

ORAL HISTORY OF THE HONORABLE WILLIAM B. BRYANT

Chapter 8

Private Practice: 1954 – 1965

Interview Date: November 17, 1994

Bill Schultz: The last time we talked about your law practice. I want to ask you about whether when you were in private practice you ever went down South to try any cases?

Judge Bryant: Yeah. I was in my office one day and Jack Greenberg [of the NAACP] called and asked me if I would go down South and try Jasper Brown in a little place out of Durham.

These were the circumstances. In a rural area outside of Durham, after *Brown* and the schools were integrated, there were some people, as you might suspect, always active in the forefront of these things. Jasper Brown was a prosperous farmer, well-to-do guy, who lived outside of Durham.

Bill Schultz: What year was this?

Judge Bryant: Oh right after the year that the schools were desegregated. What was it, '54? Around '54 or '55, and Brown had a family of I think three or four, three girls and a little boy, little kids, and they were all in grade school. His wife was a fine woman. She had allergies, like asthma and what not, and they always triggered with stress. And Brown was active in his community, NAACP and what not, active in the years leading up to *Brown*. You see he was an outstanding man; he was well-known, well-respected, and highly regarded by everybody in the county. And he was a progressive Black man. He was known as not being an Uncle Tom, but at the same time he was not looked upon as a crazy man. He knew the sheriff and everybody.

Well, on the first day of school Jasper brought his kids in from the farm. I guess maybe about ten or twelve miles from school, he brought his kids in, and it was the first day of integrated schools. He brought them in, and took them to the front of the school; he didn't take them inside, just let them go in. There had been some rumors that there was going to be some

trouble. The hoodlums said that they were going to do this and they were going to do that and some hangers-on were outside the school kind of jeering a little bit.

So Brown took his kids, and he didn't want anything to happen to them. He didn't want to drop his kids off in the county seat and then go on home. He didn't know what the hell was going to happen. So he let them off, and then he stood around a little while, and the sheriff was there with a federal man, one of the guys from the FBI or somebody, and the sheriff was there. Brown just stood around a little bit and the sheriff had some words to say. He said, "Jasper why don't you go on home?" He said, "Well I'm going on home." He said, "Nothing's going to happen, why don't you go on home?" And Jasper said, "I'm going on home."

There were about three or four hoodlums who followed him in a car. Among them was the son of the superintendent of schools who was a dropout and a hoodlum, about four of them were hanging around and they were together. Brown went into the store, which was close by the school, to buy a few things to take back to the place, maybe toilet paper or something else. He went in there and while he was in there these guys were following him around and talking, as the kids say "off-jiving" — I'm talking to you, but I'm really talking about him, you know, I'm trying to harass him.

And Brown didn't do anything about it, didn't say anything at all. He went in the store, bought what he had to buy, and came on out. These hoodlums followed him out and he got in his car. He thought everything was pretty good, nothing happened. He didn't hear anything at the school; so he figured he would go on home and come back after lunch time. He got in his car and started home. He started home, and shortly after he started home, a car pulled in behind him and started tailgating him. He looked through the mirror and it was these boys. It was four of these young white boys, and he is in his car on this country road going to his farm. He didn't want to take that trouble to his farm. Now Brown was really scared of them, but he didn't want to take that commotion to his home and upset his wife, because she was a unique patient in that Duke

medical complex down there. She was in a special clinic down there trying to do something with her stress-related allergies and what not. So he was driving home, and on the way home he passed another farmer who had a kind of circular driveway in front of his house, a nice guy, who knew Brown. He was a white guy, so Brown drove his car, and all of a sudden he whipped into this place, and pulled in and went in that man's house and called the sheriff. He tried to get ahold of the sheriff back in (the name of the town will come to me) but anyway he didn't get in touch with him, so he got back out, and got in his car and started back to town.

He was going back to town. And these guys followed him, and after a while they tailgated him and bumped him. And when they bumped him, Brown stopped the car. And down there, thanks to the National Rifle Association, people carry guns. Brown had a pistol. So Brown got out of his car, but when they bumped him there was an old Black man who was working in the field cutting something with a long cutting weapon. He was close to the roadway with a fence, and when these guys started to get out of the car this man said, "I wouldn't do that if I were you." And he had this long blade, so the white guys were in the car, and Brown jumped out with his gun, and these guys looked like they were going to get out of the car, and Brown shot through the car.

He hit this superintendent of school's son right at the top of his head, just barely creased him, put a part in his scalp, didn't even require any hospitalization, just put a part in his scalp. Another fellow who was in the car, he hit him in the arm. Neither one of them was badly injured, and the guy who was hit in the arm, I think, jumped out of the car and was trying to get over the bank away from the car, and Brown hit him. They charged him with a whole lot of felonious assaults, attempted murder, and so forth and so on. And he was down there, of course he was on bond, he wasn't locked up or anything, but he was charged with this crime.

His trial was supposed to come up and I said, "Yeah, I'll try it." I don't know why I did that. I am the same guy who wouldn't go down South with Ralph Bunche when he and Myrdal

went down there. When I left Washington I had to call up a guy who was a lawyer down there who finished law school before I did, and they told me to contact him and I could make arrangements to stay at his house. You know hotels weren't open like they were later on. So I contacted (I can't remember his name) and I stayed in his house during the course of that trial, and in driving from Durham to this place in the county seat where this trial was being held, I noticed this automobile was kind of falling behind and following us. I didn't know what the score was, but I understand later that they were federal people who were giving us some cover. They never said anything to us, but I understand they were.

Well I got down there. The family had hired a prosecutor. Down in the states, the case is brought by the state, and the state prosecutor prosecutes the case, but an aggrieved person can hire a private lawyer to prosecute the case. And they had hired an idiot who was representing the family of one of these boys and he was interfering with any kind of settlement that this U.S. Attorney, I mean this state's attorney, was trying to make. The state's attorney boy wasn't really too bad a guy. I went down there and lived with those people for three or four days. I found out what all the facts were, and all the witnesses, and talked to the lawyer down there, people who practiced law in the area, and it hurt me that this was a case that I couldn't try. I couldn't get a jury that I thought I could have convinced.

So we ended up getting the DA, over the strenuous objection of this hired prosecutor, private prosecutor, to accept a plea of nolo contendere to a simple assault charge, some minor criminal offense. And when he announced that he would do that, there was a lot of rumbling and a lot of grumbling. People didn't like what was going on. The superintendent of schools was in the courtroom. And they got a judge from a neighboring county, who had a hell of an anti-Black attitude, reputation rather.

