

**An Oral History Interview**

with

**Henry Bain**

**Civic Leader**

by

**Oral History Committee**

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## ORAL HISTORY

### Talk by Henry Bain

INTRODUCTION: This is a talk by Mr. Henry Bain on February 26, 1969 to the Oral History Committee of the Montgomery County League of Women Voters, meeting at the home of Mrs. Lee Rutstein, 9334 Harvey Road, Silver Spring. The title of Mr. Bain's talk is Montgomery County Political History, a subject on which he is exceptionally well qualified to speak. Henry Bain has been a long time observer and thoughtful analyst of the local political scene.

BAIN: My name is Henry Bain. I'm a near native of Montgomery County. I grew up here. I attended the public schools, and in those days I heard vague rumors about local government. I remember, in about the tenth grade, our teacher asked us if we knew what Montgomery County was shaped like. I had never seen a map that had Montgomery County on it so that was the first time the subject of Montgomery County and its existence as a political unit was called to my attention.

I studied economics and political science in college. I went to graduate school and studied public administration, and one of my professors there, a very distinguished and famous professor of public administration said, "Whatever you do in your later work and research, never get into the kind of research where you are going around and asking these old geezers at the courthouse things and letting them tell you what old John did to old Harry in the election of '22 and that sort of thing."

Well, as it turned out, I subsequently lost some of my interest in public administration, and I made a study that consisted precisely of going around to the court houses, talking to the old geezers, and I wasted a significant part of my productive years doing that, but it was certainly an enjoyable experience, and I'm looking forward to the day when I'm sufficiently old a geezer that the perpetual oral history project will be coming to see me and asking me to tell, not what I am talking about this evening, but about my own days as a young geezer.

To begin with, I thought I would give you a brief outline, for whatever use it may be, of the historical background that I think you will find helpful in talking to some of the people you will be interviewing.

And if you will bear with me, I will start in the pre-Cambrian era, and I won't spend too much time there, but I do think it is important to get some basic historical and other determining factors well in mind before launching ourselves into the recent past.

Now when I was in the third grade in the elementary school here in Montgomery County, they told me something that had a great influence on my life, which was that Montgomery County is in the Piedmond Plateau. I don't know whether they still have an instructional unit on that or not, but that was a very memorable experience, and subsequent experience has confirmed what they told me at that time, and I've since learned a few other geographical facts about the county and state.

It seems that the Piedmond Plateau is a band of land running through the middle of Maryland from around here to the northeast corner up near Wilmington. It's as wide as from here to

Frederick, and south of it is the whole expanse of the southern Maryland peninsula and all of the Eastern Shore, which they call the Coastal Plain, and north of it is the western Maryland region, which is part of the Appalachian geographic region with the mountains and valleys and the Great Plateau.

Now, I feel that the physiographic facts of these regions are very important for an understanding of the recent history of Montgomery County, and I will be stressing here this evening the political and governmental history. I suppose that is your main concern although certainly the county has a cultural and other aspects to its history, that I am not so familiar with.

But we should remember that political institutions and alignments are very strong and of long duration. At least they were for about a hundred years. Maybe everything is in flux now. Maybe this is a very different era, but if you are studying history which is in the past, you are studying some factors and some phenomena that have their roots far in the past.

So I would like to give you a little perspective on the place of Montgomery County in the Maryland political picture, and I'd like to show you first a chart that won't show up very well, but I'll pass it around. This is a chart, and before I show it, I'd better pause with a parenthetical comment.

I do want to make one comment before going into this. In your study of Montgomery politics and government, you will notice, first of all, that Maryland, our state, is a border state. It's south of the Mason-Dixon Line, that is to say, it was a slave state; and it's north of the Potomac River,

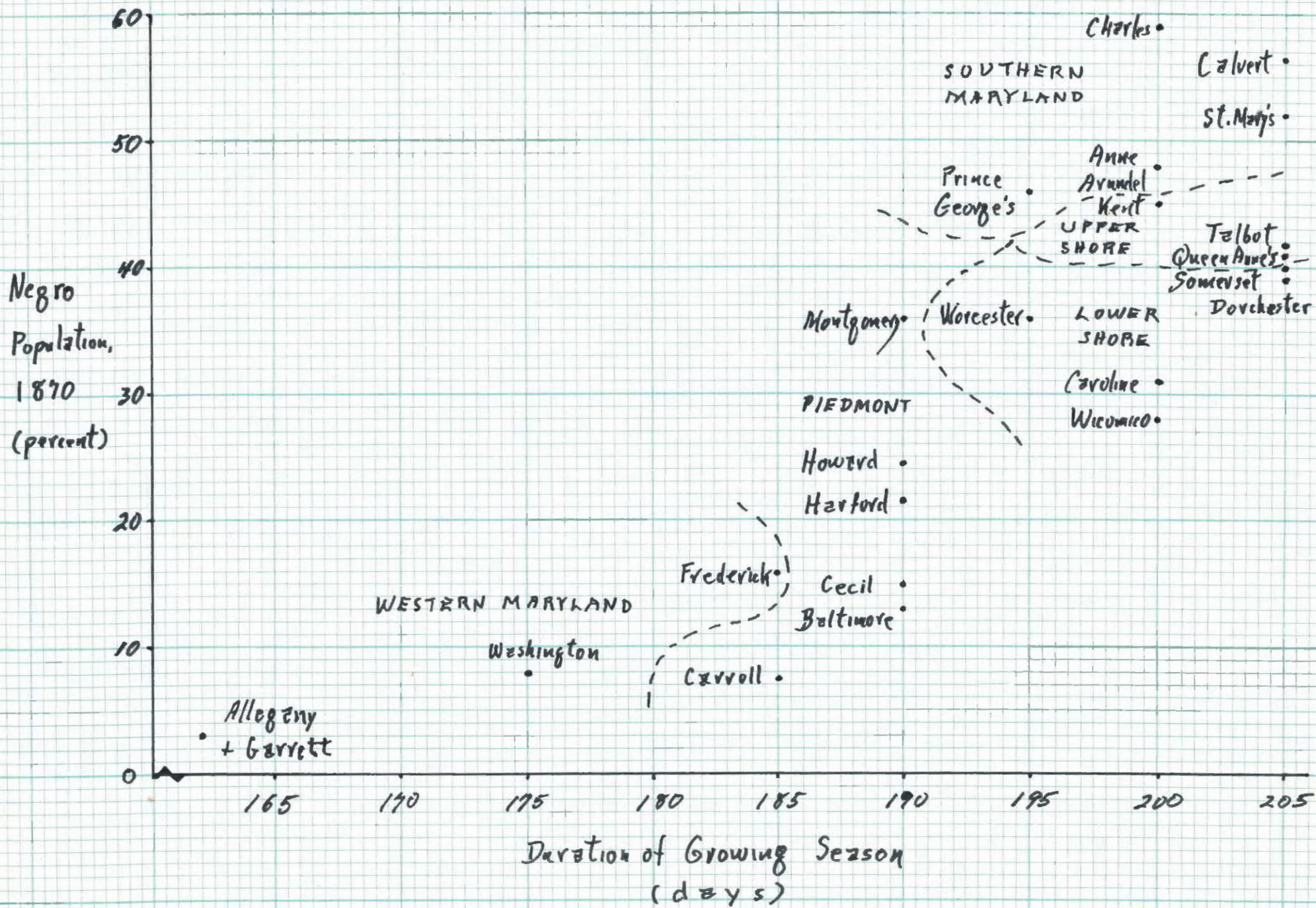
which means that it was not a secessionist state; so it partakes of some of the qualities both of the South and the North.

The overwhelming fact that shaped Maryland politics for many years, at least in its broad outline, as was true throughout the South, was the role of the Negro in politics, and I will have a good bit to say about that. When I say it, I want you to appreciate that I am simply saying the facts about the past as I see them, and I'm not approving any of the phenomena that I speak of, and I don't think they are actually a model for anything that's to follow, but I stress that we do have a strong Southern element in our background, and that's something that I think it helps to know and understand when we move on from an understanding of the general structure of politics to talk about individuals and the roles that they have played in it.

So first of all, I'd like to show you here a chart that tries to show the relation of several phenomena. On the one hand, the geographic phenomena that I spoke of, the main regions of Maryland; and the climate of Maryland, also, which, of course, varies greatly from the hot lands of Southern Maryland up into the cold mountains; and the relation of those to the proportion of Negroes in the population.

This is a chart (chart A), and maybe you can see the general outlines of it, and then I will pass it around. It shows the growing season horizontally. In other words, the farther this way you go, the hotter it is and the longer you can grow crops. Vertically, is the proportion of Negroes in the population. In 1870, which was when we were just coming out of the Civil War, we'd only stopped being a slave state

# CHART A





a few years before, and if you see any of the written names of counties on there, you will see a relation you might well expect, which is that the warmer it was, the larger the proportion of Negroes they had, since these people had been slaves up until just a few years before.

But you notice that over at the right, you have a lot of counties all with the about the same long growing season, and then there's quite a spread there. The spread is interesting because the top three counties are the deep Southern Maryland counties. Those were tobacco counties, and they had a far larger slave economy, a plantation economy, than any other part of the state. This is five counties, actually, right up to Prince George's. In other words, the boundary between the coastal plain and the Piedmont was right here, following a line going from Washington to Baltimore. We're on the north of it; Prince George's on the south.

The next few counties are from the Upper Eastern Shore. It so happens the Upper Eastern Shore was better slave country for a plantation economy than the southern part of the Eastern Shore because the soil and the drainage were better. It was a great place for large farms and a lot of slaves. Down here is the Lower Eastern Shore with the sandy, poorly drained soil. Then comes the Piedmont. Those counties in there are all the Piedmont. All the different groups are quite close together here, and there is Western Maryland, from Frederick all the way over to the farthest mountains.

So we see there are quite some regularities. Within the Piedmont, it is interesting to note, importantly for our purposes, that old Montgomery County is way up above the other counties,

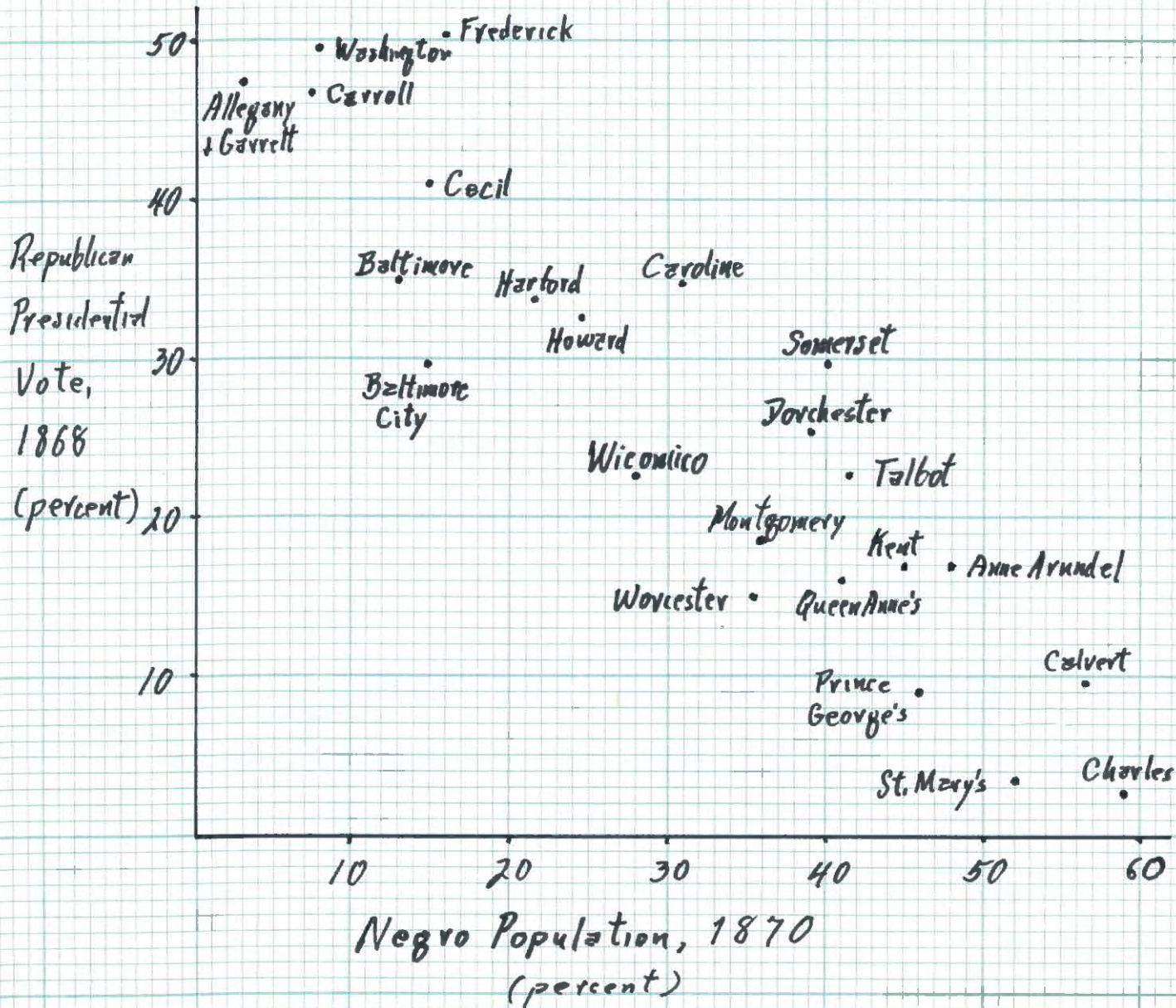
reflecting the fact that we were both farther south, of course, than Baltimore County or Cecil County, which is up there near Wilmington, and also the fact that Montgomery had a tobacco economy. This was a real tobacco land in the old days, and that's a very labor intensive crop. So you had to have a lot of slaves to grow tobacco.

