

Michael Jepson: Let me start. This is Michael Jepson from the National Marine Fisheries Service SERO office. I am here today with Dr. Bob Shipp, a Gulf Council member, and we are going to do an oral history as part of the Fishery Management Council Oral History Project at SERO to coincide with the Voices from the Fisheries. So, Bob, we kind of start by beginning to ask you to talk a little bit about your family background. So, if you could just tell us your full name, and where do you reside right now.

Robert Shipp: I'm Bob Shipp, and I live in Mobile, Alabama right now.

MJ: What year were you born?

RS: I was born in 1942, Tallahassee, Florida. My father was personal secretary to two governors in Florida, Millard Caldwell and Spessard Holland. He died when I was four and a half, so I moved to my mother's family in Fort Walton Beach. My grandfather kind of raised me, and he was an avid fisherman. We fished pompano in the surf off of Destin for years and years, so that's the start.

MJ: Did your mother work?

RS: She did work. She worked for an uncle as kind of a secretary. Then about three years later, she remarried. She and my stepfather and my sister moved to New Orleans. That's where I grew up, from the time I was seven, eight years old.

MJ: In New Orleans?

RS: In New Orleans.

MJ: So, were you always interested in the marine environment? I mean, you say your grandfather was an avid fisherman and you went with him.

RS: Yes, I did. I was always interested in fishes. In fact, every year, I go on a tuna trip with my high school classmates. We do it once a year. They always laughed that I'm the only person they knew in high school that knew what he wanted to do and actually did it. So, even in high school, I was committed to fishes.

MJ: So, that interest was there early on. Do you have any brothers and sisters?

RS: I have an older sister. She lives in New Orleans, in Kenner as well.

MJ: Was she involved or interested in marine science?

RS: Not at all. She married a physician, and she had four sons. Three of them are physicians and one of them is in the movie production business.

MJ: Did she go fishing with you or your grandfather ever?

RS: No. Once in a great while, we had a four-wheel drive jeep. She knew how to drive those old four-wheel drivers. So, when my grandfather's guy was ill – drunk was what he was. [laughter] When he didn't show up, my grandfather would often get Velma to drive the jeep until I was old enough to do it.

MJ: Do you have any memories about those fishing trips with your grandfather?

RS: Oh, absolutely.

MJ: Anything special that you would want to relate?

RS: Absolutely, yes. I mean, my grandfather at that time was in his late [19]80s, and we would go out and fish from about 9:00 to 1:00 or 2:00. I have one funny recollection. At the time, there was a fellow named Bob Sikes who was a house member for Northwest Florida, and very powerful, very senior. Hurlburt Field was located on Okaloosa Island, and it was prime fishing area, but it was also a restricted area. My grandfather got Bob Sikes to get a letter drafted from the Department of Defense giving him, and only him, permission to go through their gate to fish. So, my fond memories are the shocked look at the guard station when he pulled out this letter and said he had permission to go fishing there.

MJ: So, that was your first foray into exempted fishing permits? [laughter]

RS: Yes, that's what it was. Well said, Mike.

MJ: How about children? Now, I think you have three children.

RS: I have three children. I have an older daughter who's a consultant for – not a consultant. I don't know exactly what she does for Franklin Templeton. She has two daughters. I have a son who owns a seafood restaurant in Orange Beach, a very large seafood restaurant. It's called Shipp's Harbour Grill, just in case any of the listeners are in Orange Beach. Then I have my baby who's twelve years behind. She's thirty-three years old. She lives in Manhattan, and she's vice president of J.P. Morgan Private Bank. It sounds impressive, but there are a lot of vice presidents. [laughter] It's not quite as impressive as it sounds.

MJ: So, did any of them ever show any interest in going to marine science?

RS: No, not at all. Not at all. I tried. My oldest daughter started off in pre-med, but that lasted a semester, and she was out of it. The other two were in marketing. So, no, they had no interest at all in marine...

MJ: How about when they were young? Did you take them fishing?

RS: I did, especially my son. We went fishing a lot with a lot of other friends who were fishermen. My youngest, I took occasionally. But that's pretty much it.

MJ: I would like to talk a little bit about your educational background. Where did you go to

high school?

RS: I went to high school in New Orleans, Jesuit High School. I was there from eighth grade through senior year, so five years. Then I went to Spring Hill College in Mobile for my undergraduate degree. I was the only biology major. All the others were pre-med majors in that curriculum. Then I got my master's and PhD at Florida State.

