WILLIAM B. SMART

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Salt Lake City, Utah

An Interview By

Everett L. Cooley

Everett L. Cooley Oral History Project

Tape No. U-1051, U-1052, U-1053, U-1054

Interview #1 and #2

August 28, 1989 and September 5, 1989

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W. B. Smart
Interviewee

Everett L Cooley
Interviewer

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TODAY IS MONDAY AUGUST 28, 1989 AND WE'RE RECORDING AN INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM B. SMART. WE'RE RECORDING IN THE MARRIOTT LIBRARY AND THIS IS PART OF THE [EVERETT] COOLEY ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM. THIS IS INTERVIEW NUMBER ONE, TAPE NUMBER ONE. [EVERETT L. COOLEY IS THE INTERVIEWER.]

EC: Bill, let's begin by having you tell us something about your beginnings, where, when you were born, something of your family background.

WS: Okay. I was born in Provo on June 27, 1922. My father was Thomas L. Smart who--I don't know if you want to know about him.

EC: Yes. Let's have a little bit of his background.

WS: He was at that time struggling. He was trying to go through college at BYU, which he never did finish. He struggled, selling knit goods and working for Taylor Brothers Furniture store. Finally, when I was about twelve, he went to work for Beneficial Life, and that was his career from that point on. That took him from Provo. We left Provo when I was fifteen, moved to Reno where Father was general agent in Nevada for Beneficial Life. We were there for two and a half years and then moved to Portland where he was the general agent for the Northwest.

EC: Let's go back a little bit, about your grandfather. Now, your grandfather was a very important man out in the Uinta Basin.

WS: Right. William H. Smart.

EC: And he, among other things, was involved in

publication of the newspaper out there. Did this somehow influence the family anyway?

WS: I don't think so. Grandfather wasn't a newspaper man as such, but he was the pioneer leader in the Uinta Basin. He recognized that to be a leader you needed to control the media and the only media at the time, of course, was the weekly newspapers. He was the second stake president in Vernal, and a newspaper had already been established which he promptly bought and, as was his custom turned it over to others. He would buy banks, he would establish water companies, establish all kinds of commercial establishments, and then he would bring people out and turn the businesses over to them in order to get good people--according to his standards--in the Uinta Basin.

EC: He was located at Myton for awhile was he not?

WS: No. He never lived in Myton.

EC: Oh.

WS: He was in Vernal. He bought the Vernal Express and brought the Wallace family out to run it, and they still do to this day.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: And then he went to Duchesne, became the first Duchesne Stake president when the Uintah Stake was divided. He established a paper there and turned it

over to another family.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: He did the same thing in Roosevelt after he became the first president of that stake. So he did buy newspapers but not to be a newspaperman. He bought or established all kinds of businesses.

EC: Uh huh. You had the tradition in the family.

WS: We had the tradition, but I was never very much aware of it.

EC: I see.

WS: It really didn't do anything to influence me, I wouldn't think.

EC: What about siblings?

WS: I had two brothers and three sisters. I was the fourth child in the family, two older sisters and an older brother. And he was a trial to me. He beat me up regularly. Then I had a younger sister and a younger brother.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: But we were a close family. Still are today.

EC: What about your interests in school. What were they? Did you, at an early stage, see the direction of your life heading into journalism?

WS: No. No. That was accidental.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: About my early schooling, I don't remember any particular interests, although I was always good in spelling. I won the spelling bees and this sort of thing. Was terrible in math, and so I guess that was a pretty good indication of where I was going.

EC: What about a teacher? Are there teachers that stand out in your memory having some profound influence upon your life?

WS: Well, there were two. There was a red-headed teacher named Miss Nelson in the fourth grade who didn't like me and I didn't like her, and I almost failed. She was going to hold me back in the fourth grade, but my parents talked her out of that. So then I went into the fifth grade. There was a brunette teacher named Miss Davis. I fell in love with her. She wanted to double promote me the next year.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: So I learned early that teachers can make a lot of difference in a person's life. But those were the early teachers, and in college there were some teachers that profoundly affected me.

EC: Before we get to the college stage, what about living in Provo? What was life like at that time?

WS: We lived in several places, but by the time I was about eight we moved into a home on Eighth North and

Third East right at the base of the BYU campus hill.

EC: Yes.

WS: Just as you came down off the hill. It was a home that was originally built by Wiley Sessions.

EC: Oh yes, in the religion department down there.

WS: At that time, Fourth East was the farthest street developed. We lived on Third East, and then there was Fourth and that was it. Eighth North was a country lane that went on up towards the mountains and turned north and into Rock Canyon. My job in the summertime was to herd our cow along that lane of Eight North. We couldn't afford pasturage. We were very poor, so I would herd that cow during the daytime up and down that lane so it could feed. In those years I did two things. I loved to read and by the time I was twelve or so I'd read all the books in the junior section of the library, and went up to get a card in the upstairs section. They said I couldn't have it because I was too young. When I proved to them that I'd read every book, they allowed me to get the books upstairs. What I was starting to say is that I would spend my cow-herding time reading. I'd find a shady spot and read and while I read the cow would get in the neighbors' corn, and I got into a lot of trouble that way.

EC: Any particular concentration of your reading or was it just general interest things?

WS: Travel. I used to love Richard Holliborton's travel books. I read everything I could lay my hands on of his. And Jack London, I loved his books.

EC: Burroughs' Tarzan book and Zane Grey, were they part of your reading?

WS: Well, Zane Grey never did interest me very much, Burroughs did. Adventure books of various kinds.

EC: Now, that would be at the foot of the upper campus. There wasn't much up there at the upper campus.

WS: No.

EC: So I was just wondering what influence the BYU may have had on your life there. The theatricals, this sort of thing, were they being attended by the family?

WS: Well, I spent a lot of time on lower campus.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: As kids we would sneak into the buildings there, and I remember particularly sneaking into the biology labs and being horrified and fascinated by embryos in bottles and things like that.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: So we spent quite a lot of time as kids sort of exploring the lower campus. The upper campus

influenced me chiefly because it had an apple orchard up there and we used to sneak up and steal the apples, and later they developed tennis courts up there.

EC: Yeah.

WS: And I played a lot of tennis on those courts.

EC: BYU wasn't much of an athletic power at the time so that probably you didn't participate in many athletics there through the BYU?

WS: No. Well, when I was in junior high, of course they had athletic teams. I remember we loved to watch the football players practice, and we would go sneak into the apple orchards and fill our shirts full of apples and then go over to the practice. We were thrilled to death when players would say, "Hey kid, toss me an apple." [laughter] We would toss them apples and got close to them that way. I was very much interested in sports and took every opportunity I possibly had to watch them play football or basketball and particularly tennis.

EC: Did you participate in sports in school?

WS: Yes. I'm was a tennis player. And I played a lot of baseball and basketball.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: Later on in Nevada I went to the finals of the state

tennis tournament there, and of course played a lot as an adult.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: But in those days, Buck Dixon and Sanky Dixon were my heroes. I used to watch them on the tennis courts.

EC: And Linn Rockwood would have been about a contemporary of yours down there.

WS: Rockwood was a couple of years older. But I have played with him a good deal in recent years.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: By the time he was playing in Provo I was living in Nevada.

EC: So from Provo you went directly to Nevada?

WS: To Reno.

EC: Um hum.

WS: And then to Portland.

EC: Uh huh. How was life different in Reno compared to what you'd had in the nice Mormon community of Provo.

WS: Well, substantially different. I was by that time a paper boy. I carried the Nevada State Journal, and it was an interesting experience because we'd get up in the morning to deliver the papers on our bikes. We would have to be careful to avoid running over the drunks that were lying in the streets. And then I was given the job of collecting on a number of routes,

collecting the bad debts. Many of those bad debts were down in what used to be called the stockade.

EC: Oh yes.

WS: Along the Truckee River.

EC: Yeah.

WS: And I would go down there to try to collect debts and the girls down there would--they were very nice to me. They were very nice and several offered to pay in trade, [laughter] which I was obviously too young and too scared to take advantage of. But I learned a lot in Reno.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: But I have to say this about Reno, too. It was a lovely place to live, you know, aside from that aspect of Reno it was a beautiful climate, beautiful parks and tennis courts and--.

EC: But you moved from a community with a dominant religion in which you were a participant. When you moved to Reno, you were of the minority. How did this affect your life?

WS: Probably strengthened me.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: The church held services in a place called Dania Hall. That was owned by a Danish lodge of some kind, and my job, as a teacher I guess I was at that point,

would be to come down to the place early on Sunday morning and sweep out the beer bottles and cigarette butts and try to clean it up and make it fit for Sunday worship. And so it was that kind of life. I helped build the first chapel ever built in Reno.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: As a matter of fact, that ended my baseball career. I was going to be a major league baseball player, and I was a pretty good left-handed pitcher. I was working on that chapel up on the roof, shingling when I was, I guess, about fifteen. I stepped on a loose shingle and slid down the roof and fell off and dislocated my shoulder. For years it would slip in and out and that ended any thought of a baseball career. But living in Reno, I'm sure, strengthened me a lot. I mean I experienced as a minority what others may feel in a similar situation.

EC: Did you experience a lot of intolerance there or it was it fairly cosmopolitan-free of prejudices?

WS: No. I was never aware of anything like that.

EC: You were there until what? You said fifteen?

WS: I've always told my grandkids that my personality was warped by the fact that I went to school in junior high in Provo up through the eighth grade. You know you're not anything as a seventh grader and not much

as an eighth grader. Later when you're a ninth grader you're somebody. But when I was a ninth grader we moved to Reno and so I was a nobody again.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: Then I went two years to high school in Reno going through that same process, just about the time I was ready to become somebody as a senior we moved to Portland and I became a nobody again. I think that makes it kind of hard. I think it cost me some self-confidence.

EC: I think it's true with a daughter of ours who moved around about the same period in her life. Now, you indicated your family moved to Portland where you finished your high school and your father was in insurance business. Did you continue your same scholastic activities in Portland or was there a change up there?

WS: I didn't care much for high school in Portland. In Reno I played basketball and played the trumpet in the orchestra. I did a lot of things and enjoyed them a lot. In Portland I was--Washington High was a big school and I wasn't able to make the basketball team. I couldn't play tennis any more because of hurting my shoulder. I did play in the band there, but there was not a lot of pleasure. I just didn't fit in there

very well.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: As far as academics was concerned I was always good in English, and that continued, and I loved history and that continued. But I don't remember an awful lot about the details of high school.

EC: Higher education. Is this a tradition in your family so it was automatic, almost, that you would go on to get a college degree?

WS: Well, my father and mother both had a year or two of college but that was all. But all of my brothers and sisters older than I had gone on to college, so it was pretty much expected, although after I graduated from high school I stayed out of school and worked a year.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: Because we couldn't afford to send me, I worked for Lincoln Electric Company which sold electric welding equipment. I think during that year is when I found myself. I became a shipping clerk for this company, and in that capacity I was able to hire people to come and help unload freight cars and things like that. So I would hire my friends and I would be their boss. I think that experience of working made a difference in my life.

EC: You went to Reed College. Now, that's a pretty prestigious school. Your academic background, did it win you a scholarship?

WS: I got a scholarship half way through my freshman year.

EC: I see.

WS: I didn't get one to begin with but I applied and was able to obtain a scholarship.

EC: It's a private school?

WS: A private school of about six hundred and fifty students at that time.

EC: But weren't tuition charges rather high?

WS: Very high.

EC: And had your dad come upon some prosperity in order for you to enroll at Reed College?

WS: I don't think my parents ever paid a nickel for my education.

EC: Is that right? The year that you worked you saved enough to pay your expenses?

WS: I saved and then had this scholarship. But I worked every year, there was never a time I was in school that I didn't work, sometimes full-time.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: I worked in the college cafeteria washing dishes and pots and pans.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: I worked in the ice cream store in the Union Building, and so there was never a time I didn't earn my way in college.

EC: Now, that's primarily a liberal arts school.

WS: Uh huh.

EC: So what did you major in there?

WS: I took a split major of history and political science.

EC: Yes.

WS: Wonderful school, wonderful education. As I think back on my life, I think those years at Reed College were maybe the best years that I had. They were wonderful years. Reed College had a two-year humanities course that really shaped my life and my thinking.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: As I look at my attitudes now, and what I've done with my life, I go back to that course and those teachers and--

EC: Who were some of those teachers that profoundly influenced you?

WS: Dorothy Johannson was my major professor. I loved her. She was a historian who specialized in western history.

EC: Yes. I recognize the name.

WS: And I loved her and I think she loved me. She's still alive living on a house on the campus. I go to see her once in awhile, and we reminisce. Those were good years. Well, then there were other teachers. Frank Kierman was a literature teacher. He was great.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: And Bob Rosenbaum was a great teacher. He was in math, and I never was any good in math. But I took a class from him in non-Euclidean geometry which also shaped my life. It taught me that there are very few absolute truths. That everything needs examination.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: For the sake of those who might read this at sometime, Non-Euclidean geometry is geometry not based on the theorems of Euclid. Of course our present geometric system is based on Euclid's theorems, but there were two men named Lobachevsky and Riemann who each in different directions postulated other theorems and then based their systems of geometry on those theorems. That took them in very different directions. What we know now since Einstein's work, and what we know of space and so on shows us that perhaps Riemann was more accurate than Euclid, at least in terms of the universe. But anyway

those things--it was almost a philosophy course.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: And it was a most exciting course to me.

EC: Was there preparation outside of your humanities and geography, history and so on in communications or journalism?

WS: Oh no, no.

EC: Nothing like that. It was strictly liberal arts?

WS: Yes, There were no what I call trade courses.

EC: Trade courses.

WS: None at all at Reed. Not even today.

EC: Now, during this time your family and you were active in the LDS church?

WS: Oh yes.

EC: What about a mission? Were you being prepared for a mission at all?

WS: I didn't ever think much about a mission in those days. I suppose had World War II not come along I would have gone on a mission, although, I have to say I was not very close to the church. I mean my family was close to the church, and I went to church, but I didn't live church standards very well during those college years.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: It wasn't until I married my wife that I really got

fully involved in the church. But I suppose I would have gone on a mission, but World War II came up at that time.

EC: Did you see military service then?

WS: Yes. Let me back up just a little bit so we can do this in sequence. You're going to ask me at some point when I got into journalism.

EC: Yes. Yes.

WS: As I indicated, I was working in the college cafeteria washing pots and pans and was pretty tired of doing that. On the day following Pearl Harbor I went down to International News Service where the bureau manager was our stake president, George L. Scott. I asked him if he wasn't going to need some help with this War breaking out. And he gave me a job. I'd never written a news story in my life. He gave me a job, and my job was to manage that bureau from midnight until eight o'clock.

EC: Now this is the Oregonian?

