

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Harold (Hal) Smith

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Illinois Statecraft – General Interest Oral History project

Interview # IS-A-L-2019-042

Hal Smith, who worked for many years on the staff of Senator Charles Percy, and decades later for Congressman Darin LaHood, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Illinois Statecraft-General Interest* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Dates: Jul 16, Aug 13, Aug 28 & Oct 23, 2019

Location: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

Interview Format: Digital audio/Digital video

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPLM

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Transcript
being processed

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 0:58 + 1:37 + 1:31 + 1:18 / 0.97 + 1.62 + 1.52 + 1.3
= 5.41 hrs

Session 1: Hal Smith's early life and education

Session 2: College years and early experiences with Sen. Charles Percy

Session 3: The Senator Percy years through 1983

Session 4: Percy's 1984 election, intervening years and work with Cong. Darin LaHood

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on March 2, 2020.

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Hal Smith, *Illinois Statecraft—General Interest*, IS-A-L-2019-042

Biographical Information/Overview of Interview: Harold (Hal) Smith was born on November 22, 1950 in Springfield, Illinois. He was a 1968 graduate of Springfield High School, then attended Springfield College in Illinois and Sangamon State University, where he earned his Business bachelor's degree in 1972 and MA degree in public administration in 1976. Following graduation from SSU in 1972, he worked in the private sector for several years, and in 1975 he had the life-changing experience when he took an International Group Study Exchange trip to England, where he and his team members gave a series of presentations to British Rotary Clubs as Smith's group traveled throughout central England.

In 1977 Smith began working for Illinois's senior senator, Charles Percy. Smith worked in Percy's Springfield office, doing major Illinois project work and constituent services, while assisting Percy manage his travels and activities in Illinois. Smith talked at length about Percy's life and political career, highlighting the senator's policy positions as well. In 1983 Hal married Margaret (Meg) Moore. Senator Percy was running for reelection that year. His Democratic opponent in 1984 was Paul Simon, who had the support of the American Israel Public Action Committee. That group was upset with Percy's support for the sales of AWAC aircraft to Saudi Arabia. Percy ran a spirited race but lost by a very thin margin.

Smith spent the next several decades working in a variety of public and private sector jobs, especially in the emerging field of state lotteries, most of the time as a consultant. In 2016 he worked for newly elected Congressman Darin LaHood, running LaHood's Springfield office. In early 2019 he left that position to work for the SIU Foundation at the School of Medicine as Development Director.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Senator Charles (Chuck) Percy; American Israel Public Action Committee; Project and constituent services for Charles Percy; Congressman Darin LaHood; Congressman Paul Findlay; Paul Simon; Springfield College in Illinois; Sangamon State University; Rotary International; Robert Kennedy; Ronald Reagan

Note to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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