I had a hard time getting Jasper Brown to come around to that disposition. But I had to because of the evidence. You see these boys were not armed, they were not armed and the

evidence was that the one boy who was shot in the arm was getting out of the car to get away. So I put the case in the District of Columbia and I said now what could I do with this case here, you know what I mean? I tried to eliminate all of the negative aspects down there and put it in a purely objective basis. I said that if this man will accept a plea of nolo, he was a prosperous fellow. I didn't want him to plead guilty to committing a crime because I wanted to protect him civilly a little bit if I could.

I walked around, the courthouse was like right here, and across the street was a funeral home. In Southern towns usually the Black funeral director is a pretty substantial person. He's got more money than a lot of other people and he's a substantial person in the community. And the woman who was the wife of the funeral director there was the head of the local NAACP, had a big spacious house. And we were in that room in her house for the better part of an evening when I got this deal from the prosecutor who indicated that he would take that deal. The better part of that evening until half of the next day, trying to convince Jasper Brown that this was what he ought to do.

I figured the judge would find him guilty on the plea, and if the judge gave him the maximum under the plea he couldn't get over six months anyway. If he gave him the maximum under the plea he couldn't get over six months, and I figured I was protecting this man from a long time in jail, and I know that that jury would find him guilty of assault with intent to kill. He hit a man running away from him, you know what I mean? And everybody said Jasper your farm will be taken care of. You don't have to worry about your crops. You don't have to worry about your children, if the man sends you away.

So we put that case on and I tried that case. You enter a plea of nolo contendere and the government has to put its evidence on. The government has to put on its evidence to substantiate the charge. And when they put this boy on who was the superintendent of school's son, I cross-examined him. I was so damn mad, I said, Jesus, if I had this case in the District of Columbia,

and if I didn't have this boy who got shot running away maybe Well I asked him, "You see Jasper?" He said, "Yeah, I saw him." I said, "Where did you see him?" "He went in the store." "Did you see him in the store?" "Yeah, we saw him in the store." "What was he doing in the store?" "Buying things for the house," so forth and so on. "He bought this and what not." "Now when he came out of the place, did you come out of the store first or did he come out of the store first?" "He left the store first." "And then you-all came out of the store?" He said, "Yeah."

And after carrying me through that, I asked him this. I said, "And oh, by the way, what did you buy?" He said, "I didn't buy anything." So he had been in the store following Jasper around and harassing Jasper all that time on foot to foot. At the end of the day, the case wasn't over.

Bill Schultz: Then you said, well what were you doing?

Judge Bryant: No, I didn't have to ask him, he said he didn't buy anything, he put himself in the store all the way around, all the way around, following him foot to foot, I mean, and Jasper said what he did.

Bill Schultz: I thought you said what are you doing and he said just messing around.

Judge Bryant: No, no, the prosecutor or somebody asked him that, and he said just messing around. You remember that story?

Bill Schultz: I remember you talking about it.

Judge Bryant: No, I didn't say anything, somebody asked him what he was doing in the store after I asked him. I don't think I asked him what he was doing. But he said he was just messing around.

Bill Schultz: And then the judge

Judge Bryant: And then the judge said, "Messing around?" The judge himself got kind of turned off with this boy. And his father, who was the superintendent of schools sitting right

there in the courtroom, I think he told ... this damn special prosecutor, the guy who the family had hired to prosecute the case, had the chance to ask him some questions, and he asked him, I think, what he was doing. And he just said messing around, because I didn't ask him. After I had him in there following the man around, hell that's my argument, and I'm not going to argue with him. I'm not going to ask him what he was doing, he might tell me. You know, it might be something else, I didn't know what his answer was going to be, but somebody asked him that. Anyway, the judge said, "Just messing around?" (What was that man's name, I can see him now, it will come to me.)

At the end of the day before the case was over, the judge said, "He's committed." It took me by surprise. I said, "Committed, for Christ's sake, this man can't mean that. This man has been out on bond for months; he hasn't gone anywhere; he is a farmer; he has got land in the county; he's got a family there; he's not going to run any goddamn place." So I went up to the bench and I said, "Your Honor," I said, "Do you think it is necessary to commit him? He's not going anywhere." He said, "Don't worry me, do you see those people out there? Do you see those people out there? Do you know what that means?"

He had sensed some feeling, because the man, he was taking advantage of a deal that those people didn't like, I mean the courtroom was crowded with the surrounding people and apparently he had given him a deal that the people didn't like. And it wasn't going too badly against him in the testimony. But the judge said, "You see those people out there?" And I said, "Well we will take him right home, take him right now." I don't know whether Jasper stayed, I don't know whether he let him go. I can't remember whether he let him go or kept him overnight. But I know the next day after all of the testimony was in he found him guilty, which I expected him to do, and then he asked him — school opened in the fall and it was around crop time and all that kind of stuff — and he asked him about getting his crop in or something like that.

The upshot of it was that he sent Jasper Brown to the poky for 60 days, but he wasn't supposed to turn himself in until he got his farm squared away. Anyway, it was one of those slaps on the wrist, do you understand what I am saying to you? Everybody, the family, everybody is as happy as they can be, except Jasper. Jasper is madder than hell. That's the only client that I had who was dissatisfied, and I can understand him, I mean he was wronged, he was wronged.

If I had had him up here I wouldn't have thought about pleading him, do you understand what I mean? Even under the circumstances, but he shot that boy, and the boy wasn't armed. But that judge who had the reputation for being meaner than hell — they imported him from another county, — asked him when would his crops be in or something of the sort. Anyway, Jasper was found guilty, and I was worried to death about maybe somebody, some mob or something getting ahold of him, but nothing ever happened to him.

I was living on 17th Street, and at the Safeway store that used to be up there at 18th & Rhode Island Avenue. I'm in there one day and a woman who is a checker in that store recognized me. She was Jasper's sister. Can you imagine that? I kept in touch with him through her, and she said he is all right, he is fine, you know he has still got a bitter taste in his mouth from that sort of business. But I tried that case, and I never will forget it. And I think the thing that turned it around for that man, you had to give him some time, the thing that made the difference between what he gave him and the maximum of what he could have given him, was that I had those guys just trailing him. And the farmer whose house he went into testified that Jasper came in there and tried to get some help because these guys were following him. There was no question about it, they followed him around, they followed him around and were harassing him. That's what happened.

Bill Schultz: A good story.

Judge Bryant: It wasn't a hell of a lot of fun but it was something. It was a new experience for me.

Bill Schultz: I remember you telling that story to my law school class.

Judge Bryant: You remember that, the old man said just messing around, the judge said just messing around, I don't know whether I asked him or somebody else asked him. I think it was the prosecutor. It was the private lawyer that the family had hired to prosecute this case. The family didn't have confidence in the state, you know the state's machinery. They didn't think they had the right attitude toward him.

