

--otherwise they couldn't use the other parts for flying these missile now from over in Utah. They come right over Socorro and land on the range. So it looks to me like they could use a great deal of that country on a multiuse basis.

You own the Opera House, huh? Yeah. If I had the money I'd like to restore it and put the can-can girls in an old fashioned show and I'd like to do that myself. The stage is still there and the boxes are still there. We're all busy paying for water lines and fencing and stuff that goes on the ranch or something else. Apparently it takes four generations to make enough money if you're successful to have something where you could spend that fifty or hundred thousand dollars on a venture like that. I would imagine it would take fifty thousand dollars to restore that opera house. I think you could put it in shape, probably. If you spent fifty dollars a foot on remodeling that would be fifty thousand dollars. And then of course, if you went ahead and put shows in there you would have to have more. Twenty-five or thirty thousand would make payrolls. It would be something like the melodrama or something like that. *You own the Baca house too, don't you?* No, that's Garcia. *The Garcia house? Well that house is where the doctor's office was.* Yeah, her husband was the former Senator. I don't know what the relation is between them and the Bacas. After her husband died - I think everybody kind of agrees on this - she built the opera house after he died. And then she just ran out of money. And then when Dr. Duncan? came in he thought she had all the money because she had all this property so they got married and then both of them found out the other one didn't have any money so they got unmarried. *She didn't speak much of him.* Well. I guess she took it kind of personal because when they spend it all and then it's gone and they don't have any more ---*He has this book where he said Dr. Duncan? was another one that he mentioned who came into New Mexico and became doctors here. People had a very low opinion of that Mrs. Garcia - I forgot what he said about them.* The next time Dr. Duncan married was one of Barry?'s sisters and when I was going to law school in Pennsylvania I lived right across the street from the Episcopal Church and this Reverend Gilbertson? was a brother of Mrs. Barry. Mrs. Baca's oldest boy was named Gilbertson Baca. *What were the Bursums from Norway - Lutherans or what?* I think they were Lutherans. I don't know what that is. That's between an Episcopalian and a Catholic. *And what were you reared as?* Presbyterian. *You went to Mt. Carmel for one year. Who were the nuns there then? Did they have a big group of 'em?* Well, you know I don't remember. I remember that there were McIntyre girls there and two or three of them became nuns. I don't remember who the nuns were. *Now you were Mayor how many years?* Twenty-two years. There was a lot of squabbling and carrying on down there. Whether you are Mayor or a member of the City Council everybody is fussing around and it looks like they enjoy the squabbling. It's kind of a chore to go year after year three or four times a month, and if it isn't pleasant it doesn't take you too long to get tired of it. It might have been time for me to get out anyway and that way the people get a chance to see, you know, whether you were a good mayor or a bad mayor. If you're in there all the time, they have no way of comparing you to someone else. I was elected five times and then I was defeated once. *Who defeated you?* Troy (Dailey?). *Oh, he was there one year, wasn't he?* Yes, and then I was elected again. *Who did you run against then?* Oh gosh, I don't know. *Who did you run against first?* (Vandever?) *Who was mayor before you ran?* Joe Gallegos. *Had he been mayor a long time?* Yeah. My dad was mayor back in 1905 to about 1911, I believe. *Mrs. Hilton was a Democrat, I believe, but she always voted for Holm Bursum's*

