

An Oral History Interview

With

FRED HARRIS (part 2)

conducted by
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Fred Harris

Fred Harris represented Oklahoma in the United States Senate from 1964-73. In 1976 he sought the Democratic presidential nomination as a populist candidate. Like Morris K. Udall, he was unsuccessful.

Following the 1976 campaign Harris joined the faculty of the University of New Mexico where he teaches political science. He is the author of several books, including two mystery novels.

JF: Okay, this is Side 2. You mentioned in your 1976 book, *Potomac Fever*, that by 1974 you had begun seriously thinking about running for president again. At that time, your friend Fritz Mondale was considering running. Did you ever discuss with him your plans to run?

FH: No, not in advance. What I did do was to--I wrote a four-page memo, single-spaced, addressed to Mondale about how I thought he ought to run for president in 1976, and how he ought to go about it, in a populist way with populist issues, staying in people's homes and so forth. And by the time I had that finished, he'd already pretty much decided he was not going to run, according to reports, and I had a couple of friends of mine read it, one of whom was Jim Hightower--who was later to become my campaign manager, and then commissioner of Agriculture, now a radio commentator--and he said, "Well, why don't you do that yourself?" And so I reworked the beginning of it and made it, rather than a memo to Mondale, a sort of statement of my own, about how I was thinking about doing it, and began to circulate it and decided then to run for president myself.

JF: Did you ever speak with Mondale about that?

FH: No, never did.

JF: November 23, 1974, Mo announced his candidacy for president. I think that was probably the earliest anybody'd ever announced before.

FH: Yes.

JF: Had you known that he was considering running?

FH: No, that came as a great surprise, and also a great disappointment to me. We--I and my main friends and supporters in Washington and around the country--had already decided that I was going to run and how we were going to do it and so forth, and the field looked pretty good. We thought things looked pretty good for me and my campaign, in the way the field was shaping up. And then, all of a sudden, Mo Udall decided to run, and by then we were already committed to running. But I saw at once that he was the most like me, and would be the most serious competition for a person like me, in the Democratic contest.

JF: A couple of weeks later on, I think, December 12, 1974, Georgia Governor Jimmy Carter announced that he was going to run. What was your reaction to his announcement?

FH: That didn't seem to be of any real significance to me or to anyone I knew. It later did become very important in my mind. Very, very early in Iowa, I began to run onto.... The UAW and a lot of people like that were supporters of mine in Iowa; a lot of labor people, Congressman Tom Harkins' wife was my campaign manager in Des Moines--I believe he was a congressman then. At any rate, I began to run onto people, like I remember in particular the first time I heard this was from UAW people in Iowa, and they'd say, "I went to a coffee and I met this governor from Georgia, whatever his name is." "Carter?" "Yeah, Carter. I don't see how I could support a southerner, but I really liked him." I mean, I just

kept hearing this. Carter was running a very personal kind of campaign, as we were. So I said to a group of my staff people very early, "You know, a person that's really in this thing is Carter." And I remember one of my staff people, Jim Monroe, said, "Why do you say that?" and I said, "Well, people just keep tellin' me they like him." And he said, "Yes, but what does that mean?" And I said--this is an exact conversation--I said, "Well, it's better than a kick in the head! If somebody's gonna say somethin' about you, it's a pretty good thing for 'em to say they like ya! I think this guy's in it." They all said, "Oh, no," because he wasn't even showing at all in the polls. But.... (chuckles)

JF: He was!

FH: He was in it.

JF: A month later, on January 11, 1975, you announced your candidacy in Manchester, New Hampshire. So you were probably about the third announced candidate. So in addition to you and Mo, a number of other liberals announced that year, including Terry Sanford....

FH: Birch Bayh.

JF: Birch Bayh, your friend Sargent Shriver.

FH: Sargent Shriver, yes.

JF: Eventually, Frank Church.

FH: Yes, Church was in it after I was out of it.

JF: Oh, he was, okay.

FH: I'd been in--long before the announcement, I'd been involved. I mean, I was already campaigning, for example, I spent Thanksgiving that year, on purpose, in a borrowed home in Concord, New Hampshire. We were already campaigning, but then the formal announcement came later.

JF: Did Mo know that you were running before he announced? You said you didn't know that he was going to run.