WS: No. This is International News Service--

EC: Oh. International News Service. Okay.

WS: --which has since disappeared, of course, taken over by the United Press. So I worked during the later part of my freshman year. I was working eight hours a day. Of course I would sleep part of the time when

nothing was happening. But I was going to college during the day and managed to play on the college basketball team and worked on the school paper. So that was burning the candle at both ends but loving it. Then in the summer of that year, the summer of 1942, I was sent up to Seattle to the bureau up there as a vacation replacement. Within a couple of weeks of the time I arrived, the bureau manager died of a heart attack, and his assistant was called up to active duty as a naval reservist. And I was the Seattle bureau. [laughter]

EC: And how old were you at this time?

WS: I had just turned twenty. So for that summer I was the bureau, and they weren't able to replace me. This was war time, and they were exciting times because, as you remember, the Japanese had invaded the Aleutians and Seattle was the place where we covered that from.

EC: Sure.

WS: Japanese fire bombs were dropping in the Northwest forests and we were covering that. Of course the Seattle-Portland area was a great center for ship building--Liberty ships and so on. I remember one of the exciting things was an interview that I had with Henry Kaiser who was announcing at that time his plan

to defeat the German U-boats by building giant air transport planes. I did a story on that which went out on the wires and was read all over the country. As you may remember, he and Howard Hughes built the "Spruce Goose"--

EC: Which I've seen down at Long Beach.

WS: --which you've seen down there. That was going to be the way they would defeat the U-boat menace. So anyway those were the things I was doing. I went back to school in the fall, and the next spring, 1943, was called up for active duty as a reservist, Army Reserve.

EC: So that was between your sophomore and junior year?

WS: Well, it was towards the end of my sophomore year.

EC: Sophomore.

WS: I went to Signal Corp training at Atlantic City which was an interesting place. I stayed in the old Traymore Hotel which was then an Army barracks. We had calisthenics on the Boardwalk, and ran on the beach for aerobic training. I was there for three months, then I applied for ASTP (Army Specialized Training Program) and went from there to Laramie, Wyoming to the university there. I was there for nine months studying foreign languages, military intelligence and military history--preparing, I

guess, to be an intelligence officer. There's where I met the girl who later became my wife, Donna Toland, who was there from Star Valley, Wyoming. I have to tell you, I guess, about her. My grandkids don't believe this when I tell them, but I had been dating some other girls who were not Mormons. We had been having good times together, and I hadn't been to the church at all during that period. But for some reason I went one day to church in Laramie. It was a testimony meeting. And I sat there and I heard a voice behind me, a girl standing up to bear her testimony. I looked around and I said to myself, "That's the girl I'm going to marry!" [laughter] Nobody believes that, but it's true.

EC: Without ever having met her.

WS: No. I'd never met her or knew anything about her. It turned out that that's the girl I married.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: Our courtship was largely by mail. We couldn't stand each other when we were together. I mean she couldn't stand me because I had different standards than she did. But when we were apart we would correspond by mail and things went along pretty well. So finally toward the end of the war after I got out of Officer's Candidate School we were married.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: But to continue the military phase of it, when ASTP ended we were, as I said, to go on to military intelligence school. But that was right at the time of the Battle of the Bulge, and we were sent off to an infantry unit. It was the 96th Infantry where I trained in Missouri and Arkansas and again in Missouri. During that period, I applied for Officer's Candidate School and was accepted and went to Fort Benning to infantry school while the 96th division went to Europe and was shot up pretty badly. Then I graduated from OCS as an infantry officer. I was the valedictorian of the graduation and the top graduate. I'd written an essay on leadership based on leadership of the Savior and delivered that at the graduation. We were married right after I got out of OCS, and went to Camp Maxey near Paris, Texas. By that time the War was about over. I was sent overseas on the way to Okinawa, but while we were on route the war ended and we put into Hawaii. I spent the rest of my military time in Hawaii.

EC: Schofield Barracks there?

WS: No. I was at Fort Shaffer, briefly, as a personnel officer and then I sent for Donna to come over. In order to get a dependant to come, you were required

to sign for an extra year of active duty which I declined to do, but sent for her anyway. She came over on the first civilian ship that came to Hawaii, and we were unable to find housing. For awhile we lived with another couple until they got tired of us. Then for awhile I put her up in the bachelor's officer's quarters. [laughter] It was kind of an interesting experience. I would hang a blanket over my little cubicle with a sign saying, "Keep Out". [laughter] She would huddle there in a blanket all day long until everybody left. Then she would get up. But finally I was playing tennis with an Air Force colonel at Hickham Field.

[END OF SIDE ONE]

EC: This is side two of tape number one of our interview with William B. Smart. He's telling us of his military experiences.

WS: Yes, and I was just talking about how I finally was able to get a place for my wife to stay. This colonel arranged for me to become assigned as the housing officer for the VIP quarters at Hickham Field. That was the time they were conducting the atomic tests in the Pacific, and some important people, senators and others, were coming through. There was this sort of apartment house that was assigned to VIPs. So I was

assigned to be in charge of that, which was interesting, and also very nice because I was given a Jeep. I had orderlies to do all the work, and so I could just sort of enjoy Hawaii. So we cruised in that jeep to every corner of Oahu and had a wonderful time being together.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: That lasted for about six months and then I was mustered out. We returned and spent the summer in Star Valley where Donna's home is. I got a job laying concrete, and I always said to her, "You know, I had a career as a newspaper man and have done a lot of writing and so on, but probably the only thing that will be remembered, that I will really leave behind me, are those sidewalks that I helped to build in Star Valley."

EC: Did you put your imprint there?

WS: I did. [laughter]

EC: Like J. P. Moran and the Salt Lake City sidewalks.

WS: Yep. There's my initials on one of the sidewalks in Star Valley. Then we went back to school to Reed, because--.

EC: Did you have a scholarship then upon your return or did you return on the GI Bill?

WS: No, I had the GI Bill.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: And because of my earlier experience with International News Service I was able to get a job at the Oregonian.

EC: Oh yes.

WS: And for the last two years of college I worked full-time at the Oregonian and went to college. That was hard, but then by the first of my senior year, we had a baby. So it was necessary for me to work.

EC: And by this time were you convinced that newspaper life was for you?

WS: No. No, I was studying to be a history professor.

EC: I see.

WS: That's the way I was going, but of course I enjoyed newspapering particularly at that time. I was on the sports department staff, and I was able to get assigned as a ski reporter. So I would spend my weekends in the mountains, which probably saved my sanity. It gave relief from the pressure of school and work. Then shortly before I graduated I was reassigned to the city desk in time to cover the Vanport flood. I don't know if you heard of that.

EC: I don't remember.

WS: It was a flood where because of heavy, heavy rains in the mountains, on top of a heavy snow pack, the

Columbia River kept rising and rising and rising, and finally the dikes broke that were protecting Vanpent, which had been a wartime village, and the water came roaring into that village and killed I don't know how many people to this day because people were never found. I covered that. Then in June of 1948 I graduated. I was Phi Beta Kappa, which was a surprise because at Reed College there were no grades given.

EC: Oh.

WS: I guess there were grades recorded but, no one ever knew what they were because the theory was if you're working for grades you're not working for an education. I think that's a good system. So I never had any idea how I was doing in school.

EC: Now, were you on the tutorial system there or was it lecture and so on there at Reed College?

WS: Combination of lectures and small group seminars. It was just a great system. Just before I graduated, I applied for entrance at Harvard and was given a fellowship. I was going to be a history professor. But at that time--it was 1948--the Deseret News was starting a big expansion program. Alfred E. Bowen, who was then an Apostle and president of the Deseret News, came up for a stake conference to Portland. My old boss at INS, George Scott was still the Stake

President. Apostle Bowen asked George Scott if he knew of any bright young newspapermen. He told him about me. Elden Bowen called me in for an interview and asked if I would come to the Deseret News. I told him I was going to go on to college, but at this time I was tired. It had been tough working forty hours a week and attending a pretty tough school.

EC: With a family to support.

WS: And with a family. The college has a thesis program, and I had to finish a dissertation and go through orals. I had a pretty good size ulcer at that time and I was tired. So I agreed to come for a year, thinking that would be a good rest.

EC: Was O. Preston Robinson head of the Deseret News?

WS: Not at that time. He came just about the time I came or just after I came.

EC: I see.

WS: On a part-time basis. It was sort of a triumvirate.

EC: Ah.

WS: Preston Robinson, Wilby Durham, and Herman Wood.

EC: Oh, I didn't know that Wilby Durham was there.

WS: Yeah. But not long after I came, President Robinson took on all three duties and became the General Manager. Mark Petersen was the Editor.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: So, anyway, I came down to the Deseret News the day after graduation and went to work there.

EC: What were the differences between working for the Oregonian and coming to the Deseret News?

WS: Well, initially not a lot, because I went into the sports department by request. I felt that was a good place to learn to know a community. Covering sports is about the same one place as another.

EC: Were you under Les Goates at that time then?

WS: Yeah, and Hack Miller.

EC: And Hack Miller.

WS: Les was the Editor but Hack was the Sports Managing Editor. So I worked there and was able to get assigned as the Ski Editor again.

EC: With a byline?

WS: Oh yes. Sure. I had a ski column called "Sitzmarks" which is extremely innovative. [laughter] I still have the lead slug that identified that column "Sitzmarks."

EC: Uh huh.

WS: During that summer I started a couple of things. I started the Deseret News Ski School, got it organized, and got Alf Engen to head it.

EC: Did that work through some of the schools or was that completely independent?

WS: Completely independent.

EC: Okay.

WS: Alf agreed to head it and has done it ever since. I suppose that ski school probably has put more people on skis for the first time than any other school in the world thus far. You know, we had two or three thousand people every year that learned to ski for the first time in that school. It was free.

EC: My daughters were involved in it.

WS: Then later, long after I was no longer involved with it, they started charging. It's not that big anymore, but that's something I've always been kind of proud of, that I started that. I also started what became the first and last annual Fourth of July ski race, on the Mount Timpanogos glacier.

EC: Oh.

WS: And it was a wonderful race. At that time there were people like Jack Reddish and Dick Movitz.

EC: Oh yes.

WS: And Dev Jennings, the three Engen brothers, and Suzie Rytting--a number of Olympians and national champions, all here in Utah.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: So we got all of them and a lot of other people and we held the race up on the--it's not really a glacier

but we called it a glacier. At that time the Forest Service wouldn't allow us to use any mules or anything on the trail. Of course, helicopters were out of the question, so we hauled our equipment on our backs.

EC: Mm.

WS: It turned out that it was a foggy day or we were in the clouds. From that standpoint, the race was not highly successful, but it was a great idea. No one else ever did it, through. I went from sports to the city desk during the following year. No one else ever had the energy to do that.

EC: You didn't have any disasters coming off the snowbank, glacier, there into the boulders?

WS: No. No. We were careful to set the courses from the rocks.

EC: I've heard of hikers sliding down on to the rocks and that sort of thing.

WS: We had a good race, except that it was cloudy. So, anyway, that's how I spent the first year here. I was preparing to go back to school, and got Harvard to extend my fellowship. Just as I was getting myself reinstated at Harvard, Elbert R. Curtis called me to the general board of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association. I've always felt that I've

been kind of guided in some of my career decisions, and that was probably one of those times. It was a pretty big responsibility for a twenty-six year old kid. I felt, well, if this is where I'm supposed to be, I guess, that's what I will do.

EC: This was full-time activity?

WS: The general board?

EC: Yeah.

WS: Oh no.

EC: No. This was part of your extracurricular activity?

WS: Yeah. But it was a very demanding thing that meant many meetings and a great deal of travel. So I terminated my application to Harvard and settled down to a career in journalism. That call was the thing that made me a newspaperman.

EC: Un huh.

WS: Let me continue that theme of being guided. Years later, in 1964, I had been by this time editor of the Editorial Page for quite a few years. President Robinson had tapped me to be his successor. I mean he was training me for that and Assistant General Manager, along with being Editor of the Editorial Page. In 1964, President was called to preside over the British Mission. That meant, in effect, that he was fired. He had run into problems with Ernest

Wilkinson over Drew Pearson's column and other things, and that's another story. But anyway, he was gone. So I thought this was my time, but instead they chose to bring Earl Hawks in from Boston, where he had been General Manager of the Herald American. So I thought well, okay, this looks like maybe a good time for a career change. At that time I had done editorial writing and a lot of other writing.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: I was pretty well known, and I'd also started a series, which still exists, called "Civic Dialogue" with KUED. I was the originator and host of that program for quite a number of years. We did a lot of political shows, and we really started, as far as Utah is concerned, the political TV debates. I started those on that show. We had a lot of those, and I'd become pretty well known. A number of people had told me I should be running for office and to get into politics. I remember one time after we had two candidates on the show, somebody called up on the air and said, "I wouldn't vote for either of those guys, but I'd sure vote for you." So I had that kind of a thing. I decided, well, maybe now's the time for me to get into politics. At that time, Sherman Lloyd, who held the Second District seat, was giving that up

and running for the Senate. You remember?

EC: Yes.

WS: He was a second cousin of mine and a good friend and neighbor up in my neighborhood. So we talked about it, and we decided that I would run for his seat while he went for the Senate. We talked to a number of the party people and they were enthusiastic about it. So that decision was made. But again, the day before I was to file, the stake presidency called on me to be bishop of the Federal Heights' Ward. Once again I thought, well, okay, that's a signal. So I gave up any thought of politics and settled back into the job. I really feel thankful for that guidance, because that was the Goldwater year remember?

EC: Oh yes.

WS: There was not a Republican in the state that was elected. I would have been swept aside with the tide and would have been deeply in debt and no job. I would have been in trouble. So I really felt that was a blessing that I didn't do that.

EC: Now, had you lived all the time on Laurel Avenue by the time you were made bishop there of Federal Heights?

WS: I lived there for some years.

EC: Uh huh. And how much of a family did you have at this

time?

WS: We had five children. We lived originally in a little basement apartment on Eighth East between South Temple and First South. It's now been torn down and the property is part of the Bryant Junior High play yard. We came to Salt Lake during the summer of '48, and moved into this basement apartment. I think we paid $60.00 a month rent, but they agreed that if I would mow the lawn and rake the leaves and shovel the walks in the winter, they would reduce it to $30.00 a month. I very happily agreed to do that. So I mowed the lawn the rest of the summer and raked the leaves, which was fine. And then winter came and that was the winter of '48.

EC: Oh dear.

WS: I'd never seen a winter before, at lease for many years. Oregon didn't know much about winters. I shoveled the walks that winter and the driveway. The driveway went back the length of the house and then turned back behind the house into a three-car garage. It was a sort of a big old mansion. I shoveled those walks and that driveway during that winter, and as you know the snow never melted that whole winter. Just kept piling up and piling up. By the time that winter was over I was taking each shovel full of snow

back at that driveway, walking over, climbing a mountain of snow, [laughter] you know, maybe ten to fifteen feet high and throwing the shovelful on top of that mound and then going back and getting another shovelful and hiking up the snow pile. [laughter] It was the hardest work I ever did in my life for $30.00 a month.

