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Earl A. Daniels (December 17, 1971)

C. Richard Arena

Oral History Interview

with

DR. EARL A. DANIELS

December 17, 1971
Stanton, California

By Dr. C. Richard Arena

For the Richard Nixon Oral History Project

ARENA: This is interview #1 with Dr. Earl A. (Adelbert) Daniels. The interview is in the Stanton residence of Dr. Daniels. Today's date is December 17, 1971, Arena interviewing. Shall we begin, Dr. Daniels, by my asking you where and when you were born?

DANIELS: I was born in Belleville, Kansas, in 1885, May 13.

ARENA: How is it that you did end by making your residence in California?

DANIELS: My father was quite a hand to make a change, and he homesteaded in Kansas in '72, I think it was, and we lived there with the folks on the three hundred and twenty acres that he had there, until he sold and decided he wanted to come to California. So we landed here in Whittier [California], in the fall of 1905. He bought a place in the second block of North Greenleaf [Avenue], and we lived there a number of years until my mother and he both passed away. I had a twin sister and she has passed away also, so I am the last one of the direct descendants of the family.

ARENA: You do have children yourself.

DANIELS: I have a son, Dr. Howard Daniels, and a daughter, Carobel [Daniels] Pignolo. Of course, she lived here, and she went to school with Richard. They were in the same grade in high school.

ARENA: Is she still living?

DANIELS: She's still living, yes.

ARENA: Do you mind if I ask you her address and telephone number, if you can get them, and we can get them later if you don't have it in your mind right now.

DANIELS: Later.

ARENA: She attended what schools with Richard Nixon?

DANIELS: Whittier High School. And she went to USC [University of Southern California] and he went two years to Whittier [High School], I think, or one year.

ARENA: It was two, and he graduated in 1930.

DANIELS: He graduated from Whittier High School.

ARENA: He did, yes.

DANIELS: And then he went back East to Duke [Law School].

ARENA: That's right, 1934 through '37.

DANIELS: Yeah.

ARENA: And do you recall her year of graduation? Was she the exact same year?

DANIELS: She was the same year in high school. I think it was '29 or '30; I'm not quite sure.

ARENA: Do you know what she took in college when she went on?

DANIELS: Well, she took Business Administration, but she never practiced it. She got married before she worked at it.

ARENA: I see. May I ask you generally, what was your direct contact with President Nixon? For example, about when was the first time you met him, and then how long was the connection, and when was the last time you saw him face to face?

DANIELS: Do you want me to tell anything in between?

ARENA: No, not in between. First I'd like to establish that, and then we'll go into it in detail.

DANIELS: Well, the first time I remember him, I knew him in high school. You know how you will know boys. He was in high school and I knew his name, and I knew him well enough at that time that I said to myself, sometime he can be President.

ARENA: Do you recall the occasion, for example? Was it following a debate or an oratorical contest?

DANIELS: Well, he was a debater in high school, and I knew he was a very fine student, and that thought came to me at that time. He had a fine personality; he was honest and capable, and I just felt that he could have that honor sometime. I don't know of any other youngster that I ever had that thought about. But I thought that in high school.

ARENA: Did he ever come to your home because of the association with your daughter in high school, and so forth?

DANIELS: I never had any direct contact with Richard until he moved in the [Bank of America] bank building. You see, he was a lawyer in the bank building. I met him there and now and then, different places. One of the finest meetings I ever attended in my life was at Whittier College. Dr. [Paul S.] Smith was there, and Jessamyn West, and Richard was there. And they got to bantering back and forth with Dr. Smith about being in school and what happened. He told about, I remember, that the two of them came in together and they sat in the back seat and they were the smartest ones in the class, but they were inclined to cut up a little bit and cause a little excitement. It was just one of the most pleasant evenings that I ever spent.

ARENA: Do you think you recall about the year or about the occasion? Was he Vice President at the time? Was this an alumni affair?

DANIELS: I think probably he might have been senator or representative.

ARENA: Did he recognize you when he was there on that occasion?

