

Interview

THURSTON TWIGG-SMITH

REEL 1

(shot 1)

01:00:04:00 (MEDIUM CU) GENERAL CONVERSATION

(shot 2)

00:15 QUESTION: Twigg, this is an archival tape, so we need some context for people who will be watching it sort of raw. Could you give us some background on your birth, you parents, your education, and your professional career?

00:28 TWIGG-SMITH: Well, I'm Thurston Twigg-Smith. I was born out here in Hawaii; in fact, I'm a fifth generation resident here now. I was born on Kuakini Street in the Children's Hospital. My mother walked down from our house on Bates Street through the back pastures and had me one afternoon there. I went to all the local schools here; Lincoln School, Kapalama, Roosevelt, and then Punahou—I didn't go to any school more than three years—and then went away to college, graduated from Yale in 1942, and went directly into the Army and got back here the end of 1945. I went to work for the Advertiser in nineteen-forty—February, 1946, and stayed there for fifty years, and now I'm retired. •

(shot 3)

01:12 (SLIGHT ZOOM) QUESTION: You were Thurston Twigg-Smith, and I think the Thurston comes of course from the famous Thurston family that—

01:20 TWIGG-SMITH: Right; uh—

01:21 QUESTION: Could you tell us a little bit about that family?

01:24 TWIGG-SMITH: My mother was uh, the granddaughter ... of—uh, great-granddaughter of uh, [UNINTELLIGIBLE] Asa Thurston, the missionary. So my Thurston connection comes down through her. Uh, L.A. Thurston, who figured in the revolution activities was my grandfather. My father, the Twigg portion, and the Smith portion both uh, came up from New Zealand when he was about sixteen years old on his way to the Big I—uh, the mainland. And he lived around ca—San Francisco for a number of years as an artist and went to the Chicago Art Institute. And remembered Hawaii when he got out of there about 1914 or so and came back here, and wor—painted on

the Big Island, lived with the Lyman family over there, and met my mother uh, during a volcanic—volcano eruption. He was out on an island floating around in Halemaumau Crater with uh, Dr. Jagger, the vulcanologist. And they all wondered who uh, those crazy galoots were out there. They met that afternoon, and the rest is history.

(shot 4)

02:28 QUESTION: The Smith was your mother?

02:30 TWIGG-SMITH: No; that—uh, it is complicated. My mother was Margaret Thurston; uh, middle name Carter, Margaret Carter Thurston. **(02:33 ZOOM IN)** Carter coming from my grandfather's law partner who was killed in the counterrevolution. But uh, my father's last name was Smith. **(02:47)** In fact, I have twenty-seven first cousins down in New Zealand all named Smith. And he was born near a mount named Twigg, a mountain named Twigg after a doctor. So when he became an artist here, he would—he signed his name Twigg-Smith all the time. **(03:05)** And William Twigg-Smith was his real name. So then he decided when he became the artist he'd hyphenate the name to have some distinction. So I'm the first one to have been both with the Twigg, hyphen, Smith. Terribly complicated.

(shot 5)

03:17 QUESTION: So you grew up in a house—your being a benefactor of the arts, you grew up in a house full of art.

03:24 TWIGG-SMITH: That's correct. Yeah; I think I got my interest in art that way. He was a musician as well as an artist. He was manager of the Honolulu Symphony for twenty years, I guess; maybe longer. Played second flute in the symphony. So our house had a lot of stuff going in the cultural sense around it. Unfortunately, I didn't inherit any of that—

03:45 QUESTION: But he was—

03:46 TWIGG-SMITH: --skill.

03:47 QUESTION: He was a—

03:47 TWIGG-SMITH: He was uh—

03:48 QUESTION: --painter.

03:48 TWIGG-SMITH: --a painter, essentially.

03:49 QUESTION: And do you have a lot of his stuff?

03:52 TWIGG-SMITH: We have quite a lot. We have maybe a hundred and fifty paintings of his. Most of them are sketches that he did on sites around the islands. I lost about forty-five, fifty of them in—when my house in Kona burned down, 1976. But uh, my brother and my sister, his descendants, all have copies. I mean, all have originals of the group that we now have.

(shot 6)

04:16 QUESTION: You grew up in Hawaii's territorial establishment, obviously.

04:21 TWIGG-SMITH: Right.

04:23 QUESTION: Could you describe how its members felt about the statehood issue, and take it back if you can, as far as you can, both as a person who live in that establishment and also as a historian.