FH: I doubt it. I doubt it. I don't think so.

JF: With so many liberals in the race, I have to ask you, what was it that you thought you had, that these men didn't?

FH: Well, for example, a lot of labor people were for me, who were very much opposed to Mo.

JF: Why was that?

FH: I don't know whether he'd had a vote--I can't remember now--but it seemed like there was a vote for right to work, or at least not against right to work.

JF: Arizona's a right-to-work state.

FH: Maybe some other stuff, I don't know. But at any rate, some of my strongest support, for example, was from the Service Employees International Union, a union, you know, John Sweeney is from that union. He's now the head of the AFL-CIO. And that is a union that organizes people at the low end of the wage scale: janitors and elevator operators and people like that. They were very strongly for me, and a lot of those kind of people didn't want to be for Udall. That's one of the things that occurs to me now. And then on a number of other kind of populist issues, I and my supporters felt we were a considerable contrast with Udall's more sort of New Deal liberal kind of approach. In retrospect, I don't know that the differences were that great on those issues, but at the time, my supporters felt they were.

JF: Did you still consider Mo your primary rival?

FH: Yes, yes. And it was increasingly clear, once he got off to a great start in Iowa, that Carter was just for purely tactical political reasons, positioned perfectly, since there were so many of the rest of us over to the left of him.

JF: Yes, he was. Let's talk about the style of the Harris campaign. You ran a guerilla-style campaign, using primarily volunteers, living in people's homes, traveling in a camper. Was this primarily a financial decision?

FH: It was both. I had written in that four-page memo, all of the details of how to do this, when I was thinking I was writing it for Mondale, and then wrote it for myself. And I thought that the campaign ought not only to be a populist campaign on issues for a fairer distribution of wealth, income, and power, and the specific ways to do that, with tax reform and so forth, but also that it ought to be populist, people-oriented in style, and so that you didn't stay in high-priced hotels and so forth. That was a style adopted by design, but also out of necessity, since we didn't have a lot of money. I wound up--Charles Mohr, M-O-H-R, of *The New York Times* was later to write that I had the largest and most professional staff of any of the presidential candidates, and I think that's true. At the last, I think we had 131 national staff--none of whom drew a salary. There were a few got stipends and so forth, but like my campaign manager, for example, Jim Hightower, he drew no salary.

JF: You don't think it hurt your campaign to have unpaid professionals?

FH: It would have been a lot better if we could have done this: I don't know about the salary part, but Carter was able to put into Iowa, for example, and in some other places, but Iowa in particular, paid organizers, very early. A person who's now my very good friend, that lives in New Mexico, Tim Kraft, went in there for Carter in Iowa. But we weren't able to do that, and one reason we weren't was that our matching money was held up because of

the Supreme Court case, *Buckley versus Vallejo*, which questioned the constitutionality of the Campaign Finance Reform Act, and therefore held up, for a long period, a very critical period, the federal matching money that we had coming to us from the Federal Election Commission. Carter, at that period, was able to borrow from himself, he loaned his campaign--which you could legally do--the money to put paid operatives and paid operations in Iowa, and we weren't able to do that. That would have been good if we'd had a lot of money.

JF: Twenty-twenty hindsight: If you could go back in time, would you change the manner in which you ran the campaign?

FH: No, I'd do the same thing: Both because it was a conscious style decision, and also because of the necessity of doing it that way.

JF: You were described by some as a Wallace without the racism. And at one point in a March 15, 1976, article in the *Milwaukee Journal*, you were quoted as saying that you were uniting the McGovern and Wallace constituencies. Can you explain what you meant by that?

FH: Well, this kind of thing, of course Wallace was a figure abhorrent to me, and despicable, and the poor thing, despite his eventual attempts at apologies, I think was never able to erase the terrible things he did to people in Alabama and throughout the country in exacerbating the problems of race. But a thing that really impressed me was that after Eugene McCarthy, leftist candidate for president in 1968, was out of the race against Johnson, polls showed that a substantial portion of his supporters said they were going to vote for Wallace. And at that time, that was a very shocking fact. How could they?! But we've seen it again and again since then. For example, we've seen it again with Senator John McCain of Arizona, a very, very conservative Republican running for president, but who had a bunch of progressive Democrats who supported him. And I think a part of all that is the aura that each of those candidates had, they were against the way things were, and they were against the establishment and the system, so that Wallace did have some good populist kind of supporters who didn't agree with him on race. And that's what I meant by that--I meant to try to get those people back. And also, what we wanted to do, as Wallace once said, "To be a successful candidate, you have to put the hay down where the goats can get at it." You've got to speak a language that people understand, and I felt that I could do that.

