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William Thomas Hughes (February 11, 1972)

C. Richard Arena

Oral History Interview

with

MR. WILLIAM THOMAS HUGHES

February 11, 1972
Whittier, California

By Dr. C. Richard Arena

For the Richard Nixon Oral History Project

ARENA: This is interview #1 with Mr. William T. Hughes, (T stands for Thomas) of Whittier, California, February 11, 1972, Arena interviewing. Mr. Hughes, do you mind if we begin by my asking you where and when you were born?

HUGHES: I was born in Cedarville, California, on April 29, 1895.

ARENA: And what was the occasion that brought you to Whittier, and about when?

HUGHES: I came to Whittier in 1921 for the purpose of building homes and subdividing property.

ARENA: Now, you may or may not know that the President's family moved from Yorba Linda [California] to East Whittier (East Whittier is now, of course, a part of Whittier) in 1922. Did you, by any chance, come into contact with the Nixon family as early as 1922 or thereabouts?

HUGHES: No. I knew where the store was soon after they had the store out there. And we would hear about some good buys that they had, and just little casual things. The name Nixon I knew, but I didn't know the family.

ARENA: Do you mind if I ask you if you knew some members of the family on the mother's side, in other words, the Milhous part of the Nixon family?

HUGHES: Well, my wife went to school at Whittier College and she knew many of the Milhous girls and family, and I knew [Oscar O.] Doc Marshburn about that time, who was a relative either directly or by marriage.

ARENA: And may I ask you, if you don't mind, your wife's full maiden name?

HUGHES: My wife's name is--was--Ruby Lucile Buck.

ARENA: Do you happen to recall the year of graduation, either of the academy, which she might have attended or the college or both?

HUGHES: She attended Whittier College. She left college the last year in order for us to get married, and she did not return.

ARENA: Do you recall what that year was? I guess you would.

HUGHES: 1924.

ARENA: While we're on the subject of this background, could I ask you to repeat again other members of your family (which we did off the tape, but I'd like to get it on the tape) who had some connection with President Nixon, some contact with him, such as your daughter and your niece, and we'll begin with your daughter. What is her present name?

HUGHES: Her name is Dorothy Cortner.

ARENA: And she is living now, you say . . .

HUGHES: At Herald [California], near Galt, which is twenty-five miles east of Sacramento, or south. It's near #99 highway.

ARENA: And your daughter's connection with the Nixon family is that she was a student of the President's wife, [Patricia Ryan] Pat Nixon.

HUGHES: Before they were married.

ARENA: I see. Do you recall your daughter's year of graduation?

HUGHES: From high school, no.

ARENA: Or about when she was attending, for example. You don't have to remember the exact year.

HUGHES: It must have been near the 1930's.

ARENA: It might help . . .

HUGHES: No, it would have to be more than that.

ARENA: That's right.

HUGHES: About 1940 to '42.

ARENA: Right, because around that time [Patricia] Pat Ryan was teaching at the high school and, of course, she became Mrs. Nixon in 1940, so it would have been close to 1938.

HUGHES: Yes, well around 1938 I'm sure was when she was there.

ARENA: Right; very good. And your daughter went on, by the way, to college, do you recall?

HUGHES: No. She went to business college.

ARENA: She had business subjects, evidently, with Mrs. Nixon.

HUGHES: Yes, she took typing, and what commercial subjects, I don't know.

ARENA: That's one further family connection. One was the fact that your wife attended the same college as Hannah Milhous Nixon, the President's mother. This was your daughter who was a student in the commercial classes of Pat Nixon. And then, I believe you said you also have a niece.

HUGHES: A niece who started to school, I think she said, in the same starting class, the first grade, with Richard Nixon. And she went all the way through college and graduated with him out of Whittier College.

ARENA: And would you give her full name, please?

HUGHES: Barbara McPartland.

ARENA: How about her maiden name?

HUGHES: Her maiden name was Barbara Cogburn.