04:36 TWIGG-SMITH: Well, I think I got more interest in statehood from a historian stance than having actually been a participant. I—when I was doing the research for that book that I wrote about the Hawaiian sovereignty, I came across the fact that a number of the early monarchs, even before Kamehameha III had thought maybe annexation to some power was the solution for Hawaii's independence problem. (05:00) And actually, Kamehameha III formalized a treaty ready to sign by the United States for annexation, but he died just before he signed it. And Kamehameha IV wanted to ally himself with the English, the Great Britain side rather than America. So I found uh ... back in about eight—in the middle of the period of the 90s, 1890s after the revolution and when the republic was formed, there was a lot of interest in annexation; some people opposed, some people—most people for it. And many, many Hawaiians at the time favored annexation as a step towards statehood. (05:41) And astonishingly, most people don't realize this because they are misled by the other propaganda from the other side that uh, Hawaiians were not interested in annexation or statehood. The first Legislature after we became a territory was uh, at a time when something like two-thirds of the voters were Hawaiian, and yet seventy-three percent of the

Legislature was Hawaiian. And that Legislature unanimously passed a resolution for statehood in 1903, the second session that they had. And that kept being intro—it came up every session thereafter for about twenty years. And our delegates to Congress, who because of the voting nature were always uh, native Hawaiians, uh, Wilcox and then Prince Kuhio, they kept introducing bills in the Congress for statehood. (06:33) Of course, they didn't get much of anywhere. But there—so there is a long, long background to statehood, and it's not just something that happened to start in the early part of the territorial period. But it really—it took a long time to get to fruition for various reasons.

(shot 7)

06:49 QUESTION: I knew about Prince Kuhio, but I wasn't aware that Wilcox introduced statehood legislation too.

06:57 TWIGG-SMITH: Well, actually, I'd have to check that out to be sure myself. Wilcox was the first delegate, and the first resolution was passed in 1903. [CLEARS THROAT] It could be that Kuhio was the delegate by 1903, because Wilcox died in the process of going for reelection. So I better take that back. It—it's the—the thing that's important to me is, uh, I think anyway, is the fact that the Legislature—Legislature here, which represented the Hawaiian establishment, as I mentioned earlier, was uh, nearly three-quarters Hawaiian, passed it unanimously.

(shot 8)

07:35 QUESTION: And where was your great-great-grandfather, the one involved in the overthrow; where was he on the issue of statehood?

07:45 TWIGG-SMITH: That was my grandfather, L.A. Thurston.

07:49 QUESTION: Right.

07:50 TWIGG-SMITH: I don't think he was for statehood. Uh, it's funny; I haven't noticed anything in his writings specifically on statehood. He—he was obviously strong for annexation and spent a good deal of his life back there in Washington fighting for it. And my mother, in fact, was born there. But uh, statehood uh, in uh—he died here in 1931 and I was only ten years old at the time, so I never got to discuss it with him. But I don't see anything in his writings and I don't recall anything in—in the Advertiser when he was the publisher—and of course I wasn't thinking much about that at the age of ten.

So I don't know whether he was for statehood or not. I rather suspect because he didn't say anything about it that it was probably something he didn't think was a great idea. Annexation, he thought was great.

(shot 9)

08:37 QUESTION: But you did know him for—at least when you're ten, you probably have some memory of him.

08:42 TWIGG-SMITH: Oh, yeah.

08:44 (ZOOM IN) QUESTION: What kind of a guy was he? I've heard—

08:47 TWIGG-SMITH: Well, he was—

08:47 QUESTION: --so much about him.

08:47 TWIGG-SMITH: He was a big, husky guy with a great, big flowing mustache. Every time he kissed goodnight it would tickle our—our faces. Uh, he had trouble with his eyesight in his la—later years from about the middle 20s on. And he used to chase us around the yard when we were interrupting his efforts to write his memoirs. He—he wrote them in the mi—in the mid-20s. And he was going blind at the time, and finally went blind. (09:14) But he seemed to be able to chase after us with his cane anyway. [CHUCKLES] So I only remember him as a—I remember walking along with him a few times in—around the yard. He was very interested in propagating hibiscus. And he had uh, developed a big yellow hibiscus which he wore every day in his coat lapel. We were walking along one time, and he asked me what I thought I would do when I grew up. I said, Oh, I'd like to be an inventor. And he said, I think you better think about that again; inventors don't usually make a lot of money. So that was my only contact with reality with him.

(shot 10)

09:47 QUESTION: You say he would chase you around. I mean, did he—he comes across of course in the official histories as kind of a determined—was there a sense of humor to him or—

10:00 TWIGG-SMITH: Oh, I think there was a sense of humor. I remember the one time when he was seriously chasing us, 'cause we

were—he had an office built on—he lived next door to us there. We lived on a piece of land that he had, three or four, six acres maybe. And he'd had that from way back in the ... the—in the 19th century. And uh, he'd built an office right over near our part of the yard, so we—we would play outside of that office, and with the windows open, the noise would go in and bother him. (10:30) And he would yell at us from inside to quit, but there were, you know, four or five boys playing around; didn't do that. So he came storming out one time, and we ran over the neighbor's house where—uh, it was Walter Emory, the architect, Kenneth Emory's father. And uh, Kenneth—the Emory grandchildren were my playmates. And he chased us into the house and said, Where are those rascals? I want to get them. And he'd pound on the floor. We were under the bed and we could look out and see him. But ... at the time even, we thought, I'll bet he's winking at their mother. Where are those guys? [UNINTELLIGIBLE] We were right there. [CHUCKLES]

11:05 QUESTION: They gave you up?