EC: Do you recall what your salary was when you came to the Deseret News?

WS: It was $80.00. No, no, excuse me, it was $80.00 that I made when I was working for Lincoln Electric, the year after I graduated from high school.

EC: Oh yes?

WS: See, when the Deseret News asked me to come, I've forgotten what they offered me, but I said, "No, I was worth more than that." They said, "What would it take?" I said, "$180.00 a month." They said, "We've never paid anybody that much." I don't remember this, but my father claims that I said, "Well, you've never had anybody as good as me." [laughter] So, anyway, they paid me the $180.00 a month. And not long after that I went to $300.00.

EC: In working for the Deseret News to begin with, were there any implied or specified restrictions on any activities that you may have had to agree to--

WS: No.

EC: --as far as memberships in any organizations, political activities or anything else?

WS: When I went there?

EC: Yes.

WS: Oh no. No. There was nothing of that. It wasn't an issue.

EC: Then when you became editorial writer, did you have to back off from some of those things at that time?

WS: I didn't back off from anything. After two or three years as editorial writer, I was invited to join the Salt Lake Council of Foreign Relations, which I did and was a member of that for years. This caused me problems because that was targeted by the Birchers, do you remember?

EC: Yes. Yes.

WS: ...as being a communist tinged organization, which was ridiculous of course. But they attacked me on that basis. But I remained a member for years and finally dropped out of it because I had other interests and other things I wanted to do. But that was one of the things that tarred me as being a liberal. In the minds of some general authorities it made me somewhat suspect.

EC: On the other hand, were you encouraged to participate

in service organizations with maybe even the dues being paid by the paper?

WS: Oh yes. Yes. The paper always encouraged that and I became a member of the Exchange Club and became president there and then became a national board member and national vice president--

EC: Uh huh.

WS: --and was targeted to be president but then ran into a problem. I guess we could get into that. I don't know how soon--.

EC: Sure. Let's get into--.

WS: Oh. You want to get into things like that?

EC: Why sure.

WS: I had campaigned to bring, the national convention to Salt Lake City, and I succeeded in getting that approved. Then in 1968 I had open heart surgery. While I was in the hospital, somebody, I don't know that I can even remember just who it was that was involved, came to Salt Lake City and felt this was not a good place to hold the convention. They had gone back and persuaded the executive director and the executive committee to take the convention elsewhere, without consulting with me. I was in the hospital at the time and that made me angry and I resigned from it. I wanted nothing more to do with

that organization. Then a year later, the convention came to Salt Lake City anyway, but I was no longer involved and I haven't been since, which is all right. By that time I was the Editor and General Manager of the paper and felt that I shouldn't owe my allegiance to only one organization. Rotary always has tried to get me to join, but I always felt that I didn't want to look in one direction, but keep my options open. So yes to answer your question, there was a feeling on the part of management that we should be involved with those service groups, and they paid the dues.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: They also paid dues for my membership at Fort Douglas and later the Alta Club.

EC: You indicated you thought you were being trained to take over after President Robinson, and yet they brought someone else in. What was behind that? Do you think your affiliation with the International group may have caused you to be by-passed for the top job?

WS: I was never able to determine that, I never knew that for sure because those things, you know, don't get told. But yeah, I had pretty strong feelings that there were some in the general authorities who had the feeling that I shouldn't be there.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: Mark Petersen never did have a lot of confidence in me, and I never knew quite why. That may have had something to do with it, or maybe he just didn't feel I was that good a newspaperman. But I always had the feeling that he blocked my progress. I shouldn't say blocked my progress, because I progressed pretty well through the various chairs.

EC: Now, you were named to the board of the Heritage Foundation and I believe you became vice president did you not?

WS: Yeah.

EC: It seems like you did.

WS: I did. Uh huh.

EC: And I know the Heritage--.

WS: I was to become president.

EC: Yes. And the Foundation took a strong stand against the church's position on the destruction of some of those buildings. Did this have any influence upon your acceptance down there or non-acceptance do you feel?

WS: It probably did.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: Probably. I never felt myself as a liberal. I always felt myself pretty much middle of the road, but in

the minds of a lot of people I was branded as a liberal.

EC: Uh huh.

WS: I'll have to tell you another story. I guess it's okay at this date because some of the people are gone. When I was finally named General Manager... Well, let me back up a little bit. During that time, I was involved with the Mormon History Association.

EC: Oh yes, with Leonard Arrington. I can remember you were one of the sponsors of that initial meeting down at the church office building.

WS: Well, that wasn't the Mormon History Association, but that was the Friends of Mormon History.

EC: Yes, that's right.

WS: But I was a director of the Mormon History Association for a term, and about that time Leonard Arrington came to me and asked me if I would be the chairman of the new organization to be called the Friends of Mormon History. I thought first of all I don't need anything else, I've got plenty on my plate, and I really sort of demurred. He gave me to understand that this had been cleared with the Brethren, that this was something they wanted me to do. So I checked with our bosses and that was all right. So I finally agreed, somewhat reluctantly

because I really wasn't looking for anything more to do. And we had the organizational meeting you recall--

EC: I recall.

WS: --down in the Church History offices. I guess everybody was astonished at the turnout and response. It was, you know, people were hanging from the rafters.

EC: Yes.

WS: There was a huge turnout, and that must have caught somebody's attention. We got ourselves tentatively organized, and we collected dues that night and told people that we would be getting back to them. Then nothing happened, and after awhile I asked Leonard, "What's going on? What happens now?" He indicated there had been a hold, and after awhile we were given to understand that this movement was dead and it wasn't going to happen. So that was all right. It was embarrassing, but that didn't bother me. But some years later I was finally to learn how this happened. I was finally interviewed by President Tanner to be the General Manager and Editor-in-Chief.

EC: This is after the death of Hawkes.

WS: Yes. But during the interview, President Tanner was very frank, and he said that a number of people felt

that I was too liberal and had been involved with things that I shouldn't have been involved with, but he didn't feel that way and generally the First Presidency had confidence in me and so on. He said, "One of the things that really troubled us, to begin with, was your involvement in organizing the Friends of Mormon History." And he said, "But we checked that out thoroughly and we discovered you were clean." [laughter] And so if I'd really been involved I wouldn't have been clean and there would have been a black mark that would have probably been fatal to me. I didn't then understand attitudes toward history of the church and I don't understand them today, and that's a point of some concern to me.

EC: I suspect the main reason was--I remember there was much talk about opening the archives and encouraging all this research, et cetera.

WS: Leonard was a real historian.

EC: Yeah. Would you suppose that G. Homer Durham had any role in this?

WS: Well, you know, he became the director shortly after, but I don't know.

EC: Why is it that Leonard Arrington's portrait does not appear down there with all the other historians of the LDS church?

WS: This is a sore point. I think Leonard was badly treated, and, bless his heart, it's remarkable how he's remained sweet and faithful and loyal.

EC: Yeah.

WS: Because he must have grieved by what happened there.

EC: Now, let's get back to your being named Editor and General Manager following Hawkes.

WS: Do you want to have a little bit of chronological order leading up to that appointment?

EC: Uh huh.

WS: What happened? After I spent some time on the sports desk and then by that time I realized--.

[END OF TAPE]

THIS IS TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE WITH MR. WILLIAM E. SMART, AUGUST 28, 1989. EVERETT L. COOLEY IS THE INTERVIEWER. [THIS IS PART OF THE EVERETT COOLEY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT.]

EC: Okay, Bill, let's proceed with your telling us how you became Editor and General Manager of the Deseret News.

WS: I was just saying that I had spent a year on the sports desk at my request. Then it was time to move over to the city desk and I became a reporter, a general assignment reporter and feature writer. I was kind of, I guess you would have to say the star of the city desk. I did that and had some wonderful experiences in that capacity. How much do you want to get into the details?

EC: No, let's hear about it and some of your associates down there--some of the people that you worked with.

WS: Glen Snarr was the City Editor, who later left and became an executive with Evans Advertising. King Durkee succeeded him. Glen was a superb City Editor. King I think was somewhat less so. Then King Durkee left and went to The San Diego Union, where he had a pretty good career. Then Norm Bowen succeeded him, but I was gone from the city desk at that time. Then after that, Jerry Cahill and then Lou Bate, then LaVarr Webb, and then Rick Hall. So, at any rate, I worked there for a couple of years on the city desk.

I had a number of interesting experiences. One of them that stands out in my mind most is again in the winter of '48, which was so terrible. I got to thinking one day, "How do they keep these beacons for airplanes going during the winter?" So I called the CAA office and asked them if I could do a story on how they do this. He said, "Well yeah, come. We'll show you. We have a man going out to service the one on Antelope Island in a couple of days, so come on out and bring your snow shoes and warm clothes." I decided to take skis instead of snow shoes. So we went out there, splashed across the shallow water in a great big army ambulance, with huge wheels, you know the ones with the high wheels, out to the old Chander ranch that is out there.

EC: The Garr Ranch.

WS: They used to keep the tithing cattle out there in Brigham Young's time. We had breakfast there. Then we saddled some horses and tied our skis onto the saddle and took off to the north end of the island. It was a bitter day and the horses struggled because the snow had been swept smooth. But underneath this smoothness were all these gullies, that the horses would keep plunging into. We would have to find a way around. It was a long day, and it was dark by the time we got at

the north end of the island. We tied the horses and climbed the mountain on our skis. Got up to the station and they showed me how they serviced the thing. But by that time a blizzard was coming in. I thought we ought to stay there that night. But the CAA man had some reason to get back, so we started out. We were skiing down that mountain, and it was totally dark, of course, and blizzarding. The light would swing around and we would be able to see a few seconds and look ahead to where we were going to go and then ski in the dark. We finally got down to the horses and tied our skis back on and started out. After a while this CAA man said, "We better get off and walk." "I didn't want to get off and walk." He said, "If we don't, you're going to freeze to death." So we got off and the photographer that was with us, a fellow by the name of Vern Dale, refused to get off. So we had to physically pull him off the horse. We would walk and then we would ride. We would walk and we would ride, all that night. I suppose we came pretty close to not making it. We finally heard a dog bark and a light, a lantern came out of the yard and we made it back to the ranch. I remember falling off that horse and being carried in and filled with hot coffee, even though I hadn't had hot coffee for quite

a while. Finally, we were okay, but the photographer went to the hospital and had a number of his toes amputated. So that was one of the kinds of things that I remember. Then in 1952 I became Editor of the Editorial page. Sterling Talmadge, James E. Talmadge's son, was an editorial writer.

EC: John's brother.

WS: Yeah, John's older brother. Then there was a man named Elvick Davis. After I was added to the editorial staff, Sterling Talmadge retired and died. Davis was an interesting guy. He was a non-Mormon who was brought in by Mark Peterson as one of the shining stars that was suppose to make the Deseret News a great paper. Another was Vivian Meik, a columnist who built a great reputation--until I discovered he was copying much of his stuff from other papers. Elrick Davis was a good writer, but he was a weird guy. He had a drinking problem and he ran into debt all the time. He owed everybody in town and his wages were garnished. Finally they had to fire him and I became the Editor of the Editorial page at age twenty-eight, probably the youngest editorial page editor of a metropolitan paper in the country. I stayed in that position for a long time and added to it the title of Executive Editor and Assistant General Manager. But I

was still basically the Editor of the Editorial Page. I mentioned some guidance that I feel that I had. Let me tell this little story. I was by that time a member of the General Board of Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association, and it was a demanding assignment. Every Wednesday we would have meetings at 5:00 o'clock and they went on for hours. One Wednesday afternoon I was stuck for an editorial idea. I was laboring to get something done in time to go to that meeting, but nothing would come. I leaned over my desk and prayed about it. I immediately got an idea to write an editorial about schools. At that time there was a lot of John Birch and other kinds of pressure against what we call communist influences. I wrote an editorial about this entitled, "No Smoke Screens in Our Schools." It just came to me, you know, it just came. In a matter of about an hour, it was done. Later on that editorial was given the award as the outstanding editorial in the country on education. Second place was a guy named Alan Bart of the Washington Post, who you remember wrote Advise and Consent. There were other distinguished people who were third and fourth. So I kind of had the feeling that I had special guidance when I needed it, sometimes.

EC: Let's talk a little bit about editorial policy. How often did you have to write personally the editorials?

WS: Oh, every day.

EC: Five days a week or six days a week?

WS: Six days, I mean you had to fill six days a week.

EC: Was there a meeting for the Editor to determine what the editorial should be about.

WS: Yes, President Robinson, during the time he was General Manager would hold an editorial meeting and we would discuss editorial policies. Then I would go and do it. Earl Hawks didn't hold meetings as much. He relied on me to hold them.

EC: Were there taboos that were imposed upon you? Now here's some area we won't touch and here is something that we want to feature?

WS: Not really in that sense. I was in that position because I was Church-broke and we knew what Church policies were, what the Church wanted done and didn't want done. So I didn't need a lot of instruction or guidance or rules at that time. You know, on 99 or 95 percent of the issues we discussed, the Church didn't have a position. We just did what we felt was right. Obviously you didn't write things that you knew were counter to Church interests.

EC: You wouldn't come out pro-abortion and that sort of thing?

WS: I had plenty of opportunity to make mistakes and did. Things that I wasn't aware that the Church was interested in. The Eagle Gate was a good example. I wasn't really aware of what the Church wanted on that.

EC: What happened?

WS: I wrote an editorial saying that we ought to preserve it. That wasn't what the Church wanted. So I heard about that, of course. Shortly after that a truck "accidentally" knocked it down.

EC: Yeah, with a blade on front.

WS: You know there were things like that occasionally I would stumble over.

EC: What about running up against economic interests of the city, the state, if they were not similar to those held by the Church? Did you run into problems there?

WS: Gus Buckman did all he could to get me fired over that.

EC: Is that right?

WS: You may remember that there was a time when Boeing Aircraft was talking about building a plant out in the west part of the valley. I opposed it

editorially. I said, "We don't need that and we don't want that. It would cause us all kind of labor dislocations." I gave all the arguments why Salt Lake Valley did not want or need a giant industry. It turned out not long after that Boeing went on strike in Seattle and the wisdom of my views became apparent because Seattle had a terrible time. But I pointed those things out and said, "We don't want that." Gus Buckman and a delegation called on the First Presidency and demanded my scalp over that and over other things. I always have been a preservationist and a conservationist.

EC: I remember your strong stand in connection with Donner Hill up here. Did you encounter some difficulties there in your opposition to building that huge apartment complex?

WS: I don't think the Church had anything particular to do with that.

