

# Interview of Senator Fong by David Ignatius and Miss Kumar for Ralph Nader's U.S. Congress Project

Senator Hiram L. Fong Papers

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Interview of Senator Hiram L. Fong  
By David Ignatius and Miss Kumar  
For: Ralph Nader's U.S. Congress Project  
Tuesday, August 8, 1972

Senator: So you are writing a profile on me. Do you have enough material?

Ignatius: Yes -- 50 to 60 pages

Senator: What do you do, outside of this?

Ignatius: I'm a student at Harvard. I have another year to go.

Senator: It was quite a few years back that I went to Harvard.

Ignatius: Yes, you graduated in '35, didn't you.

Senator: What do you do?

Kumar: I'm working on the Judiciary Committee and I do some teaching at Towson State College.

Senator: Will we have a chance to see this.

Ignatius: Yes, what I write will be shown to you in late August or the beginning of September but certainly before it goes to the printer so you will have a chance to note any factual changes or inaccuracies and make comments on things you feel are unfair or slanted. I will let you know in a letter what the date for your review will be.

Ignatius: Senator, can you tell us about your background.

Senator: Yes, my father and mother came from the Orient -- my mother came when she was 10 as a maid servant, and my father when he was 16. You see in the old days when you didn't have enough money to take care of your children you would give your child to a family who could support the child with the understanding that when the female child became of marriageable age they would find her a husband.

So, my mother came to Hawaii from the Orient as a maidservant and my father came to work on the plantations. I am the 7th child in a family of 11. I went to school in the public schools of Hawaii. I worked three years after high school at the Navy Yard at Pearl Harbor; went to the University of Hawaii; finished in three years with honors; went to work again for two more years for the City and County of Honolulu and then to Harvard. Upon graduation from Harvard in '35, I became Deputy Assistant City and County Attorney. I stayed there for three years; ran for the Legislature, was elected in 1938. I served for 14 years and became Vice Speaker for four years and Speaker for six years. I was defeated in the surge of Democrats in Hawaii when they were very strong.

I stayed out for five years then when Statehood came, I ran for office and was elected and re-elected and this is my third term.

Ignatius: You said when you received the Horatio Alger Award that this award was a wonderful way of reminding Americans that opportunities for success are still open for anyone --

Senator: Yes, to anyone who was willing to work hard for it. The door is open to everyone. If a man will work hard and will get as much education as he can and that if he will pursue his course to gain useful employment that through thrift, through wise investment and through opportunities that have been afforded to every American that he can rise, not necessarily in politics, but he could be a successful individual.

He could, for example I carried on a very successful law firm, if he had the opportunity to become a lawyer he could become very successful. For example I was president and am now Chairman of the Board of a few corporations in Hawaii and he could become a businessman.

Ignatius: Was this true even when you were growing up. Were there opportunities open to all?

Senator: Hawaii is a very unique place. We have people coming from all parts of the world and with the influx of the missionaries from New England in 1820, bringing with them their Puritan ethnics and love of education -- free education -- we followed along New England lines and had a free educational system. Everyone had a chance to go to school. We are not confined in ghettos. There's very little discrimination in Hawaii. In fact, I didn't know what it was, actually, from the standpoint of race, until I was elected when they began to talk about it.

Even in law school, it didn't impress me at all.

Ignatius: Did you find yourself discriminated against by your colleagues.

Senator: No, no, because the matter of civil rights came up and then I was thrown right into the midst of it and then I began to realize what racial discrimination was. Up until then I knew that someone discriminated against someone but didn't understand it or it was not called to my attention.

Yes, I would say opportunity is just as good today, if not better, because of the tremendous opportunities we have given to students -- have loan funds, have grants, and all the money being poured into the universities. In my days, we couldn't borrow the money. I had to work before I went to school, to law school, the Government didn't lend us the money. It was difficult for a man without ties to borrow money.

Ignatius: In 1970, Jack Anderson reported you worked very hard trying to fight petroleum companies to get Hawaiian Oil Refinery rights to foreign oil closer to the Middle East so as to get cheaper oil on the Islands. What are some of the other things

Senator: Didn't hear -- Ignatius: You said you had worked hard trying to get an oil refinery

Senator:- Yes, I fought hard and we succeeded. Hawaii is discriminated in this respect -- 2100 miles in the Pacific

-- they put us in Zone 5 which is the western zone and all the oil that comes to Hawaii is brought by surface vessels and because of the distance we pay a large price for the oil and oil products and because we do not have any other source of power and we are dependent upon fuel oil for power, as a result our light bills and all our manufactured goods cost more so it was very imperative that we do have a refinery and hope that it will drive down gasoline prices, fuel prices, and all the other prices.

Ignatius: What are some of the other special problems Hawaii has that you have been able to do something about.

Senator: We were being taxed under the Defense Highway Act but yet they would not give us an appropriation for Defense Highway. My job was to see Hawaii was included in the Defense Highway Act. It brought 2-3 hundred million dollars to the State. . . . We were discriminated against because they would only relate to States and we always had to see that the Territory of Hawaii was included. Because it was a Territory, we did not get certain appropriations. Our judges were being appointed by the Federal Government. We had nothing to say about our judges. Our Governor was appointed by the Federal Government -- but now we are a State and have all the benefits.

Kumar: Senator, do you feel you are well enough represented in the Circuit Court?

Senator: I fought very hard for the selection of the three judges for the Ninth Circuit Court and thought that Hawaii being one of the States that did not have a member in the Ninth Circuit, should have one but somehow that did not come and I held the appointment up for three months. Now I have gotten a member of the Hawaii Bar on the Ninth Circuit Court. He is a member of Korean ancestry and it is a credit to our Government that an American of Korean ancestry, probably representing 15 or 20,000 Korean-Americans in the United States should have a man sitting on the Ninth Circuit Court where there are only 96 Circuit Court Judges in the United States and the next step is the Supreme Court.

Kumar: Senator, how long has it been since a person from Hawaii had been on the Circuit Court.

Senator: Never. This is the first time.