11:09 TWIGG-SMITH: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. We had dinner every Sunday night ...

11:08 QUESTION: Uh-huh.

11:10 TWIGG-SMITH: Living right next door there, and it was uh ...

(shot 11)

11:17 (SLIGHT PAN LEFT) QUESTION: In 1937, after the Great Depression, there seemed to be greater urgency for statehood among some of the sugar planters and so forth in Hawaii. Do you have any memory of any of that, their discussion of that, or historical ...

11:36 TWIGG-SMITH: No, I don't. I uh, I pick up statehood about the time I went down there to work. And all that uh, pre-war 30s period and during the war years, I—I don't uh, recall discussing statehood with anyone. I—I went away to college when I'd just turned seventeen. And uh, I was gone for seven years. I didn't come back during the summers.

(shot 12)

11:59 QUESTION: Was there any discussion when you were in high school where it was an issue that they would talk about in civics classes at Punahou or at Roosevelt in anyway? You don't remember—

12:10 TWIGG-SMITH: I don't remember a thing about that; no.

[INTERRUPTION/GENERAL CONVERSATION]

(shot 13)

12:34 QUESTION: Sort of a general atmosphere question, if we could. Could you describe what pre-statehood Hawaii was from your point of view? What was economic—you know, we're going to ask Ah Quon McElrath this question. I wanted another perspective, if you will. What was pre-statehood Hawaii, what was economic and political and cultural dynamics from your point of view?

13:04 TWIGG-SMITH: Well, obviously, sugar and the agricultural part was the main thing, and all of my friends were involved with sugar and pineapple operations during the summer. And by operations, I mean they worked in the pineapple cannery or something menial like that. Uh ... so we grew up looking for careers in sugar or pineapple, or whatever. And I went away and took engineering, and came back with a job uh, lined up at the Maui uh, HC&S plant, the mill there. (13:34) But then uh, because my cousin had been killed in the war, uh, nobody left in the family to work at the paper; they said, Why don't you go down there and take a look around. (14:43) So I went down, and of course got stuck and stayed there the rest of the time. But uh, but Hawaii was primarily uh, an agricultural enterprise with all the side issues that come along with that—the need for marketing and insurance and other activities that led—that had to be surrounding a big production plant.

(shot 14)

14:03 QUESTION: And culturally, I mean, you grew up in the establishment. What were your relationships between the various ethnic groups at that time, or did you have little contact with ...

14:14 TWIGG-SMITH: Well, it's funny; we uh, we had contact, but actually very little. At Punahou at the time in my class, there were—there were a hundred and eight students. And I don't think there were more than a handful of Asians in that uh, grouping. Nowadays, uh, it probably mirrors the co—the—the population here. But I don't know whether that was economic or what. Uh, there—there were English standard schools that we all went to. Roosevelt was English standard; Lincoln School, the elementary and middle

school there was ... I forget whether Kapalama was or not. I was out there for two years. Um ... hard to say.

(shot 15)

14:56 QUESTION: Why did your parents move you from school to school so often?

14:59 TWIGG-SMITH: Well, we couldn't afford—you speak of growing up in the uh, establishment, but we were growing up in a situation where my father made four hundred fifty dollars a month, and at the time of the—this is when the Depression hit the uh, HSTA—he worked at the HSTA, sugar planters association, they took—gave him a one-third cut. So he was down to three hundred dollars there in 1933. (15:11 ZOOM TO CU) So that's why I didn't come back from Yale during the summers.

15:27 QUESTION: Yeah.

15:28 TWIGG-SMITH: I stayed back there and worked. But uh, things—things were very tight here during those—uh, not—1929, we hadn't yet seen the Depression. It hit here in the early 30s up to about '35.

(shot 16)

15:39 QUESTION: You were more a name establishment than in fact wealth establishment.

15:43 TWIGG-SMITH: That's true. [CHUCKLES] That's for sure.

15:47 QUESTION: So you mentioned earlier you became aware of the statehood issue really after you got back from military—

15:54 TWIGG-SMITH: M-hm.

15:54 QUESTION: --service and were working at the Advertiser.

15:57 TWIGG-SMITH: That's right.

15:59 QUESTION: And you went to work for the Advertiser in what year?

16:04 TWIGG-SMITH: I went to work—to work for the Advertiser February the 1st, 1946. And I worked in the advertising department there for a

year, and then a year in the circulation department. Intending to continue on to go through the various departments. That was my plan. But the 1949 shipping strike came along, and the national advertising department that I was in at that time was defunct. (16:27) I mean, we weren't getting any shipments from the mainland of much of anything. So they were down to just two people, and the—the woman in charge of it, I—I think was afraid that she was gonna be next to go and I would survive [CHUCKLES] as a family member. So she thought it'd be a grand idea if I went up to the editorial department. So I went up there in 1949. And uh, that, I really loved. I—I wasn't very enthusiastic about the sales end of it. (16:54) But I worked in there as—I went in as one of a staff of about five other people, like Jack [UNINTELLIGIBLE] and Buck Buchwach were there as reporters. Uh, so we did a little of everything in those days. In fact, I became the city editor after two or three years, and managing editor after about five years. So—and I stayed as managing editor for another five years.

