

Donald Mitchell oral histories, Archives and Special Collections, Consortium Library, University of Alaska Anchorage. Ted Stevens interview, 1989 December 18. Transcript completed by R. Joy Stancel.
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MR. MITCHELL: And it's December 18th, and I'm in Senator Ted Stevens' office in Anchorage, talking about the Native Claims Settlement Act during the early 1960s, and I guess by way just of background, you obviously had -- your public biography is well-known, and you're in Washington, D.C., and you came up to Alaska in about '53 and became a U.S. Attorney, and obviously had not had any dealings with the Native community at that point. Did you get to know the Native community at all in terms of being U.S. Attorney? Were you out in the villages at all, or where did you get your initial grounding in what the problem might be?

SENATOR STEVENS: Well, actually, I had practiced law in Washington before I came to Alaska, in Washington, D.C., and was with a small firm that did work with the -- with Usibelli Coal Mines and I had some, you know, personal interest in Alaska before that time, and had, during that period, attended some hearings there in the -- in the period of 1950 through '52 before the House Interior Committee on statehood. I can't remember the exact dates, but I remember some of it, testimony concerning the Native Claims at that time. I had some friends in the Department of Interior at the time, who were -- one of them's name was Porren (phonetic). I don't remember what his first name was, but you'll find his name in the (indiscernible). There were a lot of things about -- he was the (indiscernible) ultimately of Indian Affairs with the Interior Department. But I practiced law, and then I came to Alaska in '53 with Collins & Clasby, and that fall, became U.S. Attorney, and I had, you know, the same kind of exposure to the Native community that any prosecuting attorney does. At that time, I was U.S. Attorney for the Fourth Division, which was from roughly Nome, McGrath, down to, you know, the Kennicott area and over to the Canadian border. I used to travel through the villages, a great many of them, on investigations and interrogation of witnesses. It was a lot different then. There were no local attorneys, you know, prosecuting attorneys. We -- we were the prosecutors for the territory from -- well, not -- the territory didn't have any prosecutors, but we prosecuted territorial law violations, and for the U.S. Government, and so I had quite a bit of experience in the villages at that time. Primarily, I'd say, in the Nome, Yukon River area. There actually was a U.S. Attorney at Nome. He was supposed to be there, but he wasn't there during my time. But up at the Ft. Yukon area and down, down the river.

MR. MITCHELL: Now I assume, maybe I'm wrong, that the land issue was really not a pressing problem at that point in the mid '50s out in the villages. There was no state in terms of state selections and -- now, is that assumption correct?

SENATOR STEVENS: Yeah, that's true.

MR. MITCHELL: Okay. Well, I guess that gets us into '56 and you obviously also -- it's well-known in the public record -- had become involved with the Interior Department and are involved through the statehood fight, and I guess a couple things come to mind about that. One is, what was the Department's -- was there anybody in the Department paying attention to land claims at that point in the late '50s? I know that Senator Bartlett and James -- a lawyer named

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James Peacock had floated -- he had another one of Bartlett's many bills around that had never gone anywhere. Was there anything -- any consciousness at all inside the Department?

SENATOR STEVENS: I remember there was one bill that was filed, and there was a group that was working with the American Association of Indian Affairs, LaVerne Madigan and Doctor --

MR. MITCHELL: Forbes?

SENATOR STEVENS: Forbes. I spent a lot of time with them starting, I think, in the fall of about '56, talking about some of the things that they were looking into. Maybe it was a little later than that. But I think it was about that early. We had Elmer Bennett was the Solicitor at the time. He was from the West, had been assistant to Milliken of Colorado. He was a good lawyer. And Roger Ernst was the assistant secretary for the area that included BIA, and he was in Arizona, was quite sympathetic, really, to the Indian problems of the Arizona area, and I think we had people who were quite conscious of the scope of the -- of the claims of Alaskan Natives. But there was no -- there was no real active focus of that. It was -- it was really an intellectual pursuit to try to understand how they affected statehood.

MR. MITCHELL: Since there was really no political movement in Alaska, I guess, at that point, as far as the Native community was concerned?

SENATOR STEVENS: The only thing was the persistent claim based on (indiscernible) case.

MR. MITCHELL: Well, one of the interesting bits of trivia that I uncovered in the paper trail that I've been dying to ask you about is probably the major event of the early era is Tyonek getting their lease across Cook Inlet and they ended up bankrolling that first AFN meeting, a lot of people don't remember this, to the tune of well over a hundred thousand bucks, and I have seen a paper trail that indicates that when you were still Solicitor, that there was some work done that actually concluded what the Udall administration later concluded, that Tyonek was entitled to the reserve. And what I was seeing was you were overruled by Elmer Bennett, or the Solicitor's Office was overruled. Do you remember that at all?