DANIELS: Oh, yes. I remember, I went up to him, and he said, "Earl, how are you?" I'd seen him around town. And he also, as I said, was in the bank where I had my office. While we didn't come together too often, we knew one another well, spoke to each other when we met. And I've always had a very high respect for Richard. As I said--I've told this many times--I felt that as a boy, that he could be President. I still have that thought.

ARENA: Now, this office that you had, to pinpoint it as much as possible, my recollection is that the President's office was number 607 and it was the law office of Bewley, Knoop and Nixon. Where was your office?

DANIELS: I think it was in 504 at that time. I later on moved to the office just below them, after they moved out.

In other words, my son was in the service. He was with me awhile in the bank. Originally, I had an office across the street. When he came in, he wanted to be in the bank, and we moved over to the bank. Then he was called in the service, and then I changed my office a little bit to go in the corner, just below where Dick was.

ARENA: Is your son older than your daughter?

DANIELS: He's younger. He's four years younger than my daughter.

ARENA: I see. And the service that he entered would have been around World War II time, is that the idea?

DANIELS: That was it, and then he was in college at the time, otherwise he was that select group that would have been called first, providing they weren't getting an education or had some legitimate excuse.

ARENA: I see. Did he know the President personally, through not only maybe the contact in the same building, but in organizations such as Kiwanis, or the 20-30 Club?

DANIELS: Well, he knew him, but I don't think. . . . There was just enough difference in their ages that. . . . He knew him, I'm sure, well, and thought well of him, and he knew his wife, too, as well.

ARENA: Do you mind if I ask you your son's name?

DANIELS: Dr. Howard Daniels.

ARENA: Did you or your son ever actually work on any of the teeth of the President or any of the members of his family?

DANIELS: I worked one time for the little girls [Tricia and Julie Nixon], when they were quite small.

ARENA: On both of them.

DANIELS: I think I worked on both of them.

ARENA: And do you recall whether or not it was the President personally or the mother, or possibly the grandmother who brought them to the office; how they did get to the office?

DANIELS: I don't remember that. I just remember I did a little work for them.

ARENA: I'd like to keep on this general area of contact with the President and his family, and I'm still

concentrating on your association with him. Would there be any contact through the church? Did you belong to the East Whittier Friends Church, for example?

DANIELS: No. I belong to the Methodist church. My contact, as I said, was more general. I knew him in high school, knew what he was doing, what he was accomplishing there, knew him as a lawyer in the bank building. He was always pleasant and nice, agreeable. And I went to this meeting that they had for him. And then, when we were back East a number of years ago, I had but one thing in mind, that was to see Dick when I was back there. So we drove in there along in the middle of the afternoon. I forget the name of the hotel, but we weren't more than two or three blocks away from the hotel, so I walked up to his office. I saw the young lady and asked when I could have an appointment. She said she didn't know right then. It was a time when they were putting through some oil legislation and it was keeping him very occupied. And she didn't know, but she would call me the next morning at 8:30. She called the next morning and we went up to see him that afternoon. And we had a hard time to get away. I knew how busy he was, and as I told him, we went in just to say hello to him and wish him well, and so forth. He had us sit down and he asked about all the people back home and we just couldn't hardly get away, and I knew he had people out there waiting on him, but he wasn't in any hurry to let us go. Then I went down to the Senate and sat in his chair. Oh, the gentleman who was head of the Senate . . .

ARENA: Hugh Scott, possibly?

DANIELS: No, before his time. Several years ago. Well, he was downstairs. We thought very much of him. We wanted to go down and say hello to him. That name skips me.

ARENA: Well, it might come to you later. If it does we'll put it down. I wanted to be sure that I did hear you correctly. This was during his serving as a senator, which would have been between 1950 and 1952. More precisely, do you know what year or what part of the year; spring, fall?

DANIELS: No, I can't. That's quite a while ago.

ARENA: Uh huh, but it would have been in between that 1950-52. Well, actually, he was not sworn in, I guess, until 1951, although the campaign, of course, took place . . .

DANIELS: It might have been in '55, I'm not sure where it was in '55.