Ignatius: As the first Chinese American that entered the U. S. Congress, you found yourself under pressure from either side on the question of admission of Red China to the United Nations

Senator: No

Ignatius: That you supported that later -- research could be wrong -- some discussion between Senator and Ignatius on this --

Senator: I did not support the admission of Red China to the United Nations. My position on Red China has been this that the United Nations Charter is built on the theory that this is a group of peace-loving nations that they would negotiate their differences rather than through confrontation. Communist China has always said that they would have to fight us. They were antagonists. Taiwan has taken a peaceful attitude, was willing to work with us. I have always stood up for Taiwan. In fact, when they were thinking of throwing Taiwan out, I got 71 of my colleagues to sign a resolution asking that Taiwan be kept in the United Nations.

If Communist China should say she would forego her war-like intents; forego her combativeness and say she would abide by the Charter of the United Nations, then I think we should take a look at it.

Ignatius: Senator, have you had close relationships with the powerful Taiwan lobby like the Committee of One Million?

Senator: No, except that they had asked me to have my name on their letterhead. I think Judd was the only man that I knew there that was very active. There was very little contact -- almost nil -- except they used my name on their letterhead.

Ignatius:

Senator: Yes, I have made speeches on the theme that some day, some how, we have got to sit down and talk. In fact when I was re-elected for the first time eight years ago, I wrote a letter to Mao Tse-Tung and I have a copy of that letter, saying I would like to visit and talk to him and that some day, some time we have got to get together. The letter was taken by the State Department to the Ambassador in Warsaw and he asked that we send it through the mails. No answer. Sent another and again, no answer.

I think it had to come. Somebody had to break the ice and to sit down and talk to each other. Once you break the silence then you begin to understand each other. What President Nixon has done is a great step. It may mean we will have a generation of peace.

Ignatius: Is there any likelihood you might go to China soon?

Senator: I intend to visit the East, whether or not that would be Red China or Taiwan. I would like to go to Red China. I haven't been to Russia and I would also like to go to Russia.

Ignatius: I was interested that you, as a Republican, were supported strongly in your Senate race by the ILWU which obviously has enormous power -- how did that relationship build up over the years?

Senator: I was Speaker of the House for six years and their leader, Jack Hall, has known me for a long time and prior to that I was Vice Speaker. I was also Chairman of the Judiciary Committee. Whenever he wanted legislation which I thought was beneficial to the State of Hawaii, I would say that it would pass and if it was not right, I would tell him. Throughout the years, he had been lobbyist in the Legislature. He got to know me and I knew if I told him this is no good and I wouldn't push it and if I said the thing has merit and I think it will go through, I would use my influence and efforts to get it through and, because of this relationship and because the man I ran against went after

the ILWU. He went after the ILWU in some of his statements so they didn't like him and they threw their support to me.

I had been out of politics for five years at the time I ran. And, you may be surprised that they have always come out for recognition of Red China and I have always said No. They have always come out for getting out of Vietnam and I have said No. So, there are many things which the ILWU has stood for which I have not gone along with them on and yet they have supported me.

Ignatius: In 1967, you were a member of Senator Hart's Judiciary Subcommittee on Antitrust that probed an insurance company and a loan company in interlocks mutually beneficial. At the same time, Grand Pacific and the loan company, Finance Factors, were reported to have had similar tie-ups on loan rates and insurance rates. Did you see that then as a conflict of interest?

Senator: I did make a statement to the effect that I had not sat in on any of the hearings although I was a Member of the Committee. Anderson charged I should be thrown out of Congress because of conflict of interest. My retort was I never attended a single meeting. The rolls will prove that I never attended any of the meetings.

Ignatius: You did that on purpose?

Senator: Yes, because I was president.

Kumar: Most of the legislation really is exploratory rather than investigatory, especially in the Anti-trust Subcommittee. What about immigration? There is little legislative product and very few hearings -- no hearings in fact since 1967.

Senator: Well, it all depends on the Chairman. He is all-powerful and if he wants to call a meeting, he calls a meeting and if he doesn't want to, there's no meeting.

Kumar: There are bills that are in the Judiciary Committee that could be taken up in the Immigration and Naturalization Subcommittee dealing with many phases of the Immigration and Naturalization laws but they have not come up. What about encouraging the Chairman to take a more active role than he chooses. He must be interested. Is he interested in a negative sort of way.

Senator: He hasn't said anything to me in that respect. In fact the last meeting was presided over by Senator Kennedy. In 1965 we really overhauled the immigration laws and I feel that was one of my greatest accomplishments -- to make immigration laws something like civil rights laws. The immigration law we have passed is like civil rights for all of the nations -- nations of central Europe, the Middle East, and the East and Far East. Prior to 1965 law, there were quotas. Out of 170,000 immigrants that were allowed to come to the United States, only 2,000 to 2,001, less than 2%, came from the Asiatic Pacific Triangle which was highly discriminatory and many of the people in Asia and the people of Polynesia, the people of Oceania are included in this Triangle which starts from Russia, takes in Japan, comes over to India -- it's a big triangle -- and if you were born or if you had the blood of the people of that area and your grandfather migrated to England centuries ago, if you came to the United States you would be charged to that quota. A Chinese born in Great Britain was chargeable to China, a Japanese, a Polynesian, a Tongan. But, we fought and fought a finally we don't have a quota system now except that there is a limit.

Kumar: Why was a limit put on -- wasn't envisaged in the Act.

Senator: Because that was the number of people that came in -- 170,000 -- we used that number. The limit that no more than 20,000 could come from that country.

Kumar: When the legislation was first written, it had labor certification. Wasn't that supposed to be qualification and no outside number. Where was that number put on?

Senator: That I do not know.

Kumar: What about legislation that is being considered in the House about illegal aliens and making employers responsible for actions.

Senator: I think it's difficult to make employers responsible for acts of their employees. Everyone would have to come in with birth certificate and quite a few Americans don't have birth certificates and there's quite a dispute and they have a hard time getting enough documents together to show they are 65 to collect social security. Don't think it's fair -- would make it very difficult for many people to find employment, even if they were citizens.