MJ: What was your dissertation?

RS: My dissertation was the pufferfishes of the Atlantic Ocean. It was kind of fun. I described four species that had not been known to science before. At various times, the dissertation actually had some relevance, because pufferfishes produce a very, very powerful toxin, tetrodotoxin. Occasionally, there would be breakouts, and people suspected that some of the species I covered in my dissertation are toxic. But other than that, it didn't have a whole lot of practical value.

MJ: How about some of the professors that you worked with while you were at Florida State? Were there any of note there that you...

RS: Not really. My major professor was a fellow named Ralph Yerger. He was a product of one of the Ivy League schools. I can't remember which one. He actually got his degree in mammalogy, but he took a job at Florida State as a fish taxonomist. So, he was a great, great mentor, but not of great fame. However, some of the students that were with me have had remarkable careers. One of them is Dr. Larry Abele who actually served on the council. He was provost at Florida State for many years, and probably the world authority on crabs, decapod crustaceans. Martin Gomon was one of my classmates, and he published a huge volume on the fishes of southern Australia, very well known. There were a few others as well, but those are the two most notable.

MJ: Well, I noticed that in your bio, you said that during your grad school years, you did do some teaching at Florida A&M.

RS: Yes.

MJ: That was your first teaching experience?

RS: That was my first teaching experience other than as a lab assistant when I was a graduate student. Very interesting experience.

MJ: Why do you say it was very interesting?

RS: Well, I was there during the racial turmoil. I and one other White professor were the only White professors at Florida A&M. We were there teaching when Martin Luther King was assassinated. I was actually on campus that morning, and literally, all hell broke loose. I had an attempt on my life that fortunately, I survived. It sounds negative, but I loved teaching at Florida A&M. Just great people. Wonderful faculty. so supportive. They knew it was an

uncomfortable situation, and they made me feel like home. Really close friends.

MJ: The viewers may not know that Florida A&M is historically a Black college in Florida. So, were you teaching biology courses there?

RS: Yes, I was teaching biology. One of the reasons they hired me is the chairman of the department saw marine science as a real opportunity for some of their students at the time. Most of their science students went to med school, Meharry and some of the other Black med schools at the time. He thought that they needed more options, and he thought marine science might be one of them. So, I taught biology, but I also taught a marine course.

MJ: So, after you got your doctorate, what was your first job?

RS: My first job was where I am now, at the University of South Alabama. But I didn't get hired as a fish scientist or a marine scientist. Actually, I applied for the job. They had a job for a fishery scientist and I didn't get it. I was very disappointed. I thought I was an appropriate person, of course. So, I was back in Tallahassee, still teaching at Florida A&M. They had a sudden opening for a physiology teacher for nurses because the guy who was teaching it, I think he got married or something and left. Since they had already gone through the interview process with me, they decided, "Let's don't start this whole thing over again." They called me and said, "Can you teach anatomy and physiology?" "I don't know." [laughter] But yes, I had been a lab assistant in comparative anatomy at Florida State. So, I said yes and came over and started. In the first two years, that's what I taught, anatomy and physiology for nurses. Then I moved into the other courses, and gradually, more marine courses. Finally, all fishery and marine courses after that. The Sea Lab at Dauphin Island was just beginning then. For the first time, they offered a marine vertebrate zoo course, and I taught it. I actually served as the interim director of the Sea Lab for 1977 and 1978 while they searched for a new director.

MJ: South Alabama was probably a pretty small school.

RS: It was then. It's not now, sixteen thousand now. It's huge, with med school. Of course, our PhD program in marine sciences is based at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab. So, it's become a major, major player.

MJ: So, let me just go through your bio a little bit, because you have had kind of a stellar career and done a lot of different things. So, you were director of the Alabama Center for Estuarine Studies.

RS: Right.

MJ: You are the head of the Alabama Oyster Restoration Program, and you were the associate director of the Dauphin Island Sea Lab for ten years. You have been chairman of the Department of Marine Sciences until 2012. I mean, you have done quite a bit. What stands out in that career thus far?