SENATOR STEVENS: No, I remember it -- I don't remember who overruled us. I'm not sure it was as much of overruling as much as a decision that it was not something that was ripe for decision by the Interior Department. That would be more the way I would categorize that decision, but -- well, I had done a series of things with LaVerne Madigan, trying to figure out how we would proceed to settle the land claims. We had at one time thought that, you know, we had to have a contingency plan if we didn't get the bill through in the '58 time frame, what would we do. And we were thinking, you know, how could we do this. And I think you'll find in LaVerne's papers that Liam Morgan got access to, we had some, you know, ideas of how would we go from place to place and take evidence and get some record and try to delineate the scope and nature of these claims that were being presented to see how we could set up a mechanism for resolution. And the more I did that, the more I was convinced it would have to be by legislation,

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and that was what I told LaVerne Madigan and Dr. Forbes. There really wasn't anything that I would say that was concrete before that time. The Tyonek lease, as I recall, was -- it was issued.

MR. MITCHELL: Right, but initially in '62, the Department couldn't decide politically -- this is - - obviously, you had left the Department by that point. In '62 when they went through it, they couldn't decide what to do about --

SENATOR STEVENS: One of the strange things was is Stewart Udall was a member of the Interior Committee, and as we knew that the -- the administration was going to change, as Solicitor, I went up and visited with him, and told him that I thought the most complex problem that we had to solve was the -- was the land claims issue and urged him to make it a front burner issue in his tenure as Secretary of Interior. He -- I think to a great extent, misread what I said to him. Like anything else, you know, I was an out-going political appointee. He was incoming secretary, had no real -- you know, he was courteous, but it didn't take a great deal of time to try and up the scope of that problem. I think he probably got ahold of it later, and by that time, we had -- we had set the stage for a decision he had to make when we -- when we presented the Minto position. I had, as you know, asked my successor to clear me to be able to represent the American Association of Indian Affairs in their continued pursuit of trying to assist in finding a solution for these claims, and Barry turned me down. I don't know if you found that part.

MR. MITCHELL: No, I hadn't.

SENATOR STEVENS: So we did work out an arrangement with the Department that I could at least get reimbursement back for actual expenses. You know, I had a little family at that time, was opening up a law practice here, and was -- you know, had no independent wealth. There was no way I could subsidize that after it -- but I did confer with Richard Frank at Minto and did lay out to them the manner in which I thought it could be brought to a head by protesting the approval of state selection, which is really what finally brought it to a head. That was in probably -- you know, by the time we'd done that was probably '61 or later. Udall then reacted in a way that I thought was really, you know, difficult to understand. He put on the total withdrawal, and that was the first of, in my opinion, the Udall, you know, both the Udalls' approach to using an issue -- this was a land claims issue -- for the other objective, which was to prevent the state from taking some of the lands that they thought should be set aside for national purposes in the state. The land claims issue was the cause for the -- as you know, the land freeze that was put in effect by Udall. And he, instead of using the Minto proof test as the reason for a specific ruling, put a blanket on top of all of it and just said, this has to be solved by Congress.

MR. MITCHELL: All right. Well, let me back you up a second. You mentioned LaVerne Madigan a couple of times, and I'd be curious -- I have been through LaVerne's papers up at Princeton, and they really are pretty interesting in terms of the efforts she was making in the sort of '60, '61, '62.

SENATOR STEVENS: I never saw those. I don't know what she may or may not have said about the time she spent with me, but she spent considerable time with me, from the period of at

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least '57 through '60, and then after we came here, Ann and I had a party for her and Dr. Forbes, the back of my house over there on 12th and P, and I spent considerable time. And by that time, Roger Ernst had moved on to be the executive, you know, the (indiscernible) president, American Association of Indian Affairs, and was working with LaVerne and Forbes and was intending to come up on that trip. He didn't come.

MR. MITCHELL: What was your impression of LaVerne? Was she like bright, average, happy, sad, vivacious, dumpy? I mean, did she have a -- did she have a view of what she was doing up here or was she just trying to be helpful or --

SENATOR STEVENS: Oh, she was a very dedicated young woman. And Forbes was a very intelligent, articulate member of, you know, the academic community. And I can't remember whether he was the one that had money or whether she found other people that had money, but she had some financing coming through there. They -- and they were dedicated to try and help find a solution. It was -- it was hard to get people in the South to recognize that Alaska Natives were part of the American Indian scene, and she -- she succeeded in focusing their national association on that and was, I think in the long run, quite helpful. Some Alaskans viewed her as being quite negative, including Gruening. I think she -- I don't know what her papers showed, but my memory was she didn't get along with Gruening very well at all.