And they didn't really, because Jasper Brown, class will tell. Jasper Brown was a high-class man. He was an industrious man. He was an independent man, he was a taxpayer, do you understand what I mean? And he had a good reputation, and had been in the county for a long time, he was a man that Black people looked up to and white folk respected as a man. He was a high-class man.

Bill Schultz: Now who is Jack Greenberg?

Judge Bryant: Jack was a good defense lawyer up in New York.

Bill Schultz: Tell me about him.

Judge Bryant: All I know about him is that I have always admired him. He is a stalwart. Jack reminds me of Joe Rauh. Joe was pretty clear-sighted, and Joe never lost sight on the ball, I mean he never got confused about these issues. And Jack Greenberg in my book was that kind of guy. He knew what was right and what was wrong, and he didn't get confused. He was consistent. He was a hell of a guy. I always lamented the fact that Jack never got on the court somewhere. I don't know, I think he's teaching up in Columbia or someplace. A good man. The last time I saw him was at the memorial service for Thurgood over at the Supreme Court. He looks okay.

Bill Schultz: He was the lead counsel for the Defense Fund for a long time.

Judge Bryant: Yeah. A good man. He's done some good work. I hope this local fiasco with the NAACP won't spill over and hurt the reputation of that group. The Defense Fund is a thoroughly respected bit of business.

Bill Schultz: Yes, a separate organization. Now, I would like to ask you some questions about law practice. First, I am curious on your thoughts about the role of juries in our legal system. Do you think the jury system works?

Judge Bryant: Yeah, I think it works.

Bill Schultz: Why?

Judge Bryant: I think it works 90 percent of the time.

Bill Schultz: Why? Do you think juries are better than judges? Do you think they are better than judges in deciding cases?

Judge Bryant: On some cases I do. I think juries are better than judges, particularly in criminal matters. You know judges. For a long time judges came out of a certain barrel. A lot of judges never really were practitioners. They were government lawyers hired by the prosecutor in one way or another, either in the U.S. Attorney's Office or state's attorney's office or the Corporation Counsel's Office, and then they found themselves on the bench one way or another. They never really practiced, and they were kind of government-oriented.

I think when you get twelve people in a jury box that you have got a whole lot of human experience that the average judge doesn't have. For instance, I've known judges who would be completely horrified and think you were out of your mind if you indicated that you thought from time to time a policeman wasn't telling the truth. And they couldn't understand why anybody would disbelieve a policeman. A lot of jurors know better. They have been around, and they have seen what happens in the streets and some of them have been exposed to some things, you know, that are not too pleasant. And even in civil matters I think human experience and some understanding of human nature is critical to the overall administration of justice, what people

will do on a given set of circumstances. And it is always better to have twelve people who have had a lot of experiences walk around that matter than to have one person who has been exposed to just their circumstances.

A lot of people, a lot of judges have been raised like chickens on wire, you know, their feet have never hit the ground, they haven't had any real experience in adversity, haven't been in any position where they deal with people who will lie to them. I think the jury system is better. I have watched a lot of juries. I have watched, for instance, a lawyer go to a great deal of trouble to try to weigh the jury one way or another, either by way of race or gender or have some other motive, you know, selection.

I've always thought that except that something surfaced on the voir dire that definitely disqualified a juror, and then you excused him for cause, that trying to tell what a juror will do in that jury box is like somebody trying to tell the price of pork chops in the marketplace by looking at the hog's feet on the farm. You can't do it to save your life, it's a waste of time. You delude yourself when you think you can do that.

I've seen people pick jurors, eliminate the women if they could, or the Black or white people if they could, and the jury comes out without regard to that foolishness. And they get disappointed. I mean the lawyers get disappointed.

When I was practicing law, I used to go in the courtroom as a prosecutor and as a defense lawyer after voir dire, and if I didn't see anything that alarmed me, here is what I would do. They would put the jury in the box. And when they put them in the box in the criminal cases, the prosecutor gets his chance to strike a juror and another one is put in his seat, and then the defense lawyer has a chance to strike a juror, so forth and so on. Well, I would get in the courtroom and get involved with the papers, and kind of pretend that I was busy and wasn't paying attention to what was going on in the jury box, and a guy would strike a juror and somebody would put him in the box, and I would be busy and the judge would say, "Mr.

Bryant?” and I would say, “Oh, Your Honor, I'm sorry, we are satisfied, any twelve.” I've done that for defense, I've done that for prosecution. Oh, I'm sorry, Your Honor, the government is satisfied, or the defense is satisfied, whichever side I'm on, we are satisfied, any twelve, Your Honor.

Bill Schultz: Did you ever see anybody else do that?

Judge Bryant: No. Have you ever seen that? The jury knows, what the hell, I'm here to get to it as quickly as we can. We don't have any problem with it.

Bill Schultz: So what about all of this work you hear about in high-profile cases where they do extensive studies of the jurors?

Judge Bryant: I am not privy to anything that they have as evidence that supports the validity of their findings or their strategy. I just don't know. I believe that there is no way in the world they are going to get a system and they are going to pigeon-hole 12 people. I don't believe that. And if they had a system where they were already and had everything fine for ten of them and they went awry on the other two, if they could get them, they are not going to win the case one way or another. I think it's a way to spend money. I don't think that the selection of a jury is going to be the deciding factor.

In the trial of a case, I don't care what anybody says, the facts carry the day, and it is the way that you present those facts. The facts either carry you downstream or upstream, one way or another. If the facts are good, if the facts are in your favor, and they point to a logical conclusion, somebody on that jury is going to buy it. You have got a factual situation, and you squeeze out the facts, squeeze the facts out as they are, and you don't try to make up any, don't put any performers on the witness stand, you squeeze all of the facts that you can get out of the case. I used to have arguments with clients, and I would tell them that the truth is the light of the world in litigation so far as I am concerned. And I have tried some cases that bear that out pretty well,

to show what the facts will do, if the facts are compelling one way or another, the facts will take you.

Bill Schultz: Did you have any strategies or philosophy that you adhere to with respect to jury trials?

Judge Bryant: No. If I had the case, if I tried the case I thought I could win it. And I don't want to be immodest about it, the cases I lost at trial, I won on appeal.

Bill Schultz: Is that right?