ARENA: Well, in '55 he would have been Vice President. If you sat in the Senate chair. . . . Although in the Senate he would have been president pro tem.

DANIELS: I sat in his Vice President's chair, I think.

ARENA: Yes, and that would be in the Senate Chamber.

DANIELS: It was 1955. And another sideline is that the young lady in his office offered to take us for a ride in the evening. She had a car, and Harry Schuyler was there.

ARENA: Harry Schuyler.

DANIELS: This thing, I had planned it. I talked to Harry before we left. He said he was going to take a trip back East and I said, well, I am too. I never thought to ask him where he was going. But we got to Washington and I had gone up to see Dick to make arrangements for the next day, and I hadn't any more than gotten back to the hotel than Harry call, and he was there. So we made arrangements with the girl in Richard's office, and she took us for a trip all around Washington that evening.

ARENA: Did you ever have any contact with him when he was a lawyer, as a client, possibly, in any connection?

DANIELS: No, I never had very much to do with lawyers. Tried to keep away from them as much as I could.

ARENA: Did you ever see him perform in any of the plays, in college or the Community Players?

DANIELS: Well, I'm sure that I did, but I don't remember what they were now. We went to most of them. I can't remember all about it.

ARENA: You do recall that he was in some, but you don't recall the details. Do you recall anything else in the way of direct contact with him, now; for example, as a speaker at your Rotary Club meetings? Was he ever a guest speaker and you were in attendance?

DANIELS: Well, he had been a speaker, years back, at the Rotary Club, and I don't remember the occasion, but he would speak there, and he was an honorary member, I think, of the Rotary Club.

ARENA: Well, this might be pretty far-out, but just to make sure: You say you're a Methodist. Were you aware that his father had been, as described in the books written about the President, a Methodist before he was married? I just wonder if that came up in any way, maybe President Nixon mentioning it to you, or maybe even you meeting with Frank and that came up?

DANIELS: Well, I don't think so. I don't remember where I heard that, but . . .

ARENA: You might have read it, as I also found out that way.

DANIELS: I think Richard's father was kind of a character, in his way. I never knew him. I knew the mother better than I did the father; that is, she belonged to East Whittier [Women's Club], and I met her a time or two.

ARENA: I just want to be sure we've covered in a general way your firsthand contact with the President. We've looked at the high school period, the college period, the law period. While he was in Washington, D.C.; and in military service, I don't suppose there was any contact at all. You did not see him, maybe, on furlough, when he was revisiting home before taking . . .

DANIELS: Don't remember any time.

ARENA: Now, let's move to the close relatives of the President. You say you do recall Mrs. Hannah Nixon?

DANIELS: Yes.

ARENA: And what would be the most clear impression of her?

DANIELS: Well, I just imagine she was a very fine mother and looked after her duties as a wife in the very finest way. She was quite a religious woman, a high-class lady all the way through, I felt.

ARENA: When you did meet her personally, through what connection was this, through her working at the store and you visited the store for some reason?

DANIELS: No. I met her when my wife belonged to the East Whittier Women's Club. It was there at a banquet that I met her, I'm sure.

ARENA: You heard about the President's father, [Francis Anthony] Frank Nixon. You never met him or had any contact with him to speak of?

DANIELS: No.

ARENA: How about the other children of the President's mother, his brothers? And by the way of a quick review, the oldest, who did die, this was Harold [Samuel Nixon], then the President, then Donald [Francis Donald Nixon], then another youngster, Arthur [Burdg Nixon] who died, and then the last son, Edward [Calvert Nixon], who makes the third living child.

DANIELS: I think Don was the one who stayed around Whittier, and I knew him. I wouldn't say I knew him well, but I'd speak to him and I'm sure he knew my name, that kind of an acquaintance.

ARENA: Do you mind if I ask you where your residence was located? Was it in the city itself?

DANIELS: Yes. I lived at that time at 606 North Friends [Avenue].

ARENA: Speaking about some other close relatives of the President, besides the immediate family, there would still have been his grandfather living, his grandmother, and even his great-grandmother. And these would have been Franklin [Milhous], Almira [Burdg Milhous], the President's grandmother, and Elizabeth [Price Griffith Milhous], and I was wondering if you ever met any of them?