ARENA: Is there any other that might come to mind at this point, any other contact with members of the family, aside from the one that we're going to talk about later, when you sold the home to the President? Any other connection before we get to that?

HUGHES: Well, yes, before we get to that. I just knew him casually; he was just one of the young people, and I knew him not very well, just knew who he was. But when he came back from the war, why. . . . I'll stop right here and say: [Thomas William] Tom Bewley, his former partner, asked me one day before

Richard came back if I didn't think another fellow (now this other fellow, I think I better not give his name), he asked me if I didn't think that this fellow would make a good partner for their law firm, and I told him that I didn't believe that this fellow would add anything to their firm. He was a nice fellow, but I didn't admire him as a young attorney. So anyway, he didn't go with the firm.

And then, not too long after that, he asked me if I knew Richard Nixon and I said, "Yes, I did." He said, "What do you think about him as a member of our firm?" I said, "Well, he would really add to the firm." I didn't hear any more about it, but the next I knew he was a member of the firm, and it was then that I began to know Richard Nixon better. I would meet him more often and talk with him and was always impressed. And then, went along till Herman Perry decided, with others, that Richard Nixon ought to run for Congress against Jerry Voorhis, why, he called me and asked me if I didn't have a desk I could loan Dick Nixon, and so we loaned him a desk and a chair. We still have the desk. We're not sure the chair is the one that we loaned him, but my brother has those.

ARENA: Would this furniture be for the political office, you mean?

HUGHES: Yes, the first political office, when he was going to run for Congress.

ARENA: And you still have that desk?

HUGHES: My brother has it, yeah. I'm sort of ashamed I didn't loan him a better desk. [Laughter] It isn't much. But it's what his desk was; it's what he started with.

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

HUGHES: John Nolan Hughes.

ARENA: Could you give me his address, please?

HUGHES: Well, they've changed the numbers and I can't quite, but it's on College Avenue.

ARENA: On College Avenue. We can always get it from that.

HUGHES: I'll tell you. If you're driving up College Avenue from Whittier Boulevard, on the left you'll see an entrance that is a fenceful of flowers, right next to the church there, just before you get to the church, and drive in there and you'll see an unusual bouquet of flowers the like of which you've never seen and he'd like to show it to you, and he can show you that desk.

ARENA: Thank you very much. Would you happen to know, speaking of historical items like that, like the desk that was used by the President, if you have documents, while we're on this subject of that--keeping these things for the future--would you happen to know if you have any correspondence with the President that you've saved and so forth?

HUGHES: Oh, yeah. I've got quite a lot in that scrapbook there.

ARENA: And that scrapbook which you just pointed to has not only newspaper clippings and articles, but also your actual correspondence?

HUGHES: Yes.

ARENA: I see. And these would be the originals, and not copies?

HUGHES: Yes.

ARENA: And you keep them right here in your residence of 11445 Sunnybrook Lane, near Candlewood Country Club, in Whittier, California.

HUGHES: Yeah.

ARENA: Thank you. We just like to know where these things are for future reference.

HUGHES: Yeah.

ARENA: Is there anything else like that that you wanted to mention before we come to the rental or the sale of a house to the Nixons by you?

HUGHES: Well, I lived right here on the corner till my wife died. Then I married my present wife, and I had--I can't find it right now--it was a picture that I received from him, way back, autographed to me, and I just can't find it for now. I know it's somewhere in the luggage.

ARENA: Yes. Do you mind if I ask you this by way of background? Would you give an indication of your own education?

HUGHES: Oh, I have no education. I went through high school at Cedarville, California, that's in Modoc County, way up north. I was twenty-one before they got shoes on me--but a country high school. And then I went to business college at Modesto [California]. Then I went into the service and went to some of the different schools, like the enlisted specialists and sergeant major.

ARENA: Do you mind if I ask you what branch, Mr. Hughes, in the service?

HUGHES: Well, I went in the Aviation Signal Corps and was soon transferred to the General Service Infantry.

ARENA: We're talking about World War I here, aren't we?

HUGHES: Yes.

