was no choice. Hopkins was trying to build up for more and more control, party control, with the West Texans behind him; so Mike deserted the West Texans altogether and went over to Creager's side. Let me see, that must have been about 1947, and that was when they let Hobart McDowell go from the office and moved the office to Houston. At that time Mike was very close to Mr. Creager. And they had another man who kind of had charge of the headquarters, and he has since died, Frank Blankenbeckler, who lived in Austin, and I think they finally moved the office to Austin. I guess they still have the headquarters now in Austin. But it was a little group of fellows from around Amarillo, Paducah, and those kind of places, who had been real faithful Republicans and the McDowells. Old Judge C. K. McDowell had been a collector of customs I think under Harding, you know, one of the old timers. He was a very charming, delightful old man, a little bit rough, but just a wonderful person to know, Judge McDowell. And they all had a great deal of respect for Mr. Creager, but like any



politician, you know, they'd liked to have had a little more power. But he (Mr. Creager) held on. That was when he began to waiver just a little bit in that convention in '46. I told him, "Mr. Creager, the West Texans are no longer for Hopkins. You could ditch Hopkins if you wanted to and get Mr. Zweifel in."

And he was a little bit dubious of Zweifel so he said, "Well, I'll just go to Hopkins" (now this actually happened) "I'll just go to Hopkins and tell him that if he wins the state chairmanship at the convention it's going to be because I supported him." That is exactly what happened, and Creager just threw his support to Hopkins you know.

BURG: Why was he not willing to support Zweifel?



ACKENHAUSEN: Well, you see Mr. Henry Zweifel had been out of the party, hadn't been active. It was just because he wasn't as popular a man. The West Texans could take a person and ridicule him in such a way that you just could hardly believe it. "Zwiffel," they'd call him and all kinds of funny names you know. They didn't like him very much. Now Mike always liked him. Mike Nolte and Zweifel were good friends, and after it was all over Mike was very friendly with Henry. But

they (the West Texan group) just didn't like Mr. Zweifel very much, and they just wouldn't support him.

BURG: And Mr. Creager saw--

ACKENHAUSEN: And Mr. Creager saw the handwriting on the wall.

BURG: And no other possibilities to defeat Hopkins?

ACKENHAUSEN: No other possibilities to defeat Hopkins. He thought he could handle Hopkins, you know, when once he got into office. Oh, I had correspondence, I'm telling you I would give anything if I had kept it now. It would have been invaluable to somebody doing research. I had correspondence about this high.

BURG: About four inches thick.

ACKENHAUSEN: Mr. Creager's letters that he wrote me at home, you know, when Hopkins was in the office--he didn't want Hopkins to know what was going on. He'd write Hopkins a letter and send me a copy at home because Hopkins would never show me anything, you know. Part of the time I felt like a criminal because I tried to get along with Hopkins, and I felt really kind of bad that I was using such subterfuge.



Mr. Creager would make me call him on the phone from home and I would say, "Well, how are we going to pay all these bills?"

He said, "Just go ahead and put it on your bill. Don't say anything to him about it. It's none of his business." I'd have to call him at home about the latest moves.

BURG: Now your analysis of the situation was that Hopkins perhaps didn't have the kind of support that Creager thought he had?

ACKENHAUSEN: Well he sure didn't have it around here. You see at that time, Captain J. F. Lucey appears on the scene, pretty formidably. You've heard of Captain Lucey?

BURG: Now how does he spell his last name?

ACKENHAUSEN: L-u-c-e-y. He was the Hoover man who got interested in the Hoover campaign, and then he sort of maintained an interest from then on out. He (he was an oil man) had sort of built up a clientele of wealthy Dallas oilmen whom Hopkins was very unpopular with. So we had this group in Dallas who didn't like Hopkins and didn't like the West Texans, but they liked me, not so much personally but they knew that I was



their friend and it was terrible. They'd call me on the phone you know, and I couldn't talk to them. It was an awful situation.