EC: I thought maybe they might use some of the Church people to silence you on any kind of an effort to save that.

WS: No, I don't remember any church influence on that.

EC: What about politics? Did you ever feel compelled to endorse anyone or were you restrained from doing so?

WS: No, the policy, ever since the famous case back in

1932 when the Church opposed Roosevelt in a front-page editorial--the Deseret News and the Church has had a position of not endorsing candidates--a position on which I agree. I have no problem with that, I think that is a wise policy. You know, for a church newspaper to endorse a party or candidate would be church endorsement, and the church shouldn't be in that position. I remember one problem I had at the time that Elbert D. Thomas was defeated. That was one of the ugliest campaigns that the state has ever known.

EC: Which Frank Jonas called the dirtiest campaign that was ever conducted in the state. His pamphlet on this was entitled-- "Political Dynamiting".

WS: It was a nasty thing and conducted by a prominent Church members--Wallace Bennett. Anyway, Thomas was defeated and not long afterwards he was appointed commissioner of the Pacific Island trusts. I wrote a little editorial congratulating him. He was a Utah man with this honor rewarded to him. So we would normally have just a little bread and butter editorial. The day my editorial was published was the day that we had our Deseret News Christmas party. I was conducting it as master of ceremonies. Mark Peterson was there and I introduced him to give a

Christmas message. He stood up and proceeded to tell the Christmas party audience, the stupidity of anyone who would write an editorial praising Elbert Thomas. He excoriated me at that Christmas party.

EC: Oh dear.

WS: I couldn't believe it. That may be part of the reason that he and I didn't ever seem to quite hit it off.

EC: Ezra Taft Benson and his involvement with the John Birch Society, and more so his son, was this ever reflected in the columns of the Deseret News?

WS: I fought as hard as I knew how not to have it reflected. So did President Robinson and so did Elrick Davis, and after me so did Wendell Ashton. In my responsibilities as Chief Editorial writer and later as General Manager I just refused to allow that influence, that and so did these others, pretty much. They were courageous men, I have to say that during the years that I was General Manager, Gordon Hinckley was the president of the company, and he fully supported me in that position. I know he had some real hard times over it. President Benson used to write me memos, letters, instructing me as to what I should and shouldn't do. I would take them to Gordon Hinckley, he would say, "Just throw them in the waste basket." At this point I ought to be careful about

what I say because then we would get to questions that I--Anyway, yes, we had a lot of problems. My daughters, when they were something like twelve years of age, were at the State Fair. The John Birch Society had a booth out there. They stopped by that booth and were told there were some dangerous communist type criminals in our community, including especially their father. I was named as one of the top communists that endangered our community.

EC: Goodness gracious.

WS: I always took the position that, let them talk, I just ignored them. That's one of the things that I have been blessed with in this life is the ability to shrug off things like that. I would just go about my business and do what I thought ought to be done, except for one occasion and that's when my wife was attacked. She was an English teacher at East High. She had in her class a kid named Dave Belnap. His father was Austin Belnap.

EC: Yeah, I recognize the name.

WS: Dave was giving a report on something and used it as an occasion to use to give a John Birch diatribe. Donna, wisely, I think said, "We should have a balanced presentation on this," (some of the kids were objecting) so she invited some others to give a

contrary point of view. And the Utah Independent--

EC: Bracken Lee was associated with that paper, I believe.

WS: --came out with a screaming front page headline, "Utah teacher shows bigotry," and a long story about this teacher who was the wife of William B. Smart, Editor of the Deseret News, and how she showed her communist tendencies. That I couldn't take and I got mad. We always had that pressure, but I am proud to say that I never let that influence my ideas editorially or creep into the news columns.

EC: You indicated that you were a preservationist and so on. Did you ever have to tangle with some of the land developers? I remember going on some trips with Ernie Lindford of the Tribune who told of his encounters with some of these kinds of people. Did you get involved with similar kinds of things?

WS: Yeah, probably that was one of the groups that caused me, finally, to retire. I had appointed an environmental editor, initially it was Art Vincent, Hartt Wixam, and then Joe Bauman. They were environmentalists and that's what I wanted them in that position, I wanted that point of view expressed in the columns of the Deseret News. There were a number of issues over which the livestock and cattle

growers and the Farm Bureau, and I had different points of view. Bruce Wallentine of the Farm Bureau became the leader of this coalition that got together to insist that I be removed. I don't know that I was removed only for that reason. I think at this point I'm not going to get into that, if I do I will have to restrain myself. That was one of the groups that was one of my real problems.

EC: I know that Ernie Lindford became very close to the people of the Forest Service and National Park Service. Were you encouraged to participate in some of the government programs in the same way he was to inform the public on government efforts of conservation?

WS: Probably more so, because the Assistant Regional Forester, Barney Standing, was a very dear friend of mine.

EC: Yes, I knew him very well.

WS: He was a friend of my father's in Portland and of course I knew him well. When I came down here we became the closest of friends. I guess aside from my father I learned more from Barney Standing than anybody in my life. We went on many trips, some of them official where he was taking me out on a show-me-type of thing, and many more. We hunted deer

together for years and fished together.

EC: And went down the Big Mountain to explore The Mormon Trail.

WS: We did many things together. I remember a wonderful trip that we took by horseback over the Sawtooth Mountains and down the Middle Fork of the Salmon where we were picked up by a boat and floated down to the Salmon. Wherever we went deer hunting, it was in some far-flung part of the state. We had such long drives in which he would teach me. I was very grateful to that man. I participated in many Forest Service and other such meetings, teaching them about press relations and so on.

EC: We're just about out of tape again here.

[END OF TAPE]

TODAY IS TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1989 AND WE'RE RECORDING OUR SECOND INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM B. SMART, EDITOR AND GENERAL MANAGER OF THE DESERET NEWS AND CURRENT EDITOR OF THIS PEOPLE MAGAZINE. THIS IS PART OF THE EVERETT COOLEY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT AND WE'RE RECORDING IN THE MARRIOTT LIBRARY. [EVERETT L. COOLEY IS THE INTERVIEWER. TAPE #3.]

EC: Bill, let's have you go over, if you will, your assignments, your positions at the Deseret News with some dates. This was a little foggy in our previous interview.

WS: Sure. Let me first of all correct the title. Let's be make sure that we get that straight. I was for the last fourteen years Editor and General Manager.

EC: Oh, were you the General Editor?

WS: I was never publisher.

EC: No, the Church is the publisher. Correct. All right.

WS: Okay. I came to the Deseret News in 1948. I was there for about a year, a little less than a year on the sports desk. Then I became a general assignment reporter on the city desk. In 1952, I was made Editorial Writer, and within about a year I became Chief Editorial Writer, the Editor of the editorial page. I became assistant general manager under President Robinson in about 1960, along with the editorial page, and Executive Editor under Earl Hawkes in about 1966--still with the responsibility of the editorial page. I became Editor and General

Manager in 1972, and I held that position for fourteen years.

EC: Now, let me just clarify your relationship with people. Preston Robinson was the Editor and General Manager when you came?

WS: Yes. He was Editor and General Manager, the position that I later held.

EC: Then following him was Earl Hawkes, until he died. Then following him?

WS: That was me.

EC: How does Wendell Ashton fit into this?

WS: Wendell Ashton came in as publisher and I remained as Editor and General Manager. His work was primarily concerned with the relationships with the Newspaper Agency Corporation.

EC: The other people--were they publishers?

WS: Earl Hawkes held the title briefly as publisher.

EC: I always associated that title with the LDS church as publisher.

WS: Well, it's always been a little bit confusing. President Robinson was never publisher nor had anyone previously been named as publisher, but Earl was named publisher briefly and then Wendell Ashton was named publisher.

EC: Now a promotion from sportswriter to these positions,

wasn't this a little unusual? Has this occurred elsewhere in the Salt Lake City papers?

WS: From sportswriter?

EC: Les Goates I think did some editorial work, did he not?

WS: Les Goates was Sports Editor for a long time. In his last years on the paper he served under me as editorial writer. He had sort of worn himself out as a sportswriter, so he was sent over to me as one of the editorial writers. I don't recall anyone else particularly that has gone from the sports desk into general assignment reporting or editorial writing. Certainly no one that has gone into management. Let me back up--Jimmy Hodgson was a sportswriter and then he became a city desk reporter and a good one. So did John Talmadge, who later served under me on the editorial paper. I can't recall anyone else.

EC: Why did the owners reach outside, I think Boston, and bring in Earl Hawkes? What was behind this; was he a man with a greater vision or something?

WS: I think Mark Peterson did that. I think I mentioned before, he had brought in Elrick Davis to head the editorial page. He turned out to be a heavy drinker and had all kind of problems. He didn't last very long. And there was Vivian Meik, who I mentioned

earlier. So that was sort of Mark's pattern. I guess there were two reasons, one is that I think he felt that bringing in outsiders brought in a bigger vision, broader vision, and more experience. Then, as far as Earl Hawkes was concerned, Mark Peterson didn't feel that I should be the general manager at that point.

EC: He was bringing you along for later leadership?

WS: He wasn't.

EC: I see, just under Earl Hawkes you were moved up the ladder?

WS: And under President Robinson. President Robinson first identified me, called me in one day, and said, "I think you're the one we ought to be grooming for greater responsibilities." He made me assistant general manager. While I remained as the Chief Editorial writer and Editor of the editorial page, Earl Hawkes continued that and gave me more responsibilities.

EC: Has this been the pattern all along that one of the General Authorities is placed over the Deseret News, as in the case of Mark Peterson and Gordon Hinckley?

WS: I think that it has always been that one of the General Authorities has always been the president of the company. Mark Peterson, of course, was a career

journalist as you know. He spent his whole life at the Deseret News, until his calling as a General Authority, and then he was made president of the publishing company. As far back as I know, there has always been a General Authority as president of the company. Albert E. Bowen was president at the time he called me to come to the Deseret News, then Mark Peterson, then Gordon Hinckley, and then Thomas Marson. Monson

EC: It may have been in his role as president, that Albert Bowen wrote the criticism of Fawn Brody's book in the Church section. Would you know if that is the case?

WS: I don't recall--I guess he was president at that time.

EC: Was this unusual?

WS: Let me back up and correct something. There was a period for about three or four years when George Nielsen was president, between Mark Peterson and Gordon B. Hinckley.

EC: Was he a General Authority?

WS: He was not a General Authority.

EC: I didn't recognize the name.

WS: A highly regarded man in the Church, he was a Stake President and an attorney. For some reason that I

don't understand and I don't really know the background, he was made president for about three or four years.

EC: Why bring in Wendell Ashton? I know he was a good P.R. man and had associations with Evans Advertising I believe and other things. Why was he put in that position?

WS: Until he was brought there he was a director of public communications for the Church, a very difficult and responsible position. Wendell used to say to me, "You and I have the two toughest jobs in the Church." I think that his job was even tougher than mine. It was very visible and very vulnerable. I don't know if I can give any definitive reasons about Wendell's appointment but one reason, I think, is that he had acquired some scars in his position as Director of Public Communications. There were those who felt it was time for a change there. He had done a very effective job, but did it in the Wendell Ashton style and that was not always so pleasing to some people. Secondly, at that point I had won the concern of some of the General Authorities. I think that it was felt it was time to put somebody in there who was less liberal and perhaps less independent of the Church direction. There, it was time just before

we were to renew our thirty-year contract with the Tribune, and the Newspaper Agency Corporation. Wendell's main charge as he was brought over was to renegotiate that contract and set in motion the next thirty years. I guess those were the three factors.

EC: Since you brought up the Newspaper Agency Corporation at this time, let's talk a little bit about it. What was it that gave rise to this arrangement and was this not one of the first such arrangements in the whole country? It seem to me that there was a court case involved in this merger.

WS: It was one of the early ones but there had been quite a few other at that time. The court case was in Arizona, at Tucson. It was won by the newspapers, and it legalized these arrangements. The reasons were economic. Joining two newspapers in a third corporation, called in this case the Newspaper Agency Corporation, meant that printing, distribution, circulation, and advertising functions of the two newspapers could be handled much more economically. Meanwhile, the two newspapers remained independent editorially. The arrangement worked out very well in Salt Lake City from that standpoint. The two newspapers did maintain complete news gathering and editorial independence and competitiveness. The

competitiveness between the two newspapers has been, I think, excellent all those years. As you may remember in 1947, the centennial year, it was determined that the Deseret News would become a strong competitor of the Tribune. Up to that point it had been a very weak newspaper, weak in circulation, weak in editorial policy, and news gathering. A very definite second rate newspaper. It was determined that it would be brought up to full competitiveness. A great deal of money was put into that. That decision is the reason I was brought here and many others who were brought here in late 1947 or particulary 1948 to beef up the staff. Those were the years that great efforts were made to build a circulation. Do you remember the thimble drome racers where everybody that subscribed to the paper was given a thimble drome race car? It became a sort of symbol, along with the knife sets and all the other premiums that were given in circulation contests that included giving away very expensive prizes as well. The circulation area was expanded from Boise to the north, to Las Vegas in the southwest, and over to the Colorado border. So we probably were circulating more widely than any other paper in the country at that time. Of course, this was tremendously expensive, and

the Tribune responded in kind. They had to, of course; they spent a lot of money on circulation as well. It was, frankly, breaking the two papers. Of course the Deseret News had deeper pockets than the Tribune. So it was finally determined, and I think that President McKay and John Fitzpatrick made the accommodations.

EC: Because they had worked together in the centennial program?

WS: Yes, and Gus Backman. Those three years, you may remember, we used to meet periodically at the Hotel Utah and discuss the problems of the state. Much cooperation came out of those meetings. I think largely because of those contacts, the idea of joining in an agency was brought forward--

EC: Now there were certain economies to be gained--rather than maintaining two sets of presses, when you could get by with one.

WS: That's right. We would use the same press to print the morning paper and the afternoon paper.

EC: Same advertising staff.

WS: Same trucks distributed both papers. The biggest factor was a joint rate card for advertising. Instead of having two sets of advertising salesman and so on you had one set. Advertisers were given the option of

advertising in one paper or the other, or both.

EC: South East Furniture could say, "No, I want mine in the Deseret News," if they chose.

WS: Or the Tribune, they had that freedom. But the joint rate was greatly advantageous to them. So virtually all of them did go for the joint advertising.

EC: Now, in this arrangement was it agreed that the Deseret News would remain an evening paper?

WS: Yes.

EC: At that time the Deseret News was only a six day paper.

WS: At that time we had a Sunday paper.

EC: Oh, you had a Sunday paper?

WS: But part of the agreement was that we gave up that.

EC: I see. Well, why the change back to the Sunday paper now? How did that come about?

