CAL KRAHMER

September 18, 1996

Tape 5, Side 1

M.O'R.: It's September 18, 1996, and this is a continuation of the interview with Cal Krahmer, and today's session is taking place at his home in Cornelius.

We had a pretty interesting conversation last time about the politics of water and the environmental politics out here in the Valley. In the course of that conversation you mentioned that you talked to Governor Vic Atiyeh about the idea of putting a farmer into DEQ somewhere, and he said he didn't like the idea too much, and you said that other governors hadn't either. What I wondered about that, I was curious about your relationships with past governors of Oregon. You apparently knew Atiyeh personally, or at least through the conservation board?

C.K.: Yes, I knew Governor Atiyeh personally. When he was a senator, I was doing some lobby work for conservation and also for agriculture, and so I worked directly with him and had him carry my legislative agenda for the session which he was willing to do and gladly did and did a good job for me when he did that, and so I got to know him personally quite well.

M.O'R.: What was your legislative agenda that he was helping you out with?

C.K.: Oh boy, you're going back quite a few years. I can't remember all the issues because there was so many. I did legislative work for Farm Bureau, and then when I got in conservation, I did it originally for the district a year or two, but then I did for the whole State then for conservation in subsequent years. So there's many agendas I had, and to make me recall that now is too remote. You know, there's some of the good ones I remember, and

like the grants program that was eventually passed and allowed the Conservation Commission to issue $100,000 of money to the districts to do conservation work. I helped get that through the legislature, and those are some of the good things that happened, and those are the ones you remember.

M.O'R.: When did you first realize that it was important for you as a farmer to become involve in politics in that way.

C.K.: The first was when I became involved with Farm Bureau on the County level. Washington County Farm Bureau has had kind of a pretty nice policy in that they promoted their young farmers to be president of Washington County Farm Bureau at around the age of thirty, which give them a early experience in the legislative field and the regulatory field that could be used for many years for the help of agriculture.

And so I happened to be one of those young people that got to be president of Washington County Farm Bureau when I was 30 years old. And I was, two years in a row, and that's when I got onto the State Natural Resources Committee. The legislative program at that time for Farm Bureau was that each county took the State program and talked to their legislatures before the session and told them what their legislative agenda would be.

M.O'R.: Now you said you were on the Farm Bureau when you were thirty. So what year would that have been?

C.K.: When I was president it was '62 through '64, so that was 31, 32, 33, in that age group.

M.O'R.: Had your father been active in the political arena at that time also?

C.K.: No, my dad was active in local government. He was on the fire district board and he was on school boards, and I got soured very much with education and the politics involved in that when I was still in high school. My dad used to take me when I was

in high school. He wanted me to go to the school board meetings with him and I did. Like I say, I got soured on education at a very early age. And I did not pursue education and the politics of it as one of my goals. My goal was to stay away from it, although I did - I think I served on the board, or for the board, for about six months.

And that was when the merger K through grade six or seven with the Hillsboro High School District, and we were then in the Cornelius Grade School District, but we were in the high school district as far as the high school. And so when that merger came, I had to then - this part of the Cornelius Grade School District merged with Hillsboro Grade School District, and I sat on the board that implemented the merger. And of course a merger isn't just passing the buck, there's dollars and cents and all those kind of things involved with that merger, and the facilities that were in Cornelius had to go to Hillsboro and vice versa, and what was their worth?

M.O'R.: Let's see, I guess the one question I was going to ask relative to what you were just saying was what it was that really soured you on - was it education generally or just the politics of education?

C.K.: Well, it was between the teachers and the administration and the school boards. And I - The teachers were, I guess, too socialistic for me. They wanted their job - The way they were going was that it didn't make any difference what kind of a job they did. They wanted to be treated - and the treatment was equal to all of them, no matter who did the good jobs and who did the bad jobs. And I was a businessman, and I felt that any person that worked for me that didn't do the job, he wasn't going to be with me no more. And I felt that the administration of the schools should have that response, and be able to do that also. And that part of

education really got me turned off quite rapidly, and I didn't want to have to hassle with that.

M.O'R.: But they suck you in on this one merger.

C.K.: Yes. Yes.