Kumar: Do you think the Judiciary Committee should adopt rules in order to get around rules on Committee and Subcommittee meetings at the call of the Chairman. It is the only Committee in Congress that doesn't have rules.

Senator: I have never seen a Committee yet in which the majority have gotten together without the consent of the Chairman or Subcommittee Chairman. Always given an opportunity so that the Chairman knows. I think that is fair.

Kumar: Why haven't members pushed for it.

Senator: I suppose inertia.

Ignatius: Senator, I'm wondering whether you felt treated unfairly by Jack Anderson.

Senator: His predecessor has treated me unfairly. I even went to the Floor of the Senate and said he had lied six times in one article but somehow I never get a retraction.

Ignatius: Equal time

Senator: Many things, hasn't retracted until many days later. I have answered him many times and taken the Floor to refute his charges and I think they have been unfair to me, yes.

Ignatius: Would you be willing to give us a series of statements.

Senator: Yes, they're all public statements.

Ignatius: Senator, what about his charge that you tried to suppress a Judiciary report on hardware dealers.....

Senator: Was that something about a bankrupt company -- I really don't remember that case -- could check it as to what we did and why.,

Ignatius: Senator, did you have a close relationship with your Administrative Assistant, Robert Carson. Could you describe that relationship.

Senator: Yes, a relationship like any of my other people who work for me who I have confidence in.

Ignatius: Can you tell us about how he came into working in the office.

Senator: I had an Administrative Assistant -- my first was Mr. Frank Damon and when he left his position was taken over by Mr. Ken Nakamura. At that time, I had a vacancy for a Legislative Assistant and I asked Mr. Carson to join me because he had been Chairman of the Republican Party in Honolulu. He had worked for the Legislature as a clerk and he had been Potentate of the Shrine. He had been director of the FHA so he came with beautiful qualifications. And I asked him if he would like to join me as Legislative Assistant. So, when Mr. Ken Nakamura left, I elevated Mr. Carson to Administrative Assistant.

Ignatius: Could you tell us about the first moment when you learned of Carson's offer of \$100,000 to Mr. Kleindienst.

Senator: I was home and I think I made a statement in the papers when they saw me at home and what I had said that I had been home campaigning from October, came back for a very short period.

Ignatius: Were you surprised. Can you give me your reaction.

Senator: Immediately I suspended him.

Ignatius: Going back to the moment you first learned about this

Senator: The Attorney General had called me and said there was something coming up concerning Bob Carson and he was sorry to report it to me and that we will talk about it when I came back but they indicted him before I got back and it caught me by great surprise.

Ignatius: Was your surprise so great that you at first doubted it and tried to investigate this on your own to see if they were true.

Senator: Yes, I had to get the story from Mr. Carson.

-- Record Vote --

Senator: Shall we continue! Want to say only that this matter is still under appeal and as long as these things don't jeopardize his position.

Ignatius: You said you spoke to the Attorney General who said a matter was coming up

Senator: Yes, he had called me and said that Bob Carson was in trouble; that he was sorry to report it; and that he would discuss it with me later.

Ignatius: But you never met with him.

Senator: No.

Ignatius: Were there any other alleged irregularities connected with this that either came to light or should come to light.

Senator: This was a lone incident. This offer of a \$100,000. It was out of character and I still don't believe it that he went there

to bribe the Attorney General. He knew him and I think he went down there to talk to him. They only spoke about one minute and it was dismissed by the Attorney General and then they spoke on the Ninth Circuit Judgeship. That's what he said he went down to speak on that as at that time it was pending.

Ignatius: If this was out of character -- why if this was out of character for Mr. Carson and yet they found that he in fact was guilty, what source of pressure led him to offer such an amount.

Senator: Frankly speaking, I don't think there was that kind of money in it. There was talk there was a million dollars according to the evidence. That is absurd! I still can't believe it.

Ignatius: Have you tried to be in any way an aid to Mr. Carson. He has gone through some difficulties. Have you tried to give him support.

Senator: Well, I tried to advise him as best I could.

Ignatius: What advice did you give him.

Senator: That he should get an attorney; tell his attorney everything and that he should appeal his case if he should lose.

Ignatius: Why do you think so little mention of this incident was made during the Judiciary nomination on Kleindienst.

Senator: Actually there was nothing to it. It had no relevancy to the appointment of Kleindienst and from what Mr. Carson said transpired, I don't think it was a bribe. From what I understand, he took a piece from the newspaper stating that the Globe Company was enjoined from doing business and this is what he told Kleindienst and told me since he called Mr. Kleindienst that this appeared in the newspaper and he didn't think there is anything he could do for him and the Attorney General said yes.

Ignatius: You understand this from Mr. Carson.

Senator: Yes, and this was his testimony in court.

Ignatius: Why do you think this indictment was brought if it was unfair.

Senator: Well, I don't know. I suppose -- see this thing is very peculiar. As I understand, the man who came down and made contact ran right back to the District Attorney in New York. Looks like they were setting him up for a patsy.

Ignatius: Who would do that and why.

Senator: This I don't know.

Ignatius: Your feeling is that they sat him up.

Senator: Evidence showed in court that as soon as he made contact, he ran back to the District Attorney. That is the evidence in court.

Ignatius: Do you think this incident has cost you your political career?

Senator: No, no. If I am responsible for this, then you can say the President is responsible for a lot of things that happen under him. I presume that since his office is right next to mine you think I would know but I happened to be in Hawaii all this time. You can't say the commission of a crime by one person, you can't say another person who is close to him is guilty by association and that therefore it should reflect upon the other one, especially in politics. But I don't think there is anything in that.

Ignatius: The ways in which it might be damaging --

Senator: Probably would be guilt by association

Ignatius: The question can be brought up about your judgment on employing him.

Senator: Here is a man who was Potentate of the Shrine, FHA Director; was out there with the Shriners doing good for the young children; was Republican Party Chairman. Now you tell me can you find a better man. What more credentials do you need. These are high credentials.

Ignatius: About the Kleindienst hearings generally, did you feel they were highly political. Could you speak about this.