So that is one set of factors to be borne in mind. The great political watershed of this country that shaped our politics in a way that is still with us was the Civil War, and the political parties as we have known them now--the two great parties--were forged in the years after the War. Partly in the War, but mostly after the War. Montgomery County, like the rest of the country, had its politics shaped in that era.

Now, the question is--what did shape the politics? Here's another chart. Maybe I'd best pass the two of them around together so you can see them in relation. The first chart shows the relation between region and climate and the proportion of Negroes; I've gotten you that far now. Here's one (chart B) that shows the proportion of Negroes and the proportion of Republican votes in the presidential election of 1868. That was the first election after the War when things had gotten back to normal, part way to normal, anyway.

It was a very interesting election because it was the last election in which only the white people could vote, so it showed the political leanings of the white people alone. So here we have, going this way, more and more Negroes so that on the right we have those Southern Maryland counties and on the left the mountain counties. In the vertical dimension, we have the proportion Republican, and as you can see, actually

# CHART D



this was a Democratic state and a Democratic year. One western Maryland county went Republican. The rest went Democratic, and the fascinating thing about it, somewhat concealed to you because the names spread over here, is the very straight linear relation between the proportion of Negroes and the proportion of Republicans. It's a very close relationship, ending up, incidentally, with Republican percentages of three percent in southern Maryland counties; fifty-one percent up here in the mountains. The Upper Piedmont had about forty percent down to thirty percent. The Lower Eastern Shore, where, as I said, you didn't have quite so many Negroes, as the Upper Eastern Shore, [is] a little under thirty percent. The Upper Eastern Shore where you have the plantation type economy and Montgomery County are down at about fifteen to eighteen percent, and Southern Maryland down at about three to eight percent.

Now, combine this very distant historical data with the fact that people usually take their political affiliations from their forefathers. That's certainly true of most people, and political patterns persist. So you can see in these charts right here what has really shaped the political leanings of a great many native Montgomerians, who, of course, are not now so large a proportion of the population as they were in the days that you will be studying with some of the old timers.

I believe that the up-county rural areas were not passed by the suburban areas in population, that is to say the suburbanites did not finally outnumber the up-county people, until the late Nineteen Twenties. You can check me on

that date if your recollection is any different from that, but it was well into the Nineteen Twenties before the little old suburbs of Kensington and Garrett Park, Takoma Park and others--Chevy Chase and Friendship Heights--finally outnumbered the sizable population of the rural areas and Gaithersburg and Rockville, which, of course, were not at all suburban in those days.

So that is one set of relationships. I'll pass these around, and you might just scan them to get a little better idea of the relationships there.

Now, I didn't bother to make a map of the 1872 election. In 1872, the Fifteenth Amendment had been passed, and the whole population, once they were over twenty-one, was eligible to vote.

QUESTION: The women?

BAIN: Oh, I beg your pardon. Of course, one-half of the adult population was eligible to vote. The women did not come along until fifty years later.

The reason I didn't sketch the 1872 election was that the curve was so commonplace that it can be described orally. The curve was, essentially, a horizontal line, that is to say those heavily Democratic counties of Charles and St. Mary's in Southern Maryland voted on the Republican side in 1872 as the mountain counties did. There is a bit of a dip in the middle part of the curve where some counties like Montgomery and some of the Upper Eastern Shore and Baltimore City, which I haven't mentioned, voted a little on the Democratic side. The reason was, since the whites were voting Democratic in proportion to the Negro population, and since the Negroes voted--understandably, I think

--Republican, the result was to even things out very nicely. The more Negroes you have, the fewer white Republicans and the more Negro Republicans.

So that really sets the stage right there. The Negroes were, literally, as far as I have been able to tell, one hundred percent Republican in their voting. Occasionally, there would be a man who, I guess, would be called nowadays an Uncle Tom, who would be known as a man who would vote the Democratic ticket. There was one such man in Gaithersburg. When he died, the local politicians up there paid the funeral costs and arranged the funeral for him, somewhat better than a Negro could hope for in those days, in recognition of the fact that he had been a voting Democrat for some years, and he was certainly very unusual in that regard.

So there you have the picture. You had a racial cleavage that was extremely sharp, and the interesting thing about it for our purposes is that dip in the middle of the curve, because some of the counties, of which Montgomery was one, had so large a Negro population as to make the overwhelming majority of the whites Democrats, but they didn't have enough Negroes to push the county up over the fifty percent mark for the Republicans. As a result, Montgomery became, along with some of the other Piedmont counties, a solid Democratic county, and in Montgomery County you have Solid South politics for many years after the Civil War.

One footnote to this. I've stressed the role of race. You have to, I think, in interpreting Montgomery County's politics. Religion is another factor that does influence political behavior. In those days, Montgomery County was heavily Methodist. You

In those days, Montgomery County was heavily Methodist. You see that still in a few of the place names up in the up-county area. There are places called Grove. That meant that they had Methodist camp meetings there.

There was however a small settlement of Quakers in the Sandy Spring area, and the Quakers were Republicans, largely, overwhelmingly, as far as one can tell. So this was one interesting variant on the pattern I have given you. They made up a substantial part of the manpower of the Republican Party, and a very sizable portion of the candidates of the Republican Party. The mass of the Republicans were not permitted, of course, to run for office.

So that was the picture. The Negroes enfranchised, but not permitted to hold public office. The Party managed by a small group of white people in Rockville and the Brookeville area and a few other parts of the county, and everybody else being a Democrat. It's interesting to notice it was not a lily-white Republican Party as you had in some of the Southern states at certain stages where they froze the Negro out of political participation. The Negroes came to the county conventions of the Republicans. They voted. They had a member on the county Republican Committee, but they did not run for public office.

Well, that's mostly about Republicans right there. Now attention must focus on the Democrats since they were the majority party for so long a time. I think the best way to outline the history of Democratic Montgomery County is to suggest four things to look for in a county, and to look for distinct periods since things do go along more or less the

same, and then every once in while, there is a real change in things.

Four topics to be considered, are---First, what kind of society it was. what was the social structure? what was its economic base? How did people make their living? How well educated were they? The next question is government. what kind of government, governmental institutions, did they have? Then turning to politics, what kind of political organization was there? What kind of party competition? How did they run their political affairs? And finally, what kind of political leaders since, certainly, you usually find a few people that are more or less running things, or at least taking responsibility for providing some leadership.

I have suggested here several eras or periods to be considered. The first one runs from the end of the Civil War, from 1867, when the present constitution was established, to 1905. We have another break, then, at the time of the world war, and another one right after world war Two, and we might put another break around 1962.

So let me start, then, by giving you a sketch of Montgomery County as it appeared during this first era from 1867, when the Union troops that had kept the local citizens from seceding had left the county, from that time until right after the turn of the century in 1905.

maybe I should break there just for a moment and see if there are any questions or discussion about this introductory material. [PAUSE] OK.

In 1867, the new constitution was adopted, and that gave Montgomery County very substantially the government it



had for many years. Indeed much of our governmental structure still hasn't been changed. We've had quite a few changes in the county, but some of the things, some parts of it, have never been changed. The Courthouse offices, the States Attorney, Clerk of the Circuit Court, sheriff. There has been very little change in those offices in all the intervening years. The legislative delegation, of course, has increased in size, but in many respects, it's elected in a similar manner, and so on down the line.

Well, during that first era, I would characterize Montgomery County society as a rural society, first of all. That's the overwhelmingly important fact. There weren't any suburbs until the late 1880's when they started building in Takoma Park. The railroad out through Rockville and beyond wasn't completed until the middle 1870's, and it was only some time after that that people began to build there, and later on, some of the railroad people built homes in Garrett Park. But the overwhelming proportion of the county was a farming economy, a few lawyers in the county seat, a few people that ran mills to mill the farm produce and other enterprises of that sort.

There was very primitive transportation. The C and O Canal ran along one border and provided a few jobs and some access to markets for the farmers on that side of the county.

The government was the government of a small rural county. It was set up to provide the courts, law enforcement, to levy taxes, to maintain a few roads and bridges, and to administer elections, and not really to do very much else. There were some public schools set up in the era after the Civil War, and I don't know much about the school system's history, but it was

a pretty primitive operation in that era, a very limited kind of a public school system.

The government consisted, basically, of a Board of County Commissioners that was limited, really, to administrative functions and to levying taxes and approving the budget. They didn't make any laws. They made a few, very few, ordinances for keeping the peace in a rural county. The law making power was in the hands of the county delegation to the General Assembly.

We had one State Senator. Maryland, of course, until quite recently, had one Senator per county, and his unique position gave him quite a substantial position, quite a prominent role in politics and the government. Nothing could get enacted without his support, and he tended to be, very often, the leader of the political forces in the county.

So that was the picture. Law making in the State Legislature, such laws as you needed, and the five man Board of County Commissioners and the Courthouse officers running the offices up there in Rockville. A few very small municipalities, Rockville incorporated by this time, and a few others.

Speaking then about politics, political organization, as I indicated, the county was made into a Democratic county by the conditions I've spoken of, and it remained that way throughout this period. They had a total of about two Republicans in all that time that got elected either to county office or to legislative office, two or three maybe. All the rest were Democrats.

The Democrats, and the Republicans for a while, nominated candidates by county convention, but conventions had gone out

of style long before anybody that you will be talking to, I think, would remember. The Democrats abolished the conventions much earlier than most counties in Maryland and much earlier than many parts of the South. It was really quite a progressive move that they went in the 1870's to what they called the Crawford County system, which was simply a direct primary. There wasn't any law providing for a direct primary. The laws were silent on party nominations, and the Democratic Party simply set up polling places and ran an election all on its own hook.

So you have then a competition for public office in the Democratic primary. That's where politics really took place. The Democratic primary was what counted.

Then the next very interesting thing about Montgomery County. It contrasted with many places where, since the primary is the real election, you have factions formed that are much like political parties. They have their leaders and their continuing existence. They fight one another in a competition rather similar to party competition, and that happened in many places, but in Montgomery County it never, until after this era, happened that way.

So that brings us to political leaders. What you had, instead, was a few prominent people who ran for office and got elected, and a lot of not so prominent people who ran for office and got elected, and a lot of not so prominent people who ran for office in what apparently was a rather free-for-all kind of a Democratic election, where you might have, say, six or eight people running for Sheriff, and well, you know, when six or eight are running, that no one of them

is going to have a majority, but nonetheless they nominated and elected whoever had the plurality. There was never, as far as I know, any attempt to get a runoff elections such as were common farther to the south, to formalize the primary competition still farther.

Of course, you don't ever find out much in the history books about several farmers and maybe a woodcutter or a merchant running for Clerk of the Circuit Court, or even a couple of lawyers running for State Senator. As a result, the history of those campaigns is largely lost to us except to the extent that you did have factional competition that can show up in the record and be identifiable.