WS: Wendell Ashton and I determined--and, of course our owners supported us--that we were not going to sign that renewal agreement without a Sunday paper. We felt very strongly that having just six day publication put us in a second rate position. We just determined that was what we were going to do, have a Sunday paper. We made it clear from the start of the negotiations that there would be no renewal of the agreement without a Sunday paper. Of course, that

gave great pain to Jack Gallivan and his associates with the Tribune. They couldn't see the sense of that. They pointed out that would be expensive and that present arrangements were working very well, it was saving money, it was making money. Both papers were doing very well financially. We pointed out that financially was not our main consideration but our main consideration was getting the voice of the Church in the homes of the people and doing that strongly. In our industry the Sunday paper is equal to about a third of the strength of the week, in terms of advertising, in terms of readership, and in terms of the size of the news hole. Without Sunday, we felt that we were only two-thirds of a paper. So that was our insistence and it took two years of very intensive negotiations, sometimes bitter negotiation, but we finally prevailed.

EC: In this arrangement did you have to do something in the number of editions that you put out or was that pretty much left open?

WS: As far as the Sunday paper is concerned?

EC: No, with the old Deseret News, I don't know how many editions were published. I know there was a Blue Streak or whatever it was called and so on.

WS: The arrangement itself said nothing about that. But

the original agreement and the renewal did provide that the papers would be managed from the Newspaper Agency standpoint to maximize profits. So that phrase has been used as the basis for a number of decisions, one of them being reducing the number of editions and reducing the areas served. For example, the papers have pulled back their daily distribution a great deal. I mentioned that it used to be from Boise to Las Vegas. Now the daily distribution is really now just northern Utah and central Utah as far as home delivery is concerned. Of course we send the daily paper to newsstands in southern Utah and elsewhere, but we don't really make home delivery south of Utah County or as far north as Logan and Cache Valley. That's because of that provision that we would maximize profits.

EC: In the early '70s we used to subscribe to a wide number of area newspapers here. We finally lost some of those. I recall the Boise paper refused to send it by mail, unless there was some horrendous charge. What about the postal rates, did this have a great effect upon the distribution of the Deseret News?

WS: We still send it to anybody who subscribes by mail. It just costs them more.

EC: Do you get quite a number from out outlying Mormons

who want to read a Church newspaper?

WS: Not very many. As a matter of fact virtually none. They take the Church News.

EC: This is something I want, a clarification of the Deseret News and the Church News. Do you have a separate editor?

WS: Well, you have a separate editor just as you have a City Editor.

EC: I thought it was more independent than that.

WS: The Church News is a department of the Deseret News.

EC: I see.

WS: The Editor of the Church News answers to the Editor and General Manager, just as the City Editor does, or the Sports Editor, or the Feature Editor. He's part of that structure.

EC: Yet they do have a separate circulation, if you choose to have it?

WS: Yes, the Church News is considered part of the Deseret News in our circulation area. It is not available outside of the newspaper to those within our circulation area. Those outside our circulation area can take it by mail, independently. That's caused a lot of grief, as you know.

EC: I can imagine.

WS: A lot of debate. People who want a daily paper or

people who live in Provo and want their Provo paper or whatever it is and don't want a Salt Lake paper, have a hard time understanding why they can't take the Church News without taking the daily paper. The answer has always been that the Deseret News is published as a voice of the Church to be sure that Church people have that kind of newspaper in their home, one with high standards that carries the policy of the Church. To do that, we must maintain our strength. In Utah, we don't consider that Salt Lake City is our only hope or our only home, but that all of Utah is our responsibility. To maintain the papers strength throughout Utah, we feel that we have to use all of our resources and the Church News was always a very important resource. So that was always our answer to those people. It didn't satisfy them very much, but that was the policy.

EC: In this arrangement, you indicated that you retained your independence as far as editorial policy. Yet there was a decided change, not just with formation of the Newspaper Agency Corporation, but under John Fitzpatrick, for instance, there wasn't the bitterness that existed previously to his time. Were there any meetings between editors where any discussion for what role each paper would play or

would there be considered collusion and violation of the antitrust provisions of the agreement?

WS: Well, I don't know about antitrust provisions. I suppose we could have met and decided on policies without violating the antitrust, but we never did. I have never ever met with the Tribune people on any kind of an editorial matter. I have been invited to meetings, such as where the Salt Palace has been discussed. Obviously, you go to those meetings and you listen but then you go back, you make your own decisions.

EC: You were never encouraged from those meetings to take a particular tack on something?

WS: Well, of course, whoever held these meetings were asking for our support and asking for community support, but there has never ever been any discussion between us and the Tribune, as to what policy ought to be taken on a given issue.

EC: This morning's Tribune had a strong editorial about the $16 million gift to the University of Utah. What position would you have taken had you been writing the editorial for the Deseret News over this?

WS: I haven't read that because--

EC: Well, they were sort of condemning, that might be a strong word, Sorensen for retracting the gift.

WS: I suppose I would have taken about that same position. I think that has been a terrible tragedy for the University.

EC: Yes, it is.

WS: For the faculty and the students to have taken the position that they have taken, then for Joe Rosenblatt to get into it the way he did, it has done, I think, terrible harm to the University. Of course Jim Sorenson hasn't endeared himself or distinguished himself. I think he has lost the respect of people over his attitude. So you know, I think it has hurt everybody. I suppose I would have taken that kind of position.

EC: Let's come to this matter of what positions you were expected to take on certain issues. How was this conveyed to you? The other day you said something about you knew what the Church's stand was on certain issues and so on.

WS: Seldom was there any occasion for anyone to convey to us the Church's position.

EC: For instance, the issue of the blacks, that was when all the furor was going forth in the 1960s, attacks on the BYU basketball team and so on. What about the position of the Deseret News on these things, where did it stand?

WS: Well, obviously we were never contrary to the Church's position. On the black issue, I kind of minimized any discussion of that, I guess, because the Church's position was not one that I wanted to defend a great deal. It was an embarrassment and a problem to all of us, or at least to many of us. So as much as I could, I just didn't discuss that. Obviously, when BYU was boycotted, we criticized that editorially. I would have to say this, that I never lost any opportunity to editorialize positively about civil rights.

EC: May this have been one of the reasons why you might have been criticized?

WS: I don't think so. I was never aware that anybody resented my position. In fact, while I am not inside their minds, I think that virtually all of the General Authorities, if not all of them, felt the same way, that blacks should have full civil rights and supported the Supreme Court's decisions. It was just a matter of that's the way the country ought to be, but the Church was stuck in a different position until they got a revelation.

EC: At the time of the announcement of acceptance of blacks into the priesthood, were you called in for a special briefing, so that you might declare the

position of the Church through the Deseret News.

WS: We had our regular monthly executive committee meeting over which Elder Monson presided. At the end of the meeting, he asked me to remain. He said that tomorrow, which was Thursday, I should keep some space for an important announcement. I said, "Well can you give me any information about it, any clues to what is happening?" He said, "No, I can't." I said, "Can you at least indicate to me whether it ought to be front page or local page, A1 or B1, so I know how to plan?" He said, "I think when you hear it you will know it."

EC: That was it, huh?

WS: That was it. The next day of course it was announced, and of course we were all thunderstruck and highly elated. I wept at my desk with joy. All right, I guess I will say something about that. Some months before, I had been in Boston during the time of the Boston Marathon and Freedom Days. Chase Peterson was then vice president at Harvard, a long-time friend. He and I went out to run, we were not going to run the marathon but we decided that we would run the Freedom Trail. It was ten miles of--

EC: Historic sites.

WS: From Concord and Lexington to the northern end of

Boston. So we did, and as we ran we talked. Chase said that there had been something very much on his mind and he wanted my help. So we talked about it, and the issue was this: one of the professors at Harvard had said to him, "You know, the Church could be in a very difficult position over this civil rights matter. They say that it is a religious matter, and there could be no legal or constitutional attack on that." But he said, "You and I know that the policy in South America and Central America has changed. It used to be that a person, in order to be given the priesthood, had to prove that there was no black trace in his lineage, but in more recent years that had changed. Now a person is given the priesthood unless it is evident that there is black blood. We obviously know there is black blood in the veins of most of those people down there."

EC: Particularly Brazil?

WS: Yeah, most any of those places. So the lawyer said that if this came before the court and it was shown that in that part of the world, that was the policy, there is no way you could defend the policy here. It would be clear that it was not a matter of religion or doctrine, but a matter of policy. It's different in one country than another. Chase said, "I have been

worried about that. I need to get that message to the Brethren. Would you help me?" I said, "Of course." So when I got back I made arrangements for him to present that message.

[END OF SIDE ONE]

EC: This is side two of our second interview with William B. Smart. He is talking about some of the difficult positions or the positions taken by the Deseret News and his role in it and specifically here on the blacks in civil rights in the 1960s.

WS: I was talking about getting Chase Peterson's message to President Kimball. We did get it to him. Not long after that, President Kimball, I guess agonizing over this matter, made it a matter of intensive prayer and received the revelation that changed the doctrine. So the word came to me that morning that the change had been made. The first person I called was Chase Peterson in Boston. We wept together with joy at what had happened. I should say that to some people, the reason I am hesitant about describing this is that for some people, it might intensify their feeling that this is a matter of convenience and politics, but I also believe that the Lord gives us answers to our questions and if we need it then we ask for it and are likely to get the answer. I think that is

exactly what happened here. It was an intensive effort on President Kimball's part to get an answer and he got it.

EC: I remember Jan Ships wrote a good article, I think it was in Dialogue about this issue, saying that the LDS Church was becoming a world Church, and this was a necessity to expand their idea on the blacks. I think this is in keeping with this.

WS: Part of the same thinking.

EC: Well, thank you for that. Let me go back to well--let's touch upon this, how was a policy decision arrived at on what positions you were going to take, or what your editorial was going to be? Were there weekly sessions? Were there daily sessions or something with the people from higher up or just within the organization itself?

WS: I suppose that with 99 percent of the editorials that were written, policy was set in our daily editorial meeting, which consisted of the editorial writers and me as the Editor and General Manager and, of course, later with Wendell Ashton. We would discuss the issues of the day and decide what we were going to do about it and go ahead and do it, without any reference to anybody. In the great majority of the cases, the Church didn't have a position. Obviously,

there would be occasions when there was a real question. If it was a matter we knew where the Church stood, why of course we went ahead and wrote. If there was a question, then of course we would confer with our president, Gordon Hinckley, Elder Monson, or James Faust--he later became a key. He was chairman of the Executive Committee during the time that Elder Monson was president. Of course, he was a very wise head, and we talked with him from time to time. There was a monthly Executive Committee meeting, with President Monson, Elder Faust, and others, but we would very seldom talk about editorial matters. If there was a sensitive matter, then we would be asked to remain afterwards and we would talk about it then.

EC: The MX missile statement of the General Authorities, how was this arrived at and how did you present this to the world?

WS: Well of course, that statement came independently of the Deseret News and it was just presented to us for publication. How it was arrived at, I don't know. I could guess, but I don't know. That was just presented to us for publication, as were other statements from time to time, the black statement for example. So of course that gave us our guidance on editorial policy. I have to say, however, that before

that statement, we had editorialized a good deal about MX in a very negative way on our own initiative.

EC: And you had not been called in for any counseling, so to speak?

WS: No, we had no counseling on that. Let's see. I was going to mention one other thing. During the time Gordon Hinckley was president of the company and I was Editor and General Manager, we tried to meet weekly for lunch. We didn't always achieve it, but usually we would meet for lunch. We would just talk. Those were delightful and wonderful times. He was a great leader and a great friend. Generally, those were meetings where we would just have an enjoyable time together. Of course we would talk about the newspaper and what needed to be done and if there was an editorial matter that was sensitive, that was discussed. So that was also a source of editorial guidance. He was never obtrusive. Gordon Hinckley was wonderful in letting us pretty much have freedom to make our mistakes, and we made them, obviously. But we--

EC: To your knowledge, did you ever take a position on something and then you were called and chastised for it?

WS: Oh sure.

EC: You were? So you were a little more cautious next time that you were dealing with that subject?

WS: Of course.

EC: I did an interview with O.N. Malmquist. He has a delightful story where he had taken a position opposite to what John Fitzpatrick wanted. He said, "That was not a gentle chewing out."

WS: I know. From time to time, we stubbed our toe, and we were told about it in no uncertain terms.

EC: By this do you mean that it was a case of opposition to the general Church policy or just the views of some of the Church leaders?

WS: I don't know that we were ever in opposition to general policy; there isn't general Church policy on much that we wrote about. It was more a matter of how individual leaders felt. But I didn't have a great deal of problem with that. It used to be, President Robinson used to tell me, that he had twelve bosses or fifteen bosses who would call him about their views. But Gordon Hinckley made it clear that he was responsible and that other General Authorities were not to try to deal with the Deseret News, except through him. That wasn't always followed, but that was his policy. From time to time, I had

communications from some of the General Authorities and Gordon used to tell me to, "Just throw them in the waste basket."

EC: Are those being preserved in your papers here in our archives? [laughter]

WS: There may be some, but I think that I threw most of them away. [laughter]

EC: That's too bad. [laughter] The other day you indicated that one editorial you wrote won a national award of some distinction. Was this a result of your involvement with national and international organizations? How did this come about? What was your association with these groups? Were you encouraged to participate in such organizations?

WS: There are several questions there. To answer the first, that particular editorial had nothing to do with any involvement with any of the national organizations. The second question was, were we encouraged, and we certainly were. From the time that I first became Chief Editorial Writer, I was a member of the National Conference of Editorial Writers. I remained so for many years until I became Editor and General Manager. Then I became a member of the American Society of Newspaper Editors and The American Newspaper Publishers Association. I belonged

to both of those and was active as a committee chairman in a number of things. Then I became a charter member of the United Press International board of advisers. I'm not sure that I can recall exactly the date, but it was about 1972. They organized an international advisory board which was not their board of directors, but it was the closest thing to a board of directors that they had. I was a charter member of that organization, and I served the maximum number of terms on that.

EC: I remember that you spoke to the Aztec Club once and in fact you almost didn't make it to the meeting, because you had gone to South America and got sidetracked or hijacked or something in Miami.

WS: It was a crash landing in Miami. That was the Inter-American Press Association that held a meeting in Lima and I attended that and a number of others of that organization.

EC: Now as a result of these, did you sort of specialize in international relations or writing on South America or anything? What was a result of these connections.

WS: Well, I traveled a good deal. I tried to make it a policy to be abroad at least once a year. I didn't always achieve that, but I did a lot of international

traveling and did a lot of international writing. My writing in international affairs really grew out of my travels rather than any particular organization connections. Of course, I suppose my associations with those organizations had an influence. The first trip I took to China, for example, was with the executive officers and advisory board of United Press International. It was a remarkable trip, because the group had considerable prestige. We were the guests, the paying guests I should emphasize that, of Hsinhua, the official news agency of China. So we had access to the leaders, for our interview with Derg psiao Ping, for example. So yes, I guess my association with those organizations did get me into some places I would not otherwise have been. I went with the same group to Cuba the following year, and we had interviews with important leaders there.

