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FIRST INTERSTATE BANK OF WASHINGTON, N.A., EXECUTOR OF THE  
ESTATE OF GERTRUDE W. PAUL, DECEASED (Widow of Judge Charles H.  
Paul, Deceased)



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This is an interview being taped with Judge Charles Paul in Seattle, Washington, on April 18, 1972. The interviewer is Dr. Maclyn Burg and the interview is being carried on in Judge Paul's office.

DR. BURG: Judge, you were just saying that with regard to the speech that Senator Taft gave out here in 1940 you had introduced him, and he tried to give sort of an off the cuff speech, and it didn't work too well.

JUDGE PAUL: Yes. He came here and delivered this speech on September 11, 1939. I had known him at Yale. I was a debator at Yale, and I was on the same team with Bill [William C.] Bullitt my sophomore year. Taft was then President of the University debating society. I afterward became President of it in my senior year. We had the tryouts. Bullitt and John Wallace Young and I and a couple of others were the only ones that came out for it. Young became a New York lawyer, but you know Bill Bullitt of course.

DR. BURG: Oh, yes, Ambassador Bullitt.

JUDGE PAUL: And so I had to memorize a ten minute speech; I think we were given ten or fifteen minutes whatever the time was. I got up there, and I had a beautiful peroration. The

flag was taking an awful beating. [Laughter] My God right in the middle of the cap sentence that I had which I thought was a whing-ding, and maybe it was for that matter, I stopped and said, "I'm sorry to say that I can't fill out this paragraph or this sentence. This is all I've got to say." So I got down, and I was in pretty sad shape. I thought that was a hell of a thing to do.

BURG: Had you forgotten it, Judge?

PAUL: Yes. It was a memorized speech.

BURG: I see, and you just drew a blank at that point?

PAUL: I drew a blank. I've got a lot of stories that I've often told on that. But at any rate, Taft came up to me afterwards, and he said, "Now look, Paul," (you know we called each other that way), "you ought to let that be a lesson to you--never memorize debate speech. But," he said, "nevertheless I'm going to put you on the team."

BURG: He was then a senior, Judge.

PAUL: No. He was a senior at Yale. I was a sophomore at Yale. This particular thing was for the sophomore debate.

BURG: About what year was this?





PAUL: The actual time that we were doing that was in 1913. So he put me on that team. I didn't do very much debating after that, but I had enough interest and I think because I was a football player. I was an athlete you see and grew until I got the mumps and everything else. [Laughter] But I was on the freshman crew, and I was an all around athlete. I think that they thought it would make it a little bit nicer to have a well known athlete interested in debate, President of the Debating Society. I never felt that I really deserved that very much. And by the way, in this stuff that I have given you, I've got some information about myself so you know something about me that I think is fairly complete down to that date, August, '43. Of course, I've done a lot of work after that. Here's another thing, this is about my political activities in this state down to, oh, I don't know when. I don't know when that was written. Doesn't make much difference anyway.

BURG: All right, we'll check that out too, sir.

PAUL: I'll give you that to look at.



BURG: Wonderful.

PAUL: I had a couple of items here that I had written down. More background material we can call them. In 1940, the situation was that Tom [Thomas E.] Dewey was the boy prosecutor who had made a big success, and it was true he had done a great job in New York City. So he was quite a hero and attractive, and what you call a glamour boy, viewed that way. I don't say that in a derogatory sense, but that was the way it was. And of course that took a lot of them out here.

BURG: He had a good press, Judge.



PAUL: Yes, out here. But Taft had nobody here that I know of that was close. He did have, later on, Charley Taft's daughter who married the local doctor here. When Taft came here in '48, there was an incident that I'll explain to you in just a minute. But at any rate we had quite a fight in this state, but we did get two delegates for Taft nevertheless. At that time the Spokane side of it, eastern Washington that is, that's east of the Cascades, was for Dewey. The man from Tacoma was a very well known lawyer who worked

with me during the campaign and at the state convention which was held in Tacoma. We did fairly well. In fact, one of our delegates made the seconding speech for Taft at the convention in 1939. I was there and I saw the whole business. You see, I sat with the delegation. Jim Bailey who was chairman of the Dewey delegation statewide was a very good friend of mine, a young lawyer at that time, younger than I was. He got in with the sugar people and got to be a trustee along with his partner at about fifteen thousand a year; so he didn't need to worry much which was all right. What I was afraid of was a resolution of the convention and unit rule. Well, I got them out of it. This was not a unit state, and we just went after that, and they agreed on that all around.