(shot 17)

17:17 QUESTION: Now, did you start out as a reporter when you went in?

17:19 TWIGG-SMITH: As a reporter; yeah.

17:21 QUESTION: And you covered everything?

17:22 TWIGG-SMITH: Covered everything.

17:23 QUESTION: Five of you folks—

17:25 TWIGG-SMITH: Covered the whole works. We had one person cover the courts, 'cause you had to be there most of the time. But when I was covering the courts, if uh, if I got put on a jury, I had to cover that trial even though the judge would say, No more writing about this case. Are you writing about this case? Oh, no, sir. [CHUCKLES]

(shot 18)

17:43 QUESTION: Tell me about—you said that you first really sort of became aware of the statehood issue in 1946 or thereabouts—

17:52 TWIGG-SMITH: M-hm.

17:54 QUESTION: --when you went to work for the Advertiser. What was the Advertiser's position? I believe Lorrin Thurston, Lorrin P. Thurston was now the editor; this was your uncle. (17:59 ZOOM OUT)

18:05 TWIGG-SMITH: That's right. Lorrin P. Thurston, my—was m—the publisher, and he was my uncle, L.A. Thurston's only so—no, he had two sons. I'll take that back. But he was the son in charge of the newspaper. And he was—he went through a change in the early 50s. He—originally, he wasn't very enthusiastic about statehood. Uh, I don't know what made him change, but uh, the newspaper didn't really fight against statehood. (18:30) The Star Bulletin being very much for it, it would have been a natural thing for them to have had great debates. But I don't recall anything like that happening. I—I think uh, the animosity between the Advertiser and Star Bulletin at that upper level was primarily personal between Joe Farrington, who was publisher of the Star Bulletin and our Delegate to Congress, and Lorrin Thurston, publisher of the Advertiser, who didn't like Joe. (18:57) So the two of them uh, engaged in all kinds of arguments, and I—I don't think the Advertiser knowingly wrote its uh, long diatribes against the ILWU and other union activities, I don't think they—they were written with the question in mind of what that would do to statehood. I think that was something that Lorrin Thurston felt very personally about. And he had a whole series in the late 40s of uh, of headlines—I mean, uh, editorials across the top of the front page. Dear Joe editorials that could apply either to Joe Stalin or Joe Farrington. And they were really pretty weird. [CHUCKLES] But uh ... they made him happy.

(shot 19)

19:41 QUESTION: And he was arguing in those days that the ILWU was doing your work in Hawaii and taking the place over for Communism or something—

ILWU.
19:51 TWIGG-SMITH: He was—he figured the ILWU was a Communist front. And of course, there were Communist ties; you had all the—that—that period of time when everybody saw a Communist under every bush or one thing. And—and the whole idea of the um, the—the establishment here, having come along without the problem of unions that any management sees as a problem, um, would—became a serious problem for them in the late 40s when the ILWU took on its strength. Up to that time, there'd been skirmishes, I think ten or fifteen years of unionization on the sugar plantations, but nothing as serious as ILWU, which took over sugar, longshore, hotels, and

even the circulation department in the Advertiser. So it was a pretty formidable organization in an economic sense, much less the question of whether it was communistic or not.

(shot 20)

20:46 QUESTION: Guys like you, you're twenty-five year old in 1946, a veteran of three years in the service [UNINTELLIGIBLE] Buchwach and the Stars and Stripes, [UNINTELLIGIBLE]. **(21:02 ZOOM OUT)** My guess is there were other veterans who were coming back and working for the paper and all these kids from the 442 and so on. What experience—did the experience of being involved in the war and being from Hawaii have an impact on your generation in being more pro-statehood? I guess that's what I'm trying to ask.

21:22 TWIGG-SMITH: I think the experience of the war certainly had an effect on all of us one way or another. And it made all of us—it matured all of us very quickly. I mean, three years, four years in the Army, and ending up at a—in Europe in the war would open anyone's eyes. And I think coming back here with the GI Bill up and available, and seeing people going and taking advantage of it, the—the—primarily the 442nd group came back and the GI Bill opened the door for them to go to college. **(21:55)** They hadn't been going before the war and might never have done it if it hadn't for the—that GI Bill and their wartime experience. But they didn't have an immediate effect because they were away in college from '46 to the early—to '50, early 50s. But no, there was uh, definitely a feeling that Hawaii had to move, had to move up, 'cause the people like Buchwach had—and all of the—and Jack [UNINTELLIGIBLE] and uh, later Sanford Sahlberg uh, those—they—those people had come from away from Hawaii. So they had a different viewpoint than those of us who'd grown up here. Uh, and may or—and might or might not have thought about economic future, just sort of assumed that we'd stay here and be working.

(shot 21)

22:40 QUESTION: Where did you serve during the war?

22:43 TWIGG-SMITH: I served in Europe. I—I'd meant to get out here, but couldn't get on a boat. And so I went in the Army in San Francisco and ended up in—landing [UNINTELLIGIBLE] six in Normandy in—in field artillery unit, and we went all the way to the Elbe River, through all five of the campaigns.

