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(Signature - Interviewee)

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(Address)

Dale C. Densberry  
(Signature - Witness)

Frank Lucento  
8/6/84  
HISTORY OF  
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WEST VIRGINIA COMMUNITIES - Ceredo

AN ORAL INTERVIEW WITH: Mr. Frank Lucente

CONDUCTED BY: Donavan Quesenberry

DATE OF INTERVIEW:  
AUGUST 5, 1984

TRANSCRIBED & TYPED BY:  
Gina K. Kates

Don: This is an interview conducted by me, Donavan W. Quesenberry, the III, on the 6th of August, 1984. The release slip has a small mistake, it states the 5th of August of 1984, but the interview was conducted on the 6th in the parking lot of Dwight's restaurant on 8th avenue, across from Huntington High School in the city of Huntington, WV. I'm interviewing Frank Lucente, part owner/operator of Rocco's Restaurant in uh, Ceredo, West Virginia, as a project of the Oral History project concerning Marshall University History Dept. under the direction of Dr. Bob Sawrey at Marshall University, part of his Oral History of Ceredo graduate class.

Frank: . . . give these personal interviews.

Don: Well, I appreciate your talking. . .

Frank: I get thousands a day you know. (oh, really?)

Don: And your full name please?

Frank: My name is Frank Samuel Lucente.

Don: How do you spell that last name?

Frank: L-u-c-e-n-t-e.

Don: You uh, uh. . . exactly how are you connected to Rocco's Restaurant?

Frank: What do you mean, how am I connected?

Don: How are you of affiliated with Rocco's? You and he are business partners?

Frank: Well, we're business partners in a sense, yes.

Don: Okay.

Frank: In a sense. I sold him uh, we use, well it's a long story. There has been times when originally he started on his own, but I

became his partner, and then I disembowled my partnership or sold him the interest back into the restaurant and uh, uh, he in turn, uh, has offered me a way to get back in but it's. . . it's basically illegal more than it is you know, we work very well together and always have. I've had to sell him the interest in the restaurant at certain times due to financial problems that I was having, so I didn't want him to be encumbered with (right) mess, so I sold him the business at a fair market value at the time to in essence to keep him from becoming involved in my financial muddle, so to speak. But, for all practical purpose, we're business partners.

Don: Uh, do you have anything. . . are you involved in the day-to-day management of the restaurant?

Frank: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Don: So you're both in there every day?

Frank: We're both in there every day. We rely on each other.

Don: So, you have a very good working relationship.

Frank: Sure, you have to have a good relationship with a partner or when I say partner, somebody your're working toward a common goal. . . you have to or it won't work. (right) Especially in business.

Don: When did uh, you two meet? How did you meet?

Frank: We met in 19 uh, let's see. . . probably about 1976, '75, somewhere around there.

Don: How did it come about that you decided to form a or start a restaurant, an Italian restaurant in Ceredo?

Frank: Well, he wanted. . . he was from Fairmont and I had a real

good friend I went to college with that was living in Fairmont, and I'd go back and see him and uh, I met, he was. . . he became good friends with Rocco and I'd met Rocco through this guy, I'd only known him. . . I'd only met him two or three times, in party situations. And he wanted to open an Italian restaurant and at that time I was doing real well, I had a lot of money and uh, had a lot of property, not a lot of money but for me it was a lot. I had extra, excess money. And so I needed a male friend, I didn't have any friends down here you know, really to be friends with, that I found, and he fit the bill, so I encouraged him to come down here and open one and I. . . I used one of my buildings and kind of invested all the upfront money and renovated it and uh, got him in and got him started. He started on his own; I just wanted somebody down here and we needed an Italian restaurant here, so I encouraged him to come down and he did and that's the way it started.

Don: Did uh. . . let's see, that was about what year was that?

Frank: Well, we opened in April of 1977 is when we opened the doors.

Don: Mmm-hmm. Since then has uh, has the economic situation here in Huntington has changed somewhat. How has that affected you guys?

Frank: It hasn't really affected us too much, because the economic situation's gotten worse, our business has grown so we've kind of stayed in pace with things. I mean, we've uh, we've learned to uh, do things easier and cut our expenses here and on the other hand, we've had an increase on business. (uh,huh) Not a lot but we have, you know, we're doing. . . we've done well for several years

and continue to do well, we're at a point now where we can't make anymore, or uh, we're kind of maxed out with what we have.

Don: Do you see the future of any pivotal events or changes that might affect the restaurant, a move possibly or. . .?