BURG: Everyone accepted the fact, no unit rule?

PAUL: No unit rule. Yes. And they have almost universally been against the unit rule in this state. At any rate they didn't have a promise on it, and there were some that wanted it you see. And I knew who they were.

BURG: Dewey people who wanted it?

PAUL: Yes, Dewey people who wanted it. But I knew the chairman of the resolutions committee who happened to be a Taft man who got appointed in some way. So they said, "Well, all right, on the unit rule." And they did not make any floor effort on that. And then I said, "Now that's not enough." They said, "But we want a resolution endorsing Dewey."

BURG: From the convention at large?



PAUL: Yes, from the convention at large. And I said, "I don't think you should do that." I went into see the chairman of the resolutions committee. I said, "We got this problem now. The way to kill it is this--just get a resolution endorsing all of them--Dewey and Taft--as fine men for presidential timber. Let it go at that. They can't knock that, and you're protected against that." So we got that, and it passed the resolutions committee. That was settled. Then I said to Jim, "Now here's another thing. I know despite all of this, that your Spokane delegation" which was going as a unit in effect, "will start to parade or do something and go around the room and try to pick up delegates here and there and be sure that they get everything



and get maybe an endorsement despite all these resolutions, maybe the unit rule, I don't know. I want you to promise me that you will not allow the Seattle delegation," that is the King County delegation, (Seattle was practically all of King County, the voting strength, then. It's changed a little bit since this election.) "to parade." Not that I thought he would do it you know, but he said, "That's fair enough." So this Spokane delegation, before we started the balloting on the delegates, started to parade with the Dewey flags and one thing and another. And they came in, and Jim's delegation all sat in their seats. Here they were, King County delegation, the biggest, sitting in their seats. So finally some of them came, Jim was sitting right beside of me, they pulled him up and he had to go I knew. I said, "Go ahead." So I thought, well I'll kill this too. So I grabbed a Dewey banner, and I walked right along back of him.

BURG: You did?



PAUL: The head of the parade around the room and everybody laughing to beat hell, and that was the end of the parade.



BURG: It finished just like that?

PAUL: Yes.

BURG: You actually weathered the storm in fact.

PAUL: I actually went right into it. I said, "Well, if everybody is going to parade, I'll parade too." And I waved a Dewey banner. Of course, they all knew me; so we did pretty well. What I was after were the alternates you see. In case somebody didn't show up or something, we'd pick up a few votes.

BURG: Did you send then any Taft delegates to the National Convention?

PAUL: Two delegates.



BURG: You sent two Taft delegates to the National.

PAUL: Yes. Ralph Ahoar from here who persisted in voting for Taft after the thing was over and Wilkie had the votes you see.

BURG: Did he later become a judge, too?

PAUL: No.

BURG: Judge Horr?

PAUL: No.

BURG: Different man?

PAUL: He spells his name differently, and he was a lawyer. He was a peculiar kind of a guy. I never had any great admiration for him, but he had quite a swing.

BURG: Ralph?

PAUL: Yes, Ralph Ahoar.

BURG: How did he spell his last name? Do you remember?

PAUL: A-h-o-a-r. The woman, whose name I can't remember, it's in the records of course, was the one that made one of the seconding speeches for Taft you see. That forced the Dewey people from the state of Washington, because it made it look as though Washington was going for Taft when she made the second nominating speech, to get a woman, whose name I can't remember now, who was a good speaker on their delegation.