M.O'R.: And then you mentioned that you became the president of the Farm Bureau, was it, in the county of Washington County. And then that brought you into contact with the politics at the State level with respect to farming. And we just established that was in the '60s, the early '60s. So let's see, that would have been still during Hatfield's, when he was governor.

C.K.: Yes. And I had no real contacts with this Hatfield when he was governor. I've had a lot of contact with him since he became a senator, but when he was in Oregon, I didn't at that time.

M.O'R.: As long as we're on that subject, why don't you tell me a little bit about some of your dealings with him as a senator?

C.K.: I think we've mentioned that I did go to Washington, D.C. ten times to lobby and that I did bring - I was effective in getting some things here in Washington County, like the road rebuilt around Hagg Lake and the bypass for the pump station for the irrigation district and the cities. And I did that through Senator Hatfield and his office, and that was one of the real interesting times in Washington, D.C. because I happened to - It happened to be a year that the Republicans were in power in the Senate. And of course, Senator Hatfield was chairman of the Appropriations Committee, which gave me a great opportunity, and so I went to his office and visited him about the issues that we had in Washington County. And so he invited me then to go to the Capitol and to the basement and introduced me to the staff of the Appropriations Committee. And he appraised his staff of what I was going to be there for.

M.O'R.: Was Jerry Barker, would he have been one of the staffers then?

C.K.: I don't remember the name. I don't remember the name. But one of the things about that appropriation was that it didn't come out of the general fund.

M.O'R.: What was the appropriation for?

C.K.: For the road around that and the bypass. It came from the fund that was established for the Bureau of Reclamation. And so consequently, those funds did not have to have Congressional approval totally. It came basically from the Appropriations Committee. And so it was things I learned that I used in subsequent years is that when you go back there and ask for money, well don't ask for it if that's a political hot spot, ask for money out of a fund that nobody even knows about. And it's real easy to get the money then.

M.O'R.: And so you learned it then on that trip. Was that your first trip to Washington.

C.K.: No. No. That was like about my fifth or sixth trip to Washington.

M.O'R.: I'd like to pursue a little bit more about your contacts with Hatfield, but then you should back up a little bit and just tell me the whole story about your involvement with Washington generally. That started when you were on the irrigation district?

C.K.: No, I started it and really I always went back for conservation. And I was on the State board for the conservation districts the first time, and the first time it was in February and we made a trip to Atlanta, Georgia, and went to the national convention, and then, on our way back from the national convention, we made a stop in Washington, D.C. and did some of our lobbying

that we were interested in, and then came on home. And that was our first time.

C.K.: Who did you see on that time.

M.O'R.: We seen all of our congressman. And we were there only two days, and the State conservationists was with us. He was knowledgeable of Washington, D.C., and so he kind of helped us along on that. In subsequent years, the State conservationist went with me, but then I suppose over half the time I went either with somebody from our board or from the State board, but we went without a government person with us.

M.O'R.: And just talked directly to the representatives and the senators?

C.K.: Right. And I had some very good friends in government in the Department of Agriculture and Interior and those places that I enjoyed having contacts with.

M.O'R.: And these are people that you met in Washington and then you carried on a relationship on subsequent trips? Who were some of the people that stand out?

C.K.: Gaylon Bridge was the assistant conservationist in Washington, D.C., and his office was always open to me, his secretary was always available to me, his telephone was always available, that I could call home and check at home every day or whenever I thought I had to, and so he made it real easy for me in Washington, D.C. because of that. And he'd tell me a little of how the flows of politics were going on the various issues and stuff.

M.O'R.: Anybody else that comes to mind?

C.K.: Names, I'm having trouble with names. The chief of conservation - when I first started there, and always in the years past had been a professional person in conservation. Come up through the ranks in the soil conservation service. When Reagan took over as president, he insisted that person be a political

employee. And so he appointed a farmer from Missouri, he was a hog farmer, and really it made it a whole lot easier for us farmers, because we could talk back and forth farmer-talk then. And he became an assistant secretary of agriculture after about two years, in charge of conservation in the Forest Service, and so forth.