JF: Your campaign audiences were often reported as being largely long-haired hippies, hippie types. Was that true, and if so, do you think it hurt your campaign?

FH: It was very mixed. For example, in a place like Lincoln, Nebraska, when we had a big outdoor meeting to organize that state--and every state--once we got a mass of supporters of sufficient size, we'd have a statewide meeting and organize a campaign and choose a manager for the state and so forth. And in Lincoln, most of that audience were red-faced farmers where the top of their foreheads where white where their ball caps, as they rode the tractors, had shaded them from the sun. We had all types, but it is true, what I was trying to

do was to put together people of all kinds, and some of those were these alienated people, the kind who'd supported Robert Kennedy and Eugene McCarthy--to some degree, a few that had supported people like Wallace. I went down to Hattiesburg, Mississippi, for example, once, had a huge meeting in a hotel ballroom in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. And I told this group, "I said last night in Wisconsin, 'I'm goin' to Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and I'm gonna put together the best-lookin' coalition of all kinds of people--some American Indians, blacks, a lot of my red-neck kinfolks....'" My dad's people had come from Mississippi. "I'm gonna put together the best-looking political meeting anybody ever saw in Mississippi, or the damndest race riot, one or the other." (both chuckle) And the people laughed like hell. A distant relative of mine came up to me afterwards, a white guy, and had tears in his eyes. He said, "I waited all my life to hear people talk like you do." Well, that was my ambition, was to put together all of these various kinds of people, and our crowds were like that. But a Secret Service agent told me--when I later had Secret Service--he laughingly said, "You know a lot of the people in your audience are people we used to try to keep away from Birch Bayh." My detail had once worked in Birch Bayh's campaign. I didn't take Secret Service for a long time, I finally did.

JF: A number of people thought you were a radical.

FH: Well, you know, Evans and Novak once wrote an article on me and Mondale in 1968 for *Harper's Magazine*, I think it was, and they called us "establishment radicals," which I think was about right, probably, for me. You know, I'm not a bomb-thrower or a protestor. I never liked marches much. And I'm not a third-party person. I think that's not a bad way to have described me at the time, an establishment radical. I was, after all, a member of the United States Senate, too, and chairman of the Democratic Party.

JF: Looking back, do you think your campaign may have had the effect of aiding Mo Udall by casting the glow of moderation over him?

FH: It's possible, but I don't really think it had much effect one way or another like that on Mo.

JF: You suggest in your book, *Potomac Fever*, that some of the other candidates borrowed heavily from your issues and themes, like full employment and tax reform, breaking up the oil companies. Was that the case, or were those just the liberal issues of the time?

FH: I think that's true. And then Carter himself later told me, and he told other people, that he borrowed from my campaign, both in issues and in style. You know, he began eventually, in the general election, to stay in people's homes, for example. And he walked on his inaugural day down Pennsylvania Avenue. He told me that himself, and he told others. I think that's true. And I do think that people, if you look at the first debates where we all appeared together, and the last debates, you find some movement on the part of some others--maybe in the emphasis they gave to issues, and in some ways I think just paying more attention to them. So I do think it had some effect.

JF: Speaking of those debates, in 1975, the liberal candidates spoke at a series of five issue

forums sponsored by the Americans for Democratic Action and some liberal unions. As I understand it, you almost always received the most applause, but Mo Udall won the straw polls. Why was that?

