

## Frank Mitchell

### The Republican Cloakroom

Recollections of the Republican Cloakroom during the 1960s.

*Interview recorded August 6, 2008*

Well, I remember it was L-shaped, and in the back half of the 'L' it was a lot of big, comfortable chairs and couches. And the Congressmen would come back and take advantage of that, particularly on a long day, a long session. And we would have something—we had some overnights during some of the—I was there during the civil rights—Voting Rights Act debate. There were some housing debates, I remember. And you could always tell when you got the calendar of the agenda for the coming week and what was coming up, and you'd see the number of hours set for debate. And you'd say, "Oh, this is going to be a long one." {laughter} You know, and so by midnight, two or three in the morning, and they're still going, and we're like this, you know, just hanging our heads. You know, and that's when Ms. [Frances] Bolton would come in. "Hello boys! How you guys doing? Oh, you're looking so—like you're pooped out. You need to, you need to get some energy." And she'd tell us to breathe deeply and close our eyes, think about relaxing from head to toe, just a little bit at a time, and then reverse the process, and then you'll feel better. And she was right. But it would only last a half an hour, and then you'd feel tired again.