Such factional competition as did exist was the product of state politics so it might be well to look for a moment at the State of Maryland. Maryland was a heavily Democratic state, and it had the same kind of politics I've described here--a Democratic organization that ran things in the state, a few Republicans in the Legislature from the mountain counties and from the Southern Maryland and lower Eastern Shore counties.

In the state, very early, there formed a cleavage between two factions. The first governor under the new constitution in 1867 was nominated by a vote of about ninety to eighty-nine at the state convention. That was a close election, and some people always felt he got that last vote by less than honorable means. But be that as it may, you had then the emergence of two factions, largely tied in with the railroads. One faction was identified with the Baltimore and Ohio. They seemed to be the strong people in the state. The man who got elected governor that first time got some of the money he needed to get elected

by going up to Philadelphia and securing the support of the Pennsylvania Railroad, in return for which, when he became governor, he put through the legislation needed so they could run their line from Baltimore to Washington, giving them what is now the main railroad line into Washington, in competition with the then dominant B and O, which was very influential in the state.

The railroads were important, but more important was that, within a few years after that, there was a cleavage between the men who had managed to get on top in the state, who were known as the Ring, and their opponents. This was just after the Boss Tweed episode in New York, and the Ring was a well known term in those days for a political machine. The state organization was called the Ring, and its opponents were called the Reformers, and for many years, you had a competition between those two groups in the state.

That shaped politics in many of the counties because there was a lot of money to be had for a campaign if you had the support of either railroad and the banks, corporations, race tracks and other interests. Of course, most important was state legislation--that was what they were interested in, so they would put up support and money for a candidate running for the Senate or the House of Delegates. That fed the competition.

As a result, the main competition in this county was for the Legislature, the main factional competition. In other counties, they just spread the money around, and they ran a full ticket for the county offices, but they didn't do that here very much.

Now in those days in Montgomery County, we had leaders.

we had two kinds of leaders. We had those who were associated with the state Ring. The chief state leader was, incidentally, Arthur Pue Gorman, a very distinguished member of what they called Bourbon Democracy. He was allied with the Democrats from the south, who in turn were allied with the financial interests, and opposed to the more Populist wing of the party. Gorman was ruler of the state Democratic Party from the 1870's until the end of this period, after the turn of the century. He was also very prominent in national politics. He was one of Grover Cleveland's chief opponents on tariff and other issues, after Cleveland became president. But one of his main claims to fame as chairman of the Democratic National Committee--it was he who had the foresight to employ a stenographer to follow James G. Blaine around the country taking down everything he said, and it was his quotation of the famous comment about the Democrats being a party of rum, Romanism and rebellion which helped to get Cleveland elected. Gorman deserves some credit for pulling that off. Cleveland was a Reform person in the sense of, at least, civil service reform, low tariffs, and reasonably flexible monetary policy so this state was not for Cleveland for most of the time, once he was elected.

Well, in this county, we had some leaders who were allied with Gorman, and one of the ones I might just sketch for you, and you'll meet people who knew him, I think, a very few people who did know him--his name was Spencer C. Jones. Spencer C. Jones came back from the war, where he had been an officer in the Army. I don't need to tell you whose Army, and he became a states Attorney and later ran for an office that has since been made appointive--the Clerk of the State Court of Appeals. In those

days we had four elected state offices. The Clerk of the state Court of Appeals-- he [Jones] served in that office for several terms, and he was renowned for his campaign techniques. He apparently actually wore a frock coat, and he was renowned for his campaign appeals based mainly on solidarity among all the good veterans of the Confederate Army in Maryland. He had a distinguished war record, and he played on that particular theme very successfully.

Now if you want to see what Spencer C. Jones looks like. . . I think you've got a chance to see every leader I talk about either in the flesh or not in the flesh. After the turn of the century, they rather belatedly put up a statue to the veterans, to the military heroes, of Montgomery County, and, again, I don't need to tell you what uniform they were honoring. A lot of people are surprised when they go up to Rockville, people from the North, and they notice that not only is this soldier facing south, but he is wearing the Confederate gray. Spencer C. Jones served as a model for that statue. So a few other people I'll mention, you go look at them and you look at that statue, and you will have seen the leaders of Montgomery County.

Jones was an ally of Gorman, strictly a state machine politician, and his opponents always claimed that he had a lot to do with nominations for local offices, too. In these elections, I described, where you have five or six candidates running, if you put in a couple hundred extra votes for one man, you can push him over the top. So the theory was always that the canal superintendents down at Cabin John and Beneca would vote their

hired hands for Jones' candidates, and the same for some of the hired hands on the big farms, and that he actually had a lot to say about elections that didn't come out on the surface. I guess we will never really know the answer to that.

Opposing him, were a rather shifting crowd on the other side of the Democratic Party. At first, Montgomery County tended to be a little in the Reform camp, and in many state conventions we elected delegates that were not Jones' men but Reformers, but gradually as time went by, the state Ring people under Jones became dominant.

Another very well known man who was State Senator for a few terms and was a great competitor of Jones was George Peter. The Peter family had been one of the biggest land owning families in Georgetown when that was part of Montgomery County, and also in Montgomery County. George Peter was State Senator, the wealthiest and most successful lawyer in the county seat, apparently more of an aristocrat than Jones. Jones was, apparently, not in the same league with him. Peter was also an ally of Gorman. Unfortunately for him and Jones, they had conflicts within the family, you might say, and one of the few times a Republican was ever elected in Montgomery County was when Peter ran for re-election to the State Senate, and he was defeated. Well, everyone wondered how this happened. Peter's supporters claimed that the Jones people had knifed him in the general election and had thrown their votes to the Republican candidate because they would rather have a Republican in the Senate because they could tie him up in the House of Delegates. He couldn't get anything done, but at least they



wouldn't have George Peter running the county.

George Peter remained prominent but gradually faded from the scene, and Jones remained more and more the leader. Later on, he was opposed by another man whose descendents are still in the county, although they are not active in politics. His name was William Viers Bouic, and he was a prominent Reformer. He got elected to the State Senate against a cousin of Jones' or some Jones candidate. He was defeated the next time around when Jones, himself, ran and beat him.

So you have this picture of local factional conflicts, but it's perhaps not very interesting because really what they were fighting about is awfully distant. I suppose if we were transported back there, we'd find that none of those people, even the most Reforming of the Reformers were very sympathetic to anything we'd be interested in. They mainly wanted honest government and an end to the spoils and less favoritism to the large corporations and that sort of thing.

On the race issue, and I do want to keep mentioning that, in the general elections, they would always bring out the race issue. They'd say, "Do you want to have Montgomery County ruled by the Republican Party? It's four-fifths black." Remember in those days, it wasn't quite so nice to say 'black' as it has become in the last few years. "It's four-fifths black, and the black people don't pay \$2,000 taxes in this county. Do you want those people running this county?" Of course, nobody was going to vote Republican anyway. It was just a thing they did every four years to re-solidify the allegiance of the mass of the white voters to the Democratic Party. There was never any unpleasantness about it as far as I know.

Toward the end of this era, the very end of it, the Gorman organization tried to pull what the Southern states had all done in the late '90s and after the turn of the century. They tried to disfranchise the Negro so that they would no longer have the competitive situation in Southern Maryland where the Negro voters were producing Republicans regularly in public office. They put up a constitutional amendment just like the ones in Mississippi, Virginia and everywhere else in the South to impose a literacy test, from which the illiterate whites could be exempted by the so-called Grandfather Clause, and they were defeated. This state was different from Virginia and North Carolina because we had so many Republicans up in the mountains and a sufficiently strong Republican contingent in Baltimore City, as well as a sizable Jewish population that was most sensitive to any monkeying with the ballot, because they had suffered in this regard earlier. Three times they tried, and they never got one of those amendments passed so Maryland never joined the Solid South in a way that it might have. The state remained reasonably competitive in a strong Republican year. The state, in national elections at least, would go Republican.

So from 1867 until 1905, we had a rural county, rural government, free and easy competition in the Democratic Party, during this period the Republicans were nominating in conventions, a small clique nominating and rarely getting anybody elected. At the very end of the period, came the first appearance of some very interesting characters, employees, patronage appointees of the Republican national administrations. The McKinley, the

Roosevelt administrations appointed people to public office, and they came out to Montgomery County to live, and many of them remained here, became permanent residents.

Of course, they being Republicans, they moved into the Republican Party, and they had quite an impact. You might say, in a sense, they brought the Republican Party into the Twentieth Century a little faster than the Democrats because there weren't any Democratic patronage appointees in those days, once Cleveland had left office, and any new Democrats appearing in the county would be so outnumbered by the native white Democrats; but in the Republican Party, a man of parts, a lawyer or a newspaper editor from another state who moves here, settles here, can make a speech, can put in some money in a campaign--he quickly became a power or at least an influence in the Republican Party.

We had names then like Brainard Warner, the developer of Kensington, who was a power in the Party, for instance, a very wealthy real estate man from D. C. who moved on and developed out here.

And there was a very interesting factional conflict within the Republican Party, as you might expect, between the oldtimers and the new people, very early. The oldtime families--there were supposedly three Republican families in Rockville of whom the most famous was the Dawson family, a very old family in the county. The Dawsons and their allies from Brookeville and Sandy Spring were the old rural people and were naturally immediately at sword's points with these high-flying, out-of-state, people who moved in and tried to play a part both in local and state politics.

So that brings us to 1905, which was a real watershed. Maybe I ought to pause there and see if there is any question or comment on this first era.

QUESTION: I was wondering. . . . Way back you mentioned that Montgomery County was originally Methodist. I thought that in the whole of Maryland, the Catholics were in the majority in the state.

BAIN: No, the early Catholic settlements were along the Potomac as far, essentially, as the Anacostia River. They were not largely on the Bay, and they were not north of Georgetown. The heavily Catholic counties were St. Mary's, Charles and Prince George's. The Shore was Methodist. The Piedmont Belt was Methodist. Western Maryland was very heavily of the German sects, Lutheran, Brethren, a number of different denominations.

QUESTION: I had one other question. I understood you to say that the Negroes were in public office during the last period that you were speaking of.

BAIN: No. They were not in public office, except the Negroes were always given representation on the party committee, the Republican Central Committee.

QUESTION: The League has been doing some research on Women's Suffrage and discovered that the Democratic Party was against women getting the vote because they felt that--I think the figure was 50,000--Negro women in the State of Maryland would then be able to vote and they would vote Republican, and the state would then be controlled by the Republicans.

BAIN: They had an argument. . . . Since the men and women are about equal in proportions, it shouldn't have changed anything

unless it was like in some European countries where the women are more subject to the influence of a church-based party which was not the case here. But the basic argument was that the Negro women could not be reached by modern means of political communications, that they would march to the polls in a single line to vote Republican like the men did, and the white women would do what the Suffragettes said they should do. They would study. They would vote for the candidates on merit. And, of course, even if you think you've got the merits on your side, you can see that's a losing proposition because a few people aren't going to agree with you. I think they did feel it would worsen the Democratic Party's position, but I don't think it was a very important point really. It might cost more, cost the Republicans more, but I was going to get into that in the next period. The use of money was very important in both parties, and naturally it doubled the cost of getting out the vote.

Ok. 1905. One of Spencer Jones' main sources of control was the bank. There was only one bank, of course. Well, there may have been another bank over at Sandy Spring, but there was only one bank in Rockville anyway--one or two in the county. Spencer C. Jones was the chairman of the board of directors. Well, in a rural county where you need credit, credit is a matter of life and death when you've got to get a crop in and you've got to survive until you can market your crop. That was a very potent source of political control. Incidentally, Jones, as far as I know, never had any control of the newspaper at all, which is interesting. The Montgomery

County Sentinel always seemed to be independent and above factional goings-on. It had been formed to fight the Know Nothings, back before the Civil War. But that's one difference from many counties where you used to have a paper for each party, and even for each faction. In Montgomery County, the Republicans didn't have a paper, and there wasn't a paper involved in Democratic fighting.

In about 1902, a second bank was formed, on which the Peter family and William Viers Bouic and some other Reformers were on the board of directors, and I don't know how important that was but it certainly suggests that Spencer C. Jones had some new competition, or his competition had some new sources of strength because now somebody else could give you credit. It could no longer be held out, or maybe it could be held against you on the other side in an effort to influence your voting.