They had the Dewey people put her in. I talked to this woman who was going to make the speech. I said, "Now just remember one thing. I've been told this in my more or less limited experience with microphones." (You know they weren't too used to crowds.) "Just stick your nose right in that microphone and don't take it out. Never mind the gestures. Just stick right there right in front of it, and they'll get you. Otherwise they won't." Well, the other gal, when she followed, didn't know that was the only way to do, at least with those microphones. Now they're different, but then that was the only way to handle it, and I knew that. And my gosh nobody heard a word she said, and she'd stare like this. [Imitative gesture.]

BURG: I see.



PAUL: By the time she got through, there wasn't any speech made that you could understand.

At that time Arthur Taft, Mrs. [David S.] Ingalls and my wife, Gertrude, were back stage. All these guests or people that were tied in somewhere in importance but were not delegates were on the back of this big stage. And so I sat with the delegation

except at the time they were actually balloting. And we had an agreement. There was an agreement made between Taft and Dewey who did not want Wilkie you see. Wilkie was a late blooming rose. In fact, when I left for the convention, Wilkie hadn't even been thought of as having any chance. It was something indirect. They didn't have any support at all you see. So we got there, and I saw what the situation was. I said, "Now, Jim, there's an agreement between the national chairman for Taft who is a woman from Arizona," whose name I can't think of now, and the Dewey people. No, she was the one that was for Dewey. It was between them and Mrs. Taft's brother who was a had been Solicitor General or something or was mixed in that way. I can't remember the facts about that, but the agreement was that they would go if Dewey couldn't make it by the fourth ballot you see. The thing is as you know at these conventions, particularly one that was as unsure as this one, that the thing swings if you come out with a big bunch and then you begin to drop a little in each one even though you still have a majority or plurality for that matter. Still you begin to lose votes. They were both against Wilkie you see. But when he came into the hall, here





were all these kids up in the balcony. I had checked on this because I saw them over at the Stratford, whatever the name of the other building was, the other hotel. We were at the Benjamin Franklin Hotel, the Taft headquarters. And I said, "What are you kids doing down here? Have you ever voted before? Have you ever been in politics?" "No." And I found that practically all of them were from some of the investment houses in New York, and they had been sent down with their expenses paid. They had all this Dewey propaganda.

BURG: Where was that convention held, Judge?

PAUL: Philadelphia.

BURG: In Philadelphia in '40.

PAUL: I said, "Well how do you know you're going to get in?" "Oh, we know we're going to get in." So they got there. Stassen you see was the keynoter, and he was supposed to be neutral. The keynoter is not supposed to endorse any particular candidate, and he's usually agreed upon as someone who is a strong Republican who has no special interest or at least



will not interfere with the speech--try to make it a partisan speech. That was at least what they did in those days. And so I saw these passes: "ADMIT ONE. BALCONY. STASSEN." I saw a lot of them. These things were all on the floor lying around there.

BURG: The admission tickets that they used?



PAUL: In other words he violated his promise. That's the one reason that the Taft people and Stassen never made any headway in this thing.

BURG: You felt that Stassen had engineered it to have these young people out of New York--

PAUL: Sure, he did. He gave them this pass. You see there wasn't any authority for that at all. There's Stassen, STASSEN ADMIT ONE. You do gallery or balcony or whatever it was. And of course they yelled and got the thing teetering a little bit. Then when it came to the time for the balloting, Taft was gradually picking up, and Dewey was going down, and Wilkie was picking up. And Wilkie and Taft on about the fourth or fifth ballot, I may be a little wrong on my ballots

now, were running pretty near even. And I got to Jim and said, "For God's sake, here it is, the sixth ballot or fifth ballot is coming up and that may be decisive if you don't do something about this. There was an understanding that when it was apparent that Dewey was slipping to go, and that was the fourth ballot agreement as I understand it." Well he said, "I think it was, but don't you think it would be all right to go one more ballot." I said, "Well, I can't hold you back because that's your business. I think it'll be fatal, but you do it." And it was fatal because they got onto the next ballot, and then Alf Landon of Kansas broke. They couldn't get hold of Joe [Joseph N.] Pew. Of course the point was that then there was supposed to be a recess before the Pennsylvania delegation [balloted] and I'd had sat in with the Taft people where they went over this Pennsylvania bit. Hoover was mixed into it too you know some. That all occurred at this convention. So Martin from Massachusetts, Congressman Joe Martin, who was a Dewey man and Colonel [R.B.] Creager from Texas, who was the Taft floor leader, tried to get a recess because they had understood that there would be recess, and they certainly needed it at that time. So



they tried to find Joe Pew, and he was taking a bath. He thought there was going to be a recess you see. It sounds like a fantastic story. I didn't see him taking a bath.