DANIELS: No.

ARENA: Were you aware of the Milhous ranch, Franklin Milhous' ranch, which was located where the Quad [Shopping Center] is now located?

DANIELS: I knew there were such people, but I never had any contact with them.

ARENA: From the standpoint of history, do you mind if I ask you if being a Methodist in a Quaker-founded and Quaker-oriented community had any disadvantages for you, the members of your family, as you grew up and lived and worked in Whittier?

DANIELS: No, I don't think so. By that time the Quakers. . . . Of course, they located here first, but the Methodists came soon after, and I think they realized that we needed more than one church in the community. I never knew of any friction between them at all. And with me, I always felt the very finest regard for the Quaker. In the early days we felt they were kind of queer because they wore different hats than the average.

ARENA: Do you recall that era? In other words, when you first came in 1905, were the Quakers set apart with their special dress? The hat. . . . The woman had, of course, the bonnet and the cape. Was that quite common at that time?

DANIELS: I can remember that a lot of Quakers were wearing their special dress, and they had a division in the church, being a little liberal or not being a little

liberal, and the church divided, and I think the other churches still exist, as far as I know. Quite a group of 'em walked out. Eventually, the Quakers themselves changed; that is, they weren't so hidebound to form and all that sort of thing, till now, you don't think any more different of a Quaker than you do of a Methodist.

ARENA: One of the noticeable differences would have been the use of pastors, I believe. Was there any difference that you noted there, that there were those who used no pastors at all, in the Whittier area itself? This would be true of other parts of the country, I'm sure, but not necessarily Whittier.

DANIELS: I think Whittier got away from that.

ARENA: They always used pastors.

DANIELS: They came, I know. I've forgotten the minister's name, but I went to hear him a time or two, and they had very fine ministers, from the beginning that I knew the Quakers. And of course, I think the Quakers, and I think the Methodists helped--the Quakers established a different environment in Whittier than you'll find in the ordinary town. Have you been told that before? In other words, for years you couldn't buy anything on Sunday. If you wanted some sugar the next day, you'd better buy it on Saturday or expect to borrow. They closed down, and . . .

ARENA: And you recall that from personal experience. That isn't something that someone told you.

DANIELS: You just had to be prepared. It didn't last too long.

ARENA: Did you find that you found that inconvenient or you were unhappy in any way because of these regulations? And by the way, in the East, something like that, all stores must close on Sunday. Those laws are sometimes referred to as blue laws. In the East, as in the case here, some favor that and some do not. But did you find any personal inconvenience or unhappiness because of that?

DANIELS: I don't think so. All you did, you planned on Saturdays the things you wanted. Once in a while you'd get caught short with sugar, or something like that, and you'd go to the neighbor and borrow. But ordinarily you'd plan a day ahead, you know, and you were used to a quiet Sunday. You take Sunday, you never found a more quiet place than Whittier was on Sunday. There wouldn't be anyone on the street, and there wasn't anything open. But you'd get used to it. I think it was a confectionary store that opened up on Sunday first, but . . .

ARENA: Do you remember what confectionary store it was? And that might have been an historic move, especially if it were the first one, you know, this opening on Sunday? Do you recall that it was the first one and that there was considerable discussion about it?

DANIELS: Well, I don't remember the discussion. All I know, it was open for a while. Some people--and I can't get their names, but you might call up someone else--ran the confectionary store later than that. But when Santa Fe Springs [California] opened up, they were running this confectionary store and they developed a big oil well on their place. I've forgotten their name now, but I remember that was true.

ARENA: The oil period, as I recollect, is about 1918, I guess around World War I time, and people that I've interviewed do say that was one of the turning points in the history of Whittier, that the oil boom that took place there, not only in Santa Fe Springs but in the community of Whittier itself.

