**CAL KRAHMER**

September 18, 1996

Tape 6, Side 1

M.O'R.: This is a continuation of the interview with Cal Krahmer on September the 18th.

C.K.: The subsidy for agriculture was to protect agriculture and keep it as a business in the United States for the benefit of the consumer, or the people in the United States. And it's just as the subsidy to the railroads were and to the airlines. So you really got to understand what the subsidy is all about. You know, right now in agriculture they're really backing off of the subsidy in crops because the economy in it is quite high.

But you know, we on this farm really, really didn't like the subsidy thing. There was enough money in it that kept us in there signing up, but we tried to be very careful that we did not become a slave of the federal government because of the subsidy. And I think we did pretty good, never letting the federal government get an economic hold on this farm. And that's the problem that I see with the subsidy is - Whose slave are you going to be?

M.O'R.: So if you become too reliant on it, then you wind up being under the control of the federal bureaucracy.

C.K.: Right. Right. And of course there's a lot of subsidies going around, and that's what they have to be called right now, for clean water. And of course you can call them a subsidy, or you can call them the carrot, to encourage people to participate in those programs and those practices, or you could look at it in that - Okay, they passed the law, they should give me some dollars to do it with that.

M.O'R.: So there are some dollars available.

C.K.: Oh, yes.

M.O'R.: Earlier, when we first started talking about the politics of water and farming here, I had started off wanting to also find out a little bit about your personal relationships with political figures. We talked about the congressional delegation, and you made comments about various members there. But I was going to ask you a little bit more about your relationship with Governor Atiyeh and maybe other governments, which I didn't pursue at that point. What about Governor McCall?

C.K.: I didn't have too much to do with Governor McCall. Of course, he was the governor and had to sign the legislation for land use planning, which I believe I was involved in the legislation of that.

M.O'R.: You mentioned in one of your interviews here your opinion of L.B. Day, who was McCall's secretary, in terms of the environmental ...

C.K.: Yes. And of course, I ended up in 1972, I started going, delivering products to the co-op, and of course, you know, L.B. Day was the head of union for the co-ops. Those people all belonged to this union, and I remember the day when he declared a strike against our co-op. And I remember the day that he had to eat those words.

M.O'R.: Can you tell me a little bit about that?

C.K.: We tried to make those contracts come due the first of the year, when processing wasn't involved, but they would drag their feet and mess around with it.

M.O'R.: Their contracts with who, specifically?

C.K.: With the processing plant. And there was a separate contract with every processor.

M.O'R.: How did you do with wages?

C.K.: Their wages for their employees. And of course, they would drag their feet and try and get that backed off until it was

around the first of June or the first of July, and then they figured they had the power then to go ahead and call a strike, and that would make the processor come around real quick, because that's when they were processing their products. And when he did that with NorPac about six years ago, I believe, we were prepared for him, and we moved our families into those plants and started operating them without his employees. We broke the strike in about three or four days.

M.O'R.: Now you're talking about just six years ago? So Day was at that time the representative for the workers. The head of their union?

C.K.: Yes. Yes. He died a year or two after that.

M.O'R.: Literally, you moved in with your families into the plants?

C.K.: Yep. They had been not trained so much, but they had been primed for what they were going to have to do, and they went in as bosses, and the strikebreakers came in and did the work and we never lost a day.

M.O'R.: What kind of organization did you have to go through to get that off the ground?

C.K.: Well, it was done all ahead of the strike. And of course, those companies, the bosses, the higher bosses are not part of the union, and of course, it's their job to negotiate those contracts with the union. And so it was under their leadership that even though the processor, the plant was owned by the growers, they were working for the growers.

M.O'R.: So it was the managers of these plants then that sort of organized the efforts to recruit the force of strikebreakers? Okay, so that was your run-in with Day in much more recent time. But back in the era of Tom McCall's governorship, I think you said you'd had some run-ins with Day and we talked about that.

C.K.: I didn't have any directly with him, but I was concerned about how he was implementing the land use program.

M.O'R.: And you said you didn't have much interaction with McCall either?

C.K.: No, I didn't.

M.O'R.: Any other people in his administration that come to mind?

C.K.: No.

M.O'R.: And then, after McCall we had Governor Straub.

C.K.: Right.

M.O'R.: What was your experience with the Straub administration?

C.K.: Well, I didn't have too much directly with the governor, but his natural resources assistant, which was Janet McClellan - It was Governor Straub's idea and hers that they were going to have a large natural resources agency and all the smaller agencies were going to come under that, kind of like the Human Resources Department in the State of Oregon. And we were very successful in discouraging that whole effort because it had to be legislated and they didn't do their homework properly with the right people, and we were part of the right people that they didn't do their homework with. And so we were very effective in that legislation never even got off the ground.

M.O'R.: Had they done their homework with you, do you think it might have turned out differently? Their homework would convince them not to go ahead with this?