In the late Nineteenth Century, in the 1890s, the Lee family came into prominence in the county. Many years before, you may have heard the story, the well-known Montgomery County story, about how Francis Preston Blair, back in Jackson's administration, became one of the first suburbanites. He built a home at Silver Spring, which was literally a spring, and in later years a few other members of his family built houses there, and one of his daughters married an Admiral Lee. Admiral Lee and his daughters settled there in Silver Spring, too.

The Blair family remained very prominent in politics, not only in Jackson's time but Francis Preston Blair's sons

Frank Blair and Montgomery Blair became very prominent in the Civil War. They left the Democrats on the slavery issue, and Montgomery Blair became Postmaster General for Lincoln. They left the Republican Party when the Republican Party adopted radical measures, so-called, after the Civil War. The Radicals were the people who wanted to give the Negroes the vote, the civil rights law, and such things, and, of course, the people who had been against secession weren't necessarily for anything like that.

Montgomery Blair played a leading part in bringing many of those Union people. . . . You see, during the Civil War, there wasn't a Republican Party. The opposition party to the Democrats in Maryland was the Union Party. It consisted of former Whigs and Know Nothings and Democrats who were united in support of the Union, plus the few Republicans. He brought many of the Union men into a party they actually called for a while the Democratic Conservative Party. They called it that, not because they wanted to stress that it was conservative in ideology, but to stress that it was a union of the old Democratic Party, the Copperheads--they would have called them Copperheads if they had been farther north but everybody was a Copperhead in Maryland really in the Democratic Party--it was a union of the Democratic Party and the Conservative Unionists. That became the Democratic Conservative Party and after a few years, it was just Democratic again.

So he Montgomery Blair took the lead in forming the Democratic Party of Maryland in the 1867 period, but he was above county politics. I haven't mentioned him because he didn't

play courthouse politics. His last great public service was as the attorney for Tilden in the Tilden-Hayes electoral controversy. He operated at the national level.

well, Admiral Lee's son, Blair Lee, was the next generation, no, two generations down from Montgomery, then. There was Montgomery's daughter and then her son. Blair Lee became very active in the Democratic Party. He was one of the aristocracy, being descended from both the Blair's and the Lee's, who were the Lee's, one branch of the Lee family, and he had gone to Princeton. He had been a delegate to the Democratic National Convention. He had a lot of money, and he ran for Congress, which was deemed a service to the party in those days because Montgomery was thrown in with the Western Maryland counties, and they were Republican.

I haven't said anything about Congress. The Congressional seat was always held by somebody from way up in the mountains because the Democrats couldn't win it, and the mountain people wouldn't dream of letting some Montgomery County Republican have it that didn't have many local votes to offer to the ticket. So Blair Lee ran for Congress just as a gesture to show he was a good Democrat.

In 1905, the Peters, the sons of George Peter, and Bouic, and other factions, other families, united in a fight to defeat State Senator Spencer C. Jones. Jones was still not so old. He'd been in politics for forty years, but he still wanted to run for Governor. That was his ambition. That was the way you ran for Governor. You conquered your county, and then you went on from there. He'd really been master of the county



for these purposes for many years, having been elected statewide before (Clerk of the Court of Appeals).

He wanted to be Governor in 1907. That was the time to do it. There was a tradition that no Governor had ever succeeded himself, a very strong tradition because literally nobody did in those days. So there was no problem there. He was ready to move in to replace the sitting Governor, and to do it, he had to stay in the State Senate in 1905.

In those days, incidentally. . . . The one thing that has changed in government is we have now the uniform elections. In those days, elections were staggered. All state and local elections were in odd years. Senators were elected every four years, clerk of the court every six years, sheriff every two years, delegates every two years. It was a real mess. You had to have a calendar to see who was getting elected next time. But anyway that explains why the Governor was getting elected in 1907, and the State Senator was coming up in 1905, which was good for his [Jones] purposes because if he did lose out on the governorship, he was still a State Senator.

But I've really gotten a little ahead of my story there, I guess. I was going to tell you about, in this next era, about society. Well, maybe not. Maybe it's just as well.

I'll talk about 1905 and then I'll talk about what happened after it, the changes that came over the county. So anyway, I guess I've given the picture somewhat confusedly. The State Senator, the leading Democrat in this county, is running for re-election so he can become Governor. One of the richest Democrats in the county is running against him with all his

factional opponents lined up on the new man's side, and there was one hot primary election in 1905, still not affecting the other offices, just the State Senator.

There is somebody who was secretary of the meeting at which Blair Lee's candidacy was endorsed by the Peter faction. I think he is still living. I saw him in the street a few years ago. So there'd be somebody who could remember before the First World War. He was a young man. They made him secretary of the convention, and he took an active part in the campaign.

To make a long story short, the campaign was successful. So Lee became State Senator, and Jones was strictly a back number. You can't become Governor if you can't even get elected Senator in your own county. During the ensuing ten years, the old Jones faction disintegrated. There were still a few of them around, still kicking, but for some years, the Peters and Blair Lee ran things, Lee in the Senate and the Peter family and their friends in many of the other offices.

So maybe at that point I should go back now and talk about society. This period takes us from 1905 to 1919, and this was the period of the beginnings of suburbanization, suburbanization along the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad at Takoma Park, Woodside, Kensington, Garrett Park. Maybe some people even lived in Rockville and commuted into the city. There were other suburbs along the trolley line that went out through Georgetown to Friendship Heights and Somerset, and along the old Seventh Street-Georgia Avenue line to

Silver Spring. The suburbanites, however, were still in a minority, and it was still a rural government.

They had wells. They had septic tanks. They had little homeowned electric light companies. They had unpaved streets. In other words, they had almost none of the amenities that we associate now with local government.

They didn't really have any schools of any great consequence. I think many of the first suburbanites patronized either D. C. schools, which was quite common right into recent times--in the 1930's some young people were still going to high school in the D. C., --and also private schools, of course.

So the government at that time was still a rural government. You had maybe a few changes in governmental institutions, maybe a few more deputy sheriffs or constables to patrol the newly urbanized lower portion of the county, the first beginnings of some health regulations appropriate to an urban area, where pigs in the back yard become a nuisance to the neighbors, and that sort of thing. Maybe a little road work. A little road paving was undoubtedly done in the suburban areas.

Now in political organization in this period, a change took place. In 1913--this gentleman I spoke of told it to me this way--he said that an elderly doctor who had been a very well-known politician, and I just haven't mentioned him to keep you from giving too many names, and a leader of the anti-organization Democrats, asked George Peter's son, George, Jr., "Blair Lee's a smart man and he can pay his own way. What are you going to do after he gets into office?" And Peter replied, "We'll handle him." It's a nice story, whether it's literally true.

Well, by 1913 the Peters discovered they couldn't handle Blair Lee. Blair Lee became, to shift to state politics for a minute, a leader of the Progressive Democrats. Now that was in the days of Teddy Roosevelt and progressivism, and progressivism was a good word in many circles. The old reformers that I spoke of, the opponents of Senator Gorman had been replaced by a whole new generation, and they didn't call themselves the Reformers anymore. They didn't call it the Ring either. They called it the state organization. Gorman died in about 1907, and John Walter Smith, who was Governor at the turn of the century, had taken over, and he ran the state organization for twenty years after Gorman. He was a director of the Pennsylvania Railroad, a big banker, the very epitome of the corporate interest as represented in the Democratic Party of that day.

The opponents were called Progressives, and Blair Lee became the leader of the Progressive Democrats in Maryland. While this state never went for Populism in a big way or even for the later Progressive movement so strongly, they got quite a few laws through. They got laws setting up direct primaries so that you didn't have this informal party-run primary which was so subject to corruption. You see, there wasn't any law against vote-buying in Montgomery County because the votes were in the primary, and that wasn't even an official governmental election.

So they got a primary elections law, a corrupt practices law of sorts. They got a public utilities law, which was a big thing in those days to control the utilities, some beginning banking legislation. Blair Lee was the most prominent leader

in all that at Annapolis. He was re-elected in a big way in 1909.

Well, in 1911 he ran for Governor, and he ran very strongly for Governor. He got wide support in many parts of the state, but he was defeated. It was a close election, but he lost. But that election was quite a thing for the state because you had. . . . See, in the state conventions, when they nominated governors at conventions, the organization generally had control of the conventions. Lee--here you had a personality, out there in front, campaigning. This was the new politics, you might say. They had a personality here who was going to end the machine and all that dirty stuff, and he could mobilize the voters in Charles County. He could appeal to them and they would vote for him. They would never in the world have gone out and voted for three local characters that said, "Send us to Baltimore and we'll spend an evening in the hotel over there nominating a Reform Democrat for governor." It just didn't work that way. The convention delegates were organization men, and until the primary came along, the candidates were always organization candidates for governor. But Lee changed that, and some of the counties became strong antiorganization counties.

Well, this did not sit too well with some of the people who had helped him get elected. They had been for clean government, they didn't want the corporations whose stock they owned to have to pay all this loot to the politicians in order just to get the right to run a street railway on the streets of Baltimore City. They wanted honest government in that sense. But they didn't want all this utilities regulation and other

legislation that could really cause them some trouble in running a business the way they wanted to run it.

In 1912, Lee did something even worse. He had been a friend at Princeton of Woodrow Wilson, and he went to the national convention, and he led some of the delegates into the Wilson camp, helped Wilson get nominated over the nationwide machine candidate, Champ Clark, who was supported by Tammany and other machines. Well, when he came back from that episode, the Peters and the other conservative Democrats here who had supported him came to a parting of the ways, and in the 1913 election they had a fight over the whole set of offices on the ballot. This was the first time this had ever happened, and instead of having six candidates for sheriff, you only had two. Two candidates, and only two, for every office, practically--one from each faction.

So that was the beginning of a new kind of politics, and it just happened, just like that. You had the crystallization of two factions where before you'd had a much looser structure, and in every election from that time forward for a long time, you had two candidates for each office, and only two candidates because two of them had factional support. Any third candidate would not get more than a handful of votes because two well-financed candidates were in competition.

That 1913 election was won by the Lee faction. Then in the ensuing years, the Peter faction started winning elections. They won some and then a little more, and by 1917, they were running things in the county. They had defeated the Lee members of the Legislature and of the Board of County Commissioners.

In 1915, Blair Lee ran for Governor, essentially the same kind of a contest as before, and this time he did one thing differently though. He got the Baltimore City machine to support him, and I don't know whether that weakened his appeal to the anti-machine voters in the other parts of the state or not. Perhaps it did because he had been drumming the anti-machine drums for so long. They Baltimore City wanted to annex a large hunk of the surrounding county territory, and the opposing candidate for governor was from the Eastern Shore and sympathetic to the county people. Lee promised that he would support annexation, and the Baltimore City people supported him. So he gained Baltimore City votes, but he lost county votes, and he lost once again, by a larger margin.

In the meantime, Lee had been elected to the United States Senate. He was the first United States Senator elected by direct election after 1912. The organization let him have that without a fight, incidentally. He didn't have to fight for that in the Democratic primary election, presumably because they hoped he would not run for governor again. When he did run. . . . Yes?

COMMENT: I believe at that period of time, the state had deadlocked over a period of elections in the State Legislature. The State Legislature was unable to agree on the election of a Senator, and there was a vacancy that had been in existence for a period of time. As soon as the constitutional amendment passed, Maryland saw a way out of its dilemma, and so they immediately set up a special election to elect a United States Senator, and this effectively removed Blair Lee from the local

picture by pushing him up to the United States Senate.

BAIN: I get you. Very good. Well, that certainly solved a lot of dilemmas for them.

As you've seen, it didn't stop him from running for governor, and this time, of course, he had the federal patronage. Woodrow Wilson, a close personal friend, had appointed his friends to Subtreasurer at Baltimore, Collector of the Customs, and so on, but the federal patronage couldn't compare with the state patronage that was in the hands of the organization. So he didn't win the governorship. After he did that, in 1916, when he came up for the full term, they sure didn't let him have that one unopposed. He was defeated in the primary election, and that finished Blair Lee as a force in state politics.

Well, then, Montgomery County during this period--I guess I've described the society, and I've described the changing political organization, and I guess also you've gotten the idea that the government was still quite primitive. Maybe I should stay on that governmental tack, now, and move into the next period which is 1919 to 1948.