FH: I can't remember about the straw polls in those, but I virtually always, I think, in joint appearances, I got the most applause. And I don't remember about these things, it depends on the audience. I was contesting primarily with Birch Bayh for the New Democratic Coalition endorsement in Massachusetts and in New York. I think in both those places what we did was to keep him from getting the endorsement. In California, I got it. It was there called CDC, California Democratic Coalition, I think. But I can't remember these particular forums that you're talking about. I do remember this, though, about a forum where I got the most applause, or I thought the best response. But the result, I think, at least on the television audience, was different. And that was we all appeared at a giant meeting in Iowa, which was taped. I spoke to that audience in sort of the old-style way of speaking to a political crowd--you know, sort of red-faced and yelling and so forth--and I went away from there feeling very good. There wasn't any question I had made the best impression. That evening I was staying with some people in northern Iowa at their home, and we turned on the television to see the taped program of that debate, and it was just overwhelmingly clear that Jimmy Carter was the best. He had spoken in much more calm, television tones, and it came across much better on television. Mine, on the other hand, seemed a little bit too frothy and....

JF: Fiery?

FH: Yes, a little bit too fiery. That was a shock to me, too. It also convinced me--well, I was already convinced by then--that was late in the Iowa campaign--that Carter was probably going to win the Iowa.

JF: So by Iowa you thought that Carter was....

FH: I thought he'd win in Iowa. By then I wasn't sure he'd win elsewhere.

JF: Let's talk about Ladonna for a minute. Your wife at the time, Ladonna Harris, actively campaigned with you, and in fact had quite a following of her own, as I recall.

FH: Yes.

JF: What effect do you think her participation had on your campaign?

FH: I think really a great.... I should point out what you may not know--I'm not sure--she and I have been divorced now for eighteen or nineteen years--I remarried--she lives here, continues to head Americans for Indian Opportunity. She lives in New Mexico, and I see her regularly, had lunch with her yesterday. She was a really vital part of that campaign, as she was in all of my campaigns, and I think in joint appearances was a very humanizing kind of influence, and made me less of a sort of politician to people. They saw me as more human, I think, in her presence than they might have otherwise. It helped to humanize me,

and I think she was a great influence on me in regard to a lot of issues, as well. She had a particular appeal, for my campaign, for women and minorities. She was more or less scheduled separately from me. We sent her to a lot of places on her own, and I thought she did a really terrific job.

JF: Were many of the other wives of candidates actively campaigning, do you recall?

FH: No. You saw Rosalyn Carter with Jimmy some, and I think she also campaigned on her own, but I don't believe that was true of any of the others--not Birch Bayh and not Shriver, except a little bit. Eunice Shriver, I think, went with him to some things. But I don't think anybody campaigned to the degree that Ladonna did. Maybe Rosalyn was close.

JF: Did you or Ladonna know Mo's wife, Ella Udall?

FH: Had met her, but didn't know her well.

JF: How about the role of humor in politics? Mo, of course, was known for the humor he employed, and you were known for your sense of humor as well. What role does humor play in politics?

FH: Well, I think it ought to play a big role. One time when I was a state senator, there was a guy who was governor, [J.] Howard Edmondson, starting off as governor, as happens with every governor and every president that we start out popular, you know, and you can't imagine that they're ever going to be unpopular. And while he was still popular, this governor how was Howard Edmondson, whom I later beat for the Democratic nomination for the United States Senate, I was in a little town back in my home state senate district, and a guy, Ira Neal [phonetic spelling], said to me, "Tell me about this guy Edmondson, the governor." And I said, "Well, he's very progressive, he's reform-minded, very smart," and he kind of brushed all that aside. He said, "Does he ever laugh?" And I thought a minute and I said, "Well, I've never seen him laugh." And he said, "Well, that tells you a lot about a fellow." And I think that's true. I think you ought to be able to see sort of the absurdity of things, and be able to laugh about things. That was certainly true in my campaign, and Mo, of course, is well noted for that. One of the most famous things to come out of that campaign was his story which poor old [Senator] Joe Biden tried to appropriate later on about the barber shop. That's one of the best stories ever in politics, I think, where the barber says, "Oh, yes, we were just laughing about that yesterday," or "laughing about that this morning."

JF: That's right. Yes, that's definitely one of his most well-known jokes. Your strategy was to....

FH: But it wasn't a joke, that's an actual thing that happened to Mo.

JF: It was!