He made trips to Oregon, he's been in my home, and so, he was very helpful to me in trying to get my agenda in conservation. And of course one of the real big things was the RC&D program, which is a Real Conservation and Development program that involves cities and so forth. And we got Washington County. The urban counties of Portland were not included in that originally. So we got that as one of our agendas because it was a source of funds, and we got that in Washington County, and consequently Columbia County ended up with it, and some of the others in the State because of our efforts to get that.

M.O'R.: It sounds like you've had generally a fairly rewarding experience with dealing with the folks in Washington D.C. Have you felt like the government works in the Department of Agriculture and other bureaucracies that you dealt with there?

C.K.: Does government work?

M.O'R.: Well, does the process work for you, is probably a better way of putting it.

C.K.: Yes, but I was never satisfied. I always had my agenda, always was bigger than what I got.

M.O'R.: And you think that was just inevitable because of the give and take of politics, or do you think ...

C.K.: There was a lot of other very strong forces that were involved in some of the same things, and of course it depended on the administration as to what you called it, you know. Like targeting was a very favorite expression, and of course it's just

setting priorities. Where do you set those priorities, because that determines whether you get attention or not.

And in Washington County, the Chehelem Mountains were our really worst erosion problems, and they were heavily eroded. But because of the depth of the soil, it wasn't really considered a concern. The way the federal government looked at it as if there was a highly erodable area and the soil depth was only six inches, well that required a lot of attention. But if there was another area that was eroding a foot a year, but there was a hundred feet of soil under it, they didn't spend much time on it. And so, originally we weren't' really considered very much of an issue here in Washington County.

But I learned a little bit about how to prioritize money and influence how they selected those priorities and that helped us. But then we got in water quality and all of us in conservation knew that when water quality issue came around, that conservation districts were going to be an important player in that. Because we had all the technical capability to deal with that. And so when the lawsuit was granted in favor of the Lewis and Clark against the EPA, we knew that the district was going to have a real important, be a real important player in that Washington County - Well, it was the first in the nation to have to deal with that. And our erosion was one of the problems, because we had enough of it that it really did affect the quality of the water in our streams.

M.O'R.: Come back to Hatfield here for just a minute. You talked a little bit about this first trip, and about learning a little bit, getting into the implementation level ... of the appropriation processes. It's better to get in at an earlier political stage. But I'm just wondering how your relationship with the senator [unintelligible]

C.K.: I'll tell you a little incident. I don't know if you know, but a lot of people in this County knows about the 12-year-old law and how any kid under 12 years was banned from the strawberry fields. And of course this was the Congressional edict and passage. We were having a hard time getting the ear of anybody in Congress about that issue. So Mel Finnegan and I, we come up with this idea that Hatfield was in Beaverton promoting his book that he had just written, and so we then, Mel and I and his wife, we got in line, didn't pick up a book. We walked down through the line, and when we come to the senator, we shook hands and says - We aren't really interested in your book but we sure are interested in this 12-year-old law that's going to raise heck with our kids. And we got his attention, and he spent some time with us, listening to us, and was quite concerned. And we got his vote against the law, even though he was on the losing side. But it was that kind of attention that he's always known me then personally from then on.

M.O'R.: So he remembered you from that experience of meeting you in the book-signing line? That was previous to your first visit, then?

C.K.: Yes, that was previous to the first visit. And of course he has been speaker for the conservation district and things like that which draws quite a crowd, and he's been very favorable to our concerns in conservation.

M.O'R.: And so you've met with him on repeated occasions when you've gone back.

C.K.: Yes. Yes. And I had a very good relationship with Representative AuCoin also.

M.O'R.: Who would have been your representative.

C.K.: And he certainly give me a lot of his time, and he came out, and he's been on the farm, and I've shown him around. In Washington, D.C., he used to run every morning. Well, I'd try and

catch him in the hall and talk to him rather than in his office. It was always easier when he was still in his running clothes, he listened better.

M.O'R.: Were your contacts with both of these men mostly business, then, or did you actually socialize with them on any of these trips?

C.K.: It was all business. I did not really socialize with the Congressmen. I socialized some with the agency people, but never with the Congressmen. And of course there's always an ethics issue when you start getting involved in who pays what, and those kinds of things.