Judge Bryant: Yeah. Cases you lose at trial, you win on appeal, by and large. And you try a case with that in mind. Sometimes you've got a case that some legal defenses of the facts won't help you, but the legal safeguards are there, and if you establish that they have been violated you are okay, like a search-and-seizure case. If the judge should suppress the evidence and he doesn't, what the hell, you can't win it at the jury level. And that's why I'm glad they let you plead guilty to preserve. You know there was a time you had to go to trial, but now you can plead guilty and preserve your legal defense and go upstairs.

Bill Schultz: Did you do anything to try to establish a relationship with the jury or get your case to the jury in any way?

Judge Bryant: I guess so. I tried to let the jury know from the very outset that I had the meritorious position wherever I was, and that I was anxious to put it in their hands, in other words, I was anxious that they get a hold of it and deal with it. And I would like to point out some reasons why they ought to find my way.

For instance, in that gambling case that I always brag about where the guy was one of nine or ten people charged with the conspiracy with the police captain and the police sergeant, everybody is convicted except my man on the entrapment. Remember I told you that one. I went to the jury, and in my cross-examination of the witnesses, I didn't make any bones about it, my man was a gambler. My man was a numbers backer, there wasn't any question about that.

In my cross-examination of the witnesses I demonstrated that they tried to catch him in the numbers business and they couldn't catch him. He had never been convicted of it, and they were satisfied that he was a numbers man but they couldn't convict him of that, so they resorted to this bribery scheme.

I never will forget the prosecutor tried the case for 22 days; and every question came off of a yellow pad; and everything he argued to the jury came off of this pad. At the end of 22 days he told Judge Matthews he wanted to talk four hours. He wanted to talk at least between two and three hours on direct and an hour or something on rebuttal. He wanted four hours. There were nine of us, nine defendants, so when the prosecutor asked for four hours, all of our lawyers asked for an hour.

Now there is nothing in the world I can talk about for an hour, nothing, and I was so afraid that Judge Matthews was going to grant that hour that I didn't know what to do. But she ended up giving each lawyer 20 minutes. No, giving each of us one-half hour. Curtis Mitchell said that was unfair, he's going to talk for hours and.

So when I got ready to go to the jury the judge had indicated that she was going to give that instruction that if he was entrapped as to the first time he paid that thousand dollars he was entrapped to the whole scheme. The entrapment went to every payment. And once she said that she was going to do that, well I got up before the jury and I said, "Well, the prosecutor spent a lot of time telling you about what happened." I said, "I don't know why it took all of that time, you have all of the evidence as well as he did, but anyway he had that much time. We don't have much time to tell our side so I'm going to level with you right quick." I put my watch on the table, and when I had them play the tape of that part where Lefty asked Thurman, "Well what do you have in mind?" Thurman said, "A thousand dollars a week." And Lefty said, "A thousand dollars a week?" I told the jury you weren't there, and I wasn't there, nobody was there but Thurman and Lefty, I said, but I'm satisfied, and then I said, "Play that again." He played it

again, and I said I'm satisfied that when Thurman propositioned him for that thousand dollars that both of his eyes went behind his nose, and I had a guy almost fall in my lap, he damn near fell out of the jury box.

The jury came back not guilty, just like that. Now that was a case where you just squeeze the facts out. "You arrested him at such and such a time didn't you, charged him with gambling. You couldn't make that case could you? The D.A. threw it out didn't he? And you remember when he went in Jewel Woods' house that night when you raided Jewel Woods' on W Street and you arrested Lefty? You opened the door and said come on in Lefty, you were very happy weren't you?" And in the cross-examination of the witnesses. I know what my theory is.

I asked the chief of the gambling squad, "You have known Lefty Winston a long time, haven't you?" "I have known of him," very proper, very proper, Captain Layton. And the undercover man was Lieutenant Thurman, and the head of the whole division was Inspector Lutts. So I cross-examined Layton because Layton was a straight arrow. I said, "You know about Lefty Winston." I said, "He has been known to you through general sources as a numbers backer, isn't that right?" "He has a reputation for being a gambler." I said, "Yeah, a numbers backer." "You arrested him on two or three occasions, is that so, he was a focal point of one, two or three of your investigations wasn't he?" "He has been investigated sometimes." "Well, specifically when Jewel Woods was arrested on W Street, he was the focal point. You thought it was his operation, didn't you? And when Barbara Towles was arrested up on O Street with all that group of people and with Lefty's brother, you thought that was his operation, didn't you?" I said, "The bottom line is you never have been able to make a gambling arrest stick on this man, is that so? Despite the fact that you are convinced that he's a big-time numbers operator, he has not been convicted." I said, "All right, now let me ask you this question. When Thurman came back after he had made contact with Lefty, when Thurman came back and told you he had Lefty on the hook, who was happiest, you or Lucky?" Objection. This boy Chauncey Whitt objected, and the

judge overruled the guy. And that was it. "When Thurman told you he had Lefty on the hook who was the happiest, you or Lucky?"

So I built up all of the facts and made them admit that they couldn't catch him legitimately doing what he was doing. "There was some motivation to hook something on him, do you follow what I am saying to you? And they set up this elaborate scheme, and the judge is going to tell you, I don't want you to take the law from me, as a matter of fact, I'm even reluctant to say this, but listen to her when she tells you that if he was hooked, if he was entrapped for the first payment, he was entrapped for the whole business, because he was entrapped into a scheme, not a thousand a day, but a thousand dollars a week, that's an arrangement." And they bought it. I think that had I not squeezed all of the facts out of that case, all of the actual facts, I couldn't have made my entrapment defense so attractive.

Take the case of the Park policeman who killed his wife and that man. If we didn't squeeze all of the facts out of that case, that jury wouldn't have had the reaction that they had. That jury was absolutely in that man's corner when the verdict was over with. They came in and said I don't want to appear to be condescending but I'd like to know if there is anything we can do for this man's family. And that was a legitimate piece of business, that wasn't a put-on at all. That was a pitiful situation. But I always said that the truth is the light if you get the facts out, if you have got a case that you think is worthwhile, the jury will buy it, you know that.

Bill Schultz: Now what about objections. You said the prosecutor objected. What philosophy did you have about objections, in terms of making objections before a jury?

Judge Bryant: No, unless I am hurt, unless I am really hurt, I don't make objections. And also, if I'm making a record, if I have to preserve a record for appeal purposes, I make an objection. But I make as few objections as I can in any situation because usually what you object to isn't anything.

Somebody objects to something that is hearsay, and you are going to have a witness come in and testify to it anyway. I know its hearsay, and I don't object to it. The reason I don't object to it is because I have learned. You see no experience is wasted experience in the law business.