Let's talk about the government. Now in 1919 at the end of the First World War, the county government was still rural and primitive. I've described the very few things that might have been done. They had a few deputy sheriffs. Occasionally, a road got paved. The people, again, who are living, can tell you how the Rockville Pike was just one huge furrow of ruts, almost impassable, and how, indeed, many of the roads, until a little before this, had been toll roads, old corduroy toll roads put up by private companies. That's one thing Blair Lee



had done, was to socialize the roads and turn them all over to the government for maintenance.

The citizens of Woodside in Silver Spring had taken up a subscription in order to build themselves a schoolhouse because the rural County Board of Commissioners hadn't put up any money, if the rural Board of Education had asked for it, to build them an elementary school. A high school was still out of the question in the lower portion of the county.

So that was the challenge at this next turning point. Let's see. That does end another period. Maybe we should take a break there and see if there are any more questions about that, through World War One.

QUESTION: What was happening to the Negro population during this period. Was it going down?

BAIN: The Negro population was going down very slightly, very slightly. The proportion declined only, really, as a result of increase in the white population.

QUESTION: Who won that 1907 election for governor--Smith?

BAIN: Smith had been in before. Somebody named Crothers was elected Governor, who turned out to be quite an independent in support of Blair Lee, much to the disappointment of the organization, which is one reason, maybe, Lee ran better the first time in 1911. He had some of the state patronage with him that time.

Incidentally, to talk about the state machine for a minute, that election led to the proverbial hard feelings that accompany a primary election. The Republican Governor was elected that year, in 1911. That's how hard the feelings

were, and for the next eight years, the local fight between Lee and his opponents was a small thing compared to the statewide fight between the men who stuck their necks out and supported Lee, including substantial politicians like Governor Crothers, and the old state organization under Senator John Walter Smith. So that statewide division did continue and was paralleled here in the county.

QUESTION: Was there still a one term tradition?

BAIN: Still a one term tradition. John Walter Smith had gone to the Senate. In 1911, just to confuse you a little more, the first time Lee ran, he was defeated by the organization candidate, who was Arthur Pugh Gorman, Jr. Family tradition was very strong in Maryland. Gorman was defeated in the general election by a Republican. The Democrats came back in 1915. In 1916, Lee was defeated for Senate by a Congressman named Lewis, Davey Lewis of Western Maryland, and Lewis was defeated in the general election by a Republican, again reflecting the intense division that broke up the usually solid Democratic Party.

Well, let's move on now into the modern era. I'm sure you'll find a good many people that can tell you about this next era, but I do want to stress in justifying this pre-Cambrian approach to the politics, right on down into the Fifties, you will find many of the themes and many of the alignments that I am speaking of here still very pertinent to an understanding, and, of course, you are going to meet people who were active much earlier than the 1950s.

Well, what was to be done about this still rural government? Rock Creek had turned into an open sewer. People wanted good schools

for their children. They wanted water supply. They wanted paved roads and all the rest. After the War, building picked up quite a lot, along the trolley lines. The trolley line was extended all the way to Kensington and another line all the way to Rockville along the old Rockville Pike so there was a great opportunity here for real estate development, and it began to take place out along the various highways, mainly the ones with transit service.

Well, in 1917, when the Peter faction had cleaned up and taken over the county government, the Lee fortunes were at a low ebb, and the Lee faction was really on the skids. In that year, Blair Lee's son, who you've all heard of, E. Brooke Lee, went to France as an officer in the National Guard, which had been mobilized into the Army, served heroically in France, won medals, came back a very distinguished war hero. When he came back, he found things in a great state of flux. So you see, 1919 is one of the change-over dates, here. It was in two senses. The Republican Party in Maryland was very strong. The Republicans had swept the State Legislature in 1917--very unusual. They actually gained control of the State Legislature. The 1920 election was coming up, and people may have sensed how Republican the country was going to become.

Well, Senator John Walter Smith knew that if they were to retain the governorship, they had to have a united party, no more of this Lee versus the organization split. He saw to it. . . . He said, "The criterion is--we are going to have Attorney General Albert C. Ritchie be the candidate for governor." Ritchie was an organization man, elected against Lee's

candidate in 1915. He was going to be the candidate for governor, and that was generally agreed by both factions. The Lee people thought well of Ritchie. He was very capable. He hadn't made any enemies. He was a big vote-getter.

So they were united on Ritchie, but they still didn't know whether they could get him elected. There were a lot of people, also, of the rank and file voters that assumed that Ritchie was just another John Walter Smith, a machine politician. So Smith said, "We've got to have a Lee on the ticket."

Brooke Lee, who was only about twenty-seven, just back from France, had just gotten married and wanted to get down to tending to the family affairs in Silver Spring. His father was really retired. They had land in Silver Spring. He wanted to get into the real estate business. He was persuaded, apparently somewhat against his will, to be a candidate for Comptroller. He couldn't run for Attorney General because he wasn't a lawyer. So he ran for Comptroller. They had a united Democratic Party that year.

Well, to show you what a good politician John Walter Smith was--Ritchie defeated his Republican opponent by 165 votes in the state, and it was generally assumed that actually the last few thousand of those 165 votes were had by less than honorable means. As I mentioned, that's a recurring theme here. The Democrats in Baltimore City and some of the counties were in such complete command that the Republicans couldn't even depend on their own judges of election. For all they knew, their judges were being paid more by the Democratic Party than they

were by the Board of Election Supervisors.

Their running mate was defeated. The Attorney General candidate lost. That's how close it was, but Lee was elected.

In 1919, besides being candidate for Comptroller, Brooke Lee came home, and also as part of this, helped unite the local party. They wanted the party united at the local level throughout the state, too. He was just a young man. He wasn't a big shot, but he was influential already. He spoke for his father's followers, for that faction. He joined with some, but not all, members of the Peter family in a united ticket for most offices. I think they decided they would fight over the Legislature, but they joined for the county offices. The united ticket was successful. I think the Lee people did win the contested offices.

So there you have it. In that year were shaped the Democratic organizations of Montgomery County and of the state for a good many years to come.

Albert C. Ritchie proved to be a very strong Governor. He was a very capable executive and a very adept politician, a fine public speaker. He was opposed to Prohibition, and he made no bones about it. In Maryland, that was okay. The Prohibitionists were, largely, some of the Lutherans up in the mountains who were Republicans anyway. He was a strong opponent of the centralizing tendencies of the Republican government, the drift away from States' Rights as evidenced by Coolidge and Hoover and other presidents like that. In other words, he was, essentially, another nineteenth century conservative Democrat. He had big speeches he'd make, almost identical with Eisenhower's speeches. He would hold up one

of these booklets that the Agriculture Department publishes, about how to cook or how to sew, and say, "This is socialism. This Harding Administration is running this country into socialism." Right up until 1932, he was one of the leading figures when they were looking for an opponent for Roosevelt, to put the Democratic Party into his way of thinking.

Well, the first thing he did was to abolish the one term tradition. Ritchie was Governor four terms. So that changed things a lot right there. He also demolished whatever was left of the old factions. From then on, there was only one state organization, and that was Ritchie. Anybody that was against Ritchie was out in the cold, and by and large, he achieved a good degree of unity in many of the counties where his followers with his support and patronage dominated their respective counties. Nowhere was that more true than in Montgomery County where Brooke Lee, as the state office holder, leading scion of the old leader, was the political leader within a few years. By the time he was thirty, I'd guess you'd say he was the leader. Lee was a very strong leader, and he organized a very effective political party, the Democratic organization.

The first thing he [Brooke Lee] did was to address himself to this rural government I speak of, and in the course of a decade or so he converted that government into a suburban government. The government paved the roads. It arranged for putting in street lights, street trees, even, in some places, and it did provide us with good schools. The big build-up of Montgomery's very fine school system, dating from the day when Edwin Broome became School Superintendent, was back in the early Twenties. The School Board members were all appointed by the

Twenties. The School Board members were all appointed by the Governor, which meant they were all appointed by Brooke Lee. The County Commissioners were also all Lee men.

They did a number of interesting things. They set up a separate suburban district in the lower part of the county to finance, by a special tax, these extra services that I speak of--the street paving, the trash collection and some of those things, so that the farmers in the upper part of the county wouldn't have to pay for these suburban services. So he kept both of them happy. The farmers weren't paying for it. The suburbanites were paying for it, and they liked what they got.

He also participated in a very important agency that had been set up to provide the needed water system and the sanitary system, the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission. That had been set up a little before his time, but it was a bi-county agency of Prince George's and Montgomery. His people quickly took command of the Montgomery County part of it and extended the water and sewer systems and cleaned up the polluted streams, provided those services.

He was solely responsible, a few years later, for creating the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, which had two main functions--to build up a park system and to do some zoning. It wasn't really planning in the sense that we think of it today, but they did provide the basis, the necessary legal foundation, by which the Board of County Commissioners could adopt a zoning map and ordinance that would prevent undesirable commercial development in residential areas. They froze out some uses all together, some of the less uses. They kept cemeteries from popping up just across the

District Line the way that happened over in Prince George's County. They did a great many things to give Montgomery County what was generally regarded as good, progressive government, and it is interesting to note that the Lee organization was strongest in the suburban areas. It was not so strong in rural areas. General speaking, it lost, or at least broke even in the rural areas, but it was very strong in the suburbs.

well, now, as this was happening, to go over to the society item for a moment--what kind of society was it here? During the Twenties and into the Thirties, the suburban areas grew very rapidly, and you can't say much more about it, except that from then until now, it's just been one continuous increase in suburban proportions. In those days, each increase was a little more noteworthy because they were gradually chewing away at the rural predominance. Nowadays, if we lose a few more farmers, nobody notices it. But in those days, you could see it happening, and gradually the suburbs spread out as people started commuting by automobile. You had a much broader suburban development.

That brings me to another aspect of Brooke Lee's career. The family owned a lot of land around Silver Spring, which, at those times, was a little settlement near the railroad station on Georgia Avenue, and he proceeded to develop it. It was an obvious opportunity, right on the trolley line, close access to downtown, and he and some associates built many of those cottages that are now giving way at the edges of Silver Spring to commercial and high rise development. He went in very heavily for real estate development, and he kept moving outward.



Also some of the land that wasn't suitable for development, like the low lying land along Sligo Creek, he very wisely sold to the county for parkland. So that's how we got some of our park system there. I say that with a somewhat snide tone because, of course, his critics pointed out that he was selling it to the county. He wasn't giving it to the county even though the land wasn't good for much because it was all floodable. But I would stress that the county government was honest. Nobody ever put a thing on Brooke Lee or any of his immediate associates. There may have been one or two small timers in the courthouse, you know, that took some money out of the petty cash drawer but there was never anything proven in the way of dishonesty or electoral fraud either. It was a very high standard, much higher, incidentally, than neighboring Prince George's. Quite a contrast there between this county and Prince George's.

Now that I've talked about the kind of a growing suburban society it was and the kind of government they were getting, let's talk a little more specifically now about the political organization and leadership.

The question of leadership can be disposed of very simply. It was Brooke Lee who ran the organization. He was only Comptroller for two years. He went to the House of Delegates in 1926, when they converted to even year elections. He spent four years there. He was Governor Ritchie's right hand man, speaker of the House. You see, it's important the way the state ties in with the local. Brooke Lee ran for the House of Delegates. He wasn't running to go over there and just push the roll call button. He was speaker of the House. He put through the Governor's program.

Brooke Lee, personally, was a very strong person--big man, booming voice, fine speaker, prolific writer, and he could shout you down; he could gavel you down; he could talk you down; he could argue you down; he could even--well, you could call it a gracious manner--he could even charm you down, perhaps.

However, the contrasts between him and his father were conspicuous. His father was very much the charmer, eloquent, gracious, and a very high minded Progressive--and also a college graduate.

Brooke Lee, it was noticed from the beginning, was much more authoritarian, although he could be gracious when he had to be. There was not so much evidence of high minded, progressive ideals. He would give them good government, but he didn't have that Blair Lee progressive enthusiasm to convey. He was a practical politician. He quit college. He quit Princeton after a term or two to work for his father who was in the senate. He worked in the office and ran some campaigns. He was dealing with county and city bosses for his father's interests, setting up the election day activities, at the age of twenty-three. But he didn't finish college. Perhaps--just speculation--maybe something was lost there. Something was lost that would have been advanced if he had had more of a liberal education and less of a practical, political education.