Frank: No, we have no plans on moving or expanding or otherwise. Uh, the way things are in this society, or the way this government is now, it doesn't encourage growth. And to grow means to give the government more, you know, I mean you get more diminished. You have no. . . there's no incentive to really bust uh, yourself trying to make a lot of money, because the more you make, the more they take. (yeah, that's true)

Don: Uh. . . how would you say that changed exactly? Is there a way to change that? Is there a way for a business man to get around that kind of a thing? (get around what kind of. . .?) Well, in a situation where uh. . . well, for example, the B & O tax here in WV, is there a way for those kinds of things to be changed? So it's. . .

Frank: Oh, why yeah, the Legislature can change 'em but uh, special interest groups, most people that want to work and get ahead are busy working gettin' ahead; they don't pay attention to the government or anything else. They're just trying to barrell through. But most of the people want a free ride or live off a uh, system are down at the legislature. They're like hogs to a trough. (laughs) They're trying to see what they can get for nothing. So they're puttin' the pressure on the legislators to get the freebies and in turn to get this, they're offering the legislature their support in the next election to get them reelected. And since

they're the only. . . they've got some vested kind of bow down to their knees because when election time comes, the working people are still working and then these hogs so to speak, they're at the trough, they're out doing their thing, trying to get these people to back them. So. . . that's the problem. That's why you never have any change. You never have you know, once the legislator gets in, he's either there until he dies or the. . . you know, he may have temporary insanity and decide to run for higher office (really?). Or you know, death, that's the only two ways they leave office. So, there's not much of a change in it. What's happened and I feel it's made all business people kind of a crook, you know, they've all become. . . they break the law. They won't report their earnings correctly, they'll fudge their books, they'll do anything, they'll make deals, and not run 'em through their books. So, it's almost like we say, when a system first starts, you know, they'll take a small percentage and the government gets a lot of money, but in the end uh, the government takes a big percentage and you get less money because everybody's fudging. So I don't know what the answer is.

Don: Is that really necessary? I mean, is it almost an economic fact of life today for the businessman?

Frank: Yeah, sure is. I think so, I mean uh, I had a business and ran it completely a hundred percent above board, I didn't I mean, I reported everything and they broke me. I mean, the government broke me. And uh, now I, another business I run it above board and I can make a livin' and that's it. Uh, I've got another I mean, I've got a couple of other things I'm trying to make a lot of money

but I'm doing it in another way (uh-huh), I've got a deal workin' a franchise in hot dog stands, but that's a whole new ballgame. It's nothing related to Rocco's.

Don: Would uh, would you classify yourself as uh, a restaurant owner/operator or would you classify yourself as an entrepreneur type?

Frank: Oh, I'm a entrepreneur. I'm not a, I don't have a real love for the restaurant business. My partner does. (uh-huh) Because that's what he's done all his life. But me, I like, I like. . . my main thing is I don't like to work for anybody. I can't work for people. I have a strong inclination to be independent. I don't, you know, I don't like. . . I don't like to do things that other people tell me to do. I like to do what I think I should do. And that's. . . that's the , if it wasn't for that, I'd probably be working for somebody, taking the easy route. But because I have such a distaste for that, I maintain my own businesses and therefore I don't have too many bosses. I have. . everybody has a boss but you know what I'm saying. (right, I know what you mean)

Don: Uh, Rocco's is a unique restaurant in the fact in this area, and it's really the only try Italian Restaurant, and is located in Ceredo, sort of between a large metropolitan area, if you want to call that here in Huntington, Ashland uh, what about your relationship with the community? Does the business, do you two. . do you and Rocco have a good relationship with the community? Can you depend on that?

Frank: No, we don't become. . . try to depend on anything but

ourselves. And sometimes it's hard to depend on yourself. (uh-huh) But no, we try to keep a good relationship with the community. We try to you know, contribute something back uh, but we don't look at that as our you know, if we don't support the community, the community's not gonna support us. In that respect, we do what we do basically to get back something. But, uh, it's kind of like I don't know, we're not giving back so we can uh, make. . . do more business. That's not the motivation behind it.

Don: But just the motivation of giving.

Frank: Yeah, just, I mean, there's a lot of needs out there and we do little odds and ends here and there for an organization. We're not overly into it because like I say, we're not really flush, we're just makin' a livin'. We have (inaudible). . . our hours are flexible uh, sometimes we can put in 5 hours a day, sometimes it's 20. It just depends on what the deal is.