DANIELS: You see, right about that time there was quite a little depression, so the oil boom took care of it pretty well for Whittier. We never felt it very much. And it had a change effect, too, on the life of Whittier. There was a different class of people that came in, working in the oil fields. I don't know whether you're going to consult [John B.] Johnny Reilly--you probably do--but if you do, why, he can tell the story. He was a man that was working in the oil fields, a roughneck, I guess. He had two daughters, and he'd tell what a hard time he had because he was an oil man, finding a place in Whittier to live. Now he's a millionaire several times.

ARENA: I don't believe I did catch your post-high-school education.

DANIELS: I went to the University of Southern California.

ARENA: And how long a period was that?

DANIELS: That was three years. At that time, you could go direct from high school into dentistry. I remember when I was a freshman in high school, a young fellow in our class decided he was going to be a dentist, as a freshman in high school. In other words, I came along about the time they began to establish the standards you had to have before you could go into the professions.

ARENA: In other words, you became a dentist around the time that dentistry was becoming a fully established profession, with high professional standards, the same way as law and the same way as medicine.

DANIELS: I went there at a time when they recognized dentistry more or less as a trade, in the early days.

BEGIN SIDE II TAPE I

ARENA: Now, regarding the tie-up of Whittier as a rural community, your own background as a boy whose father was a homesteader, and therefore had an early farm upbringing, would you say that that was the overwhelming characteristic of Whittier, even up through the time of World War II, that Whittier was overwhelmingly a rural community?

DANIELS: Yes; it was only two thousand, probably less than that when we came to Whittier. In other words, clear up in the north end of town, that was practically vacant. C. W. Harvey put that on, that subdivision, and there were a lot of vacant lots up there. But I remember, we used to go up Painter [Avenue], and about the sixth block there was one home up there, it just seemed like that was clear out in the country. There wasn't hardly anything in between. And it had to go from there. There was more building in 1906 than there ever was before. The Masonic Temple was built in 1906 on Greenleaf [Avenue], which now is owned by the Knights of Columbus. One building just east of the bank was built that year. And that was a lot of buildings. And then shortly after that the St. Johns Building was built up above there.

ARENA: What is the St. Johns building?

DANIELS: That's the one on Bright Avenue, Bright and Philadelphia [Street]. The family of St. Johns, they had a home in there. They owned that lot and built that building about that time.

ARENA: So Whittier was made up of a few large buildings, but the great majority of people depended on farming, still, and ranching.

DANIELS: Yes, for work. A number of people worked at the state school, too.

ARENA: By that you mean the Nelles School for Boys, but possibly it had this other name when you were there, in the beginning.

DANIELS: Yes. Whittier State School. W. B. Coffin was working down there, I think as vice president. Later on he was put in charge.

ARENA: Do you recall anything about the idea that the school was established to promote the economy of the community, that that was one of the objectives?

DANIELS: Yes, we heard that quite a little bit at that time. You've been told, I'm sure, that during that day there was no business here at all, and really anything that. . . . I think they raised tomatoes, and people thought it was something to get a job working in the tomatoes for a while. And then the state school, there was so many people that worked there that lived in and contributed to Whittier. It was a small town, and anything that would contribute to the economy, why, they were for it, which, after it was all over, I think they wondered if the state school was placed where it ought to be, because there could have been a lot of people lived down there.

ARENA: As far as you know, is the present location of the Nelles School for Boys also the original location, near the intersection of Philadelphia [Street] and Whittier Boulevard?

DANIELS: I'm sure that it is. In fact, it went clear down to the street below there. The girls' school was there, too. The two together went clear down to the other street down below.

ARENA: In other words, originally there were both girls and boys, and now it's just boys.

DANIELS: Yeah.

ARENA: Any idea when that change took place, and why they ceased admitting girls and about when?

DANIELS: I don't know just when it was. It was several years ago. One thing, they felt it was built up too fast, and they also didn't feel it was good policy for the girls and boys to be that close together. I'm sure that entered into it.

ARENA: Do you recall instances where escaping boys or girls would cause an alarm to be sounded throughout the community, or some bell ringing?

DANIELS: Oh, yes. In the early day, if someone got away, why they tooted a horn or a bell; it would start ringing and you would hear it for miles.