Senator: Well, frankly, the Kleindienst nomination should not have dragged out that long. They really wanted to embarrass the President here so they brought in a lot of things that were extraneous to his qualifications and to whether or not he would be a good Attorney General. They brought out the case for example in San Diego where the man as they said should be fired and actually the man testified he would have done the same thing all over again. It only related to a question of whether you would have the man come in under subpoena or whether you would ask him to come in and they decided it was better to ask him rather than to subpoena him. This was the extent of the case of the District Attorney in San Diego. And then the ITT case, if the Administration really wanted to help ITT, the only thing that they would have had to do was to follow what the Johnson Administration and the Kennedy Administration did which was do nothing but they saw fit to go ahead with the charges against ITT and they had lost in the Courts all along the way to have them enjoined from merging. They had lost the case in several instances the Court had ruled against the Government in several instances and when you consider divestiture, there is a company that had to divest one-sixth of assets and one-sixth of the sales and it had to divest the canteen and it had to divest all these companies and Avis car company and had to promise it would not have any more mergers. You can see that it was a very, very severe penalty on the company. And the amount of money that was supposed to go to the Republican Convention actually was an amount that was promised the San Diego people and the committee that was in charge of the Convention programs. Actually was not money going to the Republican Party. So, actually what the Administration could have done was not to bring any charges but they did and they lost all the way and they made a big point of the fact that Roitan (?) had gone to see him and told him

about the very severe economic damage that would be done by such a divestiture and so he set up a meeting with Gray and that was the second time that he saw him and the third then when he came back because he was complaining he wasn't getting any satisfaction from Gray and these were the meetings that Anderson called secret. If a man came to see me, like you came to see me, yes that was a secret meeting unless I publicized it. There was nothing secret about this thing. It was a chance to embarrass the Administration and they did everything possible to embarrass the Administration.

Kumar: What about Eastland's handling of the hearings. As Chairman, he could have cut

Senator: Yes, he should have, especially when he felt matters were not relevant. Eastland is a fair Chairman. Everyone will tell you that. Even Hart said he was a fair Chairman but he voted against him as President Pro Tem of the Senate. Everyone will testify that he is a very fair Chairman and will give you a lot of latitude. There was a lot of hearsay evidence that came in.

Kumar: If these hearings were indeed highly political, there must have been strategy meetings on both sides. Did Republicans meet to decide how to refute charges. I talked to Senator Cook a good deal about how he came to issue his attack on Anderson's claim that Anderson had been close friends and later this was disproved. Could you tell us about how strategy was handled and how contacts were handled with the White House.

Senator: Senator Hruska was ranking member and had several conferences on what to expect and what matters might come up and what was the evidence on the other side but as to a concerted effort to get the Republican Members to follow certain paths, there was nothing like that because we were not sure who was going to vote for him and who wouldn't. On the Republican side, we have liberals and conservatives and many times we don't vote as a team.

Kumar: Were there any groups, like groups of conservatives. How about the Democrats, did they have strategy meetings?

Senator: I presume so from the way the evidence came about. I would say yes they were bound to because there were a lot of things sent to them.

Kumar: One person I talked to, in characterizing Senator Eastland, said an explanation of why he is not autocratic is that there are only two things he intensely cares about -- one is re-election, the other cotton!

Senator: No, I wouldn't disparage a Senator. I don't agree with him. I think Eastland is just as concerned as anyone. He is such an old-timer here he is not one of those intense characters and you have Senators here who are cool and calm and he is one of those cool and calm ones. Even if he gets beaten in Committee, he doesn't show it. He has been beaten many times -- civil rights, voting record, minority of one, minority of three, but he goes on in his merry way. Doesn't feel any affront whatsoever.

Kumar: Can you think of any other areas he gets beaten on besides civil rights.

Senator: Gun Control, crime laws, and things like that. You see the Judiciary Committee handles about 40 to 60 per cent of the cases and we get quite a number of bills at every Executive session and many times he is in the minority.

Kumar: What about processing and treatment of judicial nominees by the Senate. Certainly an exceptional person should pass -- no investigation from the Senate angle.

Senator: I think the Senate position is to advise and confirm and in following that power that has been granted, that there should be hearings even though other parties and other groups have already gone over the qualifications of the nominees.

Kumar: What about the American Bar Association and statement the Committee has regarded person as not qualified, qualified, or whatever.

Senator: I don't think they should say whether or not he is qualified. They should go into the facts of whether he can do the job. I wouldn't relegate so much importance to the ABA.

Kumar: Should the ABA be forced to explain.

Senator: When you go through hearings, you can find places where the Committee Chairman will have to ask why they gave him unqualified rating. It works through committees in the various states. What do you think of the guy -- does not like him, he's no good -- so, he has a bad mark. In Hawaii they said he wasn't qualified and subsequently he became Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Hawaii.

Kumar: Did they explain why?

Senator: Never, and I think the ABA is given too much emphasis. There's too much emphasis on what the ABA says.

Kumar: Was he turned down at the Justice Department level?

Senator: Kennedy Administration -- didn't appoint -- they flinched but they did appoint them -- in Nixon Administration.

Kumar: ABA has blanket veto. What discussions did you have with the Justice Department about the person. Did you

Senator: Didn't have any except they said he wasn't qualified. Couldn't get it through Justice.

Kumar: Was he on the Hawaii Supreme Court at the time. Is it elected or appointed?

Senator: Appointed.

Ignatius: Also on judicial nominations and Carswell. Richard Harris writes for the New Yorker and in article says Fong was probably the object of as much political pressure as anyone...

Senator: Nobody can pressure me, nobody can pressure me. The big corporations, the unions, nobody can pressure me! And to say that a Democrat on the other side pressured me is absolutely false! I voted for Haynsworth. Carswell's another matter. He made some very, very disparaging statements. He came out and said things which should not have been said being a man in that position. He talked about white supremacy. If he had not said that, I think it could have been different. I couldn't go for Carswell although I voted to let his name come before the Senate as I thought Senate should have a chance. On Haynsworth, I think we made a mistake. Haynsworth was a godd man and all they had against him was a little pin ball machine. Actually the fact that he owned a few shares of stock shouldn't have disqualified him.