Don: So, do either of you belong to any civic organizations, like Kiwanis or. . .

Frank: Well, I'm on the Board of Director's of Big Brothers Organization. Rocky is a big brother. Uh, I'm a Jaycee, inactive, but I'm just you know, I'm on the roster. Uh, let's see, I. . . I help the United fund every once in awhile. I raised 5,000 for 'em this year, and I raised money for the Big Brothers. (right) I donate to the Boys Club. Most of my emphasis is with the youth. You know, and I'm not real strong. I. . . I coach a couple, well, I coach. . . ball teams, minor league ball teams you know, (right), for the youth. So I. . . I do a little bit in that respect. I'm not. . . you know, I don't kill myself but I do a little bit of

that. Rocco does the same thing. We donate to several organizations. Uh, things of that sort.

Don: I know from talking to a mutual acquaintance of both of ours, Mrs. Richards, that you are a republican and have run for office in the past. (right) Are you running for office now?

Frank: Yeah, I'm running for the House of Delegates.

Don: And uh, how is this going to affect assuming that you win, how will this affect the restaurant business or your time?

Frank: Well, let's just assume I'm gonna lose, 'cause that's what's gonna happen. But if I would, should win, it's gonna take some times away. I'd have to be in Charleston a couple of months a year, but uh, that's very flexible because I come on the weekends or leave Rocco, get away in the evenings or an evening. I could get through that. And then when I got back, I could work extra time, and he could take some time off, so. . . that's something you can come, you know, that's water that you cross when you get to it. And I don't see that happening at this point, you know. (mmm-hmmm)

Don: Are you primarily a Republican because you see a need for change in West Virginia?

Frank: No, I'm a Republican because I believe, you know, I was raised in a Democratic family and uh, all I've known all my life is Democratic politics. And when I decided to run, I looked at both sides and you know, to coin the philosophy of both party, and I liked the philosophy of the Republican party better. And uh, also, uh, (inaudible). . . Republican because in 1980 I sensed the conservative trend of the country, although that didn't hold true in West Virginia but uh, I didn't. . . I did not see Rockefeller

spendin' 12 million dollars. I liked the Republican philosophy because it says everybody's equal, everybody has an opportunity to do something but nobody has, ever, you know, because you decide to go live under a bridge, that doesn't mean that you should have high as you know, (inaudible). . . uh, wealth because I work 20 hours a day I mean, you know, we're talking about equal uh, chance or you know, equal opportunity to do something. A lot of quality people aren't equal. I mean uh, one guy may decide he wants to get ahead and work 20 hours a day to get a nice house, where another guy wants to go lay on the street, but yet up to 10 years he expects hey, this guy has something, I should have something. I don't believe in redistributing the wealth in that respect. And that's what we have, your great government spends 50% of the budget in redistribution of wealth, you know, and I'm not saying I'm against welfare, but I'm against a lot of the social programs merely for the fact they don't help the poor, you know, they help the people that don't want to do anything. And I believe in helping people that can't help themselves, but you know, a great majority of the people out there getting government relief can help themselves but they've learned to just go to the back door so to speak, to get the free handouts. And uh, they're used to that and they've lost their desire, or incentive to work. So, that's basically my. . .

Don: Well, that makes a lot of sense. Uh, I know a lot of people, especially small businessmen like yourselves, have been really concerned about the differences between the higher interest rates today and the low inflation. Do you see the cost of rural money affecting your business?

Frank: Well, it affects everybody in business. Uh, high interest rates are brought about by government deficit spending. They're spending you know, they're going in deeper every day, almost 3 quarters of a million dollars a day and that puts a lot of strain on the money. And the government doesn't say hey, what's the rate? Whatever the rate the government pays, so the rate keeps going up, the government keeps borrowing money and they don't care if it's 10, 20, 50 they just borrow because in a sense they create their own so, that kills. . . that's the major problem. That kills the incentive for anybody that wants to go out and borrow capital and eventually start something. Because there's no way you can earn uh, 15, 20 percent. I mean, you're working for the banks, you're not working for yourself. If you've got to borrow 500,000 or a hundred thousand, you know, you borrow (inaudible). . . 12, 15 thousand back but they say, for an average restaurant, they probably cost you 250,000 or 200, you're talking 35, 40 thousand a year in interest. Now, how much money do you have to generate to take that off the top, that comes off the top of your profit before anything else is paid. Now, you know, there's all the profit and it's gone. So, uh, the desire to borrow money is not there. On the other hand, if you have. . . if you have a little money saved, a couple 3, 400,000, the desire's to put it in CD's and lay back. No incentive for you to do anything productive with the money, just give it to the government, they'll give you a free ride on this big, big air balloon that they're on. You know, the government said, I'll take care of you, but you know, one day the bubble's gonna bust. Right now, everybody thinks everything's solid, but