BURG: Because they knew how you had stood at the convention that had picked Hopkins?

ACKENHAUSEN: Yes, they knew how I stood. They were for Zweifel simply because they were not for Hopkins. They didn't like Hopkins. Captain Lucey, he made no bones about it--he just practically treated Hopkins with scorn. I mean, that was the sort of person he was; they weren't all quite as undiplomatic. And there's always somebody who wants a little more recognition that he's getting. And there was a man (he would have been a good man to interview if he were still alive, Dr. Burg), Walter Rogers was the one who ran the pre-convention Taft campaign. He had been the Republican county chairman. Well Walter had come from Ohio, and he knew [Senator John] Bricker, and he knew Taft, and he wanted to build up a big Republican party right away. You know somebody from out of the state, they think that you should have a two-party system right now, the minute they get in here if they have been in politics in some other state that is two-party.



Well you just can't do it that fast. We still don't have a two-party state in Texas by a long shot. We've got two Republicans elected to office, see. We've got one Republican senator in Texas now that got in just on account of the inaugural I guess.

BURG: But he came in '51?

ACKENHAUSEN: No, Mr. Rogers was here before. He was here in '46, and he didn't like the West Texans, and he didn't like Hopkins. So he'd have a meeting out at his house and invite these people who were sympathetic to him, and I went out there one night, and I guess they found out about it, and they nearly had a fit. Then they'd write Mr. Creager and tell him that I wasn't loyal to our organization--it was terrible. You see Mr. Creager was smart enough to know that you couldn't spend all your money trying to build up a powerful organization and please everybody. In other words, you had to have somebody dominating it. You just couldn't spread it all over. Rogers had visions of everybody having his say and all that. It just doesn't work in a one-party state. You have to have somebody in control of the situation. So Rogers was kind of on the side of these oil people and everything. Now I got along well with



Mr. Rogers. I worked for him in two different campaigns, the Taft campaign, pre-convention Taft campaign, and then also--

BURG: Which year was that now?

ACKENHAUSEN: That was '52. That was where we had the big deal.

BURG: But you had worked for Rogers in another campaign.

ACKENHAUSEN: I had worked for Mr. Rogers when I wasn't working other places. In 1948 he was the county chairman, and I worked with him during the campaign. We had an office I think in the Baker Hotel.

BURG: Here in Dallas?

ACKENHAUSEN: In Dallas. They had no headquarters, you know, downtown. Of course Mr. Rogers was sort of disheartened when Mr. Creager turned down his idea of hiring a big powerful money-raiser and director of organization which he wanted to do.

BURG: Why had Creager turned it down?

ACKENHAUSEN: Well, Mr. Creager just didn't feel that it was feasible to raise that money and do those things. He just, I



don't know, he just couldn't see that it was--the handwriting on the wall hadn't happened yet. You see we were still out of power remember in 1948.

BURG: Could you have drawn funds, do you think, at that time from the oil people?

ACKENHAUSEN: Well, I don't think that we could have drawn enough to finance it the way Mr. Rogers wanted it done. Of course, if we had known then what was going to happen--and then of course there were divisions in the party too, you know, between Taft and Dewey. See there were still two divisions in the party. The West Texans were all for Dewey, and Mr. Creager and Marrs McLean, who was a very wealthy oilman in San Antonio, and Captain Lucey were for Taft and most of the oilmen I think in Dallas were Taft people at the time, but then you see what happened at the convention. Taft lost out again.



BURG: Would you describe the Texas Republican situation in '48 as, oh let's say, basically hinging on two groups, these oil people and the West Texans? Or would you say there were other factions that should be mentioned within the Texas Republicans?

ACKENHAUSEN: Well I think those two groups were pretty dominant in the picture, but Mr. Creager still had control of the situation, and he wasn't about to give up his control. And if he could see that Dewey was going to be the man, he wanted to be in with the winner. But Hopkins was a Dewey man from the beginning. And all the West Texans were for Dewey. And, let's see, we better get this straight, Dewey was nominated in '44 and '48. How could we forget '48? We hear enough of it.