Ignatius: You do recall reading Harris' account of how you voted -- you went home to Hawaii -- there was a lot of media pressure to announce a vote against Carswell -- you had been leaning toward Carswell before that account and after seeing all this political pressure at home, voted against.

Senator: This was not true. Claimed a certain man in the Legislature forced me and I had no connection with him whatsoever.

Kumar: Why did ABA give unqualified rating to your selection. Do you think they have bias against certain lawyers -- some Senators -- Cook -- think criminal lawyers rate low, corporation lawyers rate high. ABA far more likely to give criminal lawyer unqualified than corporation lawyer.

Senator: Some of the criteria which has been set down by Justice Department -- a man has to have so many years of experience -- has to be in court -- Mitchell couldn't have qualified for District Judge cause his experience is being a bond writer and I think some of those qualifications and professions are unrealistic. Fifteen years in the practice of law -- why should a man have to have 15 years in the practice of law. You can tell if he is good in five or six years of practice.

If they don't like you they say you don't have New York Trial practice. I have been fighting ABA along this line -- don't think they are right.

Kumar: There's not much of a revolt. Everybody has much the same feelings.

Senator: If the name doesn't come up, there is nothing you can do with it.

Kumar: You could start sitting on people.

Senator: Well, once a man's name comes up, he must be pretty good, otherwise his name wouldn't come up.

Kumar: Why doesn't Committee force ABA to explain whenever sending up letter about nominee -- why doesn't the Committee ask for specifically why did they come to the reasoning which they did.

Senator: Don't know whether a man has been considered or not until his name comes up before us. Suppose I recommended you and they check and say you are not qualified. Your name never goes to the President for him to send to the Committee.

Kumar: Why doesn't the Committee ask them to be specific on their rating when it comes, at least to hear.

Senator: Cause they say they are not qualified.

Ignatius: Senator, I was wondering whether your other brothers and sisters have had the same success you have had.

Senator: Out of 11 in the family, only two finished college -- myself and my youngest sister. An older brother was elected for about 14 years as the Auditor of the City and County of Honolulu although he didn't finish high school. He finally got his diploma when he was 60-some years old. So, he was successful in that respect. He was a good accountant, and my other brothers just worked for a living.

Ignatius: Did your sister take up a career after college.

Senator: She was a teacher, then she married a contractor-engineer who is doing very well so she doesn't have to teach. She still lives in Honolulu. My oldest brother I think probably he must have had about two years of schooling and an older sister no schooling at all. You see, this was primitive Hawaii -- back in 1898 and 1896. Hawaii was still very backward and so they didn't have an opportunity for an education. I had a difficult time going to college. As I told you, I worked for three years before I went to college.

Larry: I mention this fact, with the Senator's permission, and only because he is too modest, but he was not only saving for college, he was also helping the family...

Senator: Yes, I was just out of high school -- worked for one year when he died -- was main provider for the family -- so I have always had several jobs.

Ignatius: Senator, I don't see how you had three jobs at the same time and yet managed to graduate in three years and yet with honors!

Senator: Just lucky.

McGraw-Hill made a film of me -- a series of six people -- Enrico Fermi, Einstein, Perry (North Pole) Fong, Helen Keller, and Dr. Jonas Salk -- which was distributed to the schools. (Larry to arrange to have it shown)

Ignatius: Senator, concerning the Post Office and Civil Service Committee, Senator McGee has said he spends very little time as Chairman, that he spends most of his time on other affairs instead of on this second-rate, minor Committee.

Senator: It is a minor Committee, but I am Ranking Member of that Committee and that Committee puts more pressure on me than any Committee because of the pressure by Government employees to have increases in their wages, better retirement, and the Post Office, when it was under that Committee, there were a lot of problems -- salary rates of pay, and the rates of postage gave us a lot of trouble and from that standpoint, there was a lot of pressure, it was a real pressure Committee and this is a time when it could really embarrass the Administration by putting up bills which cost a lot of money and which go far beyond what they know the President would accept. Take for example the bill just passed setting wages of blue collar workers 12 per cent over comparability. This will start an escalation of wages. For example if we were both carpenters, I get 12 per cent more than you -- this just passed the Senate and the House and I think the President will veto it. I voted against it because I thought it wasn't realistic.

Ignatius: Senator, were you glad to see the Federal Comparability Act of 1970.

Senator: Yes, I fought hard for it and was one that pioneered in that direction. I think they were well deserving of it. In my State, under Comparability the pay schedule for the past ten years has gone up 108 per cent -- the salaries in my State. White collar workers have gone up 50 per cent.

Ignatius: Were there Members of Congress opposed to that form of legislation because they would lose their ability or lose their influence to gain votes or support by legislative action or by fixing pay scales?

Senator: Well, some of them didn't want to give the authority to the President to set the wage scale by annual surveys and that was set up about a year or year and a half ago.

Some didn't want to give the President that power, they wanted to control the setting of wages. What their motive was, I don't know. Felt wages should be set by the Congress, rather than by the President.

Ignatius: Our figures show in the First Session of this Congress, 100 per cent of new legislation on Post Office Committee matters originated in the House and that the Senate Committee held very few hearings, chiefly very few investigations of the Civil Service Commission of any sort -- Why has the Senate Committee had so much trouble in innovating --

Senator: In the Senate, there are 100 Members as opposed to the House where there are 435. The Senate is at a disadvantage because each Member of the Committee has two large Committees and one small, secondary Committee. The Post Office and Civil Service Committee is a secondary Committee. Take Senator McGee, Chairman of the Post Office and Civil Service Committee. He is Chairman of the Agriculture Appropriations Committee and then he is on Foreign Relations -- take for example in my position, I have approximately 22 Subcommittees. I am ranking Republican on Post Office and Civil Service; I am ranking on Immigration Subcommittee; ranking on Refugees & Escapees, ranking Republican on Constitutional Amendments, ranking on Foreign Aid Appropriations and that keeps me very busy. Sometimes there are four meetings going on at the same time. It's because Senators have so many more Committees and Subcommittees than Members of the House they do not give it as much attention. House Members must make a name for themselves and by Subcommittees pushing, they are able to get the publicity that they want. Members of the Senate are very busy and maybe that accounts for it.