FH: That's why he resented Joe Biden using it as if it had happened to him. Byden told that

story when he was running for president later on, as if that happened.... And they said to him, "Oh, yes, Senator Biden, we were just laughing about that yesterday." Mo said maybe it wouldn't be so bad if it was some joke he was appropriating, but that's something that actually happened to me! (laughs)

JF: Mo used to say about jokes, once you use them three times, they're yours. (laughs)

FH: That's right, you could do that.

JF: But that one actually happened.

FH: But that's not a joke. Yes, that was a real occurrence. My humor was that kind of stuff. I told people about things that people actually said or did, like, "My mama said this or that," or whatever. Two things that people quote of mine a great deal about that campaign is I said everybody wrote, and does write, about the Iowa caucuses, that it's a winnowing-out process. And I said in the press conference where I ran third in that Iowa caucus, "The winnowing-out process has begun, and I've been winnowed in." And the other that jillions of people--hardly a month goes by somebody somewhere doesn't quote what I said after New Hampshire. They asked me at the press conference, "What happened? Why didn't you win here?" And I said, "Ours was a campaign of the little people, and I guess they couldn't reach the levers. We're gonna hafta get 'em some stools for the Massachusetts primary." I think that's something that Jim Hightower and I giggled and laughed about as we were walking down toward the press conference.

Yes, I think humor is a very important thing, and I think it says a lot about a person, whether or not they've got some humor about them. Gary Hart, for example, just could not--he couldn't even tell a joke. I saw him in one pathetic attempt at it in a joint meeting with some other candidates for president, and people were just scratching their heads, "What?!" Bill Clinton wasn't that good at it at first, but with writers and help, he's gotten a lot better.

JF: You mentioned in your book your strategy for the 1976 campaign was to place in the top three in the early primaries, the top two in the middle primaries, and then be first by the time the later ones, such as Ohio. You were off to a very good start in Iowa, which was January 19, 1976. You came in third, with Carter coming in first, and then Bayh second. What did you do so well in Iowa?

FH: Well, everything worked just right. Iowa was a real politics state, and we had a huge volunteer operation in there. Our entire national staff, practically, was in Iowa. Then what happened was Oklahoma. Well, two things happened: one was Oklahoma, and the other was Florida. We had made a decision not to go to Florida, and so had everybody else, except Carter and George Wallace. And Carter was able, in the process of beating Wallace there, to project himself nationally as the Democratic alternative to Wallace. He was a good southerner, as compared to a racist southerner, and that proved to be a really key thing for him. It was, incidentally, Carter's progressive views in regard to race that helped him--southern blacks supported him, like Daddy King, Dr. King's father supported him, was a huge help to Carter among white liberals in the north, and Iowa, for example. So

Mississippi happened between Iowa and New Hampshire, in a positive way for Carter. But Oklahoma happened for me. As Jim Hightower used to say, "Our crack staff hadn't thought about Oklahoma." Ha! Oklahoma had put its caucuses up earlier, like a lot of people want to do these days in these western states. They say, "Well, the process is over before we get in it." So not having to do with my running, they had changed their caucus system, and all of a sudden, it dawned on us that after Iowa, instead of being able to pick up and move to New Hampshire, like Mo Udall and others were going to do--Udall was badly wounded in Iowa--we were going to have to send everybody to Oklahoma. So we did nothing at all, weren't able to do anything in New Hampshire. We picked up everybody from Iowa and put them on buses and cars and airplanes to Oklahoma. And they spent every waking moment organizing Oklahoma, against a really hard onslaught from Carter, who had the very vigorous and active support of the conservative Democratic governor, David Boren, and Lloyd Bentsen, who was a next-door neighbor senator, was running. Those two put on huge campaigns in Oklahoma. We wound up, therefore, in this kind of position with Oklahoma. We kept trying to say to press people trying to talk it down, saying, "Well, you know, Fred hasn't actually lived in Oklahoma for a long time. He's been in Washington and so forth." And they would say, "Yes, but where's he from then--Virginia?! I mean, everybody's got to be from somewhere. What's his home state?!" So Oklahoma had to be our home state, of course, and therefore, it was a no-win situation. If I carried it, people would say, "Well, sure, that's his home state." If I didn't carry it, well then it was a terrible blow, "Can't even carry his home state."