BURG: We'll not forget that one, no.

ACKENHAUSEN: We hear about '48 every day of our lives, don't we?

BURG: That's right.

ACKENHAUSEN: But I'm trying to think. In '44 it was Bricker whom Dewey opposed and, of course, Marrs McLean and I were for Bricker. We were always for Bricker and Taft, you know, those kind of people, but Creager had to tell Bricker he was going to support Dewey. He said it was the worst thing he ever had to tell anybody because he liked Bricker so much personally, but he had to support Dewey. I don't know just how that '48 thing finally resolved itself. I can't remember enough about the national convention. See I wasn't in the office before then.



I guess I was working with Mr. Rogers then, and I didn't know enough about the state situation. It's a little foggy to me when I went to the national convention what did really happen, how Creager threw his support to Dewey.

BURG: In '48?

ACKENHAUSEN: Yes, away from Taft. It's a little bit foggy for me right now.

BURG: Your own inclination in '48 was for Taft?

ACKENHAUSEN: Oh, yes, I was always for Taft. Once for Taft, always for Taft.

BURG: Now let me ask you why?

ACKENHAUSEN: Well because I think Taft deserved, one thing, to be President. I think he was an outstanding senator. I think he was a man beyond reproach in every way morally, and I think he knew about the government. I think he really understood everything there was to know about the government. Now, by comparison, Eisenhower was a General, a very popular man, but he didn't really know about the workings, you know, of the civil part of it when he first appeared on the scene. Of



course, subsequently, he did a good job. Then Taft, while he was always classed as sort of a hide-bound reactionary, he really wasn't a reactionary. He had introduced quite a few things like fair housing practice, I think, in Ohio. He was responsible for some new legislation that was helpful to everybody and of course I liked the Taft-Hartley Bill, the labor bill, and he upheld right-to-work, and I was for right-to-work, still I'm for right-to-work laws. I just could go on and on about being for Taft. A lot of people thought he was cold and austere, but he wasn't when you got to know him. He was warm and friendly.

BURG: You met him here in Texas?

ACKENHAUSEN: Oh, yes, I met Senator Taft several times. He was very abrupt in some ways. He told it like it was. I was looking over some correspondence in here; I thought I'd look through and see if I had anything that you might be interested in, and I found a letter from Taft he had written to me following some meeting that we had in Texas where he was the principal speaker. He said in the first paragraph, "The meeting was poorly handled. I just hope that the--I have every reason to believe that the radio was all right and went out all right over the radio." But, I mean, you know, imagine a politician writing a letter like that--"The



meeting was poorly handled."

BURG: Just laid it on the line.

ACKENHAUSEN: Laid it on the line because it was. It was just a flop, whatever had happened. Do you want to hear any more about Taft?

BURG: Yes, yes indeed.

ACKENHAUSEN: Well he was down here one time during the state fair. It must have been--I'm trying to think--I think this was during the [Wendell] Willkie campaign, before Willkie was nominated in '40. I think it was--it must have been because--anyhow, they had decided to have Taft speak at the state fair. We have the annual state fair the first two weeks in October. And I want to tell you, there wasn't a corporal's guard that came out to hear Taft. And it was a cold night, and everybody was up there on the platform. There was a great big platform, and there weren't any spectators, but Taft went through with it and made a little speech to those few people. So you can see how disheartened he must have been, and yet he just persevered. I can't remember all the things that were said and done that night, but I know they were hilarious among the people that came to hear Taft. When this thing hit the convention, and Willkie just took it by storm--unknown



barefoot banker from Wall Street. They just went crazy over him, and Willkie did have a dynamic personality--there's no question about it when you first met him and knew him. But he just disintegrated, I mean, he just turned out to be not an important man and not a really strong one in the final clinches. He didn't have what it takes.