C.K.: Yeah, I think it would've convinced them not to go ahead with it. But I'll have to admit that under the Atiyeh administration, Atiyeh called me in his office one time, and I was then president of the conservation districts in the State, and those of you that remember that in Atiyeh's time, in the State

there wasn't very much money. Every agency was short, and tax collections was done. So he informed me that the conservation agency in the State of Oregon was up to be cut, eliminated. He said there's only one way it can survive, and that is to be put under another agency. And he told me the agency was of our choice. So I had to go back to the conservation people in the State of Oregon and we sat down, and of course it's not much fun to lose your identity and have to come under another agency, but that's what we did. And we selected to go with the Department of Ag. But we could've gone with DEQ or something like that too.

M.O'R.: Why did you choose agriculture, just because that's the most logical place?

C.K.: It was more acceptable by the people who were implementing conservation in the State of Oregon. And really, the federal government had really their priorities were basically with agriculture. Not totally, but generally.

M.O'R.: So you thought there might be more political clout there?

C.K.: Right. Even though we knew that the Department of Ag in the State of Oregon was a consumer group, it still sounded better.

M.O'R.: A consumer group. What do you mean by that?

C.K.: Well, most of the regulatory responsibility of the Department of Ag is consumer protection.

M.O'R.: So - not another group that is closely allied with farmers' interests necessarily.

C.K.: Marketing has become an interest in the Department, but I still question that program as being a government program. But that's the only one that is to promote agriculture in the State of Oregon. Practically all the others is just to be sure that the food is clean and healthy.

M.O'R.: You said that you knew Atiyeh personally? Does that relationship endure to this day?

C.K.: No. Well, we're on a first-name basis yet, and I see him maybe once every two or three years, and probably won't see him no more. I ended up getting somewhat involved in the Republican Party and I would see him on occasion that way. But now that I'm retired and out of this, I'm trying to leave politics go.

M.O'R.: So you were involved here with the local Republican Party organization?

C.K.: With the County, yes.

M.O'R.: Was it always on an official basis that you spent time with Atiyeh, then? Did you socialize with him at all?

C.K.: Occasionally we were at a dinner together.

M.O'R.: Okay. So you were just saying, as we were sitting here discussing your plant, you were saying that you would like to talk a little bit more about the irrigation district. The comment you just made wasn't on the tape, so why don't start with that.

C.K.: Well, our irrigation project is one of the most modern, most sophisticated and one of the neatest operations in the United States. And it's kind of looked at as the model for those things that are coming and going to be repaired, or updated. And of course, the beauty of it is that any farmer can hook onto the pipeline system, which we've got over a hundred miles of pipeline in the County, and without a pump or the use of any energy on his part, can irrigate his crops. And practically everywhere else in the United States, you either got to hook a pump on, or use a pump, or it's the flood system where you flood your field with water and you control it that way.

M.O'R.: Which is the older system that existed here, I guess.

C.K.: No, we never had a flood system here. Instead of flood system, we were using a underground system, and we just filled the

soil up to about eight inches from the top with water and left it that way. Where the systems that I'm speaking of now is running water over the surface of the ground.

M.O'R.: I see.

C.K.: The system in Washington County still operates, there's still a pump that's involved. And it's with that pump plant. And that pump plant pumps the water three hundred feet up this hill, and of course it then, with gravity, we have 150 pounds of static pressure on that pipeline.

M.O'R.: This is the pump system that you went back to Washington to get money for, is that right?

C.K.: Yes. Yes.

M.O'R.: Why don't you tell me a little bit about where that - Is that pump just right at the reservoir, then?

C.K.: No, that pump, we release the water out of the reservoir and pick it up down the river on Spring Hill Road. And it's pumped to a reservoir up on the hill, a tank, and it's all automated. When the guy out at North Plains turns his valve on to use water, it automatically kicks the pump on here because of the reduction of water that he has created in that tank. And it automatically turns the pump on and that pump then keeps that tank full. And as more farmers turn their valves on, more pumps are turned on. And that pump plant is capable of somewheres around 140 cubic feet per second, which is a lot of water. So that is the beauty of that system is that it's always available, and that system is available year round because you don't want to drain the waterlines, otherwise they'll float in the wintertime, because our water level sometimes is over the top of the crypt. And so consequently the water is there year round, if it wanted to be used. And right now the policy of the district is to shut it off

every fall and turn it back on in the spring, but they do that at the individual boxes.

M.O'R.: So the water is still used.

C.K.: So water is still there. And it's always available for firefighting and the pumps are still on, and usually they terminate all but one or two of the pumps so that if there happens to be a line of any size that would break, it wouldn't turn all the pumps on in the plant. 'Cause it would probably pick up a house and wash it away.

M.O'R.: There's that much water available?

C.K.: Yes. There's that much water available. And there's more automation that's possible, and of course, with anything this automatic, there's naturally some problems with maintenance and operation and being able to - if there's a breakdown, how to bypass it and keep everything going. It really only takes less than an hour to drain that tank usually, and by the rule it's supposed to take 24 hours to fill it back up. So it you're in the middle of the summer and that breaks down, you've got everybody shut down for 24 hours, which is a long time when you need water in the summer-time.