ARENA: Aviation Corps there?

HUGHES: Yeah. And I went from there to the Coast Artillery to train in this specialists' school as a sergeant major, and about the time I finished that, why, they asked me if I wanted to go to Officers' Training School, and I went to Camp Zachary Taylor and got my commission there as a second lieutenant. And then from there I went to Lincoln Memorial University and went one semester there. And that was the extent of my actual academic education.

ARENA: How long did you remain with the military service?

HUGHES: I was in the service a year and a month.

ARENA: Did you ever get to fly during that stint with the Aviation Corps?

HUGHES: No. Never did. No.

ARENA: Did you fly afterwards? Did you take it up as an interest in civilian life?

HUGHES: No, I didn't.

ARENA: I want to be sure that we have covered all of the relatives of the President. For example, did you ever meet . . .

HUGHES: . . . Mother and brothers?

ARENA: Well, his brothers, there's both Donald [Francis Donald Nixon] and Edward [Calvert Nixon].

HUGHES: I knew Don quite well; I didn't know Edward. I knew his mother quite well, and she was a very good friend of my wife.

ARENA: Hannah Nixon.

HUGHES: Hannah, yes.

ARENA: The other relative situation I was thinking about was HER parents and grandparents. Her own mother was Almira [Burdg Milhous], who continued to live on at the original Franklin Milhous ranch, I understand. And then Mrs. Hannah Nixon's grandmother, her father's mother, was brought here from Indiana too for a while, and her name was Elizabeth [Griffith Milhous].

HUGHES: Oh, yes.

ARENA: And she was noted for having done some preaching as a Quaker before she came to Whittier. You don't have any personal recollection, possibly, of that group of relatives?

HUGHES: No, I don't know much about . . .

ARENA: They were quite up in years anyway.

HUGHES: I've been told those things by my wife, because she knew them quite well. She knew the Quakers quite well and lived in Whittier from the time she was a little girl, you see.

ARENA: Do you think your wife kept any correspondence with Mrs. Hannah Nixon that might now be in your possession somewhere, and including that very scrapbook that you mentioned?

HUGHES: No, that was way back. This was my first wife that died about three years ago. But no, I wouldn't have any idea where it would be, because I didn't know them well enough you know.

ARENA: Well, this is just in case there are any papers around that have Nixon family business, of course, that would be of interest to future historians. Still on the subject of your possibly knowing other relatives, there was Mr. [Charles Wright] C. W. Milhous, who was in education out at the Lowell School District.

HUGHES: Yes, my wife used to talk about him. I didn't know him.

ARENA: How about the man who taught music, Mr. Griffith Milhous, who was a halfbrother of Mrs. Hannah Nixon, if his name comes to mind.

HUGHES: I don't know him.

ARENA: Now, there are some other sisters of Hannah that you might have come into contact with. One we've already mentioned, [Rose] Olive Marshburn. But there was a nurse

who died not too many years ago, I understand, Mrs. Martha Gibbons, who was a nurse and lived, the last time, up near Whittier College. Do you happen to know if you ever ran into that name, Martha Gibbons?

HUGHES: No. There was a first cousin of Dick's. The mothers were sisters, and I don't know, I can't think of his name. He worked for me for several years.

ARENA: One name in that connection could be the Harrisons. There is Russell Harrison, Sr., Russell Harrison, Jr.

HUGHES: Oh, I knew them.

ARENA: Good. As a matter of fact, you remind me of Mr. Russell Harrison, Sr. I've seen him just a few days ago. You might know that he has property not only here but also up in Dinuba [California], just outside of Lindsay. Also, you might have had contact with the Seulkes.

HUGHES: I know the name, but . . .

ARENA: [Thomas T.] Tom Seulke helped Mr. Donald Nixon in his store for a while. Another one you might know is the gentleman who owns and runs the Sea Fare Inn; this is Mr. William [Alan] Milhous, Bill Milhous.

HUGHES: What does he run?