M.O'R.: Now Senator Packwood was your senator too. Did you have any kind of relationship with his office, to contrast your experience with him versus Hatfield?

C.K.: I could never talk to Senator Packwood. I got in his office one time in the ten years, and that was all.

M.O'R.: You mean in his personal office? But you knocked on the door.

C.K.: Oh yes. Oh yes. And sometimes the staff would give me a little time, but generally he was not interested in our issues at all.

M.O'R.: Well, that's an interesting comment, especially after some of the other things that goes on...Packwood's attention - I'm not talking about the scandal, I'm talking about some of the kind of work he was doing, maybe more on the national level [unintelligible]

C.K.: As far as the congressman I enjoyed the most, Representative Allman from eastern Oregon was very helpful to us as long as he was there. And oh, I can make comments like - not the one presently from Eugene, but the one prior to that.

M.O'R.: Weaver?

C.K.: Weaver, yeah. We could always get in, but we could never talk to him because he was so busy talking to us, we never got a chance to say anything to him. He liked to do the talking. But you know, after a few years I got to learn that I would ask for ten minutes of the congressman's time, but I would ask for an hour of the staff's time. And that's how I accomplished most of everything. If you can convince the staff, then you've got the person that's at the attention of that congressman then when you need it because it may not be when you're there. And if you've got that staff person sold on your issues, that's what you need.

And so I'd always schedule my time with them that way. The appointments were always made while I was still in Oregon. And I lobbied the agencies and if I was dealing with higher-ups in the agencies, I always made those appointments before I left here. And then I lobbied the lobbyists. And like Farm Bureau and some of those people, and went and asked them - Well, have you been aware of these issues? And what is your stand on them? And of course that became very effective and I usually never made an appointment for those. When I got time, I'd drop by those offices.

M.O'R.: I was going to ask you, in fact, what kind of preparation previous to going to Washington, and then I assume that when you came back there was follow-up to be done?

C.K.: You always had to stay on it.

M.O'R.: You mentioned one of the things that you worked on in those years was the road around - the improvement of the road around Hagg Lake?

C.K.: Yes. That was for the County, but then there was all the issues in conservation and one of those was always budget, and whether we could keep our soil conservation staff here and how much of it.

[End of Tape 5, Side 1]

C.K.: And then the prioritizing, or the targeting, was always an issue, it seemed like. And so we were involved in that. And usually the prioritization and targeting and so forth was always a budget note. And so you needed to get that budget note written appropriately so that the agency that was going to implement this would do it in your favor.

M.O'R.: So that required attention to detail in the language of the note, et cetera, so it was really clear? It would give you something to go back and challenge them with?

C.K.: Well, usually the budget notes were more important than the figure that was put there. And your good lobbyists really pay attention to those budget notes, 'cause that's really the intent of the budget.

M.O'R.: Did you have any experiences where the wording of a budget or the nature of a budget note was really important?

C.K.: Oh yes. When targeting came about in the Reagan Administration, it was quite important, because we ended up getting targeting on our Chehelem Mountains. Which give us some extra money to implement conservation in all our hill ground around the County. And without those budget notes, we'd have never got that.

M.O'R.: And so, in that case, the budget notes were the ...

C.K.: Yes.

M.O'R.: This was an area that needed to be targeted?

C.K.: Yes.

M.O'R.: In terms of Hagg Lake, let me just kind of drag you back a few years. I think I asked you a little bit about your awareness of the project there before it came about, when Henry

Hagg and the others were involved. I think that you said that you were involved in that process.

C.K.: No.

M.O'R.: I think we also talked a little bit about that, and about the different proposals that were out there. There was one you mentioned that was on the other side of Highway 26, and there was the one over here in Cherry Grove, of course. A couple of sites near Cherry Grove on the main stem. And then, of course, the Scoggins project.

Now, the Scoggins project wound up being the one chosen, and I'm just wondering, in terms of the exact location of the dam there, I heard that that was also a point of debate or at least something to be considered, and perhaps when the reservoir was built that the dam was actually situated where it presently is in order to allow Stimpson Lumber to continue operating at the present site, or maybe there were other considerations as well. Do you know anything about that part of it?