M.O'R.: So that's one of the drawbacks of the system. Now when you went back to get the money for this, you mentioned that it's a unique system in the United States. Was that recognized, and if so, did that prove to be a problem in getting the money, or did people want to fund it just because it was so forward looking?

C.K.: I didn't explain the problem. The pump plant was originally designed that way, and it was set directly on the river. And because of the silt problems in the wintertime, that pump station was filling up with five to six foot of silt in those pump bays where those pumps were every winter, and then they had to be cleaned out in the spring before you could operate it.

And so it was the concept of the Bureau of Reclamation that if they would bypass the river further away from the pump plant and then use the old channel to bring the water back to the plant, and it was really pumping it back upriver - drawing it back upriver, that the slowing down of that water, in the time it took to get to the pump plant, that they could reduce the sediment by 80 percent. And this was a real big benefit to the cities because then they didn't have to try to filter that sediment out, it was already dropped before it got to their pumps. They made models of this in Denver at their research area, and I saw it there, and so I knew what I was talking about when I went to Washington D.C. and asked for it. It had been demonstrated that it would work. It was implemented and it does work that well. It works very well in dropping that sediment. And we have never had to pump out those bays since that was put into place.

M.O'R.: Because of the sediment accumulation, you mean?

C.K.: Yes. We've had to clean out the channel at least to the pump plant, but we've never had to clean the pump plant itself out.

M.O'R.: Of course, that would make sense, because that's where 80 percent of the sediment's going. It's at the bottom of the channel. Now you mentioned going to Denver. This was to the vendor of the pump system, or the ...

C.K.: The Bureau of Reclamation, their political office is in Washington D.C., but their operational offices are in Denver. And of course the Bureau of Reclamation has projects in every state west of the Mississippi. In Denver, that's where most of the administration is, and they also have a research center there and their engineering is basically all in Denver.

M.O'R.: And so, you say you got to Washington with your facts kind of in hand from the Bureau of Reclamation Engineering Department, et cetera. I imagine that made it easier to sell.

C.K.: Oh yes. Yes.

M.O'R.: You mentioned the cities. Do they get their water in there from the same reservoir? The one that's up on the hill there?

C.K.: Yes. Yes. Now they also put water in the river from Barney Reservoir, clear up on the Coast Range, and they pick it up at the pump plant. They also have water rights -

M.O'R.: They pick it up at the same pump plant as the irrigation?

C.K.: Right. And they've got water in the Hagg Lake also. And they pick their water all up there.

M.O'R.: So the pump plant and the reservoir up on the hill there, plus Spring Hill Road - that's for the irrigation system, right? The one that's up above Spring Hill ...

C.K.: No, there's two up there. One for the cities and one for irrigation.

M.O'R.: Oh, I see. So they don't both drop in the same exact reservoir, but it's being dropped in the same place down below.

C.K.: Right. From the same place, from the same plant, on the river.

M.O'R.: On the Tualatin. Okay. Which then would be below where Scoggins flows into the Tualatin. Okay, I get it.

C.K.: And of course the cities pump it over to their treatment plant, and then from the treatment plant to the reservoir up on the hill, and that reservoir is about five times bigger than the irrigation district's. And of course the water all comes from that reservoir then, goes to - as far as Beaverton, it can go into Portland all by gravity.

M.O'R.: Again, because of pumping it up the hill, and then that's how you get the balance of pressure.

C.K.: Yes. It's 300 feet, and you get 1.8 pounds of pressure for every two feet, or I forget what that figure is, but it comes out to 150 pounds. For every two feet, or 1.8 feet, you get one pound of pressure.

M.O'R.: I think we talked about this before, but in terms of irrigation, the water supply at present is adequate for the people drawing on it?

C.K.: Yes. The water supply is there. The legislation isn't. The legislation has been quite restrictive. It was underestimated and there was no provisions in the legislation to try to meet the - at least balance out the usage of the water. And so there's a lot of water still in Henry Hagg Lake that is not being used because the legislation won't allow it.

M.O'R.: So the law needs to catch up.

C.K.: Yeah. And it never will, because the environmentalists think that that's a bad deal.

M.O'R.: To draw it all the way down?

C.K.: No, they think any use of water other than to let it flow down the river is not good.

M.O'R.: So it would reduce the flows in the Tualatin?

C.K.: Well, it won't but they think it will.

M.O'R.: Why won't it, then?

C.K.: Well, one of the things is, the Tualatin Basin produces a million and a half acre feet of water. And we're capable right now of putting in reservoirs, probably about 70, 80 thousand acre feet. Hardly a drop in the bucket of what runs off in the river.

M.O'R.: So it has a relatively small contribution to make.

C.K.: Whether it's flood control or whether it's addition to the flows or whatever, it's relatively small.

M.O'R.: Anything else you want to say about the irrigation district or irrigation situation?

C.K.: No, I think I've said everything pretty well.

M.O'R.: Well, I do too. Thank you again for a good interview, and we'll get together one more time to sort of talk a little bit more about farming and about maybe just a few things that either one of us thinks of between now and then. So thanks again.

[End of Tape 6, Side 1]