23:00 QUESTION: So you fought across—

23:03 TWIGG-SMITH: All the way across Europe.

23:04 QUESTION: Across Europe.

23:05 TWIGG-SMITH: Yeah; m-hm.

23:10 QUESTION: And as an artilleryman; you saw combat?

23:12 TWIGG-SMITH: Oh, yeah; every day. [CHUCKLES]

23:15 QUESTION: Uh ...

23:24 (ZOOM OUT) TWIGG-SMITH: Artillery is a much better place to be in.

(WIDE SHOT) [INTERRUPTION/GENERAL CONVERSATION]

(shot 22)

23:34 TWIGG-SMITH: --and they were facing this pillbox structure on the Ruhr River. And the only guns around that could consistently hit on it were ours. So he had [UNINTELLIGIBLE] our guns there. So we had good [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

23:24 QUESTION: I can imagine.

23:45 TWIGG-SMITH: He was a great writer, you know. I mean, he would write some very good uh ... D Day anniversary stories.

23:52 QUESTION: Yeah.

23:53 TWIGG-SMITH: But he—he didn't like to do that. He's the one who should write a—a story about it.

23:57 QUESTION: He's a very [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

23:58 TWIGG-SMITH: Yeah.

23:58 QUESTION: I did some work on Jack Burns and he was [UNINTELLIGIBLE] stuff that he had that he had done on—

24:07 TWIGG-SMITH: Yeah.

24:07 QUESTION: --on the Jack Hall story.

24:10 TWIGG-SMITH: Yeah.

24:12 QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE] Is he still living down there in—

24:15 (SHAKEY CAMERA) TWIGG-SMITH: Yes.

24:15 QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

24:16 TWIGG-SMITH: Right; yeah.

24:17 QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

24:17 TWIGG-SMITH: I think he's living alone; I don't know whether his wife died or whether they got divorced. I think maybe both. [CHUCKLES]

24:24 QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

24:24 TWIGG-SMITH: (ZOOM/CAMERA RE-SET) Yeah.

[GENERAL CONVERSATION]

(shot 23)

24:35 (ZOOM IN) QUESTION: I was wondering about—when you graduated from Yale, I think about 1942, 1941?

24:42 TWIGG-SMITH: Yes.

24:45 QUESTION: Did you see anything of Hawaii under martial law?

24:46 (SLOW ZOOM OUT) TWIGG-SMITH: No; I didn't get back here until '46. Uh, I got out in '42, but because I wasn't yet twenty-one, I couldn't get my commission in the ROTC. So I had a period of time that I could come out to the West Coast to try to get to Hawaii before joining the Army. Which

was in retrospect a pretty foolish move. But uh, it worked out because uh, my wife and I, we were married the day after graduation. She couldn't get on the boat. She was a nursing student, but not a graduate. They wouldn't let her on. They were evacuating people from Hawaii. So I don't know anything about martial law in Hawaii, uh, except from what I read.

(shot 24)

25:25 QUESTION: I think you've already dealt with this a bit, but you talked a little about the evolution of Lorrin P. Thurston's attitude toward statehood in the paper. But I was wondering, in that evolution, you mentioned Buchwach and [UNINTELLIGIBLE], but I frankly never heard of him.

25:46 TWIGG-SMITH: Jack [UNINTELLIGIBLE]; yeah. He—

25:47 QUESTION: Yeah.

25:47 (ZOOM OUT) TWIGG-SMITH: He went to the LA Times as an editorial writer after he left us.

25:53 QUESTION: Are there other people that you would credit with the evolution of the paper's position on statehood?

26:00 TWIGG-SMITH: I think the thing that changed the Advertiser's view on statehood was a gradual realization that this was what the community wanted. And Lorrin Thurston had never really come out wildly against statehood in his—when the Advertiser was not doing anything about it, but the Star Bulletin was carrying the torch for statehood. You remember that old adage that when the world ends, what the headlines are gonna be. **(26:28)** The Advertiser's will be, Many kama'ainas to die. The Star Bulletin's will be, Statehood hopes dim. And that was what kept us going in those early years. But uh, Ray Carl, the editor for half a century there at the Advertiser was pro-statehood. Don't—don't forget that the Advertiser had Walter Dillingham on its board. Walter Dillingham was not in favor of statehood. Uh, so that uh, I was on the board from 1952 on. And there were never board arguments about whether we should support statehood or not by that time. **(26:28)** And there may have been before that, but I think what—what happened was that Ray Carl finally convinced Lorrin that it was crazy for the Advertiser not to be in favor of statehood for all the reasons that were obvious at that time. So Lorrin became so much in favor of statehood that he got on the Statehood Commission, in fact was chairman of the commission at the time of statehood,

and worked very hard for it. He—he could—he would work when the occasion warranted or he wanted to. And he worked very hard for statehood. He got George Chaplin out here just because of statehood. (27:34) He was familiar with George's work on the New Orleans Item, where George wrote some fifty or sixty editorials favoring statehood. And these were all mailed all over the country and got Hawaii a lot of favorable press. And Lorrin had heard of him, and I believe met him in Washington during one of the uh, Statehood Commission meetings. So about 1957 or 58, he thought of the idea of bringing George out here, which would accomplish two things. (28:01) One, it would give us an editor who could really write about statehood with some meaning, and also might get me to leave, which he wanted to—wanted to have happen at that time. He thought I would get discouraged, 'cause I thought that I would be editor was what his thought was. I was managing editor, and had been for five years. But uh, so all of a sudden one day he announced that he'd hired George Chaplin to come out. And George arrived, and we hit it off beautifully right the first day and worked very closely thereafter.