BURG: The tide was turning, and he was in the bath.



PAUL: I sat side of the fellow from Pennsylvania; you know-- the oil man. You can check that out.

BURG: I was going to say Biddle.

PAUL: No.

BURG: Not Biddle.

PAUL: No, I know the Biddle's. Julian Biddle was in my class, and I argued before the Biddle that was head of the National Labor Board before the Labor Relations Board went in. But that's another matter. At any rate Martin wouldn't listen to him. He refused to recognize him. And so they went by, and then Pennsylvania was split. Their agreement was that they would let the thing ride until their votes were needed. That was the agreement, and it was stated at this Taft meeting. They had two or three Taft meetings; Charley Taft was there



of course at the meeting. There was the Pennsylvania delegation split you see. And while I think we got a majority of them, it was close enough so that this sixty votes or whatever they had was badly split. Some of the people that were for Taft weren't even there, figuring there was going to be a recess.



So then of course Wilkie was nominated. Wilkie couldn't make a speech. He made an acceptance speech that was so terrible that they put [John] Hollister on him, and Hollister was Taft's partner and also went to Yale with me. You see Taft was a "Bones" man, and I was "Bones." That was one reason that I think--. [unintelligible name] was Skull and Bones you see. We had all met each other or been there. I had been there when former President Taft was Chief Justice, and he made a talk at Bones one night. I remember him of course from that. At any rate, that was the end of the thing. But I made a speech for Wilkie after that because my idea was and it always has been if you go to the convention, this is the presidential convention I'm talking about, [you should support the nominee.] You get down the line there's more justification for breaking away than there is for the top dog,

in my opinion. At any rate, the I made a speech just the night before the election out in Bothell. We had a big crowd, but they were more interested in who was going to be elected governor than they were who is President, and I got nowhere at that meeting. Of course they were all for Wilkie. Anyway I think they were. So that was the situation then.

In '44 I dreamt up the Time for a Change Club, and we had buttons. That went all over the United States, that idea. It may have been done somewhere else, but here we had an actual club. You paid a dollar and you got a button; so I spent four months that fall in 1944 working for Dewey. They said, "Well how do you reconcile that with your position that Dewey was too young for the office." I said, "He's four years older. Can't you give me a better reason for not being for him than that?" We kidded about it so it didn't hurt anything.

In '40 I went with Taft and Martin down to Portland, and I stopped at all the little places down through the south and had meetings at Centralia and Chehalis and all these places, and Taft got in there.

BURG: In '40?



PAUL: This is in '40. Now the reason I'm telling this, this is a sidelight on the man. When we got down to Centralia, which is before you get to Chehalis. I had Chehalis in the bag. I had most of that southwestern Washington tied up for Taft. My weakness was Spokane and some elements here. At any rate, he got talking to the farmers. (They hadn't made the arrangements, the local committeemen, it all depended on whether he did something or not.) He brought in four or five guys that were actually mostly farmers. And so Taft got in the back office and Ingalls was there and Martin, and he kept talking and talking to them you see. He was sitting up on a table and talking to them about agriculture. And Dave said, "For gosh sakes, we got to get him out of here. We haven't got time." They had to go. We were going to Olympia or we had been to Olympia, I forget now. We were going to see the governor down there who was a Democrat. Taft insisted, always, when he came to a state, that he'd pay a visit if he could possibly do it on the governor of the state as a matter of courtesy, particularly when he was campaigning in the state on the other ticket. He went in and talked to them. Well, at any rate, then we went down to