we're really riding on a crest that eventually someday has exploded, always has in your history manuals see, that government after government has taken and you know, inflated your money because they've got in debt, of course that's illegal, under our system, but they've found a way (to do it), to do it, that's true. So, that's the big problem that happens over and over again when finally the bubble busts, everything goes back to zero and a lot of people out there think they're wealthy. They're not; they're just all big air.

Don: I want to change track a little bit here, and uh, ask you a few questions about you personally. (okay) You are a married man? (yeah) And your wife's name?

Frank: Betty.

Don: And you two have been married how long?

Frank: Ah. . . about 12 years.

Don: Do you have any children?

Frank: Yeah, I have uh, twins 9 years old or 10 years old, they'll be 10 in November, and a daughter 15, she'll be 16 this month.

Don: Do you as a family belong to or attend church regularly? Here in Huntington?

Frank: No, I don't attend church only for deaths, and weddings. (laughs) That's the only time you'll see me in the church.

Don: Yeah, in a way I can understand, because I kind of get tired of that religious stuff, too.

Frank: I'm not anti-religious. (inaudible). . . morals of a religious person, I believe in the morals, but I don't go every Sunday. I just. . . not into that.

Don: You uh, describe yourself as an entrepreneur. Would you also describe yourself as uh, a middle-class American?

Frank: Ah, no, I'd say I'm lower middle-class or upper lower. (laughs) (upper lower!) Upper lower you know, if I'm really thinking highly of myself, lower middle, probably upper lower.

Don: Do you have an aspiration of I don't know, making it rich, possibly in the restaurant business or in something else?

(well. . .) Hitting the big bucks.

Frank: Oh, I could sure uh, I'm. . . I've always had the uh, idea that some day I'm gonna you know, put it together. I don't you know, look for no fantasies, somebody droppin' it on me, if it's done, I do it, if it's gettin' made, I'm gonna have to get on it. I figure if I'm gonna do it, I could do it between my forties and, you know, in my forties (mmm-hmm), they're fast approaching. But yeah, I still have that desire. There's still ways to make money, there's still ways to you know, make a large amount of money. It's just that it's gettin' harder all the time. If it had been 1920, I'd already been there.

Don: Is that a goal of your wife and you both?

Frank: Well, it's my goal. And uh, she doesn't mind it because she'll benefit from it. (laughter) My wife likes the idea but she has no I don't think she has enough incentive enough to go out and do it herself. But she has enough incentive to stick with me and put up with my crap. (laughter)

Don: Uh, your family. . . were there, are there, have there been in the past or are there now any dominant (inaudible). . . or superstars in the area of sports, religion, politics?

Frank: No, I have a pretty. . . I come from a mediocre family as far as Greece in history, you know, everything we know, our people are just coalminers and immigrants and uh, no one has really established a name for themselves. I think I was the first one in the family to graduate from college. No superstars, no wealthy people. If the whole family died, I'd probably owe money, instead of inherit. (laughs)

Don: Are. . . are your family, or has your family been located here in the Appalachian coal area?

Frank: Well, my dad was born in the house that my mother lives in. My dad passed away last year. (oh, I'm sorry) he was 67. Oh, that's alright. Sixty-seven and he was born in the house that's up around Fairmont, it was a coal mining camp that since has been turned into a residential area. Yeah, he's been here all these years. My mother's family is from Ironwood, Michigan. They're Fin, Finland, Finnish people, and they had a farm up there and they left Detroit during the war, they both worked for Packard Motors, building airplanes (right) But they've been established in those areas. . . of course, when he met her, they moved to. . . to Fairmont (mmmm-hmm).

Don: So there've been a couple of migrations of your dad and your mom and you moving to here?

Frank: Yeah, I came down here to go to graduate school, met my wife and started working and really never left. (she's a local lady?) Yeah. Yeah she is.

Don: Do you uh, think that your children will uh, elect to go to college? You think they'll want to do that?

Frank: Uh, sure, they probably will.

Don: Do you see them having the opportunity to do that?