We managed to eke out what was about a tie on caucus night, with Carter, which we considered to be about okay, and then picked up and hustled on up there to New Hampshire. But we got to New Hampshire, of course, and found that Mo Udall had made enormous inroads. He was running some television. He'd gotten the support of a person who had been unwilling to do Nixon's bidding in the Watergate.

JF: Archibald Cox?

FH: Archibald Cox. And they were advertising that, and so we started very much behind. We brought in volunteers from everywhere, and brought in all our staff and so forth, but it was a catch-up operation from then on.

JF: Did you ever run into Mo or his staff personally during the New Hampshire campaigns?

FH: Yes, a lot, but I don't have any specific recollections, no.

JF: You said after New Hampshire, in your book, "The handwriting was on the wall, and we knew it that night," after you'd lost New Hampshire.

FH: That's right. My press secretary, Frank Greer, was typical, though, of our many supporters and others: he didn't want to say, and he didn't want to believe that it was over. With the three of us, Frank Greer--later, you know, he handled the advertising for President Clinton and so forth, but this was his first political campaign. Frank Greer and Jim Hightower and I were walking down together to the press conference where I was to say

how come we lost, and that we did lose. Greer kept saying with every step, "Well, listen, I think, you know, you could say that actually this was a victory because...." (laughs) And I said, "Hell, Frank, we lost!" It was pretty clear, but still there was some hope that with the support of some unions and a lot of good progressive people in Massachusetts, that we might sort of somehow pick up the campaign again, but I don't think....

JF: You placed fifth in Massachusetts, if I recall.

FH: Yes. I didn't really believe it, and it was really over, I thought, on the night of New Hampshire. And it came as a big blow to us--we thought we were doing much better. Our canvassing showed much better than it turned out. The night before the election, we had a huge rally. Walter Cronkite said to me, "Fred, you're going to win this thing!" We thought we were going to do a lot better than.... I mean, it was close, and the votes were....

JF: You're talking about New Hampshire or Massachusetts?

FH: New Hampshire. This huge rally we had, and God, it was just wonderful, and he said, "Fred, you're gonna win this thing." I thought we were going to do much better in New Hampshire, but as I said, you're talking about such a small number of votes, in any event. There's not very many votes one way or another here, between these various places. I, therefore, knew pretty much it was over after New Hampshire. And if you didn't know it, you knew it this way: Before that, whenever I traveled, I had four or five reporters always with me. ABC was generally with me, and CBS, and sometimes NBC, and nearly always Associated Press, sometimes *Washington Post*, *New York Times*. But after New Hampshire, suddenly I've got nobody traveling with me. It's the same thing that happened to Bill Bradley lately. You just can't imagine what the change is. So that people might be saying, "Well, Fred, why aren't you speaking out on so-and-so?!" "Well, hell! I am! But nobody knows it!"

JF: I remember when that happened to Mo.

FH: Yes.

JF: All of a sudden the press wasn't there.

FH: Not only you can't get any money, but you can't get any free notice either. So if we hadn't thought it--and I did--that it was over, why, that was sort of brought home to you every day afterwards.

JF: After New Hampshire and Massachusetts, where Mo came in second, what did you think his chances were at that point?

FH: I thought Carter was going to win.

JF: You did, still?

FH: Yes. Now, I didn't think Carter was going to win for sure until after New Hampshire. I thought he was going to win Iowa before he did, as I mentioned. I thought that after I looked at that televised rally. I thought, from what I already knew, Carter was going to win Iowa. Then he wins Florida and Mississippi, and then Oklahoma. As it turned out, he got more delegates in the final thing--we didn't know for a while--than I did in Oklahoma. I knew he was the favorite then, and after New Hampshire it was clear to me he was going to win.

JF: Well, and with so many liberals running, splitting the vote.

FH: Yes, and then people getting in late. You know, Scoop Jackson tried it, and so forth. But you can't do that, it's too late.

JF: Wisconsin. You knew I'd get to that. (chuckles)

FH: Yes.

JF: As you wrote, you knew after New Hampshire and Massachusetts, as you said here, that your campaign was pretty much dead in the water. Carter was ahead with Mo a close second. Wisconsin was clearly a very critical state for Mo. You were still, however, on the ballot. And even though you decided not to mount a major campaign, or a serious campaign, a number of people were concerned that you would draw enough votes away from Mo that he would lose. Did anyone in the Udall campaign--either Mo himself or any of the staff people--personally contact you and ask you to withdraw from the ballot?