MR. MITCHELL: Well, they sort of got in Dutch when the first Tanana Chiefs meeting was held back in '62. And in fact, she speaks quite highly of you, by the way, in her papers.

SENATOR STEVENS: Well, I helped finance that. I don't know if you know that, but I helped. I had very little campaign money, but I -- I had a plane chartered up there and Richard, I think, told me he couldn't get the Tanana Chiefs in, and so they took the plane I was supposed to go up campaigning on, running against Gruening at the time by the way, sure you know, to go and get the Tanana Chiefs and bring them in, and I didn't get to my meeting, which was somewhere else. One of those things that you remember.

MR. MITCHELL: Well, actually, that does lead us into another interesting area that I've been fascinated about, and that is you did run against Gruening in '62, and I've -- somewhere along in the paper trail, have discovered the campaign platform that you ran on in terms of settling Native claims, and it looks sort of normal today, but I would think for back in 1962, it would have been pretty mind-boggling, for lack of a less artful term, for the non-Native sort of downtown chamber of commerce kind of people, and I was wondering --

SENATOR STEVENS: I think that probably is the case. I lost that election here in Anchorage.

MR. MITCHELL: I mean, let me ask the question another way. Did your position on land claims, the idea that we have to settle this, we should have some kind of development corporation, land selection program for people, was that -- how was that received by the sort of city fathers, or was it? I mean, was it a factor?

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SENATOR STEVENS: Well, I had some pretty good people here who were helping me in the campaign. I don't think the local people here in the Anchorage area were as disturbed as the people that represented the Seattle interests at the time. You know, you've got to remember that we had just gone through the battle of the -- with the canned salmon industry, and they were still very disturbed. I happened to have been Solicitor at the time, you know, that we got Fred Seaton to certify the state was capable of managing Fish & Game. There was a reservation in the Statehood Act that the state didn't have any right to manage Fish & Game until he made that certification. He made it within hours after we became a state, and they -- that whole crowd of the canned salmon mining group from the Seattle region had some real reservations about that, and they were sort of schizoid about it, because they didn't like Gruening either. But they thought that -- there was a lot of opposition from the non-local businesses. The local businesses, the guy on the street, it really wasn't an issue. It wasn't an issue. It was an issue in the people who were involved in the transportation, mining, oil exploration, that sort of thing. They weren't happy about that.

MR. MITCHELL: But in terms of the overall campaign, your position on land claims wasn't a deciding factor pro or con?

SENATOR STEVENS: Well, I think it hurt me in Fairbanks, too. Yes, it did. I think, matter of fact, there's a couple editorials you could find from that campaign. All my stuff from those days were destroyed in a flood we had at the house, and I don't have them.

MR. MITCHELL: Well --

SENATOR STEVENS: Gruening was very vociferous, one of those things.

MR. MITCHELL: What was his attitude? I mean, obviously, I know what your campaign platform was with respect to settling land claims in '62. Was he even remotely aware of the problem, or was he just still back in the '40s with --

SENATOR STEVENS: Of course, you know, I was holding myself out here to earn a business as a lawyer that understood the land problems of the state. I wrote a lot of title opinions in those days. I was working with some of the members of the oil industry, and one of the things I was doing, I was accepting the land claims in the title opinions I wrote, and the title company picked that up and started looking at, on their title opinions of accepting land claims. I think I injected into the -- into the legal stream a new concept, which was, you know, that I felt that there was something that had to be resolved. The Statehood Act required it, and I put a reservation on all of my title opinions. There weren't that many, but I wrote (indiscernible) opinions and some land acquisition opinions, and the title companies were coming on fairly strong then, and I think most of them took that up. I don't know. I know one did.