Chehalis which is about four miles south. And halfway down there was a little radio station, television wasn't in use then. And Taft said, "Well, I want you to stop here." They were in my car; I had Martin and Dave and myself in my car. I don't think, my wife didn't go with me that time. Dave looked up and it showed what the kilocycles were and one thing and another. He said, "Look, Bob, you can't do this. We've got to get to Portland, and we've got to stop at Longview and a couple of other places down here. Got to stop at Chehalis and so on." And Taft said, "I told them I was going to do it, and I'm going to do it." Well he said, "Just look at the kilocycles." He says, "I don't care whether anybody listens or not. I'm going to make good on my promise, and I've got a chance to say something, and I'm going to say it." He just didn't put any big argument. He walked right in and he made his speech. Now that was typical--he had made a promise, and he knew they were interested. He knew that the number of votes he was going to get didn't amount to anything. And the coverage of that you see was very little. He just overruled his manager. So that was typical of Bob Taft.





We had him up to our home and, we had a very good time. Of course Martha made beautiful speeches. She was inquisitive, and she was a much better speaker than Bob was as far as politics at that time. A different situation had developed by 1952, and even in '48 he was much more effective. He had got on to the thing, and he let himself go more. He really got to his audiences, and he got to them largely because he was so brilliant in his answers to questions.

BURG: Did he request your aid then in 1952?



PAUL: Yes. Well, at any rate, I've given you a little more on that than I intended to. And in '48 Ingalls was not in it, and it was a Dewey year, and they didn't even invite me to do anything. I went to the convention however, and I had a battle up in Bellingham on this and on some other things.

BURG: You went to the national convention, Judge?

PAUL: Oh, yes.

BURG: As a delegate?

PAUL: Not a delegate. I never was elected a delegate. But

I was chairman of the Washington State Taft for President organization such as we had. And then they had various men, sub-chairman, Bill Howe who is dead now.

BURG: Is that H-o-w-e?



PAUL: W. C. Howe, H-o-w-e. He died not long after, the '52 campaign. I had a battle with him in '52 because we disagreed about a certain matter. And Jim Bailey got through '44, but in about '45, '46 he was coming up a road here and truck or some damned thing ran headon into him and killed him. Three of the men that were prominent in, and there was another one --the name I can't think of now, were prominent or candidates during these times that I'm talking about were killed in automobile accidents after that. Strangest thing.

I just wanted to tell you this other characteristic. Taft spoke in Tacoma.

[Interruption]

This is in 1948, and that was at the height of this movement when they questioned the Taft-Hartley act. The claim was he was trying to take the bread out of the mouths of the workers.

The Taft-Hartley Act hadn't come up. It was the other act that preceded it, the Smith Act or whatever it was. And the Congressman from Kitsap County had voted against it. I had a big argument with Art [Arthur] Langlie about this matter, and I have in here the report of the conversation that I had with Langlie when I was telling him he was dead wrong on the thing. But you will see what it says; I won't go into that. The reason I did that is because Langlie was the man that put over the resolution at the 1952 convention disqualifying the Texas vote. And [Donald] Eastvold [Attorney General of Washington] was his supporter. Eastvold of course, I think he's dead, got in this big shoreland business down here along with--

BURG: Ocean Shores at Grace Harbor.



PAUL: I had debates with him in Tacoma, and we had quite a whing-ding. I debated all over with these fellows; we'd have the meeting and then everybody would come. When he came here you see, I went over to Tacoma to get on the train to ride back with him because I wanted to talk to him. I have in here the record; I don't know whether it can be played or not.

What happened was this--I knew that there was going to be some communist, and when I say communist I'm not kidding. It was a communist gang. There was no question about it. They were bragging about it, and they were going to disrupt this thing.

BURG: In '52, Judge?