BURG: So again you saw him in contrast with Taft--

ACKENHAUSEN: Why, sure.

BURG: That reenforced your belief in Taft?



ACKENHAUSEN: Oh, yes, I was still for Taft. When Willkie first appeared on the scene, he did sort of mesmerize people. You can imagine a man just appearing like he was, kind of a rough looking, really very handsome man. Well everybody was intrigued, and, I'm no different than any other woman, I was intrigued too. That was in '40 when he won the first one. But then, afterwards, he made trips around, and he did a lot of things that were, well, not too becoming to a candidate, without going into a lot of detail. And I could kind of see what was going to happen. Willkie wouldn't really have been

a strong President at all, I don't think. So then he made another bid you know for it, I guess it was in '44. So then that still left Taft for the next go round, and by comparison there just wasn't any comparison. Well now let's see have we come to '52 yet?

BURG: Well I was going to say now in '47, you're out of it?

ACKENHAUSEN: Yes, I'm out of it. I left at the end of '47, and I'm out until, well, really I'm out for good except for those temporary assignments like working for the pre-convention, Taft committee, and in the Eisenhower campaign. But you might say that I was without any authority. I was just hired to do one job.

BURG: But you're now in a position too where you can watch what happens as we come up on that convention year of '52. In '51, for example, is Zweifel the committeeman for Texas?

ACKENHAUSEN: Yes.

BURG: He has gotten the office, all right, let me ask you--

ACKENHAUSEN: Let me see now just a minute. When was Mr.



Zweifel--oh, he was made national committeeman when Mr. Creager died, so he was there in '51.'

BURG: Who supported him for that?

ACKENHAUSEN: Well now you see, I'm really out of the picture then to a certain extent; I have no office or anything. It's just what I hear and see. But I would think that Mr. Zweifel really had the support of all the regular Republicans.

BURG: By regular, these are the people who later on--

ACKENHAUSEN: I mean these are the people who made up the Republican organization, the members of the state committee, the county chairman, and the ones who elected him national committeeman. I think he had their support.

BURG: Oh, the organization as it was--

ACKENHAUSEN: The organization as it was.

BURG: --before it all hit the fan in 1952.

ACKENHAUSEN: Before Chicago in 1952 Mr. Zweifel had the



support, I'd say, of the regular organization.

BURG: West Texas--

ACKENHAUSEN: West Texas--

BURG:--oil people?

ACKENHAUSEN:--and oil people. Of course, there was always a move on by the oil men of Texas to nominate somebody like Jake Hamon. I don't know whether you've ever heard of Jake Hamon or not, but he's a very wealthy oil man, and his father was national committeeman from Oklahoma at one time, and Jake has always been mentioned as a sort of a leading light even during Creager's time. They were always trying to get something for Jake Hamon.

BURG: Now how does he spell his last name?



ACKENHAUSEN: H-a-m-o-n. Jake Hamon. I guess he's still living here in Dallas. But I mean there was always a little move on by the oil men because they were big contributors to the party. There was always a move on by oil men to get one of their own in some job, state chairman or national committeeman

or something like that. It just flurried around all the time, but they didn't have the know-how and they didn't have what Mr. Creager had. And so they just had to settle for next best, see. They had to take Mr. Creager, and then when Zweifel inherited the throne the oil men weren't too popular with the hoi polloi of the Republican party. Can I use a sort of an off-beat word?

BURG: Please do.



ACKENHAUSEN: Well, I want to tell you something funny that happened--talking about loyalties and everything. We had a county chairman from Corsicana, his name was Mose Blumrosen. He worried Mr. Creager to death. Every time that we'd have a convention, and it just seemed like, you know, some people were always right in your face wanting to get attention. And to just show you about Mr. Creager's ability to get along with them, and then Mose did turn against Zweifel, finally. But anyhow, at this convention it seemed like every time Mr. Creager would do anything, Blumrosen would be there talking to him or something. So one time Mr. Creager said to me, "Well, you'll have to

say this about him, Helen, he's a loyal son-of-a-bitch."