EC: In taking this role did you depart from traditional policy at the Deseret News? Did you branch out more than others, do you think, who had proceeded you?

WS: I think so, yes. That is partly because before I came to the Deseret News it really hadn't been much of a newspaper anyway, as I indicated. So I came at sort of a flowering of the paper. Then I don't know if my predecessors had had that much interest in

international journal press. President Robinson certainly had, but his specialty, his greatest interest, was in the Holy Land.

EC: Yes, the Middle East--

WS: The Dead Sea Scrolls and that sort of thing. He hadn't done an awful lot of traveling elsewhere. I don't know of any of my predecessors who did anything like the kind of traveling that I did.

EC: Did competition with the Tribune, promote this interest?

WS: Sure, the need to be a good newspaper. I don't know if that was necessarily because of the competition of the Tribune. It was because that was the kind of journalist that I was.

EC: They were doing the same kind of thing, weren't they, because Art Deck went to China and Harry Fuller went to South America and so on. While you were Editor and General Manager, were you also writing at that time?

WS: Oh yes.

EC: You continued.

WS: Well, as Editor and General Manager I wrote what I considered the most important editorials, I mean ones that were particular sensitive or needed careful thought, and ones where I had particular knowledge or expertise. I did some of that, and then, of course

whenever I traveled I wrote extensively.

EC: It wasn't on a daily bases like when you were the head of the editorial pages. It was just when something important came up. What else do you want to tell us about the Deseret News and your career there?

WS: Well, maybe it would be interesting to talk a little about my travels and what grew out of them. One, of course, the most exciting trip I ever took, was to the Antarctic. I'm not quite sure that I know even today why I was invited. I was back in some meetings in Washington and became acquainted with a member of the National Science Foundation. From that contact or for some other reasons, I was invited to go to the Antarctic with the National Science Foundation. It was in 1961, shortly after the International Geophysical Year. This, I think, was the first group of journalists who went down there. I was the only American journalist. There was a Norwegian, a Frenchman, a New Zealander, and two or three others--six of us. It was a marvelous trip. We went from New Zealand, to McMurdo Base and then from there out to Byrd Station and then to the South Pole. I did a long series of articles on that. That work became rather distinguished. The following year, when Daryl Chase was president at Utah State University, we went to

South America together. You recall that Utah State had long had ties with Iran and had many Iranian foreign students. That connection was pretty much broken, so he was interested in expanding other opportunities in other countries for foreign exchange students. He invited me to go on a trip with him to South America. We went to every country in South America, except the Guianas up on the north coast. I did an extensive series of stories, and there was an interesting thing came out of that trip. One night in Lima, we spent the night talking with the director of the U.S. Aid Program in Peru. The conversation went on most of the night. What we were talking about was the way American aid was being used in these countries. He was very disillusioned with what he was seeing with U.S. aid, because it went to the governments--governments that were not supported by the people in many cases. Particulary we seemed to give aid to dictatorships and to administrations that were long in power. So instead of making friends with the people, we were supporting the people's enemies in many cases. We talked about the need for a people-to-people program, direct contact between people. So I wrote about that and went to the State Department for a debriefing. I told them about my feelings and

so on. Not long after that, I had a call from this gentleman, who had been called back to Washington to head up a new program called The Alliance for Progress. He, of course, had made a report as well. On the basis of that, he was called to head The Alliance for Progress. So he was calling me to report that and to ask me to organize the first partnership in the Alliance. So it was decided that we would be the partners of Bolivia. So I organized the Utah Bolivia partnership.

EC: Is this the Salt Lake dentist who has taken projects to South America?

WS: It all grew out of that.

EC: My neighbor, Ed Heyes, has been down there for two years.

WS: That grew out of that too. So I organized the Partners Cup. I called a meeting and invited some key people to come to lunch for the organization meeting. I asked Royden Derrick if he would be the first chairman. He agreed to do so. I recruited Gary Neeleman, chief of the Utah U.P.I. bureau, who had quite extensive experience in South America, to be the secretary. We chose well, because Royden Derrick went on to become the National Chairman for the Alliance for Progress. He was succeeded by Gary

Neeleman as National Chairman. They became some of the most distinguished leaders in that organization, nationally. So that's one thing that grew out of my travels and the writing that I did.

EC: What about behind the Iron Curtain, did you get to travel there?

WS: Donna and I went in 1958 to Europe to cover the dedication of the London temple. After that, we traveled extensively through Europe. We went to virtually all the countries of Europe and wrote a great deal about it. While I was in Berlin, Henry D. Moyle happened to be there. He was on his way behind the Iron Curtain to East Germany for a conference. It was the first time that any General Authority of the LDS church had been there since the war. So he invited me to go with him. We went down to Leipzig and met with the people there. I did some writing about that, but other than that I hadn't been behind the Iron Curtain in Europe or Russia. I did, of course, go to China in 1978 and did an extensive series of stories that later became a small book. Then shortly after that I went to Cuba. The China trip was with U.P.I. and so was the Cuba trip. We went there to see if we couldn't build a relationship with Cuba and keep them from pirating the U.P.I. news

reports. We met with their chief of press there. We were trying to figure out how we could broach this subject of their stealing the U.P.I. reports from the air. So I delicately asked him, "How do you get your news reports?" The answer was, "We steal them." [laughter] I don't think we ever stopped the stealing, but anyway, that was an interesting trip to Cuba, and I wrote stories about that.

EC: Anything else that you would like to talk about your Deseret News career?

WS: One thing that I started when I was Editor and General Manager was a program of Utah's called "Goals for Utah."

EC: Something like "The Year 2000" that Channel 2 has been involved in?

WS: Yes. Yes, basically that. What I would do, I would run a questionnaire in the newspaper, asking readers to tell us what problems they felt that the Deseret News ought to try to tackle and be a catalyst in helping others solve them. We would get the readers' responses. Then I would invite a cross-section of community leaders to breakfast. We would discuss in some depth the problems that Utah faced and we ought to try to solve. Then they would break into small discussion groups and they would give their reports

back. Out of all that we would identify several problems that we would like to tackle, to do something about. It wouldn't be just the Deseret News that would do it, but we would try to be the agency that involved other people, and so on. One of the things that grew out of that, for example, was the Provo-Jordan River Parkway. We started with the filth in the Jordan River--seeking to clean it up and make it attractive. I had seen what had happened in Denver and San Antonio and other places that have done something beautiful with their rivers. I felt that we could do that here too. So we tackled that, and later I served several years as chairman of the Provo-Jordan River Parkway Foundation. We got programs going in other things as well and felt that we did some good things. As you say, others have since followed up. "Project 2000" is doing very well with that I think. I've been involved with them almost from the beginning, and helped organize the Coalition for Utah's Future, of which I'm currently vice-chairman. So those were some things that I felt we accomplished.

EC: In this morning's paper, a "Letter to the Editor" is very critical of the Tribune's handling of his previous letter, where they have severely edited it

and have changed the meaning of what the writer had to say. What about these letters to the editor? Is this a thorny problem that you were faced with every day? Do you have to be selective?

WS: I have never edited anybody's letter nor has anyone else, I think, ever edited anyone else's letter, that the writer didn't think that the editor took the heart out of it or even destroyed it. Obviously, we would do the best we could to try to preserve the meaning and not the flavor. But the writers were seldom satisfied. Yes, "Letters to the Editor" is an interesting thing. You get, of course many more than you can publish usually, except in the summer when things kind of dry up. My policy was always to give preference to letters that disagreed with us or criticized us. That policy caused me some real hardship with some of my staff members, particulary Hack Miller. Hack was sensitive, and of course he was very visible in the community. People would occasionally write letters that were critical of him. I would publish it, and Hack was irate about that. There was a lot of controversy about that. But my feeling always was that we had plenty of opportunities as columnists or editorial writers to give our point of view and our position. Therefore,

we should give preference to anyone who wanted to give the other side. I always did that. I think that is still a policy of the paper. So that was always something of an issue and some of the staff members didn't like it, but that is what we did. Otherwise, I guess I should just say that we tried in our letter column to be as representative of what the people were saying and thinking. During political campaigns we would get hundreds of letters. I would try to publish them on a proportional basis. If we got more Republican letters, we would publish more Republican letters, or vice versa.

EC: Most frequently there is a pro and then a con.

WS: We would do that to balance things out.

EC: Bill, I know that you have been active in many organizations, let's talk a little bit about those activities. You mentioned your affiliation with the Exchange Club and you went on to become a national officer. Then you indicated that you served in the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association for twenty years.

WS: Yes, fifteen years on the General Board.

EC: Was it then that you were particulary interested in the Explorers scout program?

WS: Yes, first I was chairman of the M. Men committee and

we did some things there that carried that program along. We separated the M. Men from the Gleaner program and built the honorary Master M. Men program. Then I became chairman of the Explorer Committee for about ten years. In that period we built the program of Explorers hiking the last thirty-six miles of the Pioneer Trail, from Henefer to Salt Lake City. I researched that part of the trail, wrote a little guide book, and marked the trail.

EC: The monuments you had the boys build themselves led you not?

WS: Yes, we had various Explorer posts build the monuments, of stone, and we provided plaques which we put on. We were proud of that; they were very nice monuments, most of which have been vandalized since then. So we did that, and we established the International Explorers Conference at BYU. That went very well for some years. It has now been discontinued. It brought kids from all over the country. It was a high-level of experience for them for several days, learning and growing. I became a member of the National Explorer Committee and a member of Region 12 executive board. Then I was called as Bishop of the Federal Heights Ward and was released from the General Board.

EC: Was it fortunate that you were in an area that was a little more liberal than some of the others in the state?

WS: In the shadow of the University with University professors around me? Oh, I guess I found some people there that I enjoyed.

EC: Kindred spirits such as Jim Clayton and some of the others.

WS: And Chase Peterson and others.

EC: How long did you serve as Bishop?

WS: I served as Bishop for a little over five years, then I was released, of course, as bishops are. I served a couple of years on the Stake High Council, then I was called to the Sunday School General Board by Russell Nelson and served there for eight years until that board was all disbanded and the format changed.

EC: How about non-Church groups, having to do with historic preservation?

WS: I was a charter member of the Utah Heritage Foundation.

EC: You have been a member of the Utah Historical Society for years.

WS: For many years, yes.

EC: Now you indicated and I think that we got sidetracked in talking about your affiliation with the Mormon

History Association.

WS: Yes, I think we told that story.

EC: You told about the Friends of the Mormon History. What about other organizations of the Mormon History?

WS: The Mormon History Association? I was a director and attended the directors meetings, but was not as active in that, not for any policy reasons or anything. I just found myself involved in so many things that I didn't give as much attention to that as I would have liked to have done.

EC: What about the publications such as Dialogue? Have you been involved in that?

WS: Never, no. I have never been directed to that kind of thing, though I did serve on the search committee to find a new editor of Sunstone.

EC: What about Sunstones or Sunstone Symposium, do you read their publications?

WS: Oh some.

[END OF TAPE]

THIS IS TAPE NUMBER TWO OF OUR SECOND INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM B. SMART, EDITOR AND GENERAL MANAGER OF THE DESERET NEWS. WE'RE TALKING ABOUT SOME OF HIS ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE NEWSPAPER. [EVERETT L. COOLEY IS THE INTERVIEWER. THIS IS PART OF THE EVERETT COOLEY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT. TAPE #4.]

EC: What about these publications? Have you found that they have been helpful or detrimental to the interests of the community or the Church?

WS: Sunstone, Dialogue?

EC: Yes. How do you feel about them?

WS: Well, I find them very interesting. Generally speaking, I think they have helped a lot. I think it's good to have kind of an outlet for that kind of writing, that kind of thinking. The mainstream of the Church is so well served by the Church magazines and the Church News and so on. But there are many people who are not in the mainstream, and I think it's well to give them an outlet and a place to write.

EC: To your knowledge, have there been those at 47 East South Temple who are opposed to this kind of writing?

WS: Well, yes, sure. Let me tell you a little anecdote about that. Jim Clayton came to me one day. I was his bishop at that time. He said that he had been invited to join the staff of Dialogue. He asked what did I think? Dialogue was just new then. I said, "Well, Jim, what's going to happen is this? Dialogue is

going to take a liberal position and the Church is going to react to that, and then they'll take a still more liberal position in reaction to the reaction, and then the reaction will be more extreme and the pendulum will start to swing. It will swing so far that it is going to swing those involved with Dialogue right out of the Church, and I don't want to see you in that position." Well, I'm glad to say that didn't happen; the Church didn't react that way. It could have and I think that if some of the authorities had their way, it probably would have, but it didn't. So the pendulum didn't start to swing. Dialogue has done its thing and the Church has survived, and I think it's been a healthy situation.

EC: I think it must be a great outlet for some of the people like at BYU who feel somewhat constrained in expressing themselves. Here in a scholarly publication where they've been able to do so. Eugene England practically made the Dialogue his vehicle.

WS: Of course you know the Church has been rather restrictive of people being involved with Sunstone. They've tried to discourage BYU people or others from participating in the Sunstone Symposium for example and writing for Sunstone. I think that is unfortunate because I think Symposium has been outstanding in

most respects.

EC: Yes, getting national figures to participate and discuss a variety of subjects. Any other organizations that we have not mentioned that you've been affiliated with?

WS: I've been involved with many--the Utah Symphony Board and Pioneer Memorial Theatre Board and a lot of things like that. I'm a member of the National Advisory Board of Snowbird Institute, for example. Right now, I'm spending a good deal of time with Grand Canyon Trust, of which I'm a director. This is a national organization based in Washington, D.C. concerned with the preservation and proper development and conservation of the whole Colorado Plateau. It includes some really outstanding people among the directors--Bruce Babbitt from Arizona, Stewart Udall and others. I think it's an outstanding organization, and I'm enjoying it a great deal.

EC: And what is their goal?

WS: Well, it's the protection of the Colorado Plateau, the Grand Canyon being part of it of course.

EC: Last week, there was quite a fuss about the pollution from the Page, Arizona power plant.

WS: There has been a lot of reaction to that plant. The Grand Canyon Trust is a leader in trying to get it

cleaned up. It is a fairly new organization. I've been a member for just about a year now. The organization really was only a couple years old when I joined. One thing we have done is change the pattern of overflights over the Grand Canyon.

EC: Oh yes.

WS: We have succeeded in restricting flights below a certain altitude and restricting any flights to certain corridors, to preserve the peace and the beauty of the canyon. The next issue that we're tackling as far as the Grand Canyon is concerned is the matter of water releases from Glen Canyon Dam. The widely varying the releases during a twenty-four hour period are destroying the habitat of the canyon--destroying the beaches of the Canyon. We're trying to solve that. Pollution is the next big problem.