C.K.: I've got thoughts, but I don't know facts.

M.O'R.: Well, tell me your thoughts.

C.K.: Well, the natural place to have put that dam was down there on that rock face, which was downstream from Stimpson's. But we all know that about the time that that dam was being - the site being selected, Stimpson's put a lot of money in that plant, and I'm not sure they were in the development of the hardboard plant at that time, but it was very near then. And a lot of us felt that they spent some money in there because they thought that they were going to get bought out, and the irrigators were going to pay for it. They made a real blunder because they spent so much money and got their values so high that the project would've never gone if we'd've had to buy them out. The cost benefit ratio would have been too low.

M.O'R.: I see. And so you think they wanted to be bought out.

C.K.: Yes, definitely.

M.O'R.: That sounds like kind of an unfortunate strategy on their part all the way around.

C.K.: Yes. Yes.

M.O'R.: And then when the reservoir was actually constructed, did you get by there at all? Did you see the project underway?

C.K.: Only that I drove by there and I think it was only one time.

M.O'R.: What phase was it in when you drove by?

C.K.: It was pretty low and it was - they had just finished the core and were starting to come up with it.

M.O'R.: I see. So there wasn't much water behind it.

C.K.: No, there wasn't.

M.O'R.: They had cleared the land, though.

C.K.: Yes, and there really wasn't much to clear, and they didn't clear all of it. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife had input into it, and they required that some of that stuff stay there in the lake for natural habitat, not only for fish but also for like osprey and those kind of birds.

M.O'R.: I see. So they wanted some snags and tree stumps.

C.K.: Right. And water makes a snag real quick.

M.O'R.: But then later on, when you got involved with improving the road around there, that was - was that a project that everyone was in favor of? Or was there controversy around that?

C.K.: Well, we knew the road had to be there, and the Bureau of Reclamation is not a roadbuilder, its a builder of dams. And so, when they put that original road in, they really didn't address the slide possibilities. And so the original road slid out on a real wet winter, and I think there was about four or five slides in

that road, and it was closed off on the one side. And of course there's people that live above that reservoir that there has to be a road kept open for.

And so we got the conservation district involved in it, and we asked that a team of engineers address the issue. Of course we knew that an engineer had to come from the Bureau of Reclamation because they were going to - the money was going to come through them. And then we got a soils engineers, and we got a forestry engineer, along with the Bureau of Reclamation's engineer, and the County had a road engineer. And we got that team to work it. And we kind of feel we have a pretty good road up there, considering the problems that exist up there with the high possibility of slides and the awful lot of groundwater coming out of those hills above the reservoir.

M.O'R.: I was just around the reservoir a couple of weeks ago. I hadn't really been up there since some of the improvements have been made. It kind of surprised me to see how developed it was. It doesn't seem to be an area that's getting a lot of use. Do you think it's successful as a recreational area?

C.K.: Well, I think I mentioned before, it's not being used like I think it should be, but the people that have to administer the reservoir, the recreation part of the reservoir, I think it's successful for them. But they're certainly limiting the opportunities for recreation.

M.O'R.: That's right, we did talk about that before. Well, maybe back to Washington here briefly. You mentioned that you got on well with Reagan's appointee, the hog farmer from - was it North Dakota, South Dakota?

C.K.: Missouri. Pete Meyers was his name.

M.O'R.: Pete Meyers, okay, good. So you thought that, in his case anyway, even though it was a political appointment, that it was a good one?

C.K.: Yes. He was very good in allowing the professional people to give him guidance, and so he did a very good job of at least making that merger of a political appointee into soil conservation service.

M.O'R.: Did you enjoy your trips to Washington?

C.K.: Yes. They were very educational. And I spent time at the Smithsonian and some of the other places, and I enjoyed that.

M.O'R.: The museums there are quite spectacular.

C.K.: And you know, you'd have never got to do that otherwise. You know, I got out there at Gettysburg and Fredericksburg and George Washington's home and farm and those things that you'd have probably never done otherwise. And the rail system, the metro, is - it's a challenge to learn, but once you learn it, it's really a way to get around Washington D.C.