(shot 25)

28:32 QUESTION: Why did he want you out?

28:35 TWIGG-SMITH: Who; Lorrin?

28:36 QUESTION: Yeah.

28:37 (QUICK ZOOM, THEN SLOW THRU 29:18) TWIGG-SMITH: I think uh, he thought I was too [UNINTELLIGIBLE]. He—he didn't like uh, what I was doing at the paper. And it was a funny paper in those days, because—I was—I was night editor for a couple of years before being manager editor. And you have to make decisions as—as the evening goes on as to what's gonna happen. Ray Carl was in his nineties by then. And so he would leave the office by about three-thirty. (29:00) So I would have to make these decisions, and you know, I didn't have the kind of background that Lorrin had, and I would make decisions that I thought were logical. But alwa—the next morning there would always be some critique of what had happened, why didn't I do this, why didn't I do that. So he was—he was sort of upset about that. (29:18) Nothing bad about any of it, but I was also upset at the board level and I would venture to say at meetings that Lorrin should get out and contact some of our key advertisers. He wasn't really working in an area where he would be useful. So he was—just resented, as a family

member I think, my coming along and suddenly thinking I knew something about it that he didn't already know. So we di—we weren't the best of buddies during that period.

(shot 26)

29:45 QUESTION: So you by 1959, you're now thirty-nine years old?

29:52 TWIGG-SMITH: Thirty-eight—thirty—thirty-eight years old.

29:54 QUESTION: Thirty-eight years old, and he's set.

29:57 TWIGG-SMITH: He's—he's set in his ways and about sixty-three of four. [CHUCKLES]

30:01 QUESTION: So you were—

30:01 TWIGG-SMITH: It was a ge—

30:02 QUESTION: --quite threatening to him.

30:05 TWIGG-SMITH: It was a generational gap. No, the—I was threatening to him, I guess. And I was—you know, pay was not very good at the Advertiser in those days. I started at a hundred eighty dollars a month after having been an Army captain at four hundred-something, which was kind of come-down. And I think by 1959 as managing editor, I was getting about seven hundred dollars a month. So economics were bad, and I felt that I should have some more money. But uh, it finally came to the point where lots of people realized that big changes had to be made there, so I got control of the stock by a long series of meetings and we uh, worked out a retirement plan for him.

30:42 QUESTION: But why—

[INTERRUPTION]

(NO B ROLL)

[END]

Interview

THURSTON TWIGG-SMITH

REEL 2

(Shot 1)

00:02

(MEDIUM CU) GENERAL CONVERSATION

(Shot 2)

00:26 QUESTION: (00:23-00:38-PANS; MEDIUM CU) You got control of the Advertiser, as you said, you weren't making personally much money and you only had a hundred stocks of your own. And you were able to put together enough stock to take over control of the company.

00:38 TWIGG-SMITH: Yes; there were about seventy-five thousand shares in total, and I had a hundred of them. But I managed to go around and visit all the other shareholders and convince them either to sell or to ally themselves with me. And finally, about the end of 1960, I had 50.3 percent locked up. So we were able to make a change. And Lorrin, I think, was ready for retirement at that point. It wasn't until the following year when his wife found out what happened that things—we fell apart, and then he sued us for mismanagement and a lot of other things. Tied us up for a couple of years, but we finally worked it out.

(Shot 3)

01:16 QUESTION: But financially, you were dependent on financial help from Chinn Ho, the Chinese financier.

01:23 TWIGG-SMITH: Chinn—Chinn Ho was an extraordinary person in those days. He—he was—he had done a lot of stock investing and he had a lot of real estate things going. And he told me one day—and—and he was on our board by then—that uh, I should just let him know if we needed any money and lined up any shares, he would put the money up and then I could tell him how many shares he was gonna get and I how many shares I'd want to have allocated to somebody else, how many I was keeping. And if I wanted to keep 'em, he'd carry the financing 'til I could manage to get him paid off. And uh, we went on that way at uh, several hundred thousand dollars and—and no written agreements, just a handshake and ... uh, he was traveling around the world then and trying to build the Ilikai, and it was pretty fascinating. Uh ...

(Shot 4)

02:10 QUESTION: But that's a Hawaii story. I mean, here you're talking about graduating from high school in the late 1930s and there's a handful of Orientals in your class mostly of Caucasians—

02:20 TWIGG-SMITH: M-hm.