EC: The pollution from the boaters, isn't this a real issue as well?

WS: In the Grand Canyon? Not really. I've been floated through the Grand Canyon three times now, and my observation is that the people that run the Grand Canyon are marvelous. The professional outfitters are just superb in terms of caring for the Canyon. I was with one group and somebody dropped a tiny little bit of a cigarette butt. And was he ever chewed out by

the boatman. It's that way. You do not leave anything. Even the private people that run it--I saw no litter in the Grand Canyon. Glen Canyon is another story. The reservoir is a disgrace. I guess there's a difference between people who go in houseboats and people who go in rafts or boats down white water. Well, anyway we're doing those things. So that's another organization I'm involved with. The thing I spend most of my time with now, other than the magazine that I edit, is what has been known as the Utah Innovation Foundation.

EC: Just what is that?

WS: It's now the Wayne Brown Institute. Wayne Brown was, as you know, Dean of Engineering at the University here and established a number of companies that became world-class companies. I guess he was maybe Utah's outstanding entrepreneur, in terms of starting new businesses and building them, and many others--smaller businesses which he has been instrumental in establishing. Somebody described him as a Johnny Appleseed of innovation and entrepreneurship because everywhere you go all over the world, you find where Wayne Brown has been spreading the gospel of entrepreneurship, technological entrepreneurship. He invited me, asked me, recruited me, spent months

begging me to become the chairman of the Utah Innovation Foundation. This is an organization that had been spun off from the Utah Innovation Center that Wayne Brown established. It was sort of an educational arm of the Center, but it ran into problems because there was a perception on the part of politicians and others that it was self-serving. That the Center, being a profit-making organization, had this non-profit organization that was really serving the same people. And it did. That's true. So he asked me to come in and reorganize that and take it in a different direction. Completely separate it, which I finally agreed to do. I don't know why exactly, because I had no expertise in technology, very little in entrepreneurship. But he felt that I was a consensus builder and could bring people together. So I tried to do that. I reorganized the Board, dropped everybody except Wayne Brown himself from the old Board and brought in people like Scott Matheson, Ted Bell, John Bennion, and Commissioner of Higher Education, Rolfe Kerr, and others--people of real stature and prestige. We built that organization in a different way, and we're now doing some very interesting things. I'm leaving in four days for our Fourth International Symposium on Technology and

Entrepreneurship in Minneapolis. We held the first one in Salt Lake City. It brought people from all over the world here to see what we were doing and hear what others are doing--exchange ideas. It was highly successful, so we were invited by other places to hold these. We held the second one in Birmingham, England, and the third one in--

EC: Now do you take participants from here, speakers, and so on?

WS: Some, but most of them are from all over the world. The third one was held in Brisbane, Australia. At that one for example, if you ask where the speakers came from, one of them was Wan Runnan from China, from Beijing, who established a private enterprise company there in technology and computers.

EC: Now, have you drawn people from behind the Iron Curtain for these?

WS: Well, not other than China, so far.

EC: What about the forthcoming one?

WS: I was about to say something about Wan Runnan. He built this company, which became what they call the IBM of China. It's called the Beijing Stone Group. He came and gave us a remarkable talk, won a long standing ovation for what he had done in his company to break through into free enterprise in China. This

company, entirely built on free enterprise principles, was producing about 45 percent of the computer product of China.

EC: I thought at this stage everything was being imported.

WS: No, no, there are a number of companies doing computers, but they're government-owned. But his private company is just outstripping them all. So we had him come and speak. I visited him in Beijing last year after having become acquainted in Australia, saw his company, and was very warmly entertained by him. Then I was dismayed after the bloodshed in Tienan Men Square, the revolt that was crushed, to see that he was on the wanted list.

EC: Oh dear.

WS: And had escaped and was hiding in America, and--

EC: You've not heard from him?

WS: Indirectly I have.

EC: I see.

WS: So that's the kind of people that we're involving. The next one will be next week in Minneapolis. Governor Perpich came to Birmingham with some of his staff. He was insistent that we bring it to Minneapolis. He put up $150,000 to do it, so we could come there.

EC: And will you be drawing people from Poland or Hungary and so on now?

WS: I don't think there's any from those countries. They don't have much entrepreneurship there yet, but they will as they get going. The symposium next year will be held in Austria, and undoubtedly we will have some of those people there.

EC: Now exactly what is the program? Are these seminar type things?

WS: We have the whole group that is meeting for plenary sessions, and then we have break-out sessions where they discuss specialized matters.

EC: What is the source of the funding? You indicated the governor of Minnesota is putting up money for this. Otherwise, what's the funding for this sort of thing?

WS: Well, initially, we had some state money. We did some programs on education for the state, but that died out. We don't want any state or any public money at all now. We live on what we get, of course, from sponsors for this symposium. That's one of our major events, and our staff is supported by those moneys.

EC: And what is your staff?

WS: Well, we have just a director, an office manager, and a secretary. They're housed here in the research park.

EC: Will you take board members to this conference? For instance will Scott Matheson be going?

WS: He won't be going, but several of our members will. One of our board members is Bob Rogers. He's a former German missionary and speaks German, so we sent him to Austria to negotiate with the Austrians for next year. He'll be going so he can meet with Austrians who will be there and make a presentation about next year's meeting. There will be two or three others who are there participating.

EC: How demanding of your time is this?

WS: I spend quite a bit of time on this. It's hard to evaluate just how much, but I suppose a quarter of my time or something like that.

EC: So, you're retirement has not freed you to do just relaxing.

WS: No, I'm as busy as I ever was--busier, I guess. The other thing that we're doing that's interesting is we hold twice a year a Venture Capital Conference. These have become something of a model for the country. What we do is we invite new, emerging companies that are just getting moving and need seed capital or venture capital to submit to us their business plans. They do, and then we select from among those business plans maybe a dozen that we think are most worthy of

making presentations. Then we organize sponsor teams of people in the finance or advertising or legal professions here. We form--three-man teams that work with these companies. There are four teams, and each team works with three companies very closely to rewrite their plans and really perfect them and eliminate the bugs in their companies--the things that they need to do in their companies that need changing, and so on. When they get to this point, they come and they give a dry run. We have a national jury that selects the companies in the first place, and then, this national jury meets, and hears these dry run presentations and rips them apart, tears them up, then trains them and helps them. So then we finally have our conference and we bring together venture capitalists from all around the country here to hear these presentations. They are excellent presentations after all of this work. And the net result is, we can trace now, before the most recent conference we could trace twenty-six million dollars of capital invested in these companies, either directly or indirectly as a result of our work. Besides that, these companies will testify that the training they underwent to prepare for this has prepared them to go out and get capitalization. We

think we are doing some real good.

EC: Now you lost Professor Brown. Who is carrying on in his place?

WS: Okay. He was a member of our Board of Directors. And then, of course, he died as a result of a plane crash that killed him and four members of his family. So in his memory, we changed the name of the Utah Innovation Foundation to the Wayne Brown Institute. We're looking at that in a rather ambitious way. We are seeking to raise $2.5 million capital endowment to endow a chair at the University. We've spent a lot of time in negotiations with Chase Peterson and his deans and others to try and work out an arrangement whereby this chair would not be bogged down in academia, but would be able to do the kinds of things Wayne Brown was doing, the hands-on kinds of things, out in the market place of entrepreneurship. So we finally worked out an agreement that's a first at this University, and I suppose as far as we know, any university whereby the man selected will be the director of the institute. He will hold a chair with tenure at the University, but he will be hired and fired by the board of the institute in cooperation with the University. Now that has taken some negotiations.

EC: I'll bet, and in light of the new Sorenson deal, it may have been tough going. Has it been approved by the Institutional Council and the Board of Regents?

WS: No, Chase hasn't taken it there.

EC: Okay.

WS: I don't know that he needs to, but he signed the agreement, and I signed it. The holder of that chair and the director of the institute has not been announced yet because we have not raised the money. But the man has agreed to come and he meets with us on occasion. It's Jim Fletcher.

EC: Oh, my goodness! Oh!

WS: So we've accomplished something.

EC: I'll say you have. You picked off a big one here. Great.

WS: So he'll come this year, and he'll be about half-time at the University and half-time with us.

EC: Well, that's wonderful.

WS: It's been a very interesting experience. So that's taken my time, and then of course the other things--the magazine.

EC: Yes, let's talk about the magazine. I wanted to review it again. I haven't been a regular reader of This People, but I got it out this morning to see since 1988, your name is on it as editor. What gave

rise to it?

WS: The magazine, initially?

EC: Yeah, the rise to it, uh huh.

WS: Well, I don't know. It's been around for nearly ten years. I can't tell you who it was started by, but the owner that I knew about was Sam Battistone. He bought it from the initial owners. It was conceived initially as a place to sort of spotlight prominent Mormons, and they did. They wrote about every Mormon I guess of any prominence, had profiles on them, and it became sort of a showcase for the rich and famous. But they couldn't make it go financially, and Sam Battistone finally closed it a year and a half ago. It stayed closed for some months, and then he Keith Whisenant acquired it.

EC: That name I'm not familiar with. I saw it, and I don't know the name.

WS: He's not a real prominent person in the community. He was an Eastern investment banker, quite successful. He came out here because he wanted to raise his family here. He's been involved with mergers and this kind of corporate development and so on. So he bought the magazine and then asked me to come and be the editor. I'll have to tell you a little anecdote about that. I mentioned to my daughter that I was

considering being the editor of This People magazine. Her response was just two words. "How embarrassing." [laughter] Then I explained to her that I didn't intend to continue the magazine as it presently existed. I explained to Keith, if I came to the magazine, it would be totally changed.

EC: Which it has.

WS: I have no interest in what was being done, but I would be interested in publishing a magazine that tackles issues, sensitive issues, not like Sunstone or Dialogue, but from a point of view of being positive and problem-solving and helping people in grappling with these problems and making a difference--a positive difference in their lives. He agreed with that concept, so that is what we did. It's been tough from a financial standpoint--Battistone left a disastrous situation. He had sold lifetime subscriptions.

EC: Oh dear!

WS: And multi-year subscriptions. When Keith bought it, it was with the understanding that Battistone would make good in some way those subscriptions. He never has and never will, so that's been a little tough. So rather than starting from scratch, we started from behind scratch. It has been hard to get to the point

where we feel comfortable financially.

EC: What about subscriptions? Have they come up?

WS: Well, they were all lost. We are gradually building them, but it's difficult. There is no way to really reach the public except through the magazine itself or word of mouth.

EC: With the decline of Holiday magazine, do you think this has boosted This People a little bit?

WS: I don't know that there is a real connection there. What you may or may not know is that a new magazine will be published this month. It is a very slick high-quality city magazine.

EC: Who's behind that?

WS: Well, it's a man who's doing a similar thing in Florida. He has a city magazine there, and I've seen it. It's a beautiful thing--thick and slick with beautiful advertising. He's moved to Park City at least part-time. As a matter of fact, he's hired away our art director at, I guess, a pretty good salary. I would think that this will be the death knell of Utah Holiday. But we don't consider ourselves really direct competitors, except of course we're trying to sell the same advertisers in many cases.

EC: What is your present subscription? Do you happen to have that?

WS: We've got about 13,000 paid subscriptions.

EC: Wow, that's pretty good.

WS: We publish and distribute about 30,000, country newsstand sales and the promotion copies we send out.

EC: There is another a slick magazine about Utah business.

WS: Utah Business?

EC: Yeah. Is that competition for you?

WS: To some extent, but not very much. You don't really see the same advertisers there.

EC: Who's back of that? Do you happen to know the publisher?

WS: Yes. It's a woman named Linda Later--L-a-t-e-r. She just built it up on her own. She's done a number of things, but she became a consultant to some businesses, and started producing a newsletter for those businesses. I guess that kind of grew and got under her skin and resulted in the magazine.

EC: Well, I was sent a sample, and I was quite impressed with it.

WS: It is about a year old now. Interestingly she asked me to come and edit it.

EC: Is that right?

WS: Recently, yes, and I told her I didn't think I was interested. She said, "Please come and see what we're

doing, and just talk," and so I did. It was a very fine set up, physically. It's fully computerized, desk-top publishing out of their own little plant, and staff and so on, and it's really kind of appealing. So, I don't think I will, but--it's interesting to think about.

EC: Let's talk a little bit about the books you've been involved with. I looked at the one you've written on Utah Trails a little more carefully this morning--very impressed with it. What other books have you done?

WS: Well, I don't know that it quite qualifies as a book, but I did a collection of my China stories ten years ago in a small book called China Notebook. I call it my little, "Red Book" because it was published in a red cover. It became rather remarkably successful. We really published it just as sort of a promotion for the newspaper. We charged for it, and printed 10,000 copies. It is now sold out.

EC: Hum, that's a pretty good publication number.

WS: Yes, and it's kind of a nice book. I got a lot of compliments. Some years ago, a friend of mine sent me a picture that he took in China. He had been traveling there and was on the train. He happened to see a Chinese man--he had no idea who he was, but he

was sitting there reading my book, China Notebook. He took the Chinese man's picture and sent a copy of the picture to me. Well, anyway that book--and Trail Guide, just a little booklet on the pioneer trail, and then this book.

EC: Now, the Utah Geographic series, who's behind it?

WS: A fellow by the name of Rick Reese, who's a rather remarkable man. I hope he'll end up here at the University of Utah working with the public relations people. Anyway, he did a series like this in Montana on a much more modest scale. He was the founder of the Yellowstone Institute.

EC: Oh yes, yes.

WS: An environmentalist--remarkable guy. Anyway, he came to Utah. He's a University of Utah graduate, close friend of Ted Wilson. They still climb mountains together. So, anyway, he came and determined that he would start the series in Utah. He's published five books now, mine was the fifth volume in the series.

EC: Well, one of the things that impressed me, not only the writing, but the appearance. Now that's beautiful. The photographic reproductions are excellent. I wish they'd make a little greater distinction on the trails on the first map in the book. It's kind of hard to distinguish them one from

another.

WS: The maps are a disappointment to me.

EC: Yeah. But on the whole, a very attractive book.

WS: The University of Utah cartographer who had done some other things for him was going to do these. So we were all excited about that, but then it turned out that he just couldn't--had other commitments. The maps were turned over to his students under his direction. I wasn't very pleased with the result.

EC: The number published, do you happen to know?

WS: Yes, it was 10,000--7,000 soft, and 3,000 hard.

EC: Have the sales been pretty good?

WS: Pretty good, yes.

EC: Good. This should be encouraging to those who are publishing on history. When I think of the struggles we had at the Historical Society at one time.

WS: So, I have that book, and more recently I published a collection of my Church News editorials.