Frank: Oh, yeah, if that's what they want to do. Uh, I'm not the kind of guy that saves money, and prepares, you know, I mean, I guess we'll just have to figure out a way when they want to go. (right) I mean, if they want to go, we'll do it. They may have to work a little bit, but that's all right too.

Don: So, in a sense, the economic status of your family has improved say, during the 20th century, from your father not graduating from college, and you having the opportunity to (oh, sure), and now your children will almost definitely probably be going. (yeah, I'd say, sure)

Frank: Wouldn't you say most people are that way? I mean, you know, since, 1900 'til today, it's a different world. But yeah, things have improved. For our family, I'd say.

Don: Is that a result of uh, the fact that you're. . . you make more money than your dad or is that a result of just greater expectations in today's world?

Frank: Probably greater expectations you know, plus the hard work my dad did laboring in the mines to providing more you know, when you start from the bottom, that's no way to go, but I . . . (that's true). . . so, yeah, I'd say that that's true.

Don: I've heard you make a couple of comments that are really interesting about work and about uh, occupational choices, working or someone else or, as opposed to working for yourself. You seem like the kind of guy that is not only a go-getter, but believes if you don't work you don't eat, the old. . .

Frank: Oh, yeah, I have the real, I have the old real. . . I have no you know, there are people out here that believes the world owes them a livin', you know (mm-hmm), hey, I'm here, you had me, take care of me, that kind of thing. I. . . I mean, a lot of people, even my age, but I believe if you know, you're out here, you know, lucky enough to be conceived, nobody owes you nothing, the world don't owe you shit! You know, (right), you're here, and uh, nobody owes you anything. And uh, I believe, you know, if you don't go out there and work, you shouldn't expect, I mean, you know, I like, I like the idea if you want something, you can go out and work for it, and get it. You can get anything you want to if you want to put the time in it. If you have the desire, you can do whatever you want to do. . . motivation. I believe in that strong. . . I mean, you can't depend on anybody but yourself. And that's the way I am. I don't believe anybody owes me a livin'. You know, I don't expect anything from somebody. And I, you know, really don't. . . don't want it. (uh-huh) I don't like asking people for anything. It bothers me to go up and ask 'em. I mean, I have to do it at times, everybody does, but I don't like it. I'll avoid it and if I can figure out a way not to do it, I'll you know, I'll do it. But that's true. . . I mean, that's probably not a common thing any more. (that's true, it isn't)

Don: Uh, I am sorry to hear about your father and your uncle. I know they just recently passed away (yeah). Uh, if you don't mind, I'd like to ask you a few questions about that.

END OF SIDE 1

Don: . . . and start recording. Uh, probably now, it's working. As I said, your father just recently passed away. How did he pass away?

Frank: He had leukemia.

Don: Is uh, is that disease or cancer prevalent in your family? Did your uncle die of any cancer?

Frank: Well, my uncle was. . . he was like a half-uncle. See, my father's dad passed away when he was a young man, and that left his mother a widow with four children; she in turn married a uh, widower that lived in the same mining camp that had lost his wife. They kind of got together. So, it was like the Brady Bunch; he had four children, so they threw themselves together and had a family, now there was 8 kids. So this uncle was a step-uncle, but he was family. You know, they all grew up together. (right) And there's no. . . my father, out of 4 brothers on my father's side of the family, he's the only one that's died. He was the oldest. He died of leukemia. It's not uh, that. . . (it's not hereditary). . . it's not really, his mother died of a heart attack and uh, he had one uh, his father may have died of cancer, stomach cancer, something like that, but back then they didn't know what it was.

Don: Do you want to switchs tracks again here just a second? Uh, and ask you have you ever served in the armed forces?

Frank: Oh, yeah, I was in the Navy.

Don: Did. . . where you. . . were you unlucky enough to be sent to Vietnam?

Frank: No, I was in during the time but I wasn't sent over there.

Don: I was just curious, because a lot of men of your generation,

my generation just missed it. I got out of high school on the war end. A lot of people of your generation did go through that.

Frank: Oh, well, I went through it. I was uh, I was out of the service when it was gettin' hot but uh, I. . . I was in during you know, the conflict when it was really, I was in there from '67 to '69. (so you were in there when it was hot, then?) Yeah. But I was on the ship. (mmmm-hmm)

Don: How did you feel about it then?