ARENA: He runs the Sea Fare Inn. It's a restaurant specializing in seafood, out on Whittier Boulevard.

HUGHES: Yeah. No, I don't know that. I know about him.

ARENA: All right. Now, let me ask you to go over your Seven Seas educational experience, your program called the "Seven Seas University"?

HUGHES: University of the Seven Seas.

ARENA: And how this ties in with President Nixon.

HUGHES: Well, I was given a job to do in Rotary [Club]. I've belonged to Rotary Club since 1927. And the president said, "Bill, I want you to find something for your committee to do. I'm going to put you on a special committee, and I want you to find something to do that's international, if possible, and something worthwhile for our club." And so, I was in Washington and I had one of the Congressmen [George Albert Kasem], he was a Democrat--he only served one term--say, "I want you to come in and talk to me." I saw him in the hallway there somewhere. And so he

said, "I want to talk to you." And I said, "Well, you know I didn't vote for you." And he said, "I don't give a damn about that; I want to talk to you." I said, "All right. We understand each other." And he said, "Bill, I think that we ought to have an international university, either in California or maybe in Honolulu [Hawaii]." And he said, "We've got a lot of ships and maybe we ought to have a ship. Maybe we could have, I don't know." He said, "Kick that around a little, and when you go back, talk to some of 'em in our district there and see what they think." So when I came back, I thought, well it might be interesting. So I called a small group of people--I think I've got a picture of most of them here--to a meeting at Whittier College and asked them what they thought of it.

ARENA: Would that have been the first formal meeting?

HUGHES: This was the first . . .

ARENA: And it was held at Whittier College.

HUGHES: Yes, this was a forerunner meeting, before we did anything.

ARENA: That's interesting. I see. Do you recall about the date, Mr. Hughes?

HUGHES: Yes. Step right here.

ARENA: Now, coming back from the news photograph story in the Whittier Daily News of 1959, let me get the precise day as well as year. That's December 10, 1959, showing a picture of what had taken place a little earlier.

HUGHES: All right. Now, Jerry Black, Dr. [Gerald] Black, took office in June, or maybe the latter part of June he took office at the Rotary Club and started talking to me about that time about finding something. Well, then, when I went to Washington, [D.C.], and came back was when I held this meeting, so that would have been in, oh, maybe, might be in August, perhaps, first meeting in August and they seemed to go for it, so that was the academic side. They seemed to think it was a good thing to do. And so I started working on it, and I had quite a hassle with Whittier Rotary Club because they thought it was too big a thing to handle, and some of them thought it was crazy, and I guess they might have been right, I don't know.

ARENA: And, as you were saying, some people thought it would be a pretty big job to handle by the Rotary Club.

HUGHES: We had pretty stiff competition in the club, because they thought the ship might go down, it would take 'em all to the bottom, they'd be our kids and we'd be responsible,

and I don't know what all. And so, anyway, it caused quite an upset, and quite an upset to Whittier. And they wouldn't print anything about it in the Whittier Daily News because it wasn't a popular thing, but we ploughed away and we ploughed away and then we held the organization meeting, and we had some attorneys in the club and some of them were afraid that maybe we might involve the Rotary Club in some tremendous thing. So, with the advice of others, we set up a corporation and founded a university. Well . . .

ARENA: As it turned out, was the university finally on its own, or was it sponsored by the Rotary Club, when you finally got all of the legal business out of the way?

HUGHES: Well, it was actually sponsored by the Rotary Club, but the way they put it across was that they sponsored the idea, so that the Rotary Club wouldn't have any direct liability. That was the principal thing. They sponsored the idea.

ARENA: I see.

HUGHES: Well, anyhow, in my opinion, that was about the biggest thing that ever happened in Rotary, because on October 22 we sailed, we started around the world. We went to many countries, about twenty-one. And we were met highest salutes and the greatest praise, a tremendous trip.

ARENA: Was the trip over how many months, Mr. Hughes?

HUGHES: About four months.

ARENA: Do you remember about how many students?