My office is 615 F Street, and George Hayes' office is 613 F Street, and one day I went into George Hayes' office to see him and he wasn't there, or wasn't available, or was with a client or something. I was sitting there, and while I'm sitting there and reading the paper waiting for George to be available, a woman came in. This is the dead of wintertime, a woman came into the office and George's secretary said, "Oh hi Miss So & So, I'm glad to see you, what are you doing here, do you want to see Mr. Hayes?" She said, "No, I don't want to see Mr. Hayes, I'm just down here, I wanted to say hello, honey I'm on jury duty, and I've sat on a lot of cases." They would call you down for a whole month.

At that time Curtis Mitchell, who was a good lawyer, Curtis was not a shyster, Curtis was a good lawyer and he was record conscious. Curtis was an objection man. Objection, Objection. Well Curtis had so many criminal cases in this courthouse, that it was hard to get a guy to trial. He'd be in trial before Judge So & So, or a judge over here had a case involving him, so he was so popular and so busy in the courthouse that this court passed a 25-case rule — saying that no lawyer before the bar could have more than 25 criminal cases pending in this court at the same time. Curtis was a good lawyer, his reputation was good.

Curtis fell on the ice, he came out of his office and fell on the ice and broke his legs in two places. And he was in a cast, and these judges in this courthouse, Curran, McGuire, McLaughlin and Holtzoff and that crowd, they kept his foot to the fire. He came to court to preserve, to protect his clients and what not, he came to court not only in a cast, but before he should have, in pain, really, but he was in the courthouse trying cases when this woman was on jury duty, and this is what I remember.

She said, “You know they got a lawyer around here he's got his leg in a cast, he was in the case we just had, and you know, he didn't want us to hear anything, he didn't want us to find out nothing, every time all he would say was object, object, he said objection all day long.” That tells me something, you know what I mean? “He didn't want us to hear anything.” And I made up my mind at that point, unless I had a record to protect, unless I was getting hurt very badly and had some reason, because most of these objections that people lodge out here in the courthouse don't amount to anything.

And that's why when I am on the bench when they make the objection, I rule. Some of them are obvious to me, some of them aren't so obvious, and half of the time I won't rule one way or the other, I just say, “Move on counsel.” Because I know that if it is significant it's going to come to my attention, I am going to sense that. And no matter which way you rule you are not really affecting the quality of justice unless you go terribly astray.

Always, if I'm trying a case, and I do this before a judge, if I'm trying a case I want everybody to know that I'm trying to get a full picture. To whatever extent anything might influence the outcome of that case, I want them to know that. Because, I think that is a kind of assessment of human nature, what human beings will do under a given set of circumstances. I always think about that Park policeman because that jury got a clear understanding of the forces that were at work at the time that man killed those people, and they engaged in what we call nullification, because instead of finding that man not guilty by reason of insanity, they just found him not guilty.

Bill Schultz: Do you think there is more jury nullification today than there was when you were trying cases?

Judge Bryant: Bill, I don't think so. There came a time from about a year ago back, a couple of years back, when the government got a guilty verdict in a criminal case in the courthouse, it was news. The juries came back with not guilty and hung juries — not guilty and

hung juries. And it tickled me because some of the lawyers, some of the prosecutors wrote it off as Black jurors won't find people guilty. But that really wasn't the fact. The reason that these not guilty verdicts and hung juries came about hinged on the type of testimony that they offered. They would offer testimony that was often contradictory. The cases that they brought into the court were not prepared properly, the police officers would lie, and jurors saw it. And when those things came up, they found people not guilty, or hung on them.

I had a case where a man, where a jury hung up on a guy, one guy held out for guilty. The jury stayed out a long time and held out for guilty. But they hung and after they were hung, the lawyers wanted to know whether or not they could talk to the jurors, and I said, "Yeah, you can talk to them."

When they found out that the U.S. Attorney intended to try this man again, they were outraged. "What do you mean you are going to try that man again, that's ridiculous." So I didn't say anything, and about a week later the young lawyer came in, a young boy he seemed to be a nice fellow, he didn't have any case. He came in and said, "Your Honor, we would like a new trial date for the case of *U.S. v. So. & So.*" I said, "What, you do?" He said, "Yeah." I said, "All right, give him a trial date." She gave him a trial date, and I said, "While you are here don't you think you ought to get a date for the next trial?" He said, "Sir?" I said, "We might as well get a date for the next two or three trials, have you ever heard of the snowball? You are not going to convict this man." I told him that right in the courtroom. And about two or three days later he came back in and moved to dismiss the case.

Now they had a crazy case. They had a silly case, the policeman came in. In the first place, the two witnesses against him were drug buyers or something. The policeman saw a man come up in a BMW and make a U-turn and come and park behind an old station wagon. And the policemen were in a van and they drove by, and when they drove by they saw this man who had driven up in a BMW in this other car in the back seat. They saw the people in the front seat look

in the back at him, and in his hands appeared to be some rocks, cocaine. They jumped out, and when they jumped out and got to the car he stuffed the stuff somewhere in the car, and they locked him up and charged him with possession with intent to distribute.

They put this guy on who was in the front seat of the car as a witness. He said, the D.A. asked him, he said, "Your name is so-and-so?" He said, "Yeah." "And you drive such and such car?" He said, "Yeah." "Were you on Southern Avenue at such and such a time?" He said, "Yeah." "There came a time that you saw Mr. So & So & So & So." He said, "Yeah, but we weren't going to buy no drugs, we didn't have no money." I just looked right at the front of the door and tried to keep my face. He said, "Yeah, but we weren't going to buy no drugs, we didn't have no money."

So he's lying right then and there, one way or another. What would he be doing out there, he's either buying or selling. He wasn't going to buy any drugs because he didn't have any money. So I didn't say anything. So then the policeman comes in and he says he arrested this guy, and took him down. And that the guy told him who he got his drugs from a guy named So & So, and the guy up on the corner was dressed a certain way and had a certain kind of cap on. He nicknamed him So & So & So & So. The defense lawyer asked him did he ever go up there and find him. He said, "No." He said, "Why?" And he said, "I wasn't interested in any." He said, "Well he was his supplier, you weren't interested in him?" "No I had him." "Okay. And he told you all of this?" "Yeah."

These policemen are so crooked, when they arrest somebody, when two policemen ought to come in the courtroom, five of them will come. The one who took the drugs, and gave it to this one, and he gave it to this one, and they come into the courtroom and make that double-time. And then one will take the statement from the guy, and the other one will write down the paper work. So a guy testifies about all of this incriminating information this guy gave him about his drugs and so forth and so on. Then on the paper work where they indicate statement of

defendant, the guy says defendant made no statement, written down in the space where you are supposed to record the statement. They tried to explain it. Well, he talked to me, and Officer So & So he wrote that down. The jury is not going to buy that. They are not going to buy it. And I looked at them, and I said to myself, how in the hell did they get in here like this? Now that's why you see in the paper where Holder has decided not to try certain cases because of the quality. The police work is horrible, terrible. And these young D.A.s come in and they short-sell you, they think they have a case, and they don't understand that kind of stuff will not wash with people. Jurors will say, I think he might be guilty, but they haven't proved any guilt to me, I'm not going to send anybody to the penitentiary on that kind of evidence. So I think

Bill Schultz: So you don't see any increase in jury nullification?