Frank: Well, I was at that time, I was for winning the war, still am, I thought they should have just went over with heavy guns and kicked ass and got out, instead of pussy-footin' around. But uh, it, there came a chance when they were gonna send me you know, I was gonna get a change, and I may have went and the thing you looked out for in the Navy, was gettin', 'cause I was an officer and you know, they may send you over and they may put you in command of one of these, well, it's like a little PT boat, and went out at the river with a four man crew, why, I didn't want to have no part of that action (laughter), so, a couple of guys got orders to go do that, and there was always a couple of goofs around. I was on a ship with 5,000 people and several hundred officers and uh, there was a couple of crazy guys on there that wanted to go so, they could trade. I had in my mind if I got orders, I was gonna trade 'em with one of these goofs (yeah), and let them go. (they were lifers?) Nooo, I don't know if they were lifers, just you know, gung-ho guys, nuts. And they wanted to go over there, so I thought if I got the orders, I'd. . . if that didn't work, I'd figure out something, you know, have an injury or (laughs), I had

no desire to go. I mean, I would go for a legitimate battle (I can understand that), but I'm not. . . I don't want to go over there just to. . . for the holding action. If you want to go over and win, I'd be happy, but I mean, just to go over there and knock off a few guys every week, just so that. . . (somebody can have a body count) Yeah.

Don: Have your views of the conflict changed any, today?

Frank: Well, no, I mean, the Vietnam war to me should have been won. I don't think we should just back. . . I think we should have just won it and been done with it. (mmmm-hmm) We could have. . . we could have kicked 'em, we could have really went in there and it could have been over. But because that the citizens got involved and really backed us out, you know, it looks. . . they try to say it was a victory for you know, but it really wasn't. It. . . it wasn't a victory. Just a needless loss of people. But it wouldn't have been if they had won it.

Don: One last question and then we'll conclude. Uh, because you are a small business man and economics really are near and dear to your heart. . . they have to be, they're your life's blood, uh, you. . . you've had some pretty strong opinions about the interest rates and about the deficit. You are a republican and it is true that President Reagan has increased the deficit more during his four years in office than any other prior time in our nation's history. Do you see that as a liability? Would you vote for Reagan again?

Frank: Well, it's coming down to Mondale and Reagan, I don't ahve any love for Reagan. Reagan has busted the budget; 200,000,000

dollar deficit. But see, it's out of control, really, you know. The only way he could stop it now, is somebody's got to go in and say, this is what we're gonna do folks, you know, we're going to uh, balance the budget this year. It's gonna hurt a lot of people, I'm going in the White House and bar myself in, I'm not gonna be got on the street because I know there's gonna be a lot of people wantin' my ass. (right) See, I'm just gonna hide out here, it's what you got to do if you want to turn this around. Otherwise, you know, this. . . this nation. . . I don't want to sound like a doomsday person, but it's going down the road so many nations before, it's going down the drain, because no one's got enough balls to uh, grab hold of the reins and say, hey, wow (inaudible). . . we're out of sinc, we're 15 hundred billion dollars in debt, going you know, two, next year it's gonna be three. In 1979 it was a 35 billion dollar deficit. Now, deficit is just what you're going in by year, as a realm of almost a trillion dollars. Now, it's 15 hundred six years later. Six more years it's gonna be 3, it will double again and you know, everybody's carrying hundred dollar bills. And we like (inaudible). . . paying twice a day, and people running. . . I mean, the faith in the government it deteriorating on a daily basis. Not a lot, but it's deteriorating. And once that faith is gone, then you know, it's over as far as the economic. . . you know, you have an economic system, your economice system is believed in, it works. If it doesn't, it doesn't work. You have chaotic period uh, our. . . in 1979, that's why I got in politics, basically, because of the deficit uh, you know, I thought I could make a big change, so I mean, you can go read the papers.

I gave my best the two races I ran in '80, I tried to educate people, I ran in '82 and I'm runnin' in '84, but I'm out of gas. I'm just. . . I'm on the ballot. If I win, fine; well, there's no way I'm gonna win. 'Cause it's. . . I mean, I've been in it long enough to know that. . . what's happening. They go in these old folks home; these high rise towers, the governments now building, they pull them out, there's so many people on the government assistance, and government this and government that, and the people (inaudible). . . vote straight democratic and you won't have any republicans win, save Arch Moore. And he may loose, you know. And uh, see, you really have no choice and the people that are in there you know, self-perpetuate themselves. Randolph's been in there since the '30s, Byrd's been, the only time he'll leave is like I said earlier, but there's nothing I can do. I've done everything I can do. Now I. . . I ahve, I feel comfortable with myself. Hey, I made, I made a hard effort. I went out there and busted guts, raised \$37,000 in private contribution you know, and people say, well, you're a quitter. No, I'm not a quitter. I've just done everything I can do, you know, within the system. Now someday you know, a day of reckoning will come. I can't believe it's been this long, you know. I mean, we'll go, step another 200, 300 uh, billion in debt next year and uh, it's ridiculous. We're. . . it's a joke. It is a joke and people don't realize it. So, something's gonna break, something's gonna give. I just hope you know, a lot of, a lot of people don't suffer when it happens, but I'm afraid there's gonna be a lot of stuff, and you talk about welfare and this and that, you know, when the government. . . someday will not