MR. MITCHELL: Well --

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SENATOR STEVENS: But the consciousness of the Alaska society of the necessity to settle the issue had not heightened. As a matter of fact, even at the time we finally got the bill passed, after I got to the Senate, as you know, we had a 75 to 80 percent opposition to the bill at the time. But it was a necessity. It was -- in my opinion, many people, including Mary Westenham (phonetic) wrote a book on the land claims and she seemed to think this was all motivated by the gigantic oil industry. I don't think the oil industry people ever asked me to get the land claims settled. They weren't worried about land claims. They had a lease from the United States and they had a lease from the State of Alaska. They were not worried about land claims upsetting them. Those were valid leases and I think the motivating factor was getting the Statehood Act. I think I had a debate with Ross Koebel (phonetic) before the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce. I know I did, but I don't know whether anybody's got the copy of it, whether it was even reported, but I tried to force the -- the Egan administration to make its lands selections, to get the job done, because I had a feeling at the time that the Udall forces that wanted, you know, they're great for national parks and wildlife -- and we were, too, by the way. Gruening introduced a bill to create a national park down in the White Mountains country, and you know, we weren't antagonistic to the parks in the state, but we were antagonistic to the size of the parks these guys were talking about. And I was saying, you've got to get the -- the land. Their opposition was based upon the highway funds we got at the time. And I tried to tell them that between the state and the Natives, we could make a deal. We could decide and we could get a release from the Natives. I think I made a statement somewhere along the line, one of those campaigns, about how we ought to proceed to try to get state selections and get a release in exchange for saying we would share with the Native people the rights to manage some of the state lands. In other words, try to get land in the Native people's hands as well as the -- as the rest of the economics, but it was -- it was not very well received.

MR. MITCHELL: Well, that actually raises sort of a technical question, and that is, did you, as a legal matter, in terms of your representation with Minto, did you agree with -- with what eventually became the 9th Circuit conclusion --

SENATOR STEVENS: I never could represent them. All I had the right to do was, as a -- as a friend of the -- and I think I was a member of the association, receiving just actual expenses, airline and -- and hotel expenses to meet with Richard Frank and go over their records and advise them how to raise a protest. Once that was filed, then AIA had to get someone else to represent them. So I had nothing to do with that case. I have no -- I don't even have any present recollection of what happened on that case. I helped them file the protest with the idea that Udall, based on the conversation I'd already had with him, would see that this -- I think I talked to him, too. He came up here by that time.

MR. MITCHELL: Yeah, he was up in '62.

SENATOR STEVENS: And I talked to him and I talked to Gruening.

MR. MITCHELL: Up until '64.

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SENATOR STEVENS: Even though we were running, I talked to him about it, and that was for the purpose of bringing this issue ahead and getting a decision. Which had it -- we could have avoided a lot of the necessity for the whole problem if the Interior Department had said, let's get together, Alaska, State, and Natives. Let's decide what the Natives have a right to claim and let's decide what the State has to claim and we'll have Congress to confirm the Natives. Now, that was my sort of naive approach at the time.

MR. MITCHELL: Well, actually, you know, that almost worked, and I guess that leads me into my next question, which is, you know, in late '67, then-Governor Hickel put together this task force, which was supposed to do exactly as you suggest.

SENATOR STEVENS: I was in the legislature and got a resolution passed. Did you find that?

MR. MITCHELL: No, I haven't found that.

SENATOR STEVENS: There was a resolution I put in there, something I did down there. It got Wally working towards trying to get the land claims resolved.

MR. MITCHELL: Well, I guess my question is, is I've talked to Barry Jackson about it, and he was like the primary drafter of that, of that task force bill, he and Cliff Groh and Roger Connor, and -- and the bill is interesting because in many ways, in terms of policy, it looks very much like the end result, conceptually, in terms of a 40 million-acre bill, and most importantly, in terms of using corporations as the vehicle for sort of distributing the settlement claims.

SENATOR STEVENS: I don't think corporations in the sense we've conceived them out of that land claims conference came out of that.

MR. MITCHELL: Oh, sure did. It's the first time you'll find a state-chartered corporation being used as the methodology for the settlement, and what I've always been curious about is I asked --

SENATOR STEVENS: That's an interesting thing, because I remember being in that conference, and I don't remember --

MR. MITCHELL: This was like December '67, January '68.

SENATOR STEVENS: Well, I'm talking at the conference in '70.

MR. MITCHELL: Oh, no, that's a -- I'm talking about in terms of where the Native community first really got it in its head that the state-chartered corporation was the appropriate vehicle, as opposed to all this IRA stuff we're hearing about today, and all the sort of revisionist history we're absorbing. But Barry says that he was the guy that thought it up, and I talked to Cliff about it. And he says, yeah, he thinks it was Barry. But the only reason I bring it up here, is I know that Barry Jackson was in the legislature the same time you were, and it looks very much conceptually like the structure that you suggested in your 1962 platform. That's just what I was

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interested in, whether or not you had any recollection of ever discussing with Barry Jackson any of this stuff.