HUGHES: We had three hundred on board that ship. I made a trip around the world to find this ship and, finally, one of the first countries we called on came to us and said they had a ship--that was the Holland-American line. And they called this ship The Seven Seas, so it fitted right into the name we had, University of the Seven Seas. And so we were met by kings and queens and war boats.

ARENA: This was strictly a Whittier-city born and propagated idea then, born and pushed through.

HUGHES: That's right. It started right just like I told you. And we had to fight all the way through to get it across. One of our passengers later talked to a Rotary Club in the Philippines, and the daily paper there gave us the full front page. Everything on that page was the University of the Seven Seas.

ARENA: They knew about the connection with the Rotary--the Philippine Rotary people, of course, knew about the sponsorship.

HUGHES: Oh, yes, and all around the world they knew that. If you'd go in many countries around the world, they'd know a lot about it.

ARENA: Do you happen to have, yourself, references to this in your scrapbook, where it was covered in newspapers, etc.?

HUGHES: Yes.

ARENA: Good. So there would be some written accounts about this in your scrapbook.

HUGHES: Oh, yes, many. And magazines, like Life. I've got those torn to pieces and put in here, you see, where they wrote the story in Spain.

ARENA: Do they also refer to you? Do they have pictures of you at the same time?

HUGHES: Oh, yes, nearly all of them do. And I talked to many Rotary Clubs around the world, before and after, and here in this area, nearly every Rotary Club in Southern California, and some other clubs.

ARENA: How long were you directly associated with this project, Mr. Hughes?

HUGHES: Well actively, I'm still Founder Emeritus of the University of the Seven Seas, which is inactive right now, and may always be that way, because we made a deal with Chapman College to take over, and we didn't want to give them that name, and we held that name back. We might take it over with another program that we've got. We haven't decided whether we might do that.

ARENA: Could I ask you to tie in your Seven Seas University project, Mr. Hughes, by recounting the experience that you had with President Nixon, then Vice President, asking him for advice regarding your trip and visit with certain London dignitaries? Let me ask you that first.

HUGHES: Well, yes.

ARENA: And that WAS in connection with your . . .

HUGHES: It was not with the University.

ARENA: Oh, at that time. I see.

HUGHES: This was a business project. I was working with London [England] soon after they started the dollar export, trying to get dollars over there, trying to have something to sell us. And so I fought my way through the timber to get orders filled, and I got them filled. That was another long story in itself. But by doing that, I apparently struck a soft pedal somewhere and got an invitation to this great reception that was being given to the president of the Board of Trade by the Lord Mayor of London in the Mansion House. I knew that the ambassadors would be about all that would be invited, the top men of the country, just under the King and Queen, with the top men of other countries that were in the country. And so I knew that I ought to have something to talk about if they were asking; it would have to be something that wasn't in the papers. And so I went by Washington and had an appointment with Richard Nixon.

ARENA: Now, about what year was this? I want to be sure we have the position he had in government then.

HUGHES: He then was Vice President.

ARENA: And about what year roughly? You don't have to remember exactly. It would have been . . .

HUGHES: Oh, it was the first four years.

ARENA: It was the first administration. All right, that would have been between 1953 and '57.

HUGHES: Yes.

ARENA: The campaign was '52, of course, and he was sworn in '53.

HUGHES: Well, it was, maybe, '54. All right. And so I went to Washington and I asked him what I would be asked over there and what I should tell 'em. And so we sat there and talked for a while, and he told me some of the things that were right--tops. And those WERE the things, when I got there, that I was asked. And I could say, "Well, what I can tell you is what the Vice President told me before I left." [Laughter] You'd think I was living in the White House or next to it.

ARENA: Was he very difficult to make the appointment with? Did he remember you from the period when you knew him back in Whittier? Is that why you were able to see him?

HUGHES: Oh, he grabbed me and hugged me like I was his brother. And he said, "Bill," he said, "I hope for the time when we can just have a visit." You know, he'd never have but a very few minutes. And he always treated me just like I was his brother. And even when I saw him at his mother's grave, he grabbed around me and he said, "Bill Hughes, University of the Seven Seas," and he gave me a bear hug, you know.