RS: I think the thing that really stands out is the growth of the Sea Lab that paralleled the growth

of our program at South Alabama. When I was in the biology department, we started a master's program with just a couple of students and faculty. By 1992, the administration was really pushing for a Ph.D. program. There's a lot of funding implications and the like. So, they formed what originally was the Coastal Research and Development Institute, which was supposed to be multidisciplinary. But quickly, the outside consultant says, "You need to focus it in a department." So, they formed the Department of Marine Sciences. I was its first chair. Through that department, we got our PhD program approved by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education. From then on, things have improved markedly. Funding became available. We had a lot of help from Washington getting our program going. So, now, it is one of the premier programs in the Gulf Coast.

MJ: The students, do they seek out careers in fisheries management or marine science that assist management?

RS: A lot of them are in management. It would take me some time, but there are so many students with the fishery service and other colleges and universities that came through our program. I just came up the elevator with Steve Branstetter. He was one of our students. Jessica McCawley, who's head of the Florida Commission, was one of our students. So, in other words, there's a whole plethora of them, many with the fishery service and many with state agencies.

MJ: Do you see a lot of them in the Gulf Coast?

RS: Absolutely, yes. Lots and lots of them.

MJ: That is good. Did you work with any notable people early in your career?

RS: Yes, I did. I guess the one I worked with who was most notable was a fellow by the name of Gary Nelson. Gary was curator of fishes at the American Museum of Natural History in New York. One of the more interesting things is I went to a seminar that he gave at Tuscaloosa one time, and we started talking afterwards. I happened to tell him about the Alabama Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo, and then I invited him down. Oh, my gosh, did that open doors because the Guinness Book of Records lists it as the largest and oldest fishing term in the world. One of the amazing things is we have thirty categories, but we also have a category called most unusual. What Gary would do would come down collecting skeletons of all these different species of fishes. The word spread. Then in the ensuing years, he came down for about ten or twelve straight years. In the ensuing years, we had leaders from the British Museum, the National Museum of France, the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, just a convergence of all these scientists to gather fish skeletons. They had to be kind of crazy to gather skeletons, but as Gary said, that's where all the knowledge is, in their skeletons. He was talking about it in an evolutionary sense and phylogenetic relationships. So, he's probably the one most notable that I've worked with. He's still active in Australia right now.

MJ: Well, do you see tournaments as a place where data can be gathered, and useful in a sense?

RS: If they're run correctly, it's just a wellhead of great data. Right now, at the rodeo, we probably have thirty graduate students always there working, gathering otoliths and skeletal

material and tissues. When the mercury scare came, we had gathered samples of tissue from all these different species. It was thirty-odd species for mercury testing. The FDA works with us. In fact, we're co-authoring a paper right now on all the species that we collected and the analysis that the FDA has done on the safety of the flesh.

MJ: Has the tournament grown considerably since you first brought...

RS: Oh, yes, it is. Oh, normally, we'd have about 3500 applicants. What's hurt us in the last few years, first of all, the oil spill. We did not have a tournament in 2010. Then the restricted season for red snapper grouper – no, red snapper, amberjack, and triggerfish, those were the three favorite categories. The rodeo is timed the third full weekend in July, so all three of those species currently are out. That's hurt a little bit. Last year, I think the attendance was about 3100. So, it was down about five hundred, and that's the reason.

MJ: How did you first get involved in fisheries management?

RS: It's kind of interesting. Well, I had served on a number of the advisory panels, reef fish advisory panel and shark advisory panel. I guess it was about 1990 or 1991. I forget who – gosh, I can't remember. You probably remember better than I, the head of the southeast center at that time, the redheaded guy, tall, who passed away two or three years ago, I can't remember his name right now, but it'll come to me. But anyway, I got to know him pretty well. When the slot came open for Alabama for an obligatory seat, especially a recreational seat, the local conservation associations backed me up and sponsored me in Washington. So, I got appointed to that seat. I think it was [19]91 or [19]90. I served for nine years, and then off and then back on.

MJ: So, what are some of the significant changes that you would say that the way fisheries are managed today compared to when you first began? What would you say has been the biggest improvement? [laughter] If you've seen any.