[Laughter] So I thought it was so funny. He was just fed up to his teeth with Mose Blumrosen always talking to him. At that time we had a girl working in the office who was a real character. She believed in reincarnation and everything on earth. Addie (Bunch) Henderson. She was a wonderful worker, and a real good friend of mine. She'd come down at any time and work for any price. She was addressing envelopes, and she never used a bit of profanity in her whole life. I had told her about this, and she was addressing envelopes to the county chairmen, and she came to Mose Blumrosen. She says, "Mose Blumrosen, chairman of Navarro County, Corsicana, Texas, loyal son-of-a-bitch." [Laughter] It was so funny; it was the talk of the office.

BURG: It is indeed, it is indeed. Yes, for Heaven's sakes. Now who was state chairman at the time that Zweifel took over as national committeeman?



ACKENHAUSEN: Well, let me see now, when did Hopkins get out? See, Hopkins was elected in '46. I'm trying to think, was Mr. Zweifel the state chairman before he became national committeeman? What happened to Hopkins? I'm trying to figure

out when Mr. Hopkins got out now; it's a little vague to me. Sure he never resigned knowingly.

[Interruption]

BURG: We were trying to determine--

ACKENHAUSEN: Trying to determine if Mr. Zweifel succeeded Hopkins as state chairman or when he was made national committeeman.

BURG: We can check that up. I'll use Professor [Roger] Olien's data.

ACKENHAUSEN: He was not a delegate as you notice. Zweifel was not a delegate to the national convention in '48. Why, I don't know, but he wasn't. His name is not on there.

BURG: So he's taken over, and you're watching that situation now pretty much from the outside up until the Taft pre-convention movement in '51.

ACKENHAUSEN: That's right.

BURG: Now had you heard much about a potential Eisenhower candidacy?



ACKENHAUSEN: Had I!

BURG: You had?

ACKENHAUSEN: You see I was just doing anything. It wasn't too easy to get a job, the kind that I'd been used to. You could get a job in most any uninteresting office, but Ralph Currie, whom of course you've heard about and Mrs. Currie, the one who led the Eisenhower--have you met them by the way?

BURG: No, I haven't. That's Allie Mae?

ACKENHAUSEN: Allie Mae. She hasn't been well. He's never encouraged her to talk to Roger. I don't know whether you'll get to talk to them or not. If you could, you could get a lot of information.

Ralph Currie was for Taft. I went to work for Ralph before Christmas in his law office. I said, "Well, Ralph, I've never worked all out in an attorney's office, and I don't know whether I can handle a straight legal job or not."

He said, "Well, I'd just as leave have somebody that doesn't know everything about the legal profession, and maybe I could have my way done then." So he put up with me and was



very kind to me. That was before Christmas in '51. In the meantime Mrs. Currie was beginning the Eisenhower campaign, and there I was working in an office for a Taft man, so he said, with the Eisenhower organizer sitting at a desk not far from where I was on the phone every second, every minute, working for the Eisenhower campaign.

BURG: Now was Mr. Currie, at that time, county chairman?

ACKENHAUSEN: No, Mr. Currie wasn't the county chairman then. No, George S. Atkinson was the county chairman, George Atkinson. He was the county chairman during the battle.

BURG: So there was an Eisenhower organizer there. Was that Mrs. Currie?

ACKENHAUSEN: Mrs. Currie was in charge. I don't know whether she had the whole state or whether she just had--Porter had employed her, I guess. I think she got a salary if I'm not mistaken. I'm not sure about that. But anyhow, Ralph had a young son. She had children by a previous marriage who were married and had children; so they were grandparents. They had one boy, just of their own, (marriage of Ralph and Allie Mae), so the family would take sides. Of course, they'd tell



me about these discussions at home. Ralph told me one time that one of the little girls, one of the little grandchildren, wanted to be whoever her grandmother was for, and Danny was for Taft because daddy was for Taft, i.e. Ralph was for Taft. So Danny, their young son, was for Taft. And so the little granddaughter had heard my name mentioned at home, you know, Ackenhausen, several times. She says, "I'm for Ike Eisenhausen. I'm for Ike Eisenhausen." She got Ackenhausen and Eisenhower mixed up, little tiny kid you know.