ARENA: Mr. Hughes, can we go back now to that, when you did meet him in connection with the University of the Seven Seas? Whatever comes to mind about your contact with President Nixon.

HUGHES: Well, I had probably written and told him about it. This I don't remember, but I'm sure that I had written back and forth to him about the University of the Seven Seas.

ARENA: By the way, was he a Rotarian?

HUGHES: He is still a Rotarian of our club. He's an honorary Rotarian, and so am I.

ARENA: Is that right? And your club is, precisely, what, the Whittier Rotary Club?

HUGHES: That's right.

ARENA: Because I know there is an East Whittier, maybe, and then there's a Rio Hondo Rotary, but this is precisely the Whittier Rotary Club.

HUGHES: This is the Whittier club, right. And he was made, several years ago, an honorary member, and I am now an honorary member, and there's two others that are honorary members. All of us have been members of the Rotary Club and they made us honorary so we didn't have to make up and didn't have the problem . . .

ARENA: . . . worry about attendance regulations and all that.

HUGHES: No, we don't have to think about that, and you go anywhere, you're just the same as any other Rotarian, but you don't have the problem of having to make up, on account of age and time you've been in and all. They can do that if they want to.

ARENA: May I ask you how long you have been in and what was the year, if you recall, when you joined?

HUGHES: Yes. I went in in 1927.

ARENA: A charter member?

HUGHES: No, it was chartered about three years before, maybe four years before--three--I guess that's right. I was president of the club in '45-'46, and I was on the International Committee, where I took care of the foreign students of this whole area, about four hundred students. That's where I became interested in international affairs.

ARENA: Do you recall that date, the period about when you were in charge of all those students?

HUGHES: Well, it was about . . .

ARENA: Thirties, forties, fifties, for example?

HUGHES: Well, between '55 and '60, and for a long time there I was interested and more interested at times.

ARENA: Do you recall offhand, for example, that before World War II and after World War II, there was a big difference in the number of foreign students coming to the United States, that the U.S. became more and more sought after by foreign students? Does that come to mind?

HUGHES: Yes, now one of the first students that came over here that I knew anything about was this Japanese girl that we finally sponsored. Her sponsor died, and we took her into our home and she lived with us for three years. Then her two sisters came after that, and three other girls.

ARENA: Did your own children go abroad through the program, in any way?

HUGHES: They've been abroad. Not when I was, but Elden [Hughes], that lives here on Honeysuckle Lane, he and his wife were there last year, to Japan.

ARENA: I wanted to get that background about you, the President, and the Seven Seas University.

HUGHES: Oh, well, he was interested always, and I would leave pictures and things for him to see about the university and keep him posted. Well, pictures like this. I made books and sent him.

ARENA: In other words, pictures such as you have just shown me, of the ship that was used and so forth, all this sort of thing that you sent to the President.

HUGHES: Yes, I kept him fully posted, and I . . .

ARENA: Did he respond?

HUGHES: Oh, yes, always. Another story that happened about this time, when he was Vice President. I went around the world by way of Australia. He went around the world and was a little ahead of me, by way of Australia. So, sometimes, he and his wife were behind or ahead of me. Now, we went into Teheran [Iran] and I was ahead of him. So I was ready to leave at the same time as his plane was coming in. I was at the airport going out, so I didn't get to talk with him, but this is what happened there at Teheran: I went into Teheran with an Italian fellow. He couldn't talk English and I couldn't talk Italian, but we'd talk as best we could, and I liked him very much. And he was calling on companies for whatever business he was in. So we came back one night--we had to take beds in the same room because there wasn't enough hotel areas. So he told me, "I no like. I no like. You tell President Nixon I no like." And I didn't know what he was talking about. He said, "You go Embassy. You tell him, 'No good.'" He was trying to tell me that there was trouble, that he was afraid.