RS: That's a hardball question, not a softball question. I think the bureaucracy has made it very, very difficult compared to what it was. The bureaucracy has always been there, and there's a reason for it. You have to have public input and public hearings and cooling-off periods and the science and all the rest of it. But I do think the bureaucracy has really bogged things down. I think the way Magnuson has been restructured has really tied the hands of the councils and given a lot more authority to the SSC than the councils have. I think that's unfortunate. In my personal opinion, I think we've gotten way too conservative. I like the old saying, "The operation was a success, but the patient died." That's what I see in fisheries. We go more and more buffers, more and more conservative. In the process, people are losing their jobs, and we're wasting a lot of fish. Anytime you have a process where so many fish are killed, something's wrong. So, I guess that's more of a negative answer than a positive one.

MJ: Well, how could you improve it, do you think? Would it mean changes to Magnuson?

RS: Yes. Let me give you an example. The way things are managed right now, everything is based on catch quotas. There are other options. There's adaptive management. As an example, for red snapper, if we said that all harvests had to be within twenty-five fathoms, they live to a

hundred fathoms. So, immediately, you've guaranteed a certain degree of security to the stocks. If you'd said twenty-five fathoms, and you had a six-month season for the recreations, a two fish bag limit, we were far more liberal than that ten years ago, and the stocks were still increasing. So, that would be a safety factor. The NGOs should be happy, because in effect, we have a marine protected area, which they really, really like. The commercial should be happy because the threat of reallocation would go away. But we can't do it because we're stuck on this business of quotas and tonnage, and it doesn't need to be that way. Yes, if you do twenty-five fathoms, you might kind of deplete that shallow portion of the stocks, but they'd continually be replenished. It would make fishing more of a challenge, too. So, anyway, that's an example. We need some more adaptive management. We need different approaches to these things and not just be bound by quotas, which are so hard to get anyway. Mike, since I've been involved, we have gone through six different models for red snapper. Everyone, basically, has failed and been replaced by a better model and a better model.

MJ: Well, that was going to be one of my questions. Do you think the science has improved?

RS: I do think the science has improved. I really do. The real positive, I think, is moving away from fishery-dependent data to fishery-independent data. Because anything based on fishery-dependent data is inherently biased by the catchers, by the fishers. You go to fishery-independent data, which are harder to get and more expensive, but they're much, much more accurate. To me, I guess that's the most encouraging thing I see, is the move towards fishery-independent data.

MJ: Are there any memorable moments or periods or issues throughout your management career that kind of stand out and that you remember, if you want to reflect upon some critical times, or things that you think were successes or anything like that through the Gulf Council?

RS: Yes. I guess the process of involvement in education of stakeholders has been a real plus. We had a population twenty years ago that really didn't know anything about fisheries management. I think, now, they have bought into some of the successes. I think there's a lot of frustration, but I think people know a lot more. I think, eventually, that will pay off in terms of, like I said, changing the regime, so we have more management options than we had before, more adaptive management. I think their sentiments will be reflected in Congress, and Congress will eventually make some changes that loosen up some of these strongholds that we have.

MJ: What have you enjoyed the most about being involved in fisheries management?

RS: The people, there's no doubt. No doubt. I've had some really, really close friends, and I won't say especially, but maybe especially some of the ones on the other side of the table that turned out to be really great people. I love Harlon Pearce. I think he's neat. Bob Gill, just a wonderful guy. They're dyed-in-the-wool commercials, and I sure respect that, but that's probably the best thing that has come out of it.

MJ: Have those relationships changed over time? I mean, from what you remember in the beginning, were they more divided, or has it always been kind of that?

RS: I think they've always been good. There have been some rough ones too. By the way, Andy Kimmer was who I was thinking of. But yes, I think we've always had good bonding with council members over the years. Some of us have served together a long time. Corky Perrett was another one that's been there a little longer than I have.

MJ: What would you say is the least that you have enjoyed about being involved in fisheries management?

RS: I think the very few times when the adversaries have gotten personal, and that's happened a few times. Not very often, but there have been some instances where people have really gone at each other personally. Of course, that's true, I guess, in any profession, and we always abhor that. I think some of the frustrations to the stakeholders – it really hurts me to see the charter industry suffering the way they're suffering. The recreational private guys suffering the way they're suffering right now, which, in my opinion, is totally unnecessary if we had more latitude. So, yes, in terms of disappointments, I guess that's it.

MJ: Is there anything that you are particularly proud about, your accomplishments, in fisheries management?

RS: Well, I've certainly enjoyed chairing the reef fish and chairing the council over the years. I think the council itself has done as much as it can do. Given the constraints and the guidelines, I think the council people are committed. I think we should be very proud of some of the successes we've had.