02:21 QUESTION: --at Punahou. And then by 1959 and 60, you're turning to a Chinese-American for financial support and he's on your board, and—what happened—I guess what I'm asking is, what happened between (02:36-02:58-ZOOM IN from MEDIUM CU to CU) the late 1930s and 1960 that made this kind of cooperation possible or this kind of brotherhood, if you will?

02:45 TWIGG-SMITH: I think realism set in. I think people—I wasn't even thinking of racial backgrounds at that point. Chinn Ho was a very successful businessman. He did represent another ethnic uh, group involved on our board. We had a pretty diverse board by then. Uh, Harold Kometani was a member of it. We had uh ... a couple of Filipino background guys. So we had done a—we had deliberately tried to diversify the board at the time we were trying to grow the Advertiser uh, after George arrived. And so that was—that was in place for business reasons. And—but uh ... I think Hawaii was—had just begun to really change. I think in the old days, there—there weren't—uh, weren't so much ethnic fighting in—it was just a case of not being in—in business with other people of other ethnic backgrounds. The whole plantation economy had built up with people—with Scotsmen or one thing or another as managers of the plantations. I don't think there were any Asian background managers in the 20s and 30s and 40s. But obviously, Hawaii has changed.

(Shot 5)

03:57 QUESTION: I was wondering, and staying sort of on the paper for the moment, and tying it to statehood. You said the stock wasn't worth very much when you started purchasing it in part because the Advertiser was the second paper.

04:12 TWIGG-SMITH: Right.

04:12 QUESTION: And it was really in very bad shape about the time that Chapman was hired and about the time statehood happened. What made you think that this thing was gonna go? Did statehood have anything to do with it, or were there movements that were taking place, or what made you think that you could make this think happen?

04:29 TWIGG-SMITH: I think I was afflicted with overconfidence. I just—I knew that the—the only way to save this paper was to get into a joint operating venture with the Star Bulletin. George knew that. George had come from the New Orleans Item, which was the second paper in New Orleans and had been frozen out by the Times Picayune, which was the number one paper. So he knew we were in a precarious position. He knew all about joint operating ventures, which were really the only way to save two editorial voices in a—in a community the size of Honolulu. So I just in my naivete felt that everyone would realize that was the case and we'd work it out. As it happened, there was uh, it was totally accidental. The uh—I would—I'd made all the calls on Betty Farrington or her various aide decamps and didn't get much of anywhere with them. 1962, all of a sudden I—I knew General Levy, who was the chairman of the board of several, and again fortuitously they had lived across the street from us on Date Street when he was a captain the Army back in the 30s. So I'd played with his kids and knew the family, and uh, my mother knew them. She'd know Mrs. Levy, who was a Farrington uh, from school days. (05:45) So one day he called and said they'd decided to sell the Star Bulletin because they couldn't get agreement among the shareholders to buy a new press. Do you remember, the Star Bulletin had its press up Kapiolani Boulevard extension. Kapiolani Boulevard at that time went all the way to Beretania Street. And they had a press building right there where the State office buildings are now. They had to move. But to make the move, they had to spend money to build a new plant and all that, and it was gonna take more money than their board was able to approve without a three-quarter vote. And the Levys had fifty percent and Mrs. Farrington had fifty. So they couldn't come to an agreement. So he just let me know that, and I—I said at the time, I think we can get you a much better price if you will have whoever is interested in coming out here to look at the paper come to talk to me and talk about joint operating ventures. And he and I talked about that 'til he understood it. And so that's what's happened. Every single person who came out, every newspaper group would come over and we'd have uh, a mini negotiation and rough out what they would have agreed to, to have a joint operating venture. And Chinn knew all about joint operating ventures, 'cause he'd been on our board where we used to talk about it all the time as the only solution. Lorrin couldn't do it, because of his enmity with the family, and Mrs. Farrington didn't like him as mu—even as much as her husband did. And her husband didn't like him at all. So we were frozen with that uh, personal problem in there, but I just thought if we get away from that, they'll see the logic of it. (07:21) Well, when Chinn became the winner in the deal to buy the Star Bulletin, we had the problem all laid out. The—the concept was approved. Then it just became knocking out the details, which took quite a while, and were pretty nasty at times, uh, to

get them to agree to what percentage we were gonna have and all that sort of thing.

(Shot 6)

07:44 QUESTION: Now, interesting ties here. I mean, Chinn Ho is important in the light of the Advertiser and consummating this joint operating—

07:53 TWIGG-SMITH: M-hm.

07:54 QUESTION: --thing. Thurston and (**07:55-08:00-ZOOM OUT to less tight CU; slight PAN RIGHT**) your uncle and the Advertiser attacking the ILWU and Communism, and then Jack Burns, who Chinn Ho was a very strong supporter of is part of this movement and the Democratic Party and so on. Where did you find yourself as a fellow I assume grew up in a family was a Republican family and an establishment family and where did you find yourself politically in all of that?