Judge Bryant: No, I don't. Let me put it to you this way, I have been surprised a couple of times that the guy was found guilty. I've been surprised that a guy was found guilty a couple of times. But I haven't been shocked by any not guilty verdicts because I could see the flaws in them, I mean big flaws, and people know. I guess they know that when people get convicted they go away for a long time, no I don't think so. I think that's the same thing with O.J. Simpson. I think you can have a jury, there might be a lot of people on that jury who are convinced in their own minds that he killed these people, but I think they are going to say well, he might have done it, I think he did, but they didn't prove it.

Bill Schultz: You think he's going to get off?

Judge Bryant: I think there's a good chance that they will get a hung jury. That's too bad, but you see, you don't have any weapon, you don't have any witnesses, and the one witness who implicates him with some incriminating evidence, that judge is going to let him tear him apart, I know he's going to let them do it. That judge will give a defense lawyer a lot of latitude. When they get through the policeman is going to be the defendant.

Somebody asked me about it: "You think he did it?" I said, "What do you think?" I said, "Yeah, I don't have any doubt in my mind that he did it." "What do you mean by that?" I don't have any doubt, a lot of people say I don't think so. But you are going to have somebody on that jury like that. Somebody on that jury is not going to want to believe it. And you know what, unless you bring in a videotape, they aren't going to convict him. And they can put on whatever circumstantial evidence they are talking about, when they are through talking about that DNA, and all the ramifications of it, and the fallibilities and what not, when those lawyers get through with that business any juror who doesn't want to see that boy convicted, who doesn't have an anxiety neurosis to convict him, will say well, he may be guilty, but damn it they have to bring me more than that. They didn't have the evidence. If you anoint some jurors, jurors get anointed when you tell them what they are supposed to do and what they are not supposed to do.

Bill Schultz: They take it seriously.

Judge Bryant: Yes, they can think of a whole lot of reasons, and there are too many people who have been convicted recently and didn't do the crime, been released recently. There has been a whole lot of publicity attached to the fact that they have served so much time in jail, so much on death row, and then they find out that they didn't do it. Jurors get kind of ... when you say somebody is guilty, they say, we don't want the death penalty.

Bill Schultz: How did you prepare for trial as a lawyer?

Judge Bryant: Facts, getting the facts squared away. Knowing how it fits in, I mean just how the case develops.

Bill Schultz: How did you prepare witnesses?

Judge Bryant: Asked them what happened. There were some witnesses who were kind of tongue-tied, but you see if you get a witness, and the witness tells you the truth, there is no way in hell anybody is going to tie him up, if he's telling the truth, you ain't going to tie him up. Now, one way to foul him up is to try to groom him, do you understand what I'm saying to

you? You get some ignorant guy off of the street, and you ask him, you try to groom him and make him a witness. He'll get on the witness stand, and he will be concentrating on what he ought to do instead of what actually happened, and that's how you foul him. You just ask a guy what happened.

Bill Schultz: Did you get nervous before trials?

Judge Bryant: No, not before trials, I got nervous when the jury was out. I always got that anxiety when the jury was out. I don't think I got nervous before the trial.

Bill Schultz: How about Court of Appeals arguments?

Judge Bryant: Yes, to some extent, but you get a little relief when you go in and see what you are looking at. But you know, Bill, I was always thrilled with the appellate stuff.

Bill Schultz: Why?

Judge Bryant: I don't know, I just love it. I just like the appellate stuff.

Bill Schultz: More than trials?

Judge Bryant: No, not more but as much. I mean I liked it, I had the case, I briefed it and I liked the appellate stuff. I hadn't had as much of it in *Mallory*, I hadn't had quite as much of it. *Mallory* was in '57. It came out in '57, and you talk about nervous before the Supreme Court of the United States. I had never been there before. My experience level with them was not too high. I'd been a prosecutor, I had been in the private practice of law for about a year before I went in the U. S. Attorney's Office, and then I was in the U.S. Attorney's Office for four years and then I went out in the practice in '54, and *Mallory* came down in '57. That meant that I got *Mallory* shortly after I came out of the office. "You got a lawyer?" "No." "The court will appoint you a lawyer, tell the clerk, send Mr. Bryant." You know I was on everybody's mind when I went out of the U. S. Attorney's Office. Every hoodlum who got called up on Friday who committed a heinous crime and didn't have a lawyer, got Mr. Bryant.

Bill Schultz: How much did you make from *Mallory*?

Judge Bryant: How much did I make?

Bill Schultz: How much did you make? Did you make anything from *Mallory*?

Judge Bryant: No, I didn't make anything, not a dime.

Bill Schultz: How about that case you tried down South for Jack Greenberg?

Judge Bryant: Jack Greenberg? I think \$1200.

Bill Schultz: Did the Legal Defense Fund pay?

Judge Bryant: Yeah. And when I look back on that I am sorry I charged them that much money, but I had to. I couldn't go out of the office for that period of time, because they were giving me hell about these other things, but I would have felt better had I tried it for free if I could afford it. But I couldn't do it. I had to live down there.

But Mallory was over there in death row, and a white guy came up here from South Carolina and he brought me, you are a tobacco man, have you ever heard of Bull Durham? Bull Durham was that tobacco that they used to sell in a bag, little cloth bag with a drawstring on it. A white guy came up here that I had never seen, and walked in the office and gave me that little tobacco pouch with some bills and change in it. It was \$59 and some change, close to \$60, and this was sent to me by Mallory's mother from South Carolina who I had never seen. I took it over and gave it to him through the property clerk. He smoked and what not and he had no money in that place and \$59 wasn't going to help me, so I took it over and gave it to him in that bag. I felt so sorry for this woman. She was a mother down there in South Carolina and she couldn't help her boy. She sent \$59 in a little tobacco sack.

Bill Schultz: You once told me that you felt like a good lawyer never felt prepared when he went into court, what did you mean by that?