friends. She was a fine Democrat. Well, the Democrats could have been elected Mayor because they outnumbered the Republicans two to one - three to one. *Well, what other public offices did you hold?* I was County Commissioner for four years. *And then you were on the State Highway Commission?* Yes, one term, and my term expired a year ago this March. I was President of Boys Ranch a good many years. I had quite a few of those non-paying jobs that people have to give time to or should give time to. I worked for the Flood Control Administration for 15 or 20 years. This was a non-profit organization primarily to develop new sources of water and water salvation and water reclamation for the Rio Grand Valley. In fact that organization was instrumental in getting a trans-mountain diversion of water that transported water from the Colorado River Project to the Rio Grande. This is the first year that water has been coming through. It's diverted 110,000 acre feet to the Rio Grande which was imperative because water is really at a premium in New Mexico particularly in the Rio Grande Valley. You know, all of that stuff you don't think much about. Right now I'm President of the New Mexico Highway Users Association, another non-profit deal which is primarily to get the earmarked tax funds for construction of highways to be used 100% for construction of highways and not allowed to be diverted to other uses. Of course, highways are communication of great importance to the whole United States. The people in Rhode Island, they couldn't care less about highways because they're not even half as big as Socorro County, so they would like to take that money and divert that money and use it for mass transit, airports, and everything else other than highways because they're not faced so much with highway problems as the western states which are large in size and very dependent on federal funds for highway construction. *Are they still providing a lot of funds for it?* Yes, of course a lot of it has shut down. You see the highway fund is set up by direct tax and the funds from the gasoline tax and the excise taxes on automobiles and tires and batteries was earmarked in a special fund to be used for the construction of the Interstate Highway system which crosses the U.S. from east to west and north to south. A lot of 'em are after that money and to divert it to other uses. The Highway Users group was formed to protest that attempt and effectively to keep that money where it was earmarked. *Now you're rattlin' around in that great big house, aren't you?* Well after a few years you got a lot of junk in there. *Well, I meant rattlin' around in your room.* Well, I've always been so busy with these various activities that I really never got to be as much at home as I would have liked to have been. Luckily that I was getting (out of stress?) in this period because Betty? was looking after the mail and she did everything - she was busy all the time, so that gave me more time. After she passed away I had to be the housemother and take care of the house and take care of the mail and the yard or at least be able to supervise it and take care of it so it's caused me to be home a lot more than I used to be. If you're busy it seems like time passes by so as the old saying goes: busy beaver - happy beaver. She was a great wife, you know, and she did a lot in the community and was always willing o help anybody, but the Lord takes your wife-- *Was she the one that people said she spoke to you all the time - she remembered you?* Yeh, I stopped by Saturday - I was up there for a meeting and I went by the bank there and there was Teresa Chavez, and we were talking and she said "I'll never forget Betty. When I graduated from high school she gave me a trip to Las Cruces?". She was gettin' wheelchairs. Are wheelchairs still hard to get? You know a year or two ago I thought Betty was always asking for a wheelchair saying so and so was sick and needed a

wheelchair so a year or two ago I thought I'll just buy a couple of wheelchairs and bring them down here and we'd have them in Socorro because they didn't have one in town and they wouldn't let you have one at the hospital. You had to go to Albuquerque and get one from Crippled Children (Hospital). I don't think they're too expensive. *Yes, they are, they are about \$160.* Well I know, but considering there is nothing to take their place. *You'd be surprised to hear how hard it is to get anybody to get from the two (---).* Well, what I was thinking is buying a couple and having somebody take care of them. *They give you old ones, but by the time they give them to you they are not much good. They rent for about \$13 a month. Another thing about Betty I think we should mention is she always gave fruit from the yard there. We stopped getting fruit.* After she died, Barbara Lockhart said I'll give you all the figs if you'll make preserves out of 'em . We didn't have any figs - oh we had a few, but it was a bad spring. *Can you tell us something about your son and his family?* Well, he was married once when he first got out of college and they didn't have any children and they had the thing annulled about six months. And then he met (---) his present wife on a blind date and they hit it off pretty good and they got married and had three children. *One of em's named after you, isn't he.* Yeah, well I guess he was named after my father. I'm really not a junior - they got it all fouled up. As a child whenever I signed something it was just H. O., Jr. *Well, who are you named after?* His father - he was named Frank Otto, and then my son is named after his grandfather. Well after we had this all fouled up, he really would be the 2nd so this really got involved and his son was the 4th. And you know, since I have title to property as Holm O. Bursum, Jr. I really can't drop the junior. And then some people got to calling us Jr. and the 3rd instead of Big Holm and Little Holm so they got us all fouled up. Nobody knows who we are anymore. *I have learned a lot things I didn't know about Mr. Bursum.* I'll bet you did. Did you know about your father-in-law, Frank Sickles? Percy's father? *No.* Well you and I were talking one day about that boardwalk. That boardwalk was here when I was a kid, but when the big flood come along in 1921, the Sickles had a hotel downtown and I used to go there and fish off of that porch because there was a lot of water between the Val Verde Hotel and the Depot and a drain ditch ran through there and I used to catch fish all the time - catfish about 6 or 8, and my mother would cook 'em for me.

(rambling) Harry Doherty used to be the District Attorney and he was a Democrat, but he was the best District Attorney and the best attorney and the smartest man. He died when he was about 40 from too much whiskey - cirrhosis of the liver. And when they told me about Buddy Griffith's dad, he said there was a real bright man, a fine attorney and a good legal mind and he said he drank too much of that whiskey and he died young in the forties. They told me he would drink a fifth of whiskey during the night. Of course I didn't even know him, but in his pictures he didn't look like a drinking man.

Well thanks for being here for these interviews. I've enjoyed it.