SENATOR STEVENS: Did that piece of legislation come out of the legislature at that time?

MR. MITCHELL: No, no, no. What happened was, in late '67, Hickel and Boyko decided maybe they should try and negotiate the decision to suggest to --

SENATOR STEVENS: Yes, and I was involved in that. You know, he was not too receptive of ideas from legislators who were lawyers. He had his own idea, and he and I went in the sinker at the time. He had just ruled that a bill of mine was unconstitutional, it would have created -- what do you call it -- fish farming?

MR. MITCHELL: Aquaculture?

SENATOR STEVENS: Aquaculture. And I don't think it was, but any event, he was not too receptive, but I did work a lot with Barry Jackson. Jackson and I were good friends in the state legislature. I was not involved as a lawyer, however, and he and Cliff were involved as lawyers and representing people. Remember, I was barred from that. You can't find my -- my participation was in conferences and meetings with them and talking to them about what I had done back there and how I thought things should come through, and I don't remember who (indiscernible) the corporations. I got to tell you, I always thought I did in that conference, as far as the land claims bill, itself, was concerned in that conference.

MR. MITCHELL: Well, the concept was kicking around a long, long time before that.

SENATOR STEVENS: I'm glad. I'm glad. I don't like to think that we seized on something at the last minute. It works better that way.

MR. MITCHELL: Well, I guess the last major event before we get up to sort of the real deal when -- after your appointment to the Senate and after Nixon administration comes online -- which I'd like to come back some other time and talk about. I haven't done any homework on that. But I have been curious about the -- you obviously got appointed in late 1968, and the first real test you had coming out of the box was trying to get Wally through his confirmation hearings, and you know, the big issue up here, although he had, I guess, a lot of other problems nationally in terms of torquing off the enviros, or whatever it is he did, but up here, of course, it was the issue of land freeze. And I guess that raises a couple of questions. Did you have a personal view at that time in terms of what Wally should do about whether or not to lift the freeze or was that pretty much left to Wally? You remember, he had to promise Scoop that he --

SENATOR STEVENS: I think I sent him some letters and memorandums and advice, or whatnot. I'd have to look. I don't know if I did or not, but I think I did. My position was, I think, all the way through that period, the way to lift the freeze was to get the land claims settled, and that lifting the freeze -- lifting the freeze would not have done away with the land claims. That's

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why I disagreed with Udall. The land claims, if they were valid, were still going to be valid until the state -- until the government conveyed the statehood lands to the State of Alaska. The only threat to the land claims was -- was the action of the state selections. It was not the leasing of lands. I kept telling the people involved there, you know, the attorneys for the various Native groups that they should not protest issuing of leases to the oil industry. Now, mind you, a lot of -- again, that's where Mary made the mistake, because she seemed to equate the land claims to a possibility of delay to the oil industry. The oil industry was dealing with state lands in Prudhoe Bay. The land claims were not a problem there. If they -- if they proved to be valid, then -- and the courts somehow or other said that they -- they owned the lands rather than the state, I was confident that the paper trail of the legislation gave the state the right to issue the lease under a tentative approval at the time, and would be binding upon the -- the Natives because of the federal government's role as trustee at the time. So I never had any fear. I don't think that -- that the -- and I'm going off on a paper -- a rabbit trail here, but I don't think that the -- the idea that we had to get the land claims settled to deal with the oil industry, as I said in the first instance. Now, when we got down into this period as to how to get the land claims, how to get the land freeze lifted, it was a absolute, you know, unified goal of the state, I think, to get it lifted, except for the few Native lawyers involved who thought that somehow or other it was a leverage. And I kept saying, you know, I still believe that the way to get the leverage was to get some case, a court case that said you can't have -- you, State of Alaska, can't have title to this land until these land claims are settled by Congress because of Section 4. And that brings us back to where we started. Section 4, I think, was the protection that we insisted on. I had long sessions with Bob Bartlett on that. I think Bartlett shared my feeling that the overall future of the state depended upon a early resolution of the land claims and that the major goal that we had was to get the land to the state as quickly as possible, prevent any other action being taken. And as you know, in the time I've been back there, there have been people that have tried to revoke the land grants and the Statehood Act and the people have suggested we had too much land in the Land Claims Act to the Natives. We -- that's why I finally convinced the Reagan administration to move as quickly as possible to process those, those grants and the land claim approvals, because I still -- I still think there's a threat out there. Even today, there's a threat that they could be taken away from us. That lifting of that land freeze, in my opinion, was the reason that Hickel came around and started working towards getting the land claims settled. And when we get back in the next session, I'll be glad to go through some of the things we did to try and get to that point where we had the -- the mechanism for settlement, and when we finally got down to literally going down to the White House and getting Nixon to sign off on the 40 million acres, and the billion dollars, provided the state would contribute. Now, that -- that was a presidential decision, and my memory of the 40 million acres was that there was never any real congressional interest in 40 million acres until I got there. Bartlett, although, as I said, I think he was very sincere, his bill was somewhere much less and --