BURG: Sure.



ACKENHAUSEN: So that went on until, let me see, when did I leave Ralph? Well, I believe, we had the Lincoln Day meeting here in Dallas. We had a Lincoln Day dinner, and I'm trying to think who our speaker was. It wasn't Taft; I'm quite sure. But Mr. Rogers came to me, I never will forget, and he put his hands right up on my shoulders and he says, "Helen, do you honestly believe that the two Curries can work in the same office and one of them be for Taft and one for Eisenhower. Can you believe in their sincerity?"

I said, "Well, I know Allie Mae is for Eisenhower.

There's no question about that. Just how far Ralph is helping her," (He still could be for Taft but you know he was guiding her to a certain extent because he was a lot smarter than she was for one thing, and he was proud of her and would naturally like to see her attain political prominence, if Eisenhower won.)

And so Mr. Rogers said, "Well, we're going to open up a Taft headquarters. We'd like for you to come and work in the Taft headquarters. If Ralph is for Taft, he sure won't mind it."

So Dave [David S.] Ingalls was here. Of course, he and I had become real good friends from previous campaigns, but this was a very hurried up trip, and I only got to see him just a few minutes. He came up to Ralph's office. And when he saw what was going on, I mean it was so apparent, he said, "We've got to get you out of here, Helen. The Taft people have got to rescue you." So then when they opened the Taft headquarters, well, I went to work for them, and I left Ralph.

BURG: But that's to say, Miss Ackenhausen, that the Taft people were running a little slow, weren't they? Mrs. Currie was going at it--



ACKENHAUSEN: O---h, Mrs. Currie was far ahead of everybody.

BURG: The fall of '51 and this is February of '52 before--

ACKENHAUSEN: Yes.

BURG: Ingalls and the others are getting geared up.

ACKENHAUSEN: Well, of course, I don't know how geared up they were in other place. But you see at that time they didn't have their friend to depend on; they didn't have Mr. Creager. It was a horse of a different color. I think the Taft people handled the campaign terribly ineptly. I'll always say that. I just don't think they were gung-ho at all. They just weren't on their toes, and these Eisenhower people, they had just stolen the show. Of course now the thing that we resented so much was that they just went out and garnered Democrats into the precincts. People that were known Democrats took over the Republican precinct conventions. Of course that's happening all over the country today; there's no difference. But at that time, you know, Republicans kind



of liked to have their own convention. The convention here at my house, we had about four people for Taft, my brother and Sue Avant and her husband and myself (I think we had six so there were two others); we had to go out in the kitchen to hold our convention. About thirty-five people in here in the front room never had been to a precinct convention before in their lives--thirty-five people came in here for Eisenhower. And, as I said, a good many of them stayed Republicans. We weren't even going to let my old Republican friend--my neighbor down on the corner--in because she didn't have her exemption certificate or poll tax. And I said, "Oh, Sue, we can't treat Jane like that; she's an old neighbor; we have to let her come in the house." But, yes, they were organized to the hilt; they were just organized to the hilt. I don't think that Allie Mae Currie was a master-mind by any means, but she did carry it through. She did work hard, and she carried it through. Now whoever master-minded it, I'd still like to know who it was.

BURG: Sometime it's very difficult to tell; many will claim that they did.



ACKENHAUSEN: I don't know that Mr. Porter was that astute or not.

BURG: Now, how did you happen to go with Mr. Currie? I meant to ask you that. Did he--

ACKENHAUSEN: In the office?

BURG: Yes. Did he invite you to come to work for him?