be able to provide everybody with everything because the government really does nothing uh, it is not a producer. And it. . . it's knocking out the producers every day. You know, the little guys that are out there struggling, keeps breaking their backs and taking this from this guy and giving it to that guy, and finally one day this guy wakes up and says, hey, I'm done, I'm not doing anything, you know, I'm just gonna lay back and get on the dole, too, more and more people doling, the marginal producers are knocked out and then they keep going to the big producers for more and then they put them on a marginal level and they just keep whittling away your productive end and you know. . . In this society, you're rewarded for not being productive. If you're not productive, you get rewarded. (that's not right) If you're productive, you get penalized. And it's just basic common sense. When that happens, you're gonna have fewer producers and more non-producers. You just. . . you know, one day you're gonna wake up and you're gonna say, where's the bread? You know, well, nobody's making bread. (laughs) So, you know. . . I. . . people say, boy, you're pessimist. No, I'm not, I'm just well, in Rome, that's why they ahve edges on coins. The government use to get the ocins and shave the edges (shave the edge), now they put ridges on coins, you know, to stop that. So they come up with a new way. They rob the American people, the government robs them every day. And deluding their money, 3 quarters of a billion dollars. When I was a kid, I never saw a hundred dollar bill. Today everybody has 'em. You know, so they're not worth you know, the more you made, the more there is of anything, the less the value you get, so. . . But

they've got everybody so cash poor, the money is (it's so tight), in big demand but there's a lot of numbers on the books, a lot of people think they have money (mmmm-hmm), that really don't. So I've kind of converted. I'm kind of in the material business now. I mean, I just want, I mean, I like to have al ittle bit of food around me, at home, I mean, I'm not into heavy materialism, I don't want any property, I don't want anything more than I can control physically myself. Now, what is wealth? What isn't? It's accumulation of my physical (things), things, and people say, well, I've got 7 million in the bank, you know, I got this. They don't have nothing. 'Cause when the system goes, they're not gonna have that, that buying power. (blue money instead of green) Yeah, it's uh, it's ridiculous. I mean, you think about that. You keep adding 3 quarters of a billion dollars to the economy everyday and you got 200 in your pocket every day, that 200 shrinks a little bit. Uh, it's gonna be interesting to see what happens. I. . . I'm, I'm like 39 years old, you know, it is happens before too long, you know, I mean, I'm physically able to move around and do some whatever it takes, but I don't want to see it happen whe I'm 70 and feeble and can't be able to do anything because they're gonna just roll right over me and then you know, say, hell with this you know, we've taken care of old people long enough, let's get rid of 'em. Burn 'em or something, if it comes to that. (yeah) And they'll say you're not productive or you're not doing any. . . you know, you want something, and you don't have a history of what you've done in the past, no bearing on it. It's gonna be interesting, it really is. I was really hot on it for awhile, see

'cause I was involved in the business and I needed a lot of capital and I need inventory and I needed, I had accounts receivable, and when interest rates blew out, you know, then it put me instead of working for me, I was working for somebody else. But I had no control over that, see. But yet, I was the bad guy. I was the guy that wasn't doing his job, you know, wasn't. . . wasn't. . . I was making my mistakes. And it really tore me up for awhile, so, I got real active. But see, since then, I've calmed down, mellowed out, you know, I went through my emotions, did my thing. And now I'm just out there. . . I mean, I know that I can survive (mmmm-hmm), so I'm out there just doing my thing, low profile, you know. In this country now, you don't want to be visible. I mean, if you uh, if you go out there and buy you a new Ferrari, you know, and start looking real nice, it won't be 10 minutes before an IRS agent will come and, the American (inaudible). . . enters, the IRS, and the powers they have are unphenomenal (that's true), and uh, they can just about do what they want to. And I've had my battles with them, you know, and I have no, I have a very strong distaste for government agents and people that really don't do shit except suck off the rest of society (right), but that's another story. But, uh, so you want to keep a low profile, you want to keep you know, you start re-evaluating what's really important in life. So you lay low, have your friends, do what you want. You can still eat your steaks and go on your trips, but you just can't, you just don't want to, (no conspicuous), yeah, you don't want to be conspicuous, which is stupid you know, because if a guy wants to be a big jerk and go drive a Ferrari, and flaunt his. . . that's fine,