08:29 TWIGG-SMITH: Well, I had never gotten involved in politics at uh, at all. Today, I'm um, leaning much more toward the Republican side than Democratic side. But most of all my growing up years and uh, my family was apolitical. Uh, all my years at the Advertiser, I viewed myself as an independent. Uh, George was extremely liberal. Uh, I didn't mind that at all. I mean, we got—we were looking at the paper as a product and editorial freedom was very much in our minds. So I don't—I didn't have any problem with the political side of it. Uh, what—when I was doing this stock deal, my—most of the support came from Walter Dillingham. I would meet with him two or three times a week and report the progress, and he didn't like Lorrin by that time either. I'm—I'm not sure whether it was because he was against statehood and Lorrin by that time was very actively in favor of it, the fact that [UNINTELLIGIBLE] just gotten us to be a state—uh, what the deal was. But Walter was very supportive and I'd meet out there at La Pietra and report, ask questions, get support, suggestions, where to go next, and that sort of thing.

(Shot 7)

09:41 QUESTION: What do you think were the principle arguments against statehood that you heard in the late 40s and the early 50s? And then on the other side, what were the principle arguments that you were hearing and the paper was making for statehood?

09:57 TWIGG-SMITH: I think looking back on it, m—I think the reason that Walter Dillingham was opposed to it was primarily one of

uh, power structure. Under the system where—where we were a territory, the governor was appointed by the President. And Walter Dillingham was an incredible lobbyist. I mean, he was in Washington a great deal of the time. And a lot of the projects he was doing out here involved massive federal expenditures—Pearl Harbor dredging and all the other kinds of major activities. And he with his contacts in Washington was always closely allied with whoever was the President, whatever side, whatever person they were, whatever party they came from. So I think he saw it as a—just a change of economic power that wasn't beneficial to him. I do think that there was—there was a problem in his mind and in the mind of a lot of other people of the ethnic problem. [They didn't know what to expect from a fast-growing Japanese ancestry p—uh, group. And they were just apprehensive about any kind of a change. They had things under control, they thought, as plantation executives in running the—the whole—the Big Five was very much in vogue in those days and—and very significantly a power structure. I think that was the primary thing.]

(11:16) The arguments that were raised on the mainland to offset statehood were the Communism issue and that the fact that we were an offshore, noncontiguous body, so that the Southern Senators who didn't like it, they very much espoused the racial objections for obvious reasons. They'd been gro—raised that way. Uh, they seized upon the Communism and—and the offshore thing as reasons that did—wouldn't reveal their true feelings, but were lo—were valid arguments one way or the other. So statehood was very much uh, a battle of a lot of reasons that were beyond our control in there. But I think the—the—the local group was ... primarily worried about control.

(Shot 8)

12:03 QUESTION: So you didn't see the Advertiser at that moment or the year of the two papers ... I guess were both opposing where some of Walter Dillingham, some of the sugar people might have—the position they might have taken?

12:20 TWIGG-SMITH: Both papers by the nineteen—the early 50s, middle 50s, both papers were very strongly for statehood. And sure, there were—at that time, I'm sure there were a lot of arguments with the Walter Dillingham types about where are you leading us on this, where you think this is going. And uh, I—I think that there were problems from the point of view, differences of opinion.

(Shot 9)

12:44 QUESTION: Did you ever have anything to do with Buck Buckwach's [UNINTELLIGIBLE]? Were you involved in any of that?

(Shot 10)

12:53 TWIGG-SMITH: (12:53-13:03-SLIGHT ZOOM IN to tighter CU) Oh, yeah. I was the managing editor at that time, so I had to approve it. And it was a fantastic idea.

12:59 QUESTION: Could you explain that for us exactly what it was?

13:01 TWIGG-SMITH: Uh, Buckwach came up with a uh, a gimmick to get a petition signed for statehood. And he got the ro—idea of rolling a roll of newsprint down the middle of Bishop Street, a [UNINTELLIGIBLE] paper laid below it, and they rolled the newsprint down there for everybody to go around and sign. And there were mobs of people down there; everybody was signing it. Over a hundred thousand signatures. (13:25-13:39-ZOOM IN to tighter CU) And they rolled—they kept on rolling this thing, and more and more paper, and they finally ended up shipping it back to Washington. And uh, it's still back there; it's in the archives. You—do you remember the discovery that [13:37-STOMACH GROWLS] one of the Hawaiian groups made the other day of the—not the other day—a few years back about finding a petition of a group of Hawaiians who were opposed to annexation. Well, this petition [13:47-STOMACH GURGLE] lay hidden there for forty years or so. We resurrected it last year, I think it was, on the annivers—for the anniversary connected with it. And they still have it there in the archives.

14:01 QUESTION: But that—

14:01 TWIGG-SMITH: Amazing.

14:02 QUESTION: It got a lot of press.

14:03 TWIGG-SMITH: It got a lot of press. It was uh, really a fantastic idea, because it—normally, petitions are something that's terribly suspect because people are writing on it in private. You know, they can write eight, ten names on it if you really want to get going on it. And those were the arguments against the Hawaiian