Ignatius: Do you think the new U. S. Postal Service has been a success.

Senator: Judging from what I have been told, there have been reductions of work force in many of the Post Offices; that large savings will be made; that by the Postal organization having

the right to go out and secure funds for their improvements, their permanent improvements, this will give them more flexibility, the flexibility they need, whereas the Congress was always very, very negligent in that we didn't give them funds to have an up-to-date Department which could cost 6 to 7 billion dollars for permanent improvements, for renovations, and we weren't able to give them that. By the new set-up, we will be able to give them that. Although not yet started, they have real plans for what they are going to do and I anticipate a more efficient operation.

The Republicans gave up about 3,000 appointments of Postmasters when we moved it into this setup. We were pretty generous in that respect. It seems Republicans always lose. During Eisenhower, lost all of the Judges -- that Act became effective when Kennedy took office. Republicans are very, very bad politicians.

Ignatius: What do you mean.

Senator: They don't ride the wave. They're bad politicians.

Ignatius: Senator, I wanted to ask about White House Liaison on Capitol Hill. A lot of Senators -- a lot of stories that it's just miserable, a lot of Senators have been offended, misunderstood, enormous mistakes by the Liaison people.

Senator: I have not found that to be so. Whenever they have contacted me, they were able to and have told me what their thinking was and I have had no trouble in that direction.

Ignatius: Have you found they have tried to enforce discipline on you.

Senator: No. No. They are very courteous. They look at a bill from one standpoint and think it should be good and from that standpoint they have never tried to importune -- at least I have not been importuned. They would explain their business, ask questions, send people to to discuss

it with me but never any pressure. Everyone is a free agent. You see that when you come in. He may be a Republican but his vote may always be with the Democrats. Take Senator Lausche for example. You come from a sovereign State, you represent that State and you do what you feel is right. We never question each other as to why we voted one way or another.

Kumar: As Ranking Republican on the Immigration Subcommittee, what is your view of the private immigration bills.

Senator: There are many times where equity calls for them and there is no other way except by private bill. Course since the 1965 Act, private immigration bills have not proliferated as in the past.

Kumar: Senate has been handling somewhat more since the House has cut off -- by rules like ship jumpers, whereas in the Senate not automatically disposed of. Senator, did you have any Chinese ship jumpers after the revelations.

Senator: I think I had one ship jumper. As a Senator from Hawaii, I have Filipinos that I have introduced bills for and they are usually brother or sister that has been in Hawaii for a while and somehow things get entangled. They know if they wait for a year or a year and a half they can go get quota number so I have been asked to introduce a bill and I have done that where there is equity.

Kumar: There is no way you can go to Justice Department and ask them to hold off.

Senator: No. No.

Ignatius: Senator, on appropriations, do you think the present method of appropriating money is a sound one?

Senator: I think we should eliminate the yearly appropriation rigmarole. We spend a lot of time, waste a lot of effort to go over the appropriation bills every year when you consider first is the authorization, then the appropriation and we go through the appropriation and authorization every year. I think we could go on a

I think we could go for two years without really dealing with it again. We waste the time of the people in the Departments -- they testify before the House and then they testify before us. During the appropriation process there is a lot of wasted motion and I think if we could get appropriation bills for two-year periods we would be helping the process very much.

Ignatius: Do you think that that will soon be the case.

Senator: It's difficult because you have the Chairmen who are all-powerful and they want these people to come up and face them -- so that they can exercise some control over the Executive Branch and I don't think it would be easy for them to forego that privilege.

Kumar: What kind of control does the Judiciary exercise over the Immigration and Naturalization Service. It seems they never have over-sight hearings.

Senator: None, none, except that we could question them but at least I have never and I have been on the Judiciary Committee a long time and have never had a hearing.

Kumar: On private bills, at the end of the 90th perhaps the 91st Congress, you stopped a lot of private bills -- a whole group that you held up, I wonder why you did it.

Senator: Because there was one bill which had passed the Senate and which they had promised me they would put through and they held it up so I thought this was the only way they would take notice. Finally I let it go through. I just held it up for a little while and then I let it go through.

Kumar: Did you get your bill through

Senator: No. no. A Member's prerogative, doesn't mean anything.

Kumar: Why was the House Judiciary Committee opposed to it.

Senator: Because one Member didn't like it. With one Member speaking against it, sometimes it doesn't get through.

Kumar: It wasn't against any of the rules. What did it deal with.

Senator: It dealt with the citizenship of a person. He had all the documents but somehow he couldn't prove it. He felt his father had been in Hawaii and that he should be allowed to come in as a citizen. But he came in -- finally, as a brother of a citizen -- not as a citizen so he is here.

Ignatius: You are quoted as not voting in our research on two Packwood amendments on the seniority question. Would you favor election of Committee Chairmen by either full caucus

Senator: No. No. The longer I stay here, the more emphatic it gets. Naturally the most democratic would be by popular choice -- if you don't have such a rule, how are you going to select the Chairman of that Committee. Who is there to say that this man is better than that because that man comes from a big State and he should be Chairman or the man from the small State should not be Chairman and then if you have that Member you follow that procedure, then you have to fight every time there is a change in the membership of that Committee. You have a fight on your hands at the beginning of every new Session. You have a fight as to the election of the Chairman and you may never be able to settle that until way past February, March, or April and you have the Committees in turmoil all the time. The staff members who would be working are usually appointed by the Chairman and then by Members of the Majority and Minority. Members have certain patronage and as long as you have these things in turmoil, your staff members will not be secure. You will not have the quality, the continuity, you will not have the caliber of men who will stick with you. This seniority system is a good system. There may be other systems but, practically, they wouldn't work. You will have so much confusion, so much bickering, so much campaigning, that you just waste a lot of time.

So, out of so many years of experience, they have evolved this system of seniority. There is no other system by which I think it would work.