ACKENHAUSEN: Yes, he asked me to come. See I'd known Ralph for a long time. We'd always been friends in politics here.

BURG: And he knew that you were--

ACKENHAUSEN: He was against Hopkins for one thing. He was very sympathetic to me when I had to put up with Hopkins, yes. I don't think I even asked him for a job. I think I just met him one day, and he asked me if I wouldn't like to try it. I said, "Well, Ralph, I'm frank to tell you that I just don't think I'd be a real good legal secretary."

And he said, "Well, I think you'd suit me just fine." And I don't think he had anybody else in the office then, any other girl. That was in '51. I went back to work for



Ralph another time when he had two more lawyers and another girl in the office. I left him then to go with the government. He wasn't able to pay too much. Since then I think he's developed quite a lucrative business. I think Ralph has done very well. He handled my brother's estate which was not very large, but Ralph was the lawyer, and he's a very good lawyer. And I would have loved to have seen Ralph get an appointment as a federal judge. I would have been for him.

BURG: But that's the sort of thing that just wasn't happening in Texas.

ACKENHAUSEN: No, they gave it to somebody that supported Eisenhower, and it was a Democrat. I resented that because I think of all the work that Mrs. Currie did for Eisenhower and Ralph worked for him too once he was nominated. So then it was such a strange thing. Well, of course, I just can't explain to you--you almost have to see an office in operation, but if you could have seen the unwieldy sort of an office that we put together. They had no state headquarters for Taft, and we were not a state group; I don't believe we were.



But all the people came to our office. Henry Zweifel was the national committeeman then in Ft. Worth, and he had us doing a lot of things for him because they didn't have a big office over there. It was sort of unwieldy. It seemed like nobody--it just wasn't a well handled campaign. They had lots of duplications, and you'd try to sort out things and get them straightened out in the office, and they'd say, "Oh, it's easier to send the duplicates."

And I said, "It would be easier if you take your time and get something done right and then let it go from there even if you have to spend a whole day getting the names right on an addressograph." People were getting duplicates of everything, and it just really wasn't a well organized campaign. I'll just be very frank with you.

BURG: Was it that there was no state central direction for Taft?

ACKENHAUSEN: I think it was that partly. Mr. Rogers, of course, he was a Taft man, and he was a pretty good fellow too, pretty good politician, Rogers was. But they just seemed to lack everything. And when David Ingalls came (let's see,



did he come to Dallas before the convention?) To show you how naive even national politicians can be, he was talking about some friend of his; (they had a cocktail party for Taft, that was one time when Taft was in Dallas). Yes, Taft and Ingalls were here, and David was talking about his friend (I can't think of the man's name right now, but he was a very prominent man, at least he was at that time), and he had already said he was going to support Eisenhower. He was there sitting on the platform with party executives, and I said, "David, your friend," whoever he was, "is for Eisenhower."

He said, "Oh, he's not for Eisenhower; he's for Taft."

I said, "Well he just said that he was going to support Eisenhower." And he would not believe it. They wouldn't believe that people were going to support Eisenhower. Now those were people that were supposed to know something about politics. And when they went to the convention in Ft. Worth, instead of making some compromise with the delegates, they told Mr. Zweifel--they really crushed Mr. Zweifel, the Taft people. They told Mr. Zweifel they wanted every delegate to the national convention; they didn't want to give up a single one.



Well, what could you do in a case like that? Of course, there were lots of contests, and we knew that Democrats had taken over, but there were some of our own people like Mose Blumrosen who had decided to support Eisenhower. Well, you couldn't say that he wasn't a regular Republican or that his credentials weren't regular. You couldn't claim him as an interloper when his county convention supported Eisenhower-- he was a Republican county chairman, even if he ceased to be a loyal so and so as Mr. Creager [said]. So there you are. That was one of the pictures. But Dr. Robert Morris, he has a better bird's-eye view of the thing than nearly anybody I've talked to--could tell you how this was all arranged in the east, that Texas was to be the deciding factor.