MJ: Do you have any advice for a young person who might want to get involved in fisheries management?

RS: I do, kind of a two-pronged approach. I think that young people need to be really well versed in their statistics and modeling capabilities, but at the same time, don't forget the scientific method. I think a lot of times we just rely so much on models. Remember, the scientific method is observe, gather data, formulate a hypothesis, and test it. I don't see that very often anymore. I think the young people that had a blend of both of those would be best fixed. Because I do think, eventually, we're going to move back towards observing and gathering data and make that much more important. We hear it now. Gathering data has become more and more important. The models are dependent on good data, and we just don't have that good data yet.

MJ: I noticed that you have a guidebook that you are an author on. Tell me a little bit about that guidebook and how it came about.

RS: It is kind of funny because it goes back to the rodeo. With all these fish species coming in and talking to the fishermen – and they really didn't know all their fishes. So, in 1986, I think it was, I put together this Dr. Bob Shipp's Guide to the Fishes of the Gulf of Mexico. Many, many of the illustrations either came from photographs at rodeo, or I spent a lot of time at the Smithsonian gathering those old, really high-quality drawings that they did in the 1890s. I sold about 25,000 copies of it over the years. Then just the year before last, I totally revised it, replaced almost everything with color, took all the old black-and-whites out, and have come out



with a new edition. It's kind of my hobby. I'm not going to quit my day job. [laughter] It's a hobby with that book.

MJ: You are also a staff writer for Sport Fishing magazine. Could you talk a little bit about how that helps in fisheries management or helps with the study influent or letting people know about marine science and things like that?

RS: Yes. Sport Fishing is one of the three major fishing magazines. The editor, a fellow named Doug Olander, is well qualified. He's a scientist. I think he's got a master's degree. Very, very interested in conservation, but also wants good fishing available. He has allowed me to write a few columns on fisheries. I did the cover story on the – I can't even think of the shark right now, but one of the shark species. I'll think of that in a minute too. He's written some editorials that were based on my thoughts with him. Just recently, he published a blog on their website describing my ideas on how to manage snapper fisheries that I just described to you. It's gotten some traction. Makos. Shortfin makos. I got started there, again, because of the identification of these oddball fishes at the rodeo. People would send him photographs of fishes, and he would send them to me to identify. We'd publish a picture and a little thing about the fish in the magazine. Kind of funny, because when it first started, I was handling all the fishes from all over the world. Truth be known, I didn't know some of these things and made some mistakes. He calls me one day. He says, "We got to get some other guys from the Indo-Pacific and all." So, there are several of us now that do that. But there's a column in the magazine every month called *Fish Facts*, and it's the eight or ten oddball fishes that people are sending.

MJ: What is a common misperception that people have about the council?

RS: Oh, that's easy. I think they think that the council does not listen to public testimony, that doesn't pay any attention to what they say or what they think or what they write in. That's absolutely false. I have seen more votes shift based on public testimony. I think the problem, of course, is every time there's an issue, there's people on both sides. If the council doesn't respond positively to their side, they think they're not listening. That's not the case at all. I do think that when we get these mass emails and mass mailings, then the council doesn't pay much attention to those. But yes, I think that's the biggest misconception.

MJ: That is kind of all the questions I have. Well, I did want to talk to you a little bit about your wife, Linda. She did teach at Spring Hill College. She was in biology.

RS: She was in biology. She got her bachelor's at University of Alabama, her master's at South Alabama, and then went back and got a PhD at Alabama in cell biology and physiology. She was really good. She's really good. She taught at Spring Hill, I guess, for ten or eleven years. Spring Hill College is a tough little Jesuit school known for their pre-med program. The reason is she and the other faculty were really rough on those students. Just to give you an example, when she taught physiology, a lot of times, they used live animals. One time, they were using squirrels. You could never do this today, but those students were out at midnight capturing squirrels and bringing them in. The squirrels were – [laughter] there are some funny stories. Yes, she was good, but she's retired now. She's just spending her time trying to keep me physically active, which I hate.

MJ: Does she come to the council meetings?

RS: Very rarely. When Larry Abele was on the council, Larry's wife, Linda, and my wife, Linda, were and are closest friends. They've been close friends for thirty years. So, when Larry was on the council, quite often, the two of them would come together, especially at a place like New Orleans or something like that, where there are things to do. But no, as we speak, she and Linda Abele are together at our place at Perdido. So, yes.