MR. MITCHELL: Well actually, that --

SENATOR STEVENS: And conservative in terms of approach to settlement.

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MR. MITCHELL: Everybody was up until -- until you arrived, and until Nixon came out publicly for the 40 million acres. But I guess that leaves me sort of at the end of the line for today, and that is what was Senator Jackson's view at that time when you first got appointed. He was the guy that pinned Wally with having to agree that he wouldn't lift the settlement -- I mean, I'm sorry, wouldn't lift the land freeze. Did Jackson at that point have a clear idea --

SENATOR STEVENS: Jackson, by this time, is chairman now.

MR. MITCHELL: Right, right.

SENATOR STEVENS: And was a good friend, but on the other hand, was still not going to get that far out in front of the people that he represented who were, again, people that had the greatest interest in -- in land were still based out of Seattle. It wasn't until later that we got these people into resident Alaska corporations. We'd only been a state nine years when I got back there. And there had been some transition, but it wasn't that fast. And I think Jackson was a good friend and was -- was not opposed to the amount of land being 40 million acres, but he wanted to see, I think, something about that -- he wanted to see Nixon on the line. Those were the words. He wanted the President behind it. He didn't want it to be a congressional action alone, and --

MR. MITCHELL: I guess --

SENATOR STEVENS: -- he wanted to get the resolution. (Indiscernible) I think -- maybe you don't know this, (indiscernible) behind the scenes was probably one of our real solid friends in this issue. He was the one who chaired the Conference Committee, and did a lot of work with Aspinall in trying to work that out. He was then I think chairman of the Public Lands Subcommittee, and he was very much involved in this whole resolution, but Jackson had his other job about defense matters and everything, so (indiscernible) was a very loyal and capable friend to both -- both Jackson and to me. Few people realize he's the one that broke the -- gave us the pipeline, you know.

MR. MITCHELL: He was the vote?

SENATOR STEVENS: He came over and voted with us when some of the Republicans went over and voted with -- against us because they didn't like something Gravel had said. But that's a long story. That's a long story.

MR. MITCHELL: I'll bet.

SENATOR STEVENS: But Jackson -- I don't think Jackson ever envisioned 40 million acres actually ever being approved by Nixon. He still had some reservations about his relationship with Wally in the period of '70, '71.

MR. MITCHELL: Well, I guess the reason I asked is that on the one hand, if you read the hearing record of Wally's confirmation hearing, Jackson is really very strident about making him

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commit to not lifting the freeze, and on the other hand, if you look at Jackson's acreage position in those days, you know, '68, '69, as you suggest, he was really quite conservative in terms of -- of --

SENATOR STEVENS: A lot of that was just politics. You know, as a matter of fact, they thought they had Wally, you know. And I don't think -- I think Scoop tried to be a friend of Wally's, but Wally never really felt that way for a while. I think later they got along. But Scoop had a very difficult job. He was sort of, you know, Mr. Alaska until we got there, until Alaska senators got there, and he had a difficult time with -- he was also trying to move in and have the environmental support for the election, you know.

MR. MITCHELL: Oh, when he was running for President?

SENATOR STEVENS: Yeah, and he -- I worked with him on the National Environmental Policy Act and all those things. He was really seeking to be involved. And when I was with Seaton, I worked with Jackson. Not only in the state, but in other matters. Jackson was in the -- the chairman of the Territory Subcommittee. So I've known Scoop even before that when I was back there in the '50s. But my relationship with Scoop went back a long way.

MR. MITCHELL: Well, I think --

SENATOR STEVENS: Let me get to this thing and I'll be glad my -- I put away all our files. It would be hellish to try to get them out. One of these days, I'm going to do it, but there have been people asking for access to them. We haven't -- we haven't done that yet, because they've really not been sorted out, you know. Sometime -- I'll probably have to be dead for people to do that. That's not very nice to my friends who are alive now.

MR. MITCHELL: Well, I -- (End of Audio Recording)