ARENA: Was it the idea that everyone in the community was supposed to be on the lookout, and possibly even help in the search?

DANIELS: Yeah, that was the idea, to alert them that there were boys out. And some of those boys were not young kids. They got fellows in there that would lie about their age. I was a dentist down there part time, did work one day a week. They had big, older boys. And they

had a bad deal there, because they had a cottage on this end where they had younger boys, and then they had this big building where they had the boys, and a lot of them were pretty tough characters. It was too close for the two to be together. Once in a while one of those big kids would get ahold of one of these small boys and it wasn't good. But there were quite a few people worked there and it helped the economy of Whittier, I'm sure, for a while. But after that, they realized they'd had that built up rather than having the state school there.

ARENA: Do you recall what other main source of economic aid there was? I'm thinking about these canneries and maybe packinghouses. To what extent did Whittier have important packinghouses and canneries?

DANIELS: By the time we got here. . . . You see, the price of oranges--as you've probably been told before--had been pretty worthless to the grocer.

ARENA: Excuse me; I didn't quite hear that.

DANIELS: They couldn't get any price at all for their fruit.

ARENA: During this period of . . .

DANIELS: During this early period.

ARENA: Early period.

DANIELS: Because the commission men. . . . That was before the association was organized.

ARENA: What organization was this?

DANIELS: It was called the Whittier Citrus Association.

ARENA: Would that be the one with which Harry Schuyler was connected?

DANIELS: Yes. He could tell you all about it. Up to that time, the commission men robbed the growers, and you'd get fifty cents a box. Well, you couldn't raise oranges for fifty cents a box. But the minute the association was organized, the price of fruit went up to, probably a dollar and a half. Anyway, they put it on a good basis. And I know there was an orchard out there that produced as much as a thousand dollars an acre, and the land wasn't worth much more than that before. And there was a period in there when citrus land went from. . . . I know my father looked at a grove of lemons he could have bought for six hundred dollars an acre. Right about that time was the low. But the association began to operate, and it went up immediately to five thousand dollars an acre.

ARENA: Even non-ranchers, such as yourself, or any sort of business people, would have a keen interest in what the price of oranges and lemons was at that time, because that was the key to the economy of everyone in the community.

DANIELS: Oh, yeah, that made all the difference in the world in the economy, It was very limited. They had a hard time going.

ARENA: Do you recall that East Whittier was the more successful part of that area, as compared with Whittier itself, that especially up to around, oh, maybe 1918, were the more successful ranchers--frankly, we'll say the wealthiest ranchers--occupied in East Whittier, rather than in what is now Whittier proper itself?

DANIELS: Well, East Whittier was supposed to have the finest orange and lemon groves of any place in California, and they were supposed to send out the earliest oranges of any place, but there was a little catch to that. They took their navel oranges in and sweat them and changed the color, but that didn't make them any sweeter, so eventually it was found out that it was the oranges in the San Joaquin Valley [California] and the warmer places that had the sweeter oranges, so Whittier eventually pretty well went out of raising navel oranges and raised more lemons than they did oranges.

ARENA: Do you recall where the navel orange started in California?

DANIELS: Well, I don't know. I think I . . .

ARENA: It wouldn't be Whittier, necessarily.

DANIELS: I've heard the story and I've kind of forgotten it, about where the first navel tree was located. I think it was over by Azusa, or someplace over there. That's where the first navel trees were in California. And valencias, I don't know when they came in. They're a budded tree, you know. But they found out quite early that Whittier was pretty free from frost. That's another thing that you can go into with different people, is that Whittier in 1909, I think it was, had a pretty bad frost, I mean the whole country, and we had some trees up next to the hills that weren't frozen at all. There weren't too many of them, but there were a few.

ARENA: They had some climatic advantages over some other parts of Southern California, which was a benefit.

DANIELS: Climatic advantages, and then soil conditions, a heavier soil than a lot of them.

ARENA: How about the human element? To what extent did the Quakers deserve credit for unusual skill in farming methods?