M.O'R.: Yeah, it's a great way to get around.

C.K.: Yeah. Yeah. And that was my first experience with something like that. While I was on one of the trips, I had relatives in Connecticut, and we took the train from Union Station in Washington D.C. and went to Bridgeport, Connecticut with it. Had to stop and sit under the river in New York for about a half hour.

M.O'R.: I've been on the train that runs between New York and Washington several times, it's a very, very efficient way to get between those cities.

C.K.: Yes. Yes. And then I have rode the plane that goes from Washington to New York and back, and that is a little bit different system. You check in your own baggage and shove it down the chute, and then you get on the airplane, and then the steward-

esses come around and that's when you pay your ticket. And you hope that they get done collecting all the money before they let down into New York. I used to call it the cattle run because everybody crowded on and hoped you got a seat, and there was no seat assignments or anything like that. Once that airplane filled up, they pulled it away and put another one in place.

M.O'R.: Did you have business up in New York, too?

C.K.: Only to visit my relatives was all.

M.O'R.: Ever ride the subway system in New York?

C.K.: No.

M.O'R.: It's a little different than Washington's.

C.K.: Is it?

M.O'R.: Much, much older in New York City. Okay, is there anything else that we haven't talked about in this general area of the politics of water quality that you might touch on, or any experience you've had that we haven't talked about? In sort of generally speaking the political arena?

C.K.: About the only thing I might add is that when I was manager of the irrigation district, I got very good at the law and water and was able to make sense out of it and able to influence some legislation, the legislators on some direction with it, and how it was implemented. I don't remember exactly how many advisory committees I was on for rulemaking in the State of Oregon. I know I was on rulemaking committees for the water resources department for DEQ, never for the Department of Agriculture, but for State lands and also for LCDC. And those committees really, with the attorney general involved, interpreted the legislation and tried to create rules for guidance of the agencies and also the people that legislation was going to affect, and how that would be conducted, and to the intent of the law. And those were real interesting sessions that I was involved in.

M.O'R.: It sounds like you've had your own success with the system and that maybe to some extent it's worked for you and Washington County, but do you think in general the political system is responsive to local situations such as the ones you're working on here?

C.K.: Yes, I think it's the best system there is. I guess that I feel that the educational system is not doing an adequate job of teaching our young people what government's all about, and you know, there's quite a movement on now that people don't believe we need a government. And that's absolutely wrong. We do need a government.

And, you know, I was just thinking the other day that Farm Bureau's got a policy on that all rulemaking has to go and be approved by the legislature. Well, if you really understand what rulemaking is all about, it's not a legislative process. It's really a process to put into a practical way that law can be implemented. And it's really the attorney general's responsibility. And it's very good to have these advisory committees that I happened to be on, and of course every one of them that I was on had an attorney, and then an attorney general representative. And you got really down to the legal nitty-gritty on it, because the attorney general was going to have to probably go to court and defend that process and those laws.

But people have to understand that that's what that is and that they need to get involved in that process. And there's an awful lot of people now that think that majority rules. Well, the Constitution of the United States protects the minorities. And there's minority protection. And the government of the United States, whether it's federal, state or local, is a representative government. It's not a government of the majority. Only the representatives are elected by a majority. And there's a reason

for that. And so I think that needs to be brought into the education system a lot stronger than it is.

M.O'R.: You think it's a point that's not being strongly enough ...

C.K.: No. It certainly isn't.

M.O'R.: We hear a lot these days about big agribiz and how it's driving the smaller farmers out of business, and so forth and so on. And hearing that, you would assume that some of the really large farmers might dominate the political process, perhaps to the detriment of the small farmers. I'm just wondering what do you think about that?

C.K.: Well, I guess for one thing I don't believe that big agriculture's going to wipe out small agriculture. I think there's been a couple of concepts that has been misunderstood, and one is the family farm. And you know, most urban people believe that a family farm is a few acres, and the guy spends fourteen or fifteen hours a day slaving on that farm and he doesn't have time for TV and he's got his kids beside him. Well, I have no idea why the urban population should believe that's a family farm because it isn't.