The organization, other than Lee, consisted of a State Senator, who was always the formal leader. The county organization was always headed by the State Senator. There was a formal party organization. Now I'm not talking about the Democratic Central Committee. That's three times removed.

The leader was Brooke Lee. The formal organization was the state senator, a few leading elected officials, and a few of the real hard-working politicians in the precincts.

Then you've got the Democratic Central Committee over here. If an elected official died, they filled the vacancy, and they didn't do much else. The official, legal party organization was an encumbrance. You didn't want the party run by seven co-equal people. You wanted it run by one person with a number of hard-working lieutenants, and that's what they had.

I would stress that it was strictly a political machine. They were giving people good government. That was the end, but the means were not the means of--if you will pardon the phrase--the League of Women Voters. This was a government in which every single courthouse job was a political appointment, including the policemen. The policemen were all Democrats. I guess the school teachers were excepted, and, perhaps, maybe, the health officer might have steered clear of it, but the policemen, all the crews at the Sanitary Commission, the parks crews were political appointments.

The county purchasing was spread around among all the different suppliers. You wouldn't buy gasoline on a bulk bid basis. You would buy it from each little distributor. The same for the other county supplies--the stationery and paper.

There was no County Attorney because you had to have six or eight County Attorneys. One was the attorney of the Board of Election Supervisors. That, incidentally, still prevails. But also you had a county attorney for various

county officers and departments, so that all the county lawyers had a chance to get some of the legal patronage. That was the kind of political organization it was.

Turning briefly to the Republican Party, it's very interesting that in Maryland during the heyday of the Republicans in the Twenties, the Republican Party was going downhill just as fast as it **could, and I've never understood** this. It carried the State Legislature in 1917, lost the governorship by 165 votes in 1919. After that, they didn't win anything except, of course, national elections--you know, with a Presidential candidate sweeping everything before him. If a Senator was being elected in a presidential year, they won that, like 1928. But during the Twenties, they didn't win anything else, and I certainly don't understand what caused that.

That was true in Montgomery. I mentioned newspapers. The Democrats hadn't had newspapers. The Republicans hadn't either. One of these rich Republicans came into the county and set up a newspaper so the Republicans would have a newspaper. That was about 1900. In the 1920s, that paper started supporting the Democrats, and I don't know whether it was that they got some of the legal advertising or what it was. It could have been just that the Democrats were giving pretty good government, and the Republicans were--if you read their old campaign statements--they were for low taxes. To the suburbanites who felt that for not too high a tax, they were getting good schools, they were not interested in that one whit. As a result, the Republican Party was at a very low state and it had very little competition to offer.

The Democratic Party, incidentally, during this time, had a different nominating process than I've described. It wasn't free and open fights like they had in the old days. It wasn't bi-factional. It was one organization, the Lee organization, against the 'outs'. Through skillful use of patronage and management of people's ambitions, Lee was always able to have a large majority in his organization. So the 'outs' were always out, and there was a shifting alliance of whoever was in Dutch with the Colonel or who had wanted to be State Senator and didn't get it, who ran against him and were regularly defeated in the primary.

COMMENT: This was the time when fewer elections amendment went in, which consolidated the party and gave the Republicans few opportunities to win, too. I think that that is as big a factor as anything else because they reduced the number of elections at a time that the Democratic Party was extremely strong and well united.

BAIN: Well, that explains why the Democrats made a clean sweep, but why did they make such a clean sweep the first time it happened--1926?

COMMENT: I think the party was in much better shape organizationally at the time, and then all the seats were lumped together. Everybody had to move at the same time. When they are all moving at the same time, you see quite a bit of strength.

BAIN: That could have been it because . . . yes. In the old days, a State Senator could knife some of his opponents who were running for Delegate in an off year when he wasn't up for election, and he didn't care that much. But when they

were all on the ticket at once, they had to stick together. That could have been.

Ritchie stressed organization. Ritchie was a very strong governor. He built a strong Democratic Party.

QUESTION: Who were the Young Turks? I keep hearing reference to Young Turks.

BAIN: Yes. I believe that that term would have been used to refer to a crowd that were all in France together in the Maryland National Guard Division that had been turned into a regular Army unit while in France. All of them came back decorated, and they became very prominent. There was Lee from Montgomery County with Ritchie. There was Preston Lane from Washington County, later a Governor, and Attorney General in those days under Ritchie. There was Millard Tydings, the Divisional machine gun officer, and later a United States Senator. Tydings was not associated with those people as closely as some of the others. But Lane and Lee were very close along with Walsh of Allegany County and a bunch of others. I think that might be it. They were younger men moving ahead under Ritchie, but they were in the fold. This wasn't a dissident group the way Young Turks sometimes are referred to.

QUESTION: Mr. Bain, I'm curious as to the kinds of people that were living in the suburban area then. Did they work in Washington? Were the government employees? Where did those people come from?

BAIN: That's a good question. I should have mentioned more about that. That's the question about society now. The people who moved into the county in the first wave were

predominantly government workers, lawyers, professional people, business people in downtown Washington. You look at the old issues of the Maryland Manual, which lists the Montgomery County legislators, and sometimes the lists show addresses in downtown office buildings. That's where their mailing addresses are. Downtown lawyers live in Montgomery and are elected to the Legislature. During the Thirties, I think, that continued.

There was a somewhat lower income contingent that moved into the smaller houses, cottages, you might call them, in lower Silver Spring. Takoma Park, of course, was well-to-do in those days, very large houses. Somerset was very upper income. The county never had the great wealth, the very wealthy population that you find in the North Shore of Chicago or in Westchester County or in the Mainline of Philadelphia. It, equally, had none of the industrial suburbs that you find in Westchester County or in Cook County. It was a very homogeneous kind of a population, upper middle income.

One thing that meant, incidentally, that held some peril for the Lee organization was that many of them should have been Republicans. They weren't. Maybe they were in the 1920s, but now moving into the Thirties, in the early Thirties, of course, and the mid-Thirties, an awful lot of people were Democrats that had been Republican before. On the state level, the Ritchie government was very well liked, a very strong government. Right up to 1934, Ritchie was governor. On the local scene, Lee was giving good government. There was very little reason to be a Republican.

As far as registering to vote, there wasn't any reason to

be a Republican because if you wanted anything to say in politics, you had to vote in the Democratic primary. As a result, in the first years of the New Deal, when the new voters registered over in Chevy Chase--this is a very vivid statistic in my mind--1934--old Chevy Chase, which later would vote Republican four to one, maybe, they registered eight to one Democratic. Either they were really Democrats, or else they sure wanted to vote in the Democratic primary. But it held a threat for Lee because, of course, as times change, that population could switch over to the other party, and it would cause him trouble.

I think that more or less takes us about half way through this next period. This takes us through to about 1940. Maybe, I ought to break here. Do we want to take a break for refreshments of something?

[INTERRUPTION]

DAIN:            Maybe we'd better accelerate the pace here. I hope we didn't spend too much time in pre-Cambrian Montgomery County government and politics. Let's say we've come to about 1940 here, and in the middle of this current era we are talking about. I think we've covered now the period which is before the recollection of most everybody you will meet. In other words, to go back into the early Thirties and into the 1920s, there will only be a few people, I think, you can find that will be able to make a big contribution. From here on, the number of people really, beginning around 1940, that you can talk to, multiplies very rapidly, both because it's more recent and because I think there is kind of a break there, and suddenly a lot more people began to become interested and take part in **county political affairs.**



I might just make a couple remarks before picking up on 1940 about the Republicans. I had described how the Democrats were so dominant. I mentioned, however, there were always some 'outs' and the 'outs' had some consistency to them. There were some people always 'out', some core of opposition to Brooke Lee. They had a Democratic faction, which for some strange reason was called the Progressive faction. It was strongly based in the rural areas. It was always slamming Brooke Lee for high taxes and wasteful expenditures. They criticized very strongly the construction of Montgomery Blair High School because they said no high school would be needed in that location for years. Well, of course, during the 1930s, this whole section here was developed so rapidly that Lee, if anything, in retrospect, didn't move fast enough perhaps, but he was certainly much closer to the mark than the parochial, conservative, rural Democrats and just soreheads, you might say, who opposed him.

However, a very interesting idea occurred to some of these people in 1934. This was a very bad year for a lot of people, including Albert Ritchie and Brooke Lee. Ritchie had been governor four times, and he didn't want to stop there. While he had certainly been a strong governor, his hostility to Roosevelt's New Deal wasn't helping him in some quarters, mainly in Baltimore City, and he had taken rather vigorous action against a lynch crowd. Maryland had a lynching as recently as 1933, and this made him just poison on the Eastern Shore because he sent National Guardsmen over to try to catch some of the men who had conducted a lynching.

So Ritchie had a lot of things going against him that

year, and Harry Nice, the man whom he had defeated by 165 votes sixteen years before, ran against him, and that was obviously a tough election for Ritchie.

Brooke Lee had problems of a somewhat different kind. He had been continuing to develop land very heavily, and in those days the financing of houses worked a little differently from nowadays, and there weren't such things as mortgage insurance. The Depression, which hit Washington, although not as hard as some places, caused a lot of these people that had bought houses in Silver Spring to fall behind in their payments, and many of them, rather than try to keep it up, simply gave him back the house. The trouble was that he didn't need any more houses. He had to make the payments on his financing of the house, in the first place, and as a result he suddenly discovered himself, as the Depression worsened, and as a few banks failed, with many, many hundreds of thousands--I think more than a million dollars--in debts that he had almost nothing to put up against, except some land that didn't have any market.

Finally, the third interesting thing was that the local people had an interesting idea which was that the anti-Lee Democrats joined the Republicans and formed a new party. They formed a Fusion, as it was called. This was quite common back in the old days, in the nineteenth century, when there were very close elections here. With almost all of the white people of the county, in the Democratic Party, and only so many offices to go around, there was a tremendous temptation for a few of them to flop over and join the Republicans, split up the offices and win an election. But it had gone out of style. It was a kind of an old-fashioned. . . .

[INTERRUPTION CAUSED BY NECESSITY TO CHANGE TAPES ]

QUESTION: [NOT RECORDED]

BAIN: Politics!

[LAUGHTER]

BAIN: A very old-fashioned kind of politics, but it was tried in Montgomery County in 1934. One of the Peter brothers had never joined the Lee organization. He and some other people, that year's dissident Democrats, joined the Republicans, people like Walter Dawson, the third generation of the Dawson Republicans of Rockville, in a Fusion ticket. The combination of all the things going against Ritchie, Lee, everything, meant defeat both for Ritchie--Ritchie was defeated by Harry Nice, a Republican--and defeat for the local Lee organization, a very narrow defeat, only a partial defeat. They lost control of the Board of County Commissioners. They kept control of the Legislative Delegation.

So for four years, the government was partially a government of the other people in the county. They didn't distinguish themselves particularly. I don't know whether they really did so badly but at the end of four years, there wasn't much call for their re-election. Unfortunately, one of their appointees did get sent to prison, and this hurt their chances of re-election. They decided, in 1938, to go their separate ways.

So that year's 'outs' fought Lee in the primary and lost, and then the Republicans fought in the general election and lost, and the whole pattern had been once again renewed after only a four year gap. Likewise, a Democrat, Herbert O'Conor, was elected governor. So once again we had the predominantly

The main new thing that happened at that time was that the civic federations, which had become rather powerful groups in the county and which had generally supported Lee, began chafing at the bit, perhaps partly because a less desirable kind of public official was running the county there for a few years, or perhaps simply because they had never been very happy, being good government types--government employees, some of them educational people and others, newspaper people. They had never been very happy with this machine government that I described, this patronage kind of a system.

They put out a resolution that the Civic Federation promoted very vigorously. This was the Montgomery County Civic Federation, thirty years ago, asking the county government to put up money for a study of the county government. They finally persuaded the Fusion Board of County Commissioners to put up some money for such a study, and the Brookings Institution was commissioned to do it. That's the origin of what became **the** very famous Brookings Report.

Dr. Louis Meriam of Kensington, the president of Brookings, took a very personal interest in this, and he put a lot of Brookings money into the thing, and it became a huge book in which they studied Montgomery County government very thoroughly. They applied to county government the Good Government rationale that was then dominant--council-manager form of government, civil service with a merit system, centralized purchasing, the whole apparatus of Good Government reform as it had been preached, mainly in the cities rather than the counties by the National Municipal League and other reform organizations for many years.