MJ: So, have you enjoyed working in fisheries management, being in the council?

RS: Loved it. Just great. I may not sound it because of what my perceived criticisms are, but that's part of the system. That's what you have to do.

MJ: Well, I think you are right. There are a lot of issues, very complex issues, that come before the council. Sometimes, it is the restrictions on how you have to handle them, I think, always been an issue. Is there anything else that you would like to mention or would like to talk about?

RS: A couple of specific things. One, despite what seems to be negative thoughts on management, overall, management's really successful. When you think of how things were in the early 1980s, when we had no restrictions at all, we saw what happened with red drum, how it just got totally depleted. Fisheries management has come a long way, and all of our stocks are in reasonably good shape. Some of them in excellent shape because of what we've done. Like I say, we don't want the patient to die. We need to benefit by it. The other which is specific is subsequent to the oil spill. I'm on the research board for the Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative. That's the BP-sponsored program. We're sponsoring about \$500 million worth of research. BP has kept hands off completely. We're totally independent. I am so relieved at what appears to be a recovering or a recovered Gulf. When that spill first occurred, I thought our way of life was over. I really thought the Gulf was lost to us forever. It has been so rewarding to see one habitat after another come back. We just had meetings last week in Mobile, the Oil Spill Conference, and so many good papers. It's kind of interesting, because some of the researchers feel like they've come up with negative data which is a good thing. But they're under the impression if they don't find something alarming, nobody wants to hear it, and that's not true. That's wonderful news when we come up with negative data.

MJ: Oh, that is good to hear. I think a lot of people were wondering, is there still something out there that might have...

RS: Yes. No, there are some residual things. There's some funny stuff in Louisiana, in the marshes, where there's been a delayed reaction to some of the oil that's turned into naphthene and naphthalene, which are mothballs, and it's killed all the spiders. Those kinds of things, you don't know what the impacts are going to be long-term. But overall, we see very few instances of permanent harm.

MJ: So, there was a lot of talk about ecosystems management. How does the council's work in the management of fisheries fit into all of this? I mean, we have the hypoxia zone in the Gulf,

and we have the oil spills. We have a lot of things going on. Is there anything that we are missing in the way that fisheries are managed?

RS: Sure is. [laughter] Get me on my soapbox. Roy and I joke about this. But to me, it is so blatantly obvious what an impact the oil platforms have had in the Northwestern Gulf and the artificial structures have had in the North Central Gulf. It's totally transformed the ecosystem. If there's one frustration I have with fisheries management, is they don't seem to appreciate ecosystem shifts like we have observed here. I personally think we probably have more red snapper in the Gulf than we've ever had in history. I'm absolutely certain of it. It's because of all the habitat we've created. That just doesn't factor into some of the modeling projections, especially the age structure where the health of the snapper stocks is based on how many in each age class you have, and that's minimized. That pales in comparison to the spread of habitat because the population is expanding so rapidly, yes, you're going to have a lot more younger year-class fish than you normally would in a stable situation. That's translated into, "Well, we need to rebuild those older fish." It doesn't take into account the major ecosystem shifts that we've had. I documented that in a paper in 2009. We went back to the history from the 1850s and traced the stocks, and they progressed over time. It's just so obvious.

MJ: So, we just came out of a meeting today, and red snapper was the big issue. So, what is red snapper going to be like in the future?

RS: I think we could have a robust snapper season for both commercials and recreational. I think the commercials are in pretty good shape with their IFQ system, and it's stabilized their market. My son owns a major seafood restaurant, so he interacts constantly with them. He loves having a source of snapper, even though he abhors what he has to pay for them. But I think, eventually, the science is going to catch up. The recreational harvest, both for-hire guys and the private wrecks is going to get back, I would guess, probably to a six-month season, two fish, three fish bag limit, maybe an eight-month season eventually, when we appreciate the impact that the habitat and ecosystem changes have brought about.

MJ: I guess that is about all I have, unless there is anything else that you would like to say.

RS: I think I've said it all, Mike. I probably kicked off the council tomorrow.

MJ: Well, no, I appreciate you sitting down with us, Bob. I just want to thank you again for sitting down and doing the interview.

RS: I've enjoyed it. It gives me a great opportunity to get on my soapbox. [laughter]

MJ: All right. Thank you.

[end of transcript]