And so I wrote a letter to Dick and took it up to the Embassy and tried to tell them what this fellow had told me. But they thought I wouldn't know, so they pooh-poohed me away. And then I said, "Anyhow, will you give this to President Nixon?" "Oh, yes!" And they gave him that letter and I got a letter from him just after he left there. He said nothing happened. There were no demonstrations or anything. Everything was all right. But we didn't know what happened, and I didn't know until I saw it in the Reader's Digest about six months later. They was prepared an overthrow of the government that happened at that time. They arrested a fellow with an old suitcase, and it had all the plans and everything in it. So they arrested five hundred Communists in one fell swoop, and fifty got back into Russia. But that stopped them from overthrowing the government at the time that we were there, see, the arresting of that one fellow.

ARENA: Very interesting. Now, could I ask you to get to the period when you met the President in connection with his buying a home that you either built or owned.

HUGHES: Well, we were building it then.

ARENA: And about what year was this, Mr. Hughes?

HUGHES: Well, let's see, when did he go in as Vice President?

ARENA: Vice President?

HUGHES: No, Congressman. It was Congressman.

ARENA: Just to give you a run-down, he was approached to run in '45. He accepted and campaigned and ran in '46 for Congress. He was a Congressman from '47 until the campaign of '50 for the Senate. Then, of course, he became a Senator in '51, and then, campaign '52, Vice President '53.

HUGHES: Well, he was a congressman. And the way that he had to buy this home was that Herman Perry--and you know his story--came to me and said, "Bill, haven't you got a house out there that we ought to have Dick Nixon buy?" He said, "He hasn't got a home here. He lives out here with his brother and has to sleep on the floor when he comes here." And so I said, "Well, let's see it." I don't know if he came out or not. But they told him about it, and so I got in contact with him. Well, we were building the house then, I guess. It wasn't done yet. So he bought the house. He never knew it, but I gave him an extra good price on it. I never talked price to him, just told him how much it was. But at that time I felt like I'd done more than anybody had for him, because I'd really given him something without talking about it.

ARENA: Had you seen the house about the time that he moved in? Could you describe the house, including the furnishings of the home, as much as you can.

HUGHES: Well, he furnished the home, and he furnished it very nicely. I wanted to help him get better prices. You know, I have to shop for my stuff. But he said, "No, I just pay the price whatever it is." He got good stuff. I went with her a time or two while they were furnishing that, and didn't have very much, really, to do with the furnishing. I don't remember very much about the furnishings.

ARENA: Was the Candlewood Country Club built at that time too?

HUGHES: No, we were running a restaurant there then. See, we bought this hundred and six acres here, and it was a run-down place you know. Pipes were all out. It had formerly been a country club, but it was worn out. The pipes were all rotted out, and the building was pretty well run down. Well, we bought it, and to get people out here we started building it up and put in a restaurant to get people out here. And that's where I got my feet wet in running a restaurant. I thought it was going to be fun, but it was work, a lot of work. Besides the regular work I had, I had to work nights in a restaurant. We had a four-hundred-chair restaurant. And so he moved in there while we had that restaurant there and got started living there. Then when he got to be a senator, why, he thought he better live back there, and so they sold the house right away and moved back there, in Maryland or wherever they lived.

ARENA: Do you mind if I ask you if he was any problem at all in the sense of being one of your home buyers? Did he complain about the contract or complain about anything?

HUGHES: No. He was one of the finest men I ever dealt with, couldn't be better, and I tried hard to please him. But I'd go over and help Pat get the furnaces going when she'd come back here, you know, from Washington. I'd help her get things going, get started, you know. It was just a little ways from where I lived.

ARENA: Do you recall about how often during the year he would be able to live in the house and not in Washington, roughly?

HUGHES: Well, I wouldn't hardly know, because he might go to Washington and leave her here, and maybe sometimes they'd both go. I wouldn't know. He was back and forth a lot. I don't remember how much she went with him.

ARENA: Mr. Hughes, thank you very much.