The Brookings Report came out in 1941, and the Civic

Federation, in alliance with the League of Women Voters, American Association of University Women and some of the other community groups, began a campaign to secure approval of its recommendations. They had one very powerful thing going for them, which was--back in 1915 for some reason that I've never known, the Legislature had put through an amendment to the Constitution authorizing the adoption of county home rule charters. That was the Progressive era with a lot of electoral reforms, and maybe this was part of that package.

Specifically, as I'm sure you know, the county could and still can adopt a charter without ever going through any of the existing elected officials. It doesn't have to have approval of the County Board or of the legislative delegation. You petition a referendum on whether a charter shall be written. You elect your own ticket, if you want to, of charter writers, and then you, the voters, vote on the resulting proposed charter. Then, finally, there is a special election to fill the first County Council, which is a non-partisan election. So you've got quite a package there to get completely out from under the existing officials and also out from under the typical Democratic dominance, as we had it here in Montgomery County with that first non-partisan election.

You can well imagine when I tick off those reforms--the civil service which would abolish all those patronage people who were the backbone of the Democratic organization--centralized purchasing that would destroy all the parcelling out to secure favors to keep their political loyalties--council-manager form, instead of the County Board of Commissioners checking with Brooke Lee to find out what to pass each week--and also important, a centralized public works program instead of

having the County Commissioners divvy up the road assignments as to who is going to get whose road paved--it struck at the very roots of the power of the Lee organization, while at the same time claiming to produce a better substance of government than the county had had.

Well, the Lee organization opposed the charter when it first came up for consideration, and that began a very dramatic period in the county's history that lasted seven years. 1942 was the time for the first election at which the county would decide whether to write a charter. The Lee organization opposed the charter. The Republicans, under Walter Dawson and some of the suburban Republican leaders, played it very smart. They said, "We think the voters ought to have the right to decide," They didn't actually say they were for charter, but they didn't oppose it, which was pretty good because, of course, the rural Republicans would be against such a government as much as Brooke Lee and his friends.

There was a hard fought battle. It was complicated because Brooke Lee had continued to be very prominent. I actually didn't finish the story about Brooke Lee in 1934. He quit politics. He turned over the organization to the State Senator. This was for real, that time. The State Senator became the county leader, and Lee concentrated on recouping his financial fortune. With a lot of hard work, and, I think, some help from people who were friends of his and who were maybe in a position to help him--and I don't mean that invidiously-- I guess that when you are a million dollars in debt, you need a little help--he began to get out of debt. He had resigned, however, and, of course, Ritchie was gone. Ritchie

died shortly thereafter. So there was quite a void there in state and local politics.

Lee had never really wanted to be governor. He had been talked about for governor. He'd always wanted to be a senator like his father. He is, perhaps, a legislative type of person. He probably would have been a good senator. Some of his charterite foes. . . . I lived next door to a very distinguished charter leader, Marie Bennett. She and others of that group used to think that the best thing that could have happened for everybody would have been for Brooke Lee to become a senator, where he could have acted on a big stage and done big things, but instead he was here on the local scene, still trying to run a county that didn't want to be run his way so much.

well, by 1940, he was part way out of debt, and, of course, the New Deal recovery program and then the war effort brought a lot of people to Washington, and the real estate market was improving. He was developing real estate again, and it looked like he was on the way. He was out of danger, and he could expect to continue to build up his fortune once again. Millard Tydings was in the Senate, and a nondescript Senator was in the other seat, who he didn't think that he could beat. So he decided to run for Congress, as the first step in that direction.

The Congressional District had become Democratic once again. It had been Democratic very briefly in the Progressive era. Generally speaking, if we had a Democratic President, maybe the Sixth District would be Democratic. Davey Lewis

from Allegheny County had been the Democratic Representative in Woodrow Wilson's time. In 1930, Lewis had run again, and the Democrats had become strong, and he won again. Lewis became a Congressman for some years in this District. But he left the House of Representatives to run for the Senate against Millard Tydings as the New Deal candidate and was defeated.

The incumbent Congressman was still a Democrat in 1942. He was killed in an airplane accident, and Brooke Lee, therefore, ran for Congress. He had a very strong Democratic Montgomery County behind him, and Frederick and Washington were pretty good for the Democrats. He told the Democratic leader of Frederick County that he would cross the Monocacy River with a five thousand vote majority. The only trouble was that at home he was running a campaign that said that "this charter that they are trying to put over on you is a Republican trick to get control of the county government." He was overlooking the fact that a lot of people didn't think the Republicans were so bad anyway, and what's worse, a lot of people thought the charter was good, and he was linking the charter with the Republicans leading people to say, "Maybe that means the Republicans are pretty good."

Anyway, the long and short of it is that Lee did run for Congress. He apparently really expected to win to start towards the U. S. Senate where he might have arrived in a few years, but, instead, he got swamped in his own county. The county went heavily Republican for Congress, and heavily for charter. It went very heavily Democratic for governor



and for local offices, which suggests that it wasn't just a Republican sweep. It was Lee's charter campaign that helped to kill off his last hope to go to Congress. He'd wanted to go in 1934 when the nonentity Radcliff (had gone) but he was so nearly bankrupt that he couldn't dream of running for the Senate. So here was a second chance, and he'd lost this one. He was finished as far as higher ambitions were concerned.

In 1944, the charter had been drafted along the lines of the Brookings Report, and the charter was voted on by the voters. The Brooke Lee organization made an all out campaign against it, spent a lot of money, a lot of publicity. All the organization workers were out working against it. They were accused of trading votes. They'd slide in votes for Thomas E. Dewey for President if the Republicans would help beat charter. Of course, you can never prove that kind of political behavior.

The charter was defeated. This was quite a blow to the very large body of civic leaders. The suburbanites had really come on strong on this. It's very interesting that the alignment switched completely in the Democratic Party and in the county at large. Lee's main base had been in the suburbs, but beginning in 1942 he lost heavily in the suburbs, relatively, and he gained tremendously in the rural areas. He aligned himself, thereafter, with the strongest support in the rural areas that were most hostile to these intellectual, Good Government ideas put forth by the upper class reformers in the suburbs.

So in 1944, the reformers had to start all over again,

and they did it. They went through the whole process a second time--a new election to say, "We shall write a charter", which took place in 1946, and then the election on the new charter in 1948.

Now just a few words at that point about county society. Of course, the society here was more and more a suburban society. The suburbanites now considerably outnumbered the rural people. The suburbanites were still largely upper income people, posing some threat to the Democratic organization. The Democratic Party's political organization was still the picture I have given you of a strong organization against a few 'outs', and once again, since Lee's retirement was ended, it was an organization headed by Lee with a State Senator being a prominent lieutenant and filled out by other office holders and patronage appointees.

The Republicans were much as before. General speaking, in the Republican Party, the suburbanites had had rather slow going after the first dramatic intrusion very early, and the Republican Party was still managed, largely, by up-county people. I keep mentioning Walter Dawson because it was, to a considerable extent, a one man party, in alliance with various suburban people who he worked along with. Some of the few names that you might still find, that are conspicuous enough to be remembered at this date, are Paul Coughlan, who, I believe, is still around, and Duncan Clark of Bethesda, who died some years ago. Very few names really stand out. It was a small clique up at the courthouse.

Incidentally, if any suburban Republicans had ever really wanted to make a fight of it, it is important to note that one

reason they wouldn't have gotten very far was that so many whites registered Democratic, and so many Negroes remained living in the rural parts of the county that the Negro vote was a very potent force in the Republican primary. The Negroes were no longer a majority of the Republicans, as they had been, but Walter Dawson rightly felt that if anybody wanted to challenge him from down in the suburbs, he could bring out a massive Negro vote. He had spoken at their meetings. He had Negro lieutenants working the vote in the rural precincts, and he rightly felt at that time that he was invincible within the Republican Party. So it was a small group that got along with each other. It was Walter Dawson who put up candidates who were regularly defeated until the end of World War II.

This brings us then to the end of World War II and to the election of 1946. 1946 was interesting because once again the question was on the ballot--Should we have a charter written for Montgomery County?

Oh, the government. I didn't mention the changes in government here in this recent era. Lee was wise enough to make a number of changes in the county government, to adapt to some of the demands for reform. He had first made some changes, he and his lieutenants, back in the Fusion era. He transferred all of the appointments he possibly could out of the Board of County Commissioners and put them under the hands of the elected courthouse officers, like the Treasurer and other county officers, or he transferred functions to the Park and Planning Commission, such as building inspection. He thereby removed some of the county government from the Fusion regime through his control

of the Legislature that did this, at Annapolis, since he still had the legislative delegation. He maintained control of a lot of jobs and a lot of policy by just pulling it right out from under the hands of the Fusionists that had the Board of County Commissioners.

He made another kind of response in the early 1940s. He began reforming Montgomery County, in each case, doing something that seemed to some extent to meet the charter demands, but never really going far enough to satisfy the charterites. They wanted a county-manager form of government. He appointed somebody who was called a County Superintendent who had certain administrative responsibilities over the whole county government but which fell far short of the responsibilities of a true manager under the council-manager form.

He made a few other changes of that sort. He put in a civil service commission whose director was the man who had charge of the anti-charter election campaign in 1944. He made a whole series of changes like that so he could point to the reforms that had been made. These were not convincing to his foes, however, and they continued to organize for the fight.

Then finally in '46, he did the most important thing which was--he said, "Listen. We are not going to fight this any more, boys. We are going to join it. We are going to endorse the writing of a charter. We are going to appoint, as the County Commissioners are authorized to do, a five man charter board, and we will get them elected. We'll write a charter that will meet out needs, and we will be charterites from here on out."

At the meeting of his organization where this was to be voted on, something happened that had very rarely happened,

which was that he lost control of the organization. This has been told to me by people that I really believe. You always wonder if it really happened that way, but they really seem to have pretty good evidence that he actually, in an open meeting of his own organization, after the preliminary caucus where he'd lined up his lieutenants to make the motion, second the motion, speak for the motion, carry the motion, with all that, he lost it.

A very well-known lawyer, a very fine speech maker, Roger Whiteford, stood up and waved his arms and made a fiery speech declaring that, "If charter goes through, you will all lose your jobs." Lee was somewhat a captive of his own organization, because they did all owe their jobs to the existing setup. Even precinct workers in Chevy Chase were county employees. It's hard to believe that now. They would have lost their jobs. So, in a sense, he was captive of his own organization. He was talking sense to them, but they didn't want to hear sense. They voted him down.

He had even planted articles. The downtown newspaper reporters out here were, to some extent, captives of the organization. You could tell. You look at the clippings and you can see this today. They'd write stories that were really Brooke Lee talking, telling them what he was going to do next. They would say, "Prominent Democrats feel this and thus and the other thing."

He had even planted the stories, and then the next morning, the papers said, "In a dramatic reversal, the Democrats of Montgomery voted war on this unproven experiment in governmental change."

So this time, the fight on charter did to the county ticket what in '42 it had done to Brooke Lee himself. The Democrats did fight charter with everything they had. They lost. The charter board was elected, and the Democrats lost the county. The Republicans, under Walter Dawson, Duncan Clark, DeWitt Hyde, Anders Loftstrand. . . . There was no very distinguished Republican on the County Council. I'll come to that in a minute. People like that put up a ticket for the county offices, and they won everything except that they couldn't fill the ticket. Republican victories were so unheard of that they left some of the courthouse offices unfilled on their ticket, and those were the only Democrats to survive in 1946. They hadn't really expected they'd win, and they probably could have found somebody.

This episode led to a second retirement of Brooke Lee. He was not active. . . . Well, I'm a little ahead of myself. He remained somewhat active for the next few years, but his organization was on the skids. There was still a Democratic Governor. That was a bright spot, and, of course, a Democratic President. But they lost everything in the county.

The charter board that was elected in that year went ahead to write a charter, and in 1948 Lee did essentially what he did in '46. He said, "The charter reform is going to come, and we're not going to fight it any more." That time, he was able to put it across. It wasn't easy, but he brought his organization along with him that time. He announced that the Democrats would vote for charter in the 1948 election. The Republicans really were then forced to even though some of them didn't like it. I mean they had to go along. They

couldn't be in the position of being the anti-charter party. In 1948, the charter was adopted.