Ignatius: Special interests might play an enormous role in these elections.

Senator: Yes, that could be true.

Ignatius: Getting back to Appropriations -- you are ranking on Foreign Operations, do you have any specific feelings about the newer emphasis on foreign aid -- Fulbright thinks we shouldn't fund -- Nixon Plan -- which I understand wants the task of foreign aid to be taken over by multi-national corporation.

Senator: I think there should be multi-national and also bilateral foreign aid. There are many circumstances in which bilateral aid will meet needs that multi-national aid cannot reach. Many countries want bilateral rather than multi-national. Emperor Haile Selassie told me he wanted bilateral aid because we needed to help him. Many countries prefer bilateral; many would prefer multi-national. Think we have to make a balance. Should have some money for bilateral aid and there's no reason why we shouldn't also help multi-national enterprise. Think foreign aid should continue, especially with the Nixon Doctrine. It is saying that you are responsible for your own security but we will give you the wherewithal to be viable and if we don't provide them with money, arms, funds... to help them build up their economy. In the interest of world peace, we need this foreign aid.

Ignatius: Senator, I'm curious as to whether an area with as many different races as Hawaii -- whether the issue of school busing was brought up.

Senator: School busing is not an issue in Hawaii. We have a very cosmopolitan population living together very nicely. If the Richmond Plan were implemented in Hawaii, you would have

to bus or take the Japanese from Moiliili and move them to Makiki where the Chinese have more people and then you would have to move to Ewa where the Filipinos are, and I tell you that would be some kind of confusion. The people like living in their old neighborhoods with predominantly Chinese, especially here on the Mainland. In Hawaii we don't have that problem. We are not ghetto-ized -- people are spread all over the Islands. We don't have the problem of one race concentrated in one particular area.

Ignatius: Senator, I'm curious about your vote on the SST. Were you originally against it.

Senator: I was never against SST. I think we should look into it but I --

Ignatius: Do you continue to favor it?

Senator: Yes.

Ignatius: About Hawaii -- having lived there all your life, is tourism going too far. Clearly, it brings many benefits, could it destroy the place.

Senator: Every community is rising up -- don't want to have things changed -- don't want to have it changed for housing, for apartments, for hotels -- and this is the feeling that is prevailing now like on the Mainland -- resorting to the Chinese philosophy of Taoism, "Leave Nature Alone." The feeling is quite rampant in Hawaii, so I don't know what is going to happen. My view is that there is much in that and I hate to see the Hawaii of today changed so drastically that we won't recognize it.

Ignatius: What suggestions

Senator: That we should be slow to change things; that we should try to preserve the values, the environment, and especially the Aloha Spirit of our people. This is the thing we should always try to preserve -- the friendliness and the smiling faces -- the willingness to work with others -- the tolerance we have for each other.

We have over-built. Now you can go down there and get a room for \$10 a night. It's an economic factor. There should be less construction. There is a surplus of things so some things have slowed down quite a bit. Apartment and condominium building prices have gone ----- oh, everytime I go back I find prices have risen -- \$6 in Makiki for residence lot per square foot -- 5,000 sq. ft., \$30,000 -- next time its \$7, and the last time it was \$9 per square foot. I don't know how the young people are going to find a home. Hawaii is a very high cost area.

Ignatius: Senator, we have asked all Members of Congress if they would be willing to release private financial disclosure statements --

Senator: That I will not do because it will be misinterpreted. If I do, then I have to explain every detail. I have quite a lot of businesses, I own a lot of property, I owe a lot of money. In fact, since I came out of school, I have lived on credit. You have to let credit work for you. People will misconstrue it. For example my company, we have to file statements every six months as to what our assets are because we are in the finance business and our company shows we have over \$80 million and people think I own \$80 million. It is so easy to misconstrue these figures.

Ignatius: You are a wealthy man -- you have several million in assets of your own.

Senator: Yes, yes.

Ignatius: Is that in your favor -- people say, my God, this man...

Senator: No, because I made it myself. I didn't inherit from my father. When I ran I disclosed what I had. I made a disclosure of what I had when I ran for office and they know I am not a poor man and they know I have all these investments in Hawaii. All of them are in Hawaii except for a very, very few things outside of Hawaii, but the great bulk of investments are in Hawaii and my people know what I own and they have a general idea of what businesses I am in. I

have been elected, re-elected, and re-elected. This is my third term and, considering that Republicans are only 21 per cent of the registration in Hawaii and that the people of my ethnic background are only six per cent, it hasn't worked against me.

Ignatius: Senator, do you have a policy whenever potential conflict of interest between one of your business holdings and legislation up before Committee on on the Floor

Senator: Yes, take the other day, I voted present on the recomputation of military retirement. See, I have a military retirement. I have retired as an Air Force Colonel. I voted present, even on the question of tabling and then the tabling was killed and then it was passed afterward and I voted present twice. Yes, if I know or if I am conscious of it. But sometimes, take for example the question of salaries -- I am on the Committee -- the salaries of the Members of the Congress is before us now. On a matter like that we are the only ones who can settle that so I don't think you can call that a conflict of interest but outside of that, I think I have refrained -- like from going to the Committee meetings -- there was no reason for me not to go and listen. It is only when the bill comes before us that we shouldn't do something about it that I should refrain -- to forego any criticism -- felt I should stay away.

Ignatius: Do you feel other Members police themselves in the way that you do

Senator: Well, for example a lawyer has to leave his practice if he is in practice...we want a good Government. We want to get the best men to serve in our Congress. Let the people know what they want to know and let them decide as to whether a man is doing his job or not. If a man is not doing his job and voting on conflict of interest bills to his own benefit, there are enough people in the Committee and enough people in the press to call the attention of the public to these things. I think we have an open society -- that we could find out and your opponent could pick you to pieces. I think there are sufficient safeguards.

To force every man to disclose everything, I think you would force a lot of people from running for office. If I were to disclose everything when I ran, probably I would not have offered myself for election.

Ignatius: Why is that.