DANIELS: Well, I think that they did, because the Quakers were hard-working people, and I think they were inclined to be successful people. And they came out here and they were used to working hard, and they took care of their grants the same way. Of course, as you know, it's a scientific business to be in. You don't just put in a tree and it grows up and you have a big production all at once. If you know something about it you have a pedigreed tree to start with. You take care of it the way it ought to be taken care of, and you get a whole lot better results.

ARENA: Results in the sense of flavor, the size and yield per acre. Would they be the main things you would strive for?

DANIELS: A stronger tree, all the way around.

ARENA: Not being a Quaker yourself, but living among Quakers for so many years, what type of a balance do you find between the Quakers' farming skill, their business skill, and their religious environment--if that doesn't complicate it too much? For example, they could be very good farmers but lose out in the business end by not getting a good price and not knowing how to deal with city people. And then, of course, they were noted for their particular religious beliefs. To what extent were these three drawn into harmony, or not? To what extent were they outstanding in one but not the other, from your own personal observations, over a lifetime of living in such a community, bearing in mind that you, as well as I, know that Quakers are a minority in the country, and there aren't too many communities, Quaker-founded communities in the country?

DANIELS: Well, I think that the Quakers, their way of living, their honesty and sincerity, their religious life, have made a different community out of Whittier than the average community, because we were the last town to have a cocktail bar, there were fewer people that drank in Whittier, probably, than any place else. That was never a problem, really, in the town. And they were people that were honest to deal with. If it was a Quaker, you didn't have to worry if you were going to get your money. They were hard-working, they were frugal, they used their intelligence. In other words, they had a nice family and had a nice home, and they tried to do the thing that they were doing in the best way it could be done.

ARENA: Bearing that in mind, about the Quakers as a whole, from your recollection of President Nixon growing up, the young student and the young lawyer, would

you say that he reflected that history and that Quaker world as a whole? Was he a true son of Whittier--let me put it that way--a good example of the type of community that Whittier as a whole was?

DANIELS: Well, I'd have to modify that a little bit. You have to think that conditions have changed a lot. He was working under different conditions than the average person working in Whittier. He's doing that now, so that with some people they would criticize maybe some of the things that he does that I wouldn't criticize, because after all, he's dealing not only with Quakers, but people that do things differently than Quakers do. He's had to modify to a certain extent the things that he's done. Now, I don't have any doubt but what--maybe I shouldn't say this, because I don't want it in print very much--but I expect that he has wine in The White House now. I'm inclined to think he does, because he has guests that like to have a glass of wine for dinner. And I still question whether Dick ever drinks very much; if he does, it's a courtesy drink that he takes because he feels it's better to do that than to pass it by.

ARENA: The old Quaker community, of course, was down on drinking, I understand, down on drinking, down on smoking, card-playing, dancing. These things came about very gradually, but really in opposition to what the fundamental Quaker tradition and origins were.

DANIELS: I always said it seemed to me that religious people . . . . I questioned, I waited quite a while before I joined the church, because I felt that it isn't everything you have fun doing is wrong. To me, if you play cards in a certain way, there's no harm in it at all; it's enjoyment. To set down a rule that it's wrong to play cards . . . . In other words, for me to set down a rule that you can't do a lot of things because someone would make a sin of it, why, there isn't anything you can do, hardly. You can make a sin of anything. You can make a sin of eating by over-eating. And a lot of my friends who have a cocktail for dinner, they don't have another cocktail, maybe, for a week. In other words, I was brought up with the idea that if you took a drink you were going to be a drunkard, sure. I've gotten quite a little bit of that out of my system. Not that we have it around, or anything of the sort, but I can see that hundreds of people don't abuse it. Of course, if I had my way, probably we wouldn't have it at all, but I'm not saying that a person shouldn't have a drink if he wants to and don't abuse it. Of course, I think Richard's in that kind of a bind, you might say, in a way. He's with people that that's an ordinary thing they do. So I don't know how he stands on it, but I imagine he's had to modify that a little bit, wouldn't you say?