Judge Bryant: Well you know, you can't over-prepare for a case so far as I am concerned. And you always anticipate, you just can't. Preparation for a trial is the name of the game so far as I am concerned. After a trial begins I felt more confident about preparation than I

had before the trial begins. I know I've done my work, I can't figure anything else that I could have done before I got there, but I used to try cases and somebody told me Johnnie Sirica had noticed this. I was a great paper clip man. You know breaking up paper clips, it's a habit of mine.

Bill Schultz: Yes, I remember that.

Judge Bryant: And I used to try a case, and I would twist those paper clips. I don't ever remember trying a case on a piece of paper. And Johnnie Sirica's messenger used to tease me because Johnnie Sirica told him, now watch this guy with the paper clip. I had that nervous thing about paper clips.

Bill Schultz: Was Sirica a judge then?

Judge Bryant: Yeah. But what I am saying is that Ed Traxel when he tried that conspiracy case he was pathetic with that paper block.

Bill Schultz: And you didn't use notes?

Judge Bryant: No, I can't listen to a witness and take notes. I just can't do two things at one time. I just can't do it, and I don't think I have taken that many notes in a case during the course of a trial.

Bill Schultz: What about when you are asking questions. Did you use notes for questions?

Judge Bryant: I just did it. I knew what the witness was going to testify to, I knew what he was likely to testify to, and I knew what areas I wanted to explore. Now I didn't just get up there and hit-and-miss and ask stupid questions. I asked questions that I knew what the answers ought to be, do you know what I am saying to you?

Bill Schultz: Except for cross-examinations you used notes?

Judge Bryant: No, no, no, you can't do that on cross-examinations. Well I guess you can, but it is not likely because I listen to what a witness says and as I tell you, I can't listen and write at the same time. So when I get up to cross-examine him I know what to ask him, and

not only do you know what to ask him, but it's when to ask him that question. I know what my punch line is going to be. I know what I ultimately am going to ask him. Sometimes I know I am going to ask him this, and then ask him that, or I am going to ask him this, and hang him up to dry and don't ask him anything else. Do you know what I am saying to you? You know where you are going. Now when I investigate a case, when I am investigating a case I take notes. When I investigate a witness and what not I know what the score is.

Bill Schultz: Now what about when you are preparing for direct examination or cross-examination, did you write things down before you went into the courtroom, or did you just get it in your head?

Judge Bryant: Well, I had a witness, and I would put the topic of what that witness was going to tell them more than specific questions.

Bill Schultz: Did you take that into the courtroom?

Judge Bryant: Yeah.

Bill Schultz: Then you would have some notes about what he was going to say.

Judge Bryant: Yeah, of course.

Bill Schultz: What about oral argument in the Court of Appeals, did you take any notes?

Judge Bryant: When the guy was arguing?

Bill Schultz: No, no, when you were doing your argument.

Judge Bryant: From notes?

Bill Schultz: When you go up to the Court of Appeals and you go to the podium did you have any notes with you?

Judge Bryant: I had my brief. And the only note I had was that I knew the sequence in which I am going to operate, but notes that I was glued to, no.

Bill Schultz: Did you have some notes as to what you were going to say or you just had nothing? What would you take up to the podium?

Judge Bryant: The brief, and I knew my topic, the sequence, that's all. And I knew what was in that brief and I knew a lot beyond that brief. I didn't read my brief. I would never do that. Now when the other guy would be talking and I was coming up for rebuttal, I would jot down something that he said for rebuttal so I could meet that. I didn't want to miss meeting that, but I can't operate from that paper block.

Bill Schultz: Now what about closing arguments, how did you prepare for that in a jury trial?

Judge Bryant: Depending on how nicely the evidence was developed, how old it was, do you know what I mean? Depending on what high points came in it. You know, sometimes you get lucky and some high points will come up, and you hinge your closing arguments to those to try to emphasize them. I mean, for instance, when they played the tape in Lefty's case, that was like manna from heaven. You know that tape was the best thing I had going for me. It was beautiful – “a \$1,000?”, you know with his voice trailing off. Very frequently your opposition will give you great opportunity in argument. Whatever your opposition says usually gives you an opportunity to focus your argument.

Bill Schultz: Would you practice your oral argument, your closing argument or argument before the Court of Appeals before you gave it?

Judge Bryant: In the Court of Appeals?

Bill Schultz: Yeah.

Judge Bryant: I think so.

Bill Schultz: In moot courts?

Judge Bryant: Yeah, I mean I had Bill. I would bounce it off of Bill Gardner. Particularly if I had some area that I was going to have to finesse pretty well. Bill would ask me

all of the questions, all of the tough ones and some that he said that I wouldn't think about. I liked the oral arguments in the Court of Appeals. They are good, then you wait around for the opinions and anticipate the opinions coming. By the time that comes out you have got another one in the hop. I always had something pending in the Court of Appeals, and that's a good feeling, right?

Bill Schultz: And then they call you up and say they have a decision.

Judge Bryant: I had a lot of fun, but you know, we were talking. [U.S. District Court Judge] Lou Oberdorfer is a wonderful guy, a tremendous guy. He was telling us about the history of this court, this circuit, its 100th anniversary last month or something, and there were two guys who were judges on this court originally and they were on it for a long time and then Roger Robb's father and somebody else were on the court for thirty years and they ran the court. And we were talking about things that happened, and things that gave way, and things that we look upon now as not even conceivable. Can you imagine this, for instance. I was in the law practice in the 1950s when the Commissioners of the District of Columbia become concerned about the police practice of arresting people for investigations. That was a system where people were arrested, and charged with investigations, and locked up in the building across the street for a couple of days and then brought before the court and no-papered. I had forgotten all about that, and I happened to run into Sol Rosen who remembered those days and was talking to me about it a couple of days ago. But can you imagine that they would have to appoint a committee to study that and make recommendations that that policy be abolished? Can you imagine that in a civilized world? But that's what they did.

Bill Schultz: Tell me a little bit about your life outside of work during those years, from 1950 to the mid '60s. What sort of family life did you have? What kind of social life?

Judge Bryant: Not much. The kids were born in 1948 and '49. I started the law practice in '48, and really there wasn't much. You know a young wife raising young kids. Her time is usually kind of soaked up with the family matters, and God knows mine was too. When I was in the U.S. Attorney's Office I worked pretty diligently, and when I was out in the private practice you know I had to work kind of diligently. I didn't have any time.

Bill Schultz: What about on weekends?

Judge Bryant: Well, Saturday was a workday. Saturdays, Bill [Gardner] and I called our sitting-down day. We had, one of the things that attracted me to that office — F. Supp., F.2d, and L.Ed. of the Supreme Court Reports. We had the slip opinions services — the advance sheet service, and also the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. And on Saturdays, Saturday mornings, we would go down and pick up those slips opinions, and sit down and prop our feet up and read those slip opinions and go to lunch, and go on home. Now if I had a trial going, in the midst of the trial, I would do some work on that too, but primarily Saturday was our reading day. And that's very valuable, too, because you keep up with the law of the circuit.