EC: Oh yes.

WS: I didn't mention that.

EC: No, you didn't.

WS: When I retired as editor and general manager, I was asked by Jim Mortimer, as senior editor, to remain part-time in a consulting capacity consulting. I was to spend as much time as I felt I wanted to do and

could. Part of that was to travel abroad once a year. The first of those trips I went to India and Pakistan, and interviewed Rhajiv Gandhi and also President Zia. Zia since has been killed, and Rhajiv looks like he has his problems.

[END OF SIDE ONE OF TAPE]

EC: This is side two of our second interview with William B. Smart, and he's telling us about some of his activities since his retirement.

WS: So, anyway we went up the Khyber Pass. I've always wanted to go there, and--

EC: You and Rudyard Kipling, huh?

WS: Yes, and we looked from the pass over the country he looked over. Looking out over Afghanistan, I thought of a poem he wrote when he was up here, which goes something like, "When wounded, you lie on Afghanistan's plains, and the women come out to cut up your remains, Roll to your rifle and blow out your brains, And go to your God like a soldier." [laughter] That was what--Rudyard Kipling wrote out of his experience. Afghanistan's war against the Russians was that kind of war, terribly cruel. I thought of that, looking out over Afghanistan's plains. Anyway, I wrote about those experiences. Then my wife met me in Kathmandu and we went trekking in

the Himalayas.

EC: Oh, wonderful.

WS: To the Annapurna base camp and it was wonderful.

EC: For a man who's had by-pass surgery and you're able to take on that?

WS: Well, I've taken on tougher things than that. On the tenth anniversary of my heart surgery, I ran my first marathon, and ran four more after that.

EC: Is that right? This is the Deseret News Marathon.

WS: The Deseret News Marathon, which I established. I thought that I ought to come to my own party. So I got in shape and ran that marathon. Anyway, I don't know how we got on to this.

EC: We were just talking about some of your experiences and the writing.

WS: Oh, that's right, I was asked to remain as a senior editor at the Deseret News. The next year, after India and Pakistan, I went back to China, and into Tibet and had a great experience there. Took my wife with me. My plan was to write about the ten years of the government of Ding Psiao Ping with whom we had become acquainted the first time over there. So I did, and published a couple of articles. Then the slaughter came in Beijing Square and most of what I had to say was irrelevant anymore.

EC: How can you account for this disregard for human rights when you see the advancement they had made economically, the apparent political change and now this reversal?

WS: Well, of course, we all knew that there were still some Maoist thinkers in the cabinet, people who thought that China had gone too far. But I felt, and still feel that they were very much in the minority and would not return to power. But while we were there this last time, we found a great deal of unrest among the young people. They were very critical of the administration of Deng Chome Ping and his crowd for a number of reasons--inflation being one of them and the de-emphasis of intellectualism being another. We knew and reported that there was that kind of unrest, but never would have dreamed that it would come to this. I think it was never intended to come to this. I think that the students went way too far. You know, they put themselves into an intractable position--no way of dealing with them. The government, not being able to deal with them, over-reacted, and we've seen the result. I think it is something no one (the business news(?)) intended. When I saw Wan Runnan on the wanted list I thought well, this really was more deep-seated than I'd even

dreamed. They are really going to destroy themselves. Since then I've learned that he was actively involved with that demonstration, encouraging demonstrators, feeding them, and so on. So the fact that he is now wanted is, maybe not an indication that they are going to sweep away all the free enterprise that they've gained. I hope that's the case. They haven't taken over any other companies as far as I know. They did take over his company.

Anyway, that was part of what I was doing as senior editor. I also agreed to write Church News editorials, and I enjoyed that. The last three years I've written about half of them.

EC: Is that right?

WS: But I'm no longer doing that. I've now ended my relationship as senior editor and I have no connection at all with the Deseret News. Anyway, I asked Deseret Book if they would be interested in publishing a collection of those essays, which they've done, called Messages for a Happier Life. It has had a very good response. In fact, it was Deseret Books' book of the month selection for August.

EC: Well, good.

WS: It sold very well, and I'm pleased with that. The essays were mostly based on my experiences and trying

to take a fresh and different look at some doctrines and scriptures. It's rather different than the editorials in the Church News in the past.

EC: I doubt that there was a Church editorial about the recent excommunication.

WS: George Lee? Not at all well.

EC: He was brought in during the Spencer Kimball regime and I suppose President Kimball's interest in the Indians was partly responsible for this.

WS: Oh, I'm sure.

EC: Do you think he would have continued or would he have had trouble with Spencer Kimball still in office?

WS: I don't know. I really don't know any of the circumstances. I notice in the Tribune this morning, he gave an interview to the community. Did you read that?

EC: Yes, yes.

WS: I read it this morning because I was away for the weekend, but I was astonished that he told the Tribune that the Church had tried to excommunicate him for polygamy and adultery, and failing that, it then got him for apostasy, which is a strange thing for a man to volunteer to say, because it raises all kinds of questions as to why he was really excommunicated. To answer the question, if these

things were going on, why then--it wouldn't have mattered whether Spencer Kimball was here or not. But I don't know.

EC: He was interviewed on both Channel 2 and Channel 4, but Bruce Lindsay on Channel 5 said they tried to contact him, but he couldn't be reached.

WS: Was he as vitriolic as the newspaper account indicates?

EC: Not at all.

WS: In the Tribune interview he seems very vitriolic.

EC: No, in fact I thought, how could they get this man on heresy, when his views expressed on T.V. were not at all difficult for me to sympathize with.

WS: Strange. I don't understand that one at all.

EC: You're glad you don't have to write an editorial on that?

WS: I'm glad I don't have to deal with that one. No one else will either.

EC: Bill, are there some outstanding figures you want to talk about? You mentioned your close friend and companion, Barney Standing. Are there people you've become acquainted with as an experienced newspaper man that really influenced your life and you associated with? Wayne Brown must have been one of those?

WS: Wayne Brown was a great influence--great inspiration. Gordon B. Hinckley was another, a man I dearly loved.

EC: Apparently you've been friends with Chase Peterson for a long time?

WS: Yes. Chase is a great friend. I'll tell you a little about Chase Peterson that I don't think he would object to. When I was Bishop, he had a child, Edward, a baby, and he called one day to say he was just distraught. This baby, they discovered was born deaf. He wanted to have me come and give him a blessing. So I did with my counselors, and found myself saying a blessing that the boy would be able to hear and to live a normal life. Some weeks later, Chase called and said, emotionally, "Bill, this child can hear." And he did hear, and has gone on to become student body president of East High, a student at Harvard, and a very successful guy. So, you know, we have that kind of an association way back. We've been close friends ever since--tennis partners--tennis opponents more often than partners. Chase is a great tennis player.

EC: People outside the community--who are some of the great figures that you have associated with?

WS: I don't know that I could identify any of them who have had a lasting impact. I've met and talked with

all the presidents up till Reagan. Jimmy Carter was a man I had a great deal affection and respect for. He invited me to come back to the White House with a group of editors, the first group after inauguration day. We spent the day at the White House with his Cabinet members and a couple of hours with him. I came away from that feeling here's a great guy who isn't going to make it because of his naivete, but what a tragedy it would be if he didn't. I have great respect for him. Oh, I don't know--who else?

EC: I remember you spoke rather warmly about the editor of La Prensa somewhere. Now whether that was in Peru or where.

WS: It was in Peru. La Prensa is everywhere in Latin America.

EC: But--

WS: But I didn't have a real close relationship with him. Roscoe Drumman, the editor of the Christian Science Monitor, was a good friend and good influence in my life, I think. And there were other newspaper people--Frank Tremaine, a senior editor at UPI. Jack Anderson.

EC: When I reviewed--

WS: Harry Press of the American Press Institute at Stanford was a close friend and a strong influence. I

spent a quarter down there as a fellow--Stanford professional fellow.

EC: Is that similar to the Neiman Program at Harvard?

WS: It's the West coast version of the Neiman fellowship.

EC: I asked you this the other day, or told you to be prepared for it. What do you wish to be remembered for?

WS: I haven't given any more thought to that. [laughter] I'm sorry I haven't been prepared for it. I guess I'd like to be remembered as being a good newspaper man. I think I was a good newspaper man. I think I built the Desert News to a newspaper that gained real respect.

EC: May I just interject something here. I like a morning newspaper. I've not been a regular reader of the Deseret News. I used to see it here. I'm very close to Sterling McMurrin, and you may be interested in knowing that Sterling thinks the Deseret News is a far superior newspaper to the Tribune. He subscribes to the Deseret News not the Tribune.

WS: Well, that's gratifying to me. But I wonder if he felt that way about it before I took it over. The reason I say that is because when I did become Editor and General Manager, I recognized that the weakest pocket in the whole state as far as the Deseret News

was concerned was on this campus. I mean, we had no respect on the U. campus. So I met with Dave Gardner--and by the way, he's been an influence too. I asked him if he had any thoughts and ideas as to what we could do to have a real positive effect here at the university. He didn't have anything very specific. Nothing much came out of that, so I just went about trying to make the Deseret News a superior newspaper. I think what Sterling said is the result of winning respect here. We won respect throughout the state and area for being a hard-hitting but fair and responsible newspaper. I guess I would like to be remembered as the person who built the Deseret News into a paper of real quality. I hope that it will stay that way. I don't know if it will or not; it sure has its problems.

EC: One related question. Do you have some regrets over paths taken or positions held or--?

WS: No, No. I made mistakes, but not fatal mistakes. The things that ended my career at the Desert News are things that I would certainly do again, things that had to be done, honest things to do, courageous things to do, and I'd do them again.

EC: You wouldn't care to specify those?

WS: Well, if I'm going to restrict this, I guess I could.

The thing that really, well--two or three things that caused me problems. One, as I mentioned before, I don't consider myself a liberal, but much the middle-of-the-road. But by some people's standards I was too far to the left. I won the enmity of people who are close to President Benson. I knew for many years that if when President Benson became president of the Church, I would not long remain at the Deseret News. As a matter of fact, I did remain for several years. But the old suspicions finally caught up with me. So that was partly the problem.

A second thing: President Tanner was, I think, my supporter. He was the member of the First Presidency responsible for the Deseret News, and I had a good relationship with him. However, when Utah Power and Light got into this Questar business, we could see that there were some questionable things going on. One of the things I did at the Deseret News was organize what we call the Pinpoint team of investigative reporters. Dale Van Ettan was one of the key members. There were others, good men--good newspaper men. I encouraged them, worked with them, and we went after things. We made some differences, and basically that did more than any other single thing, I think, to build a good reputation at the

Deseret News with stature and respect. One of the things we went after was this Questar business. Rod Decker by that time was involved as an investigative reporter and columnist. I made him a columnist and he became a darn good one. He was my seminary student, when I was teaching seventh grade seminary.

EC: Oh, is that right?

WS: I had known him for many, many years. He came to me to see about the possibility of working--had no experience at all as a newspaper man. But I knew how smart he was, and how honest he was. So I took him on as a project, made him staff member and worked with him harder than--well, the two men and I really worked with were Dale Van Atta and Rod Decker--both of them as green as they could be. But I could see their potential. Dale went on, of course, to Washington, D.C. He is going to take over the Jack Anderson empire one of these days soon. Rod Decker went on to become the best journalist, I think, in Utah television. But anyway, Rod got deeply involved with the Questar investigation, and we published exposes about them. President Tanner was a board member of Utah Power and Light, and I knew it. I knew it was a dangerous thing to do and it didn't have to be done, but it should be done. So we did it, and it

wasn't long after that that Wendall Ashton was sent over as publisher. But I would do it again, and the courts since then proved that we were right.

EC: Since you brought up Rod Decker, what about Calvin Grondahl. Has he left down there just because he had a better offer? Was he forced out? What was the situation? Did this pose problems to you--the political cartoons?

WS: Oh sure. Sure, you know that the trouble with a cartoon, you can't say "on the other hand," the way you can in written editorials. You ruffle feathers, but that was--this job, to ruffle feathers. That's part of it, and that never bothered me. I worked with him and supported him and defended him. But when new management took over, Grondahl was under a lot more pressure and a lot more restrictions and he finally left. It certainly wasn't a better offer to go to the Ogden Standard Examiner. It is not a step upward.

EC: Oh, I thought maybe financially they made it attractive for him.

WS: Oh, I don't think so. I don't know what kind of financial offer he had, but he had been on the verge of being fired or quitting several times.

EC: I'm sure the collection of his cartoons in book form did not help his cause any down at the Deseret News.

WS: No, no, particularly what had been published by Sunstone.

EC: Yes, by Sunstone. Well, Bill, unless you have further information, shall we terminate this?

WS: Yes, I think so there are lots of other things that, we could discuss, but this may be a good time to stop.

EC: Let me say how we appreciate your giving your time, and you will have a chance to review this, make additions--I hope not many deletions, because as we say, we'll offer you the opportunity to place some restrictions on this.

WS: I don't like to restrict it, but you can see there may be some problems.

EC: Yes.

[END OF TAPE]

BIOGRAPHY

WILLIAM B. SMART

NAME:	William Buckwalter Smart (Soc. Sec. No. 530-03-3838)
HOME ADDRESS:	55 Laurel Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84103
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BUSINESS TITLE:	Editor, This People Magazine
BUSINESS ADDRESS:	Beneficial Life Tower, Suite 1200, 36 South State Street, Salt Lake City, Utah
BUSINESS PHONE:	538-2262
DATE OF BIRTH:	June 27, 1922
PLACE OF BIRTH:	Provo, Utah
WIFE'S NAME:	Donna Toland Smart BORN: Afton, Wyoming
DATE MARRIED:	July 15, 1945 at Freedom, Idaho
CHILDREN:	William Toland, Melinda, Kristen, Thomas Toland and Alfred Laurence

EDUCATION:

B.A. Reed College, Oregon: History and Political Science. Phi Beta Kappa
Special Courses: University of Utah, University of Wyoming, Stanford University, Columbia University

BUSINESS:

Deseret News

Reporter	1948-1952
Editor, Editorial Page	1952-1966
Executive Editor	1966-1972
Editor & General Manager	1972-1986
Senior Editor	1986-1988
Editor, This People Magazine	1988-

CLUBS:

Bonneville Knife & Fork Club
Timpanogos Club
Alta Club
Aztec Club
Fort Douglas (Hidden Valley) Club

L.D.S. CHURCH

M.I.A. General Board, 1949-1969
Bishop, Federal Heights Ward, 1964-1969
High Council, Emigration Stake, 1970-1971, 1982-1989
Sunday School General Board, 1971-1979

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Provo-Jordan River Parkway Foundation (past president)
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Utah State Board of Regents' Higher Education Board of Advisors
Utah State Commission on Excellence in Education
Utah Federation for Drug-Free Youth
Governor's Commission on Law & Citizenship