

T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

ABSTRACT

INTERVIEWEE NAME: Carlos Spaht

COLLECTION: 4700.0292

IDENTIFICATION: LSU alumnus, World War II veteran, Alumni Association president, president of the LSU Board of Supervisors

INTERVIEWER: Mary Hebert

SERIES: University History – Distinguished Alumni

INTERVIEW DATES: June 22, 1993

FOCUS DATES: 1920s - 1972

ABSTRACT:

Tape 403

Family history; moving to Louisiana from Missouri; dairy farming -- Holstein cattle; traveling from Missouri to Louisiana in the mid-1920s; reasons for moving to Baton Rouge; LSU's new campus; structure of cadet corps; lessons learned from parents; attending grade school and high school in Missouri; discusses family members who received college education; membership in a fraternity; describes after school jobs; LSU's tuition; siblings attending college; describes cadet uniform; advanced ROTC; impact of ROTC on his military career; Troy Middleton; ROTC hazing and discipline; ending compulsory ROTC; decision to attend law school; discusses favorite classes; K. K. Kennedy and the *Wang Doodle*; Huey Long and LSU; fraternity dances; location of fraternity houses; dating; alcohol consumption among college students during the 1920s; LSU chapter of the YMCA; dorm rules; discusses types of people who became campus leaders; selection of cadet company sponsors; ROTC drills and parades; campus intramural activities; process of selecting new fraternity members; impact of LSU on his career; impact of the Depression on his law practice; death of Huey Long; discusses his anti-Long stance and the impact of that on his practice; building the new state capitol; arrest and imprisonment of James Smith; Paul "Mac" Hebert and the LSU presidency

Tape 435

Landing clients for his law practice; impact of the Depression on his father's dairy farm; discusses his commission in the Army Reserves; going on active duty in the summer of 1941; assignment at the port of embarkation in New Orleans; German submarine warfare on vessels in the Gulf of Mexico; sent to China to work with the 8th Chinese Army; reasons for sending American liaison officers to China; difficulty in getting supplies; relationship between American and Chinese soldiers; the battle to free the Burma Road; meeting Claire Chennault; reaction to the dropping of the atomic bombs; discusses the army's point system and how that factored into his return to the states; founding the 4013th USAR Station Complement Unit in Baton Rouge; obtaining officers for the 4013th; duties of the 4013th; Troy Middleton's interest in the reserves; being a judge for the 19th Judicial District; duties of the mayor's Emergency Veteran's Housing Committee; being chosen by Earl Long to serve on a committee to investigate Angola; term as

president of the LSU Alumni Federation; conflict over enclosing the stadium or building a new library; Harold Stoke's shortcomings as president of LSU; LSU coeds

Tape 441

Desegregation of LSU Law School; the creation of Southern University campuses in Shreveport and New Orleans; being asked to run for governor on Earl Long's ticket; decision to run for governor; membership on the state's Commission on Alcoholism; rift between Bill Dodd and Earl Long; impact of not being a Louisiana native on his candidacy; describes campaigning; discusses the selection of his ticket; outlines his platform -- key issue good government; Long's role in the campaign; disagreement with Long during the second primary; Long's insanity; Robert Kennon's campaign strategy; Hale Boggs labeled as a Communist by Leander Perez factor; split between Russell and Earl Long over Boggs' candidacy for governor; Spaht's campaign style; role of Leander Perez in Louisiana politics; refusal to run on the Long ticket in the 1956 election; reasons for resigning his judgeship when he ran for governor; friendship with deLesseps "Chep" Morrison; membership on Baton Rouge's bi-racial committee and that group's accomplishments

Tape 450

Term as executive counsel to John McKeithen; implementation of recommendations of Baton Rouge's Bi-Racial Committee; membership of Bi-Racial Committee; Sheriff Bryan Clemmons's refusal to hire a black deputy; petition by business leaders calling for the peaceful desegregation of East Baton Rouge Parish's schools system; civil rights march from Bogaloussa to Baton Rouge; governor's bi-racial committee; McKeithen's support for LSU; being appointed to the LSU Board of Supervisors by McKeithen; duties as executive counsel; membership on the Committee on Emergency Allocations; financial crisis of the late 1960s; discusses the creation of the state Ethics Board and his membership on that board; drafting a code of ethics for elected officials and state employees; duties of the Ethics Board; Tulane Scholarship Scandal; practice of alternating meeting sites for the Board of Supervisors; creation of the LSU System and moving the System's offices off campus; belief that the board favored the Baton Rouge campus over the other branches in the system; name change of LSU-NO; legislature's decision to create branches of LSU; Cecil Taylor's tenure as chancellor; Dean of Students James Reddoch; ending compulsory ROTC at LSU; Louisiana's dual system of higher education; process of selecting the president of the Board of Supervisors; controversy over the board's support of Option IV housing; selection of Martin Woodin as president of the LSU System; creating an independent Agricultural Center and selecting its first chancellor; the Super Board for Higher Education; establishment of School of Veterinary Medicine at LSU; friendship with Arden French; finding a site for LSU-NO; integration of LSU-NO; difficulties faced by white moderates who supported ending segregation; LSU Board of Supervisors Executive Secretary Kitty Strain; brief discussion of board members; Louisiana Organization for Judicial Excellence; National Conference of Christians and Jews

TAPES: 4 (T403, T435, T441, T450)

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 4 hours, 20 minutes

PAGES TRANSCRIPT: 251 pages

RESTRICTIONS: None