A good example of that was when the jury asked Judge Keech, what happened if they found this man not guilty by reason of insanity, and he said, "You are not supposed to tell them." It happened that within about six weeks or not more than two months before that, this circuit had come out with a case — I think it was the *Durham* case — where the Court of Appeals had said that the jury had to be told what happened to a guy who was found not guilty by reason of insanity. And I was trying this case before Judge Keech and he did not know that. He told this jury that wasn't their business, and I said, "Your Honor, you have to tell." And I had to act like I was kind of ignorant, I didn't want to embarrass him but I insisted on it.

I had a good reputation with the court. He knew that I wouldn't try to press that on him if I wasn't very serious about it. And I told him, "Your Honor, I think if you don't tell them it's an error." He sent us to dinner, and when we came back he had found the case. That case had come

to my attention because I had propped my feet up on Saturday mornings and read these cases and we kept up on that pretty well.

Bill had a notebook where if there was any change in the law, he would always annotate the other opinions. It was a good system, it was a pretty good system.

Bill Schultz: Now you played pool then, right?

Judge Bryant: Yeah, every now and then

Bill Schultz: When did you do that?

Judge Bryant: On Saturdays before I went home usually. And some late nights I would go on pass the poolroom before it closed and play a little pool, but usually after I started practicing law I played pool on Saturday evenings. I would come down here and read those opinions. And if I wasn't working on a case I would leave around the middle of the day and stop past the pool hall and play a little pool and go on home by dinner time. But the pool and other things, poker playing and what not, after I started practicing law, all of that kind of went by the board. It's funny. It really is funny how the law really absorbed me. It kind of satisfied everything in me. I mean my gambling instincts, and most everything.

Bill Schultz: Really?

Judge Bryant: I didn't miss the pool, and I didn't miss the poker games and what not, really, I don't know why.

Bill Schultz: You used to play a lot of poker?

Judge Bryant: Yeah, but I don't know, really, the law satisfied everything. That was a big enough gamble I guess. You know making a living out there was a big gamble, seriously. There were many days We never missed a day paying our office staff, the secretary and one other person, we never missed a week paying them. But a whole lot of weeks Bill and I would split \$100 and go to the Safeway to get some groceries. We had some lean days, really lean days.

This girl, one of the brightest persons I have ever seen, Eleanor Holmes Norton, came to our office. We had a little reputation. We were long on reputation, didn't have any damn money. She came to our office for an interview, and I wanted to hire her, but I didn't have any money. I told her, I said, "Honey I sure would like to have you in here, but we couldn't pay you a dime." I couldn't pay her, we just couldn't.

And I think she believed me, but a lot of people thought really, they thought after a while that we were a top law office. Houston, Bryant & Gardner, that was the law firm. And they thought when I got appointed, what are you talking about, can Bill Bryant afford to take that job? Hell, I couldn't afford not to take that job.

When I went out of the U.S. Attorney's Office, you know the people, including me, thought that I was crazy. Because there was really nothing out there, there ain't nothing out there. I did a lot of legal work, and I handled a lot of business. I never had the knack of making money. I couldn't charge fees, for instance, like most people could.

Bill Schultz: Did you make less when you went out in private practice than you made in the U.S. Attorney's Office?

Judge Bryant: Oh yeah, for a while, because there wasn't any steady business coming over there in the office. I will say that some of the stuff that they appointed me to came out pretty well, and some reputation developed in the office that attracted some paying business. *Mallory*, for instance, attracted a lot of business. That was a case where not a dime was brought in during the duration, but it got a lot of attention.

Bill Schultz: You don't have to answer this, but what would the typical year be in terms of income?

Judge Bryant: In a year?

Bill Schultz: Yeah.

Judge Bryant: Oh, Bill, I suppose, I'm trying to think back in the '40s, I am trying to think about what I was making when I left the office. When I left the office, I am not certain of this, but when I left the office I think, I believe when Rover showed me that personnel action, I think I was making close to \$4,000 a year.

Bill Schultz: \$4,000 a year?

Judge Bryant: Yeah.

Bill Schultz: When you left the U.S. Attorney's Office?

Judge Bryant: Yeah.

Bill Schultz: And what about in private practice?

Judge Bryant: And when I went in private practice I didn't make that much money for a while.

Bill Schultz: Then what were you making?

Judge Bryant: Later on, before I came on the court, I was making, I guess if I made over \$15,000 I was in clover. If I made over \$15,000, that was a lot of money.

Bill Schultz: That was a good year?

Judge Bryant: Yeah. If I made over \$15,000, that was a good year.

Bill Schultz: And then when you came on the court, your salary?

Judge Bryant: What \$30,000 or something? I can't remember. It was a good increase, and then the regularity of it was a whole new world for me. The biggest fee I had was \$32,000 in the Daddy Grace thing. That was for one solid year's work.

Bill Schultz: But you had to pay your secretary and everything?

Judge Bryant: Oh yeah.

Bill Schultz: So you didn't make \$32,000?

Judge Bryant: I charged \$32,000 for that work, and that was all I did that year. There was no question about it, that was all I did for that year. We had two girls and Bill's share,

and what not, so I didn't make \$32,000, but that was the biggest single fee that ever came in that office.

Bill Schultz: Did you go to see movies, plays, or hear music? I mean how did you and Mrs. Bryant socialize?

Judge Bryant: Well, there were little organizations that gave a dance once a year. There were little groups, fraternities, that gave a dance once a year. Astaire and I would go out to one of these formal affairs, let's say two or three times a year. There was not a lot of partying and what not. I never was a movie man, so to speak.

Bill Schultz: Where would these formal affairs be?

Judge Bryant: There was a place called Murray's Casino on U Street between 9th & 10th Streets, and there was a place in the Masonic Temple Building at 10th & U Streets. They had a big ballroom floor. I have forgotten the name of it, but that was the place where these dances and things were held, and not much vacation. I took a vacation when I was in the U. S. Attorney's Office, and went to Detroit with Astaire for a few days.

Bill Schultz: That was the one in which you were called back?

Judge Bryant: Yeah.

Bill Schultz: What about in private practice, did you ever take vacations?

Judge Bryant: No. On some Sundays we would go down to the beach or something with the children, but to leave here and go someplace, no. No we never left the city.

Bill Schultz: You never were very good at that.

Judge Bryant: No, we never were, and Astaire didn't press it too much.