He then did a very interesting thing. The Republicans had swept the county in 1946. Dewey had swept the county in '48. Then in the special election in January of '49 to elect the first County Council, Walter Dawson and his friends were licking their chops because, obviously, the beneficiaries of this new form of government would be the newly dominant Republican Party, and it really was dominant. Charter Democrats were a distinct breed. They were actually a faction just as the anti-Lee Democrats had been a faction before. They were recognized as such, and they voted Republican. They said, "We're voting Republican because we're for charter. We're for Roosevelt and we're for charter, and we don't see any contradiction between the two and don't see why either implies we should vote for Brooke Lee's candidates." So it seemed that the Republicans would be the beneficiaries of all that had gone before.

But Brooke Lee put out a little notice. He said, "The Democratic organization is going to support, in this special election, the nominees of the charter committee." He had, thereupon, effectively thrown the choice into the hands of the reformers, which was a pretty good thing from everybody's point of view, except the Republicans. From the point of view of Lee, it avoided having a fight and losing it, as he would have lost it in '49. From the point of view of the charterites, it gave them the chance to install the government, and then to run it, that they had fought so hard to achieve. So that's the way it turned out.

The first charter Council, for two years only, until the '50 election, was a very distinguished body--Dr. Meriam of Brookings; Harold Hammond, an executive of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce; Dorothy Himstead, the wife of the executive secretary of the American Association of University Professors. One of the most distinguished, and the first president of the County Council, who, I am sorry to say, died a few months ago, was Frederick P. Lee, a very prominent lawyer. These people were a couple of cuts above anybody that Brooke Lee ever put on the ticket.

They did a good job of installing the new county government. They put it in the way it should be, not the way the Democrats or the Republicans might have put it in. These people were above party. They hadn't been very active in any kind of party politics.

So 1950 came along, and maybe I'd better pause at that point and just see if we have covered the main points here, and then we will throw it open for any questions.

In 1948, as well as supporting charter, Brooke Lee announced his second retirement from politics, and turned over the organization to his lieutenants. There was now a Republican State Senator. So he didn't have a State Senator to run things, and he had, essentially, a holding committee to take over management of the party.

The Democratic organization, within Democratic primaries, remained about as strong as ever, however. The charterites had had a few candidates run in '46 in the Democratic primary. I didn't mention that. Before this dramatic fiasco for the Democrats, they were fighting Brooke Lee as Democrats



in the party, not as charterites in the general election.

Two people ran for the State Senate against the Lee candidate in 1946. Well, you can see right there, that the reformers were up to the tricks that they generally are up to. They ran two candidates against the organization. You don't have any chance of getting elected under those conditions.

But the two candidates were very indicative of what was to lie ahead. One of them was Alice Hostetler, very active in the League of Women Voters, appointed to a state commission by Governor O'Connor, active in the national Democratic Party, a national liberal. I say 'national liberal' as a certain term to describe people whose main orientation is to the party of Roosevelt and Truman. Nobody claimed that Brooke Lee had ever gone against the Democratic Party and its candidates, but he had concentrated on state and local politics. But you began to get in the party now, the Democratic Party, people with a national orientation, who were liberal nationally, although they tended to sympathize with the local charterite reformers.

So Alice Hostetler ran for the State Senate. She and her friends found they couldn't get together with another candidate for State Senate, Edward Northrop. Northrop had been an organization man ever since he was a young man, and he had come back from the war. He saw the organization in trouble. He saw a chance to get in and run as an anti-Lee candidate, neither he and his friends in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase area, who put him up as a candidate, nor Mrs. Hostetler and her supporters were willing to back down. They ran very hard.

The Northrop people along with the charterites supporting

Mrs. Hostetler, pulled the entire Bethesda-Chevy Chase area out of the Democratic organization. That began a very important geographical split in the county on the Democratic side. The Silver Spring area, where Lee and his people mostly lived, remained staunchly Democratic. But thereafter, very few of the Democrats in Bethesda were Lee people. They were generally charterites or national liberals or people who you might unkindly say were opportunistic and who saw which way the wind was blowing and who'd seen a chance to become anti-Lee people and move ahead on that slogan.

So finally, the kind of government, as I said, was the installation of a charter, modern, reform, Good Government structure, I think a very good one. However, I might mention that, in 1947 and in 1949, two of the main reforms of the Brookings Report fell by the wayside. The charterites captured the county but they couldn't do a thing about the State Legislature. A lot of them were government workers. They had permission from the Civil Service Commission to run candidates in the non-partisan charter election. They couldn't run candidates for the State Legislature because that was partisan. As a result, they couldn't send people to Annapolis. The Lee organization used their influence with the Legislature and the Governor to keep the Planning Commission and the Sanitary Commission the way they were, which meant appointed by the Governor. The Governor was Herbert O'Connor, a Democrat. He listened to the county leader who was Lee or Lee's friend. So as a result, putting planning and parks and water and sewer under the county government, which was a prime recommendation of the Brookings Institution, didn't take place at that time.

Finally, about the kind of society it was. As soon as the war was over, there was a big building boom, and the automobile was now dominant. So they could build way out, even as far as Rockville. You had a large increase in the population very rapidly. At that time, there began to be a shift in the character of the population. You began reaching into income groups that had never come to Montgomery County in great numbers. You had middle income, lower middle income people. I've met railroad conductors that live in Montgomery County. Gradually as the county grew up, of course, it had the full complement of taxi drivers and cooks and retail clerks and all the rest that you have in any large urban area.

So in the vast Wheaton section of the county, you had a large population coming in, which looked like a Democratic population. Also as the Jewish community, so largely concentrated in the Georgia Avenue corridor of Washington, moved outward, many of the members of that community moved into the county, who quickly proved themselves, as elsewhere in the nation, to be voting very heavily Democratic.

So you began to have a bit of a bright spot from the Democrats' point of view and a bit of a threat from the Republicans' because no longer was the tide running, essentially, in a Republican direction. It could be now that the new population would swing elections back into Democratic hands, for the first time, reversing that trend.

Well, that takes us up to 1948, and it's getting awfully late. Maybe we ought to have questions here, and then we can either break or very quickly sketch in a few more years, after which time we will have gotten to the point where you all have

been getting your own political and governmental wounds in your own community activities.

QUESTION: Mr. Bain, what was the relationship between Millard Tydings and Lee? You had said earlier that they had been in the war together, and they had been friends. When did the rift take place?

BAIN: Well, Tydings had always been independent of Ritchie. There had always been some competition. The federal patronage was strictly separate from the state patronage, and Tydings built up his own corps of patronage advisers and patronage dispensers. He was always trying to get somebody to run to replace Ritchie, not to beat him but to try to ease Ritchie out and to get a friend of his in. So it had always been that way really.

However, when Tydings was purged by Roosevelt in 1938, Lee had made up his mind long before then what his ticket would be. It would be Jackson and Tydings, and despite his association with David Lewis and a lot of other things, and his closeness to the national administration here, Montgomery and Prince George's went with Tydings.

QUESTION: I had a question for clarification. The dates again about charter. 1942. You weren't really voting on charter then, were you?

BAIN: The first time, they voted whether to have a charter written, and they voted to elect a charter board. That happened in '42 and '46. Then the votes on the charters that were thus written took place in '44 and '48.

QUESTION: And do I understand that in order to be anti-Lee, even though the charter election was actually non-partisan

campaign, they became charterites, and national liberal Democrats became Republicans or worked through the Republican Party. Is that correct?

BAIN: Well, they really just voted Republican. They never really affiliated. People who had been active in the New Deal elections didn't affiliate and work with the Republican Party, but they either didn't help Lee's candidates any, or they actively endorsed. . . .

One critical event we haven't gotten to is 1950 when Lee's people showed up on the Democratic ticket. Frederick P. Lee, a Democrat always, and some of the others, endorsed the Republican ticket right down the line, and called on all Democrats to vote Republican because so clean-cut was the division between continued support of charter and the reversion to the old form.

So you really had four kinds of Democrats--Lee Democrats, the loose-knit Bethesda faction that was geographically split from him, but wasn't really charterites, the charterites, and then you had what I called the national liberals, of whom to move ahead a little, Peggy Schweinhaut is a good example. She came into politics, not through the charter movement, but through working for national Democratic candidates.

I don't know. Does that bring us close enough for your present purposes? In view of the hour, do you want to call it quits?

QUESTION: Could you comment briefly on the mechanism that Brooke Lee used to select his candidates. I recall that they had colorful conventions which were somewhat in nature similar to the national conventions with delegations coming in from the various communities.

BAIN: Both parties did that for a while after the abolition of convention nominations. The Republicans kept nominating by convention until about 1930 because there were so few of them that it was convenient to do it that way. Even when they made the direct primary by law, they continued having an informal convention and the Lee organization did the same. They would simply elect delegates from each precinct, and then the delegates would meet at its county convention, and they'd cast votes in proportion to the number of registered Democrats in their precinct. They even literally would look like a national convention in some high school gymnasium with signs like 'Precinct 7-14' or whatever it would be, and nominating speeches and seconding speeches. However, the ticket would actually have been made up in a caucus of the leadership before the convention took place.

It was not, such as you have, maybe in your school board nominating conventions or some other places where there is some degree of genuine competition. The competition was all in the preliminaries at which the leaders figured out what they had to do to put together a ticket that would keep their followers loyal to it. The convention was only a formality.

QUESTION: You haven't mentioned suffrage at all, and I wonder if you are aware of any major changes that women getting the vote made in the county, how the forces separated?

BAIN: Well, the most conspicuous change was that Montgomery County was far and away in the lead in the state in women moving into active roles in politics as public officials and as party workers. Even into the 1950s, Montgomery had many more women on the ticket for the two major parties than even

such urbanized areas as Prince George's, and women in politics were still practically unknown in the rural sections and in the working class sections of Baltimore. Whether it made any difference in the quality of politics, I wouldn't know, but it might have led to a stress on education and other things that the women voters and the women officials were especially interested in.

QUESTION: Wouldn't you say that part of the reason for the women's participation in Montgomery County is the Hatch Act?

BAIN: Could be. It is certainly true that a lot of well qualified men have been completely disqualified from local politics, except in the charter campaign and in recent attempts to form a non-partisan third party. I think that probably is a factor. Also, building on that, is the sheer fact of high incomes and high level of education, which certainly do seem to lead to a breakdown of the older traditions that are to be seen in working class areas where the women and the men so often take part in many civic and social activities in separate groups. Where you do have women participating, say in Anne Arundel County, they're likely to be in strictly Women's Democratic Clubs, that are largely social organizations. That parallels a social way of life over there, where if they have a party, the men go back into the kitchen and drink beer and talk one subject, and the women talk about another subject. I think that is more or less a factor of social class.

QUESTION: I think it would be very interesting if you would comment about Brooke Lee's son.

BAIN: Well, I really haven't gotten to Blair Lee. Blair Lee was just getting started in those elections

right after the war, and that's really for another day, I think, in terms of really commenting at any length. I never mentioned the fact, one of the very interesting things about Brooke Lee was that he did set up his own newspaper, The Maryland News. He turned it into a very powerful organ of political communication. He's a very fine, a very laborious, but very prolific writer. He used to turn out huge columns, you know, two columns wide and two pages long, with all his thoughts on every issue, and he really informed you. You could really find out what he was thinking and what he intended to do and what his reasons were, whether you agreed with him or not.

He turned the editorship of that paper over to Blair Lee in about 1946, when Blair came back from the war, and Blair spent these last years I've mentioned here. . . . His first years in politics, he held a small patronage courthouse position for a little while, clerk to one of the County Commissioners, and then he was editor of that paper. He was very good editor, a much better writer than his father, and a very skilled newspaper man. He, very wisely, decided not to run for office the first few elections that came along, and he avoided having been tainted by the defeats of 1946 and 1950.

One old man that knew both of them remarked that Blair was more like his grandfather than his father, and I believe it from what I've heard about his grandfather. Blair is more polished and gracious and much less authoritarian than his father. He sounds more like his grandfather, as described. Blair has never been a domineering political leader, and he might have gone farther if he had been. He's, perhaps, more



interested in the issues, the philosophical approach to government, than his father, and less interested in the mechanics of political organization.

Well, is that enough for one time?

COMMENT: I think that is marvelous.