The farm family is entitled to have the same benefits, the same quality of life that the urban people do. And its income should be relative to the same thing, for his output. And so when the urban people talk and think of a family farm like that, it just doesn't go with me at all.

In my lifetime, agriculture has changed drastically. And anybody, whether it's urban or outside in agriculture, that thinks he's going to make a living as a general farmer on a hundred acres even now, he isn't thinking right. It takes a lot more land than that, and land is part of the agricultural process. And so, when we talk about family farms, we gotta talk about a farm that has

enough income with the opportunity of a net profit that a person can have a life of the same quality as his urban neighbors do. And so, this is one of the things that I have a problem with.

I do know that if you take any aspect of agriculture or any other business and say - well, they can't make no money, or I'm gonna condemn him because he's making money because I'm not, you're gonna hurt yourself. And if large agriculture can't make any money, then small agriculture's not gonna make any money. That's just the way it is.

The only way that could be changed is that there be a subsidy for small agriculture. And of course, the subsidy means that the federal government is your slavemaster then. And you know, the biggest slavemaster in the United States now is the federal government. All my agricultural workers are not my slaves anymore, they're the federal government's slaves, because they've got such a hold on them, financially and economically, and they've got that hold on me also. So I don't condemn large agriculture. It comes and goes, and like in the hog business, the last five years there's been mega-farms in the hog business. And all of a sudden now, with high feed and high costs, they are going out of business and the smaller hog people are still in.

M.O'R.: So they at least in this instance prove to be more resilient.

C.K.: Yes.

M.O'R.: It sounds like you were talking about your workers being slaves to the federal government, that you think maybe there's a little too much intervention on the federal government's part in farm matters? Would that be fair to say?

C.K.: Yes. Yes. Especially in labor.

M.O'R.: What do you see there?

C.K.: Well, the minimum wage on my older workers just puts them out of work every time, and I have a real problem with that. I've sold the farm now, but I still hear what's going on and see what's going on. We are using Mexican labor, but when they get to 55 years of age, they have a hard time making their minimum wage on the piece rate. And the younger fellows are making $100 a day quite often, but even so, those guys that are older, well they still have a hard time making minimum wage.

M.O'R.: Just because they don't produce as much?

C.K.: Because they don't produce as much. And we're furnishing them their housing and a lot of their food they take out of the fields, those older people, they don't require a lot of money, but the way it is, they're only resource is to go to welfare. They become the slaves of the federal government again.

M.O'R.: So you think if the minimum wage restriction didn't apply, then they'd be better off?

C.K.: Yes. Yes. The minimum wage always puts people out of work.

M.O'R.: So it's mostly in the area of labor that you have a problem then with federal policy?

C.K.: That's one of our biggest problems. With the conservation and clean water and those things, we're able to deal with pretty well. Our practices have not led to the degradation of the environment. Probably after labor is chemicals and pesticides and the removal of some of our very good pesticides because of emotion has not been good for us and has really been a problem. And one of those is DDT. DDT has been bad for the hawk and some of those things, but at that time, you know, the governments all over the country were using it to control mosquitoes, and they were spraying it directly into the water.

I remember in those early years, my neighbors would say, well, if one pound of DDT to the acre was good, three was better. But when I got into the row crop business, I had field man that did not believe that. And he encouraged us to go by the label. And if you went by the label, you did not put DDT into the environment that the hawks and all those would be able to get to. And of course DDT was so safe to human beings.

M.O'R.: Now, that's interesting.

C.K.: Yes. It was very, very safe to human beings. There was people that demonstrated - they ate it straight for umpteen days, and it never affected them, their health, or anything else. They lived - and I know those people - they lived a good healthy life. Most of them are living yet.

M.O'R.: So you thought that the banning of DDT was largely an emotional thing?

C.K.: Yes, it was definitely an emotional thing.

M.O'R.: I'm intrigued that you haven't mentioned subsidies as a problem, because that's the one that the public always hears about.

C.K.: Well, the subsidy thing has not been very well understood. And if you don't go to the intent of the law, you don't understand it. And of course, some of the subsidies in agriculture was - and it's no different than airlines or railroads or anything else - there was either a political, and generally a political motive.

[End of Tape 5, Side 2]