

T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

ABSTRACT

INTERVIEWEE NAME: John Saunders and Larry Vidrine

COLLECTION: 4700.1185

IDENTIFICATION: Saunders and Vidrine worked with Gillis Long.

INTERVIEWER: Gary Huey

PROJECT: Gillis Long

INTERVIEW DATES: August 7, 1986

FOCUS DATES: 190s-1980s

ABSTRACT:

Tape 1732

Gillis Long as Louisiana State University student body president; Gillis helping Saunders in his campaign for Congress; Long making early-morning phone calls; efficiency of Gillis Long and his office; sending people flags that had flown over the U.S. Capitol; reasons Long and Lindy Boggs voted for Constitutional Amendment that would give Washington, D. C., voting rights; Long's alliance with black legislators; Long's love for politics; Long playing to the crowd when giving speeches, acting like a country bumpkin; populism of Gillis Long's concern for poor people, black people, etc.; Long's service in the Navy during World War II; Long's liberalism hurt him in race for governor against John McKeithen; McKeithen supporting Speedy Long over Gillis in congressional race to punish him from opposing him for governor; deLesseps Morrison losing Evangeline Parish in his run-off with McKeithen; Morrison's use of Catholicism ("lily whites") in the election; popularity of Gillis Long in his district; African Americans and labor supported Long; people who were philosophically opposed to Long's politics liked him and supported him; effectiveness of Long as a fund raiser; Long's support for the Civil Rights Act used to hurt him in gubernatorial race; Edwin Edwards's coalition; Dave Treen and Louis Lambert gubernatorial run-off; 1972 Congressional election and Edwin Edwards; Long voting with the Black Caucus in Congress; importance of getting the support of the sheriff when running for office; Gillis's liberal stance alienated white middle class and white farmers; Cajun support for Long; 40 percent of Long's district was conservative and would not vote for him; conservatism of Louisiana's congressmen; Long's last race for Congress; Long's legacy; federally funded projects on Long's district; congressmen doing small favors for constituents; Long's support for the military and military spending; Long's assessment of President Ronald Reagan; Richard Nixon; John Glenn's presidential aspirations; Gillis losing his congressional seat to Speedy Long in 1972

TAPES: 1(T1732)

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 1 hour

PAGES TRANSCRIPT: 39 pages

OTHER MATERIALS: Transfer and copyright to Gary Huey

RESTRICTIONS: None.