FH: I don't think so. Mo didn't, and I don't think anybody else did. But I couldn't. I wanted to. I mean, it was clear to me that I'm not any longer in this thing, but I'm roaming around, for example, Pennsylvania, sort of going through the motions, along about this same time. But there were two principal reasons why I couldn't withdraw prior to Wisconsin. One--not the major reason--but one reason was I had mortgaged my home, a second mortgage on my home, and owed a hell of a lot of money otherwise. In order to come out anywhere close to even, I had to get the federal matching money. The law was pretty clear that the Federal Election Commission would only pay candidates. If I withdrew, there was a great doubt, and I think correctly, that the federal matching money would not be paid to a noncandidate.

The second thing, and more importantly, was this: My supporters in Wisconsin and elsewhere, but particularly in Wisconsin, but some other places too, wanted to be delegates and they had filed as delegate candidates for me. This was particularly true in Wisconsin, of some labor people, including, for example, the Service Employees International Union had been such strong supporters of mine, and there were some other unions as well, graphic arts union and some others. I can't remember whether they were important in Wisconsin or not, but service employees and some other unions were, and they said, "If you withdraw"--they knew it was over, too--they knew I wasn't going to be the nominee--"If you withdraw, however, prior to the Wisconsin primary, there's no chance that our people, who've run as your delegates, can get elected delegates to the national convention." Well, I didn't think they could get elected without an active campaign on my part anyway. I didn't think they

could get elected delegates in any event, since I wasn't actively campaigning. But the obligation was, these labor people in particular, they weren't obligated to me, I was obligated to them, for all they'd done for me. And so I agreed to stay in through the Wisconsin primary. And as I recall, they didn't get elected delegates anyway. But that was their hope.

JF: In the end, you received, I guess, over 8,000 votes, and Mo lost to Carter by just under 8,000 votes. In Peter Boren's book entitled *Jimmy Carter's Campaign*, he speculates that, and I quote, "Had Udall persuaded Harris to pull out and pledge his support a week earlier, and had he received a few thousand votes scattered among other liberal candidates, he would have defeated Carter." Do you think that's true?

FH: I don't have any way.... It seemed to me.... There's no way to know, and that's kind of pointless speculation. I was asked that The first lecture I ever gave here was a "Lecture Under the Stars" in the summer of 1976--actually, that same year--out here at the University of New Mexico. Somebody got up and asked me, "If you had pulled out, wouldn't Mo Udall have gotten the nomination?" or whatever. And I said it reminded me of something my Uncle Raff used to say, "If a frog had wings, he wouldn't bust his ass every time he took a hop." It's one of those "if" questions that I don't think you can answer. But it wasn't a thing within my power to do, in any event. I was asked this in another interview from a couple of guys who were writing a book, and the first draft of the book, which I also reviewed for the University of Arizona Press, put it down totally wrong, and they recorded it, too, and I think the publisher made them change it. They said that I didn't withdraw from Wisconsin because labor people were against Udall, and therefore didn't want me to pull out and give him some advantage. I don't see how they misunderstood me, and I'm sure they've changed that by now. The labor thing was not against Udall in that instance--the Wisconsin thing--it was, "You know, God, we stood by you. Don't leave us high and dry now. Our people want to be delegates, and you say 'I'm not a candidate,' then hell, they don't have any chance at all of bein' elected delegates to the national convention." So I don't know the answer to that. But I think Carter would have gone on to win, whether he won Wisconsin or not.

JF: Would you have had any preference at that point for Udall or Carter?

FH: Yes, I'd like Udall better!

JF: Again in your 1976 book, you described Mo as "a man I thought was particularly suited to be president, having grown tough in his outspokenness on the issues as the primaries progressed." What kind of president do you think he would have made?

FH: I think he'd have been good. He did get tougher, I think, during the campaign, on the issues--harder-edged, and I liked that. It was one of the reasons why, as I said, some of my supporters wanted me to run, even though he was running to start with, that they didn't think he was. But I think he became a better candidate. But I think Mo would have been good as a president, both because he had the right position on issues, but also he was very good in dealing with people. I think he was a very good negotiator.