Senator: You see you are in business -- not by yourself -- but you are in business with your partners. You have an obligation not to reveal anything and they may not take it too lightly or too kindly if you did that and, to forego any misunderstandings, you would rather not get into politics and I would say it would deter people from getting in. We have filed our disclosure with the people from Congress -- our income tax returns are there and the honorariums and gifts we receive are made public -- I don't take honorariums. I do make speeches, but because I believe this is one part of my duties as a Senator I do not take honorariums.

Ignatius: How active a role do you take in the affairs of the business

Senator: I am Chairman of the Board and whenever there is an opportunity for me to go home, I go home. I go home every month and a half or two months -- they allow us 12 trips -- great distance -- can't make trip too often -- distance too far -- change of time -- six hours -- if you go too often you get sick, so I go maybe once in two months, whenever there is a recess, and at that time I consult with my colleagues -- spend time with them in my businesses.

Ignatius: Do you think you have enough time to be both a U.S. Senator and be in business

Senator: See the active work of my businesses is carried on by my associates. I am lucky in that I have good associates, otherwise I could not be here.

Ignatius: If you were ever forced to make a choice between continuing your business life and continuing your career in the Senate

Senator: I would leave the Senate.

Ignatius: Why is that --

Senator: Because I have to look to the future of my family. There's no future in being a politician -- especially something you have built up for years. Our business was started from scratch. We built it up and it is interesting because we are in all types of businesses.

Ignatius: Is there a public record of all your business and financial interests -- do you have a copy that you could supply us.

Senator: Finance Factors, Ltd., is an industrial loan company; files report every year -- every six months, and the last report showed it had assets of approximately \$85 million.

Finance Realty -- deals with real estate -- subdivisions, construction of homes

Finance Investment -- deals with hotels, condominiums, rentals of business property and apartments. They are also in retailing.

Grand Pacific Life Insurance Company -- deals with life insurance and is a local, domestic company.

Market City, Limited, which is not affiliated with any of these companies, which is a shopping center -- deals with collection of rentals

Ocean View Cemetery -- a cemetery -- with affiliates

These are the main companies

Finance Securities and Finance Factors Foundation.

I am Chairman of the Board.

Ignatius: Do you still own a banana plantation.

Senator: Yes, still run a banana farm.

Ignatius: Is there any record of parcels of land that you own.

Senator: Yes, I have quite a few pieces of property. No, because they are owned in conjunction with others.

Ignatius: Is there a total acreage

Senator: Well in a Hui, which is a group, on the Island of Oahu they have me listed as the 14th or 16th largest landholder on the Island. In this we own about 1200 acres

Ignatius: On Oahu

Senator: Yes.

Corrections to Senator Fong's Profile - Sept. 27, 1972

- Page 1, Line 8 -- Chai Ha Fong instead of Chia
- Page 2, Line 14 -- Chinatown, I did not live in Chinatown but in the Kalihi District of Honolulu.
- Page 4 -- Suggest on Line 4 that native Hawaiians be inserted in front of Japanese on Line 3
- Page 4, Line 2 from bottom -- After "he lost" insert "by 31 votes"
- Page 4, Line 8 from bottom -- After word SECOND insert word WORLD, also insert the words PEARL HARBOR before the word Oahu.
- Page 5, Line 1 -- Insert "Industrial" before loan company
- Page 5, Line 5 -- Chinese and Japanese. They were loans in general not only to Chinese and Japanese.
- Page 5, Line 7 -- The firm was organized years before the election defeat.
- Page 6, Line 1 -- Add word Of before the word "eight"
- Page 6, Line 5 -- The word in-laws is not correct. Not one of my 5 associates is related to me by marriage or otherwise.
- Page 8, Line 13 -- Insert word APPROXIMATELY" before every month and a half.
- Page 15, second line from bottom -- Add words IN HAWAII after "we"
- Page 18, second line from bottom -- Mr. Mun On Chun and I do not own the land in partnership. We are holding as trustees for a group of individuals. My direct and indirect interest is about 16 percent in the land.
- Page 19, Line 1 -- The name should be Mun On Chun instead of Chin.
- Page 19, top para. -- Again the land held in trusteeship.

Page 20, Line 1 &  
Line 2

-- Substitute word NO for LOW as this project has no priority; Engineers found it is not economically feasible and therefore Federal cost-sharing of project is not warranted.

Page 23, Para. 2,  
Line 2

-- Insert word FORMER before word Republican

Page 23, Para. 2,  
Line 8

-- In the 2 years since the 1970 election, there has been no election except this coming election. Hawaii's primary is not until October 7, 1972 so Fong can make no endorsement and so forth.

Page 25, Line 21 &  
Line 22

-- Referring to licensing fee presumably for a biographical film. This film was owned by McGraw-Hill and to have it shown to the public, the fee was paid. This is the same film referred to in the series with Einstein and Helen Keller.

Page 29, Para. 2,  
Line 1

-- 7,500 instead of 7,000

Page 32, last 2  
lines

-- Macadamia nuts, avocados, lichees and mangoes grown by me are not for sale. They are for my own use.

Page 35

-- Although I am Board Chairman of Highway Construction Company, I own only a very few shares of the total shares, and I do not meet with the Board more than once a year.

Page 36

-- Referring to my son Rodney's job at the Post Office, only Pearson and Anderson are quoted. Assistant Postmaster General Tyler Abell said "the hiring of summer help for the Post Office was not, in any way, related to the Federal anti-poverty program."

The Honolulu Star-Bulletin story (September 4) continued: "Abell... said criticism across the nation has been based upon the 'misconception' that the program was aimed at helping poverty-stricken youths.

"This is not true," he said.

"These funds were appropriated, as they have been for several years to give the Post Office the help that it needs."

Page 41, Line 10 --

The word PRETEXT is not correct. It should be GROUND.

Page 29, Para. 2,  
Line 7 --

Strike all words beginning with BURNED HIS... to Haole voters and add "used a two race squeeze against him; urging whites to vote for Heftel as one of their kind and Japanese to vote for white Heftel to blunt haole criticism against the all-Oriental Hawaii delegation ( 3 Japanese, 1 Chinese) in Congress."