ARENA: Knowing that that is the case, that he drinks socially, certainly in the sense that if there is

a formal affair, a formal state dinner, that there possibly might be some alcoholic beverages served, or if he's invited to a French affair, we'll say, while he's abroad, or something like that, that there's a possibility that he will drink socially in order not to offend the host. Granting that that's possible, were you aware that he had taken a stand on one of these taboos--dancing--on campus, back in his Whittier College days? Was that a part of your actual experience? You might have read about it, but I'm just wondering if you recall when that did happen? It did happen. He did campaign in favor of dancing on campus. I was just wondering if you were aware of that taking place when it did happen. To refresh your memory, by the way, this would have been during his junior year when he was campaigning for the office of president of the student government, which would take place the following year; and that year, the spring, would have been 1933, and that's when he campaigned to have the rule changed, allowing students to have dancing on campus. I was just wondering if you recall anything about that.

DANIELS: I remember when there was a lot of argument about it. They were very strict up there in those days. I remember that one boy I think they kicked out because he was called for smoking downtown. So Whittier, originally, was a pretty strict institution. We were at the hotel a while ago, staying there for a while, and the way the kids acted then, why, it was quite a different story from what it was in the early days.

ARENA: Going back to another direct contact with the President, I mentioned it generally and I said that if possible I'd like to get back to it, did you ever attend any of the high school or college debates in which the President participated and observe him personally?

DANIELS: No, I don't think I did.

ARENA: But you were aware that he was doing that sort of thing.

DANIELS: Yes, and after he went into politics I heard a number of his speeches. And by the way, I don't want to miss this: To me, I think the thing that made Richard, more than anything else that ever happened to him, was when he was chairman of the Un-American Activities Committee. If you remember, that was the time they took up [Alger] Hiss, and I think that was the start of, I believe, the real political life of Richard Nixon. And I think that was, really, one of the finest things that he ever did.

ARENA: That certainly gave him national, and very likely, international publicity and attention; there's no question about it.

DANIELS: Well, you see, Hiss was a very proper fellow. You know, he was recognized by the upper circles as being one of them, and for Richard to come out and do that it took a large amount of nerve to do it.

ARENA: Knowing the President before his political years, as you did, and knowing the community in which he grew up, and of course, keeping your eye on the Hiss situation, what was there that surprised you or did not surprise you about the President's actions during the Hiss case affair? What was there that surprised you or did not surprise you; and fundamentally, did you see anything new in the President's character or his ability to tackle this problem, as previous problems that you knew about before, or the previous personality that he had before? What I'm saying, I guess, basically, is that we're not interested in politics, as such, right now. We're interested in the man. But was the man different in conducting the Hiss affair, and conducting himself during that affair, than he was when you knew him, knew about him growing up in your community?

DANIELS: Well, I knew him growing up in my community, and I think he took different stands when he was in high school; that is, I don't think he drank or smoked or did any of those things, and I think that this Hiss affair, he accidentally got into it, being head of that committee, and I read quite a little about it. It took a lot of nerve to stay with it, because the influence against him was very strong. And it took a lot of research to keep that going; in fact--I've forgotten some of it--the story pretty near hinged on. . . . They couldn't pin Hiss down, to know, until there was a story, something about--I've pretty nearly forgotten what it was--but all Hiss said was, "I don't know Whittaker Chambers." And they didn't have anything to prove it by. It had to do with one morning, bright morning, their going out and seeing a bird--I've forgotten what bird it was, someone else can probably tell you that--and they finally got the two together, got Hiss to mention the same incident. Have you run across that before?

ARENA: Not that particular item about the bird. There was something about using Quaker speech--I don't know if you recall that, the use of Quaker speech by Hiss.

DANIELS: It was a bird that they very seldom saw in this country, and both of them mentioned it.

ARENA: I see. As this interview comes to an end, I want to thank you very much for giving me your time and complete cooperation, Dr. Daniels.

DANIELS: And I want you to know that I still think he's the greatest American we have.

ARENA: Thank you very much.

DANIELS: I have confidence in him, and I think he has a wonderful mind, and he has accomplished more than we know, and history will tell the story.

ARENA: And you are adding to that record. Thank you.