PAUL: '48. Well the reason I'm telling you this is that it is so characteristic of Taft and what the situation was; so don't let anybody kid you into the fact that somebody just dreamt up communism as an issue. It was a big issue. So, we knew that these communists were going to picket and cause trouble. Well, Judge Gaines, who just died here recently and who was handling this big case, had his automobile there for Taft. You had an open car, and we were going to have a parade up to the Olympic Hotel where Taft had headquarters. So I went in, and I said to Bob, "Can you come back here in some of these cubicles? I want to talk to you?" So I told him that the chairman of the Western State Republican Committee wasn't even coming up to meet him. I told him that I would tell you [Taft] this. And then I told him what I would say,



and I think it's in here. What he wanted me to say was-- can't you just lay off and don't criticize this fellow because he didn't vote for your act? And I said, "I told him I would tell you that, and I've done my duty."

He said, "Charley, there are some things on which you cannot compromise, and this is one of them."

I said, "I thought you'd say that. That's all there is to it." So we came in, and here it was. They were down at the station, communists all around waving these flags just like these no-good hippies. I don't mean to include in that some fellows that are bearded and one thing and another that are perfectly all right. I'm talking about the fellows who want to break up everything and have nothing except the break-up in mind. At any rate, they were there, and I said to Taft, "You'd better get in the car." We got in. Arthur was there of course, and I got them in the car with me I guess, the three of us. I don't know how we got in that limousine or whatever it was; I was in with them. This fellow that they were talking about, this Congressman, came up and was just beating at Taft, and there was a big rumpus. Gaines



reached the door and closed the door right on Taft's right hand I guess it was. And gee it was an ugly gash. He called him over to speak to him you see because he wanted to be friendly. He wasn't going to say anything about him; he was just going to defend his policy. He wasn't going to make an attack on a local congressman. I knew darned well he wouldn't do it. So Gaines didn't see that Taft had the door open, he was on the left hand side, and closed it on his hand. Well he got up there and got up to the hotel, and I looked at it and I said, "My God, it's deep." One of these terrible looking deep gashes in his hand, right in here. It wasn't bleeding very much. But then it looked worse than that, and he had difficulty moving it.

He said, "Well, I can't hold this up."



And he got up there; and, of course, he had his two men there, and they went over the speech he was going to make in Tacoma the next night. I went over with him on that. I listened to him, and, the reporters had heard about this incident, and they wanted to know if Taft was all right.

I said, "You'd better tell them."

Taft said, "That's got nothing to do with the case." He says, "I'm all right; I'll be all right. I have to hold this up; it's a little sore. But I'm not going to get them." And so then he went on and talked to them. There was so much rumpus about it.

His two men were very well known; they worked with him. He wrote his speeches, but he'd give them the speech and then he would listen to their suggestions. When they came to one of these communism things in there, (He gave hell to the communists on certain things in their ideology of one thing or another.) He said, "You'd better tone that one down." Taft said, "That stays exactly the way I wrote it, and that's all there is to that. I'm not going to take that out. I'll accept some of your other corrections but not that one." And don't think he didn't know what he was doing. I've been through this, and in '52 it showed up too.

So we went in and drove him down in a car. I had a friend of mine who was the local chairman, and Martha and he and I were in the car. We went up to this building right up there, the Eagles Hall which is catty-cornered across from the Washington Building, and here was all this gang parading





up and down with these signs that he was trying to starve the hungry people and one thing and another. Same old gag that they try to work now but in a different form. So the police officers directed us down the alley by the side of the building, and he came in the side door. And Taft got out, either he or Ingalls and I can't remember which, both of them. I said to the police captain who was there, "Is this necessary? Is there any danger if he goes in the front door?"

"Well," he said, "I can't say there'll be any physical danger; it'd be pretty unpleasant."

Taft said or Ingalls said, or both of them said, "We're going to walk through that gang and go right up the middle aisle." And so he went back and went through them, and my God, these people were dumbfounded that he had the nerve to do it. And Martha and he, they just looked at them and waved at them and smiled and went right up the thing. And so then they tried to boo, and about ten of them, ten or twelve, had a certain seat in the middle of the place, and they were just yelling there. And Taft went right on; he never answered them or paid any attention to them at all. He went as though they didn't exist. Made his speech which was





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a good, strong speech. It was really a good one. And after a few minutes they got up and left.

[End of interview]