because to me, that just, other people out there hopes that. . . you know, that guy's got a Ferrari and it gives him something to shoot for, plus in addition that creates jobs and he's spreadin' it around. You know. . . but uh, that little part of man that's I don't know if it's a flaw or what, greed you know, puts a stop to that. We just forget, I mean, we start out on the right track, but we always forget to go back. It happens over and over again. Country after country, government after government. And I mean, in the United States no exception. We're to the point now where people think the world owes them a livin' in this country. We have. . . we have a. . . a system where people are you know, in the 1984 deal, that's true, everybody. . . go out at 10:00 at night, everybody's in front of the t.v. you know, t.v. influences us uh, forms our opinions, makes us all like one big mass of you know, all get control to have no individuality, no you know, people don't visit, talk to each other, one on one, just the t.v. talks to us. If you're in control of t.v., you're in control of society.

Don: And it can be bought, too.

Frank: Oh. . . I. . . you know, that'd put me in control. (laughter) I mean, you know, it's a psychological thing, the t.v. does. The opinion that it presents and some of the way it creates you know, people start to take on these opinions and identify with them. You've seen "where's the beef"? I mean, people's just looking. They want to be led, you know. People are looking for leaders all the time. That t.v. just coming on, that has a great effect on society and really that controls it, in a sense. So I stay away from t.v. and but I mean, I'm not saying everybody, but

I'm talking about the average American citizen. I used to go door-to-door campaigning you know, in the evening, I'd knock on people's door. And 9 out of 10 of 'em, when I'd go in there between 6 and 7, 9 out of 10 people would be laying on the couch watching the evening news. (mmmh) I mean, whatever, you know, you think about this too, the news media, they (inaudible), they present the news in the way they want to fashion it. Uh, they're commentators, uh, I mean, if you're uh, a news commentator, Peter Jennings, or one of those guys, and you have an idea of a concept of what's. . . what you believe and you want to get it, you can just, how much influence they have and maybe some of 'em don't know it, I'm sure, but if any of them are halfway bright, they realize what they can do. You seen how, you can see how they try to influence the elections (mmmm-hmm), I mean, with teir subtleties. Just like when they wanted Carter back in, I mean, they burned his ass when he was in, then they didn't want Reagan, they wanted Carter. Now, they want Mondale in, they're gonna try to burn Reagan again. But, uh, you know, I think sometimes it's surprises me sometimes the general public sees through it, you know. But they're gettin' more skilled at it all the time. If they. . . if they to. . . want to lead the American public in a certain direction, they fail, they learn by their mistakes and they get better and more subtle and uh, it's uh, it's another experience. The great American television. (laughter) It just never happens. When have we ever had a whole country which could be so controlled in the form of electronic media where in the old days, they never had that. So, it was a little tougher.

Don: I read somewhere that by the time a child is 16 years old, he has seen like a hundred and fifty thousand hours of television.

Frank: Yeah, yeah, it does. . . . it's unvelievable what the influence is. When I grew up, I grew up just before television came out. I mean, it was just coming in. I got in on the tail end of it, but when I grew up, like in the evenings and stuff, and the summer evenings, all the neighborhood families came up and they'd meet at the fence or they'd go over there and shoot the shit and drink coffee and talk about what they read, different opinions, argue, you know, they had some interaction, you know they learned. . . well, they built their repertoire of communication, because they were talking and trying to present. . . hearing different things. And people had different ideas. They had different exposure. People went different places. They shared these things. But today, it's. . . that doesn't happen very often. I mean, not, it's completely gone. They just lock themselves in their little rooms, turn their air condition on, turn on their t.v. and they're there. (yeah) They don't think, we'll do everything for you. We deliver, you know, and. . . that's different, that's different. It's gonna be interesting, the whole next 10 years.

Don: I think you're right. Well, thank you very much, I appreciate it.

Frank: Well, no problem, Don, I enjoyed talkin'. I got something off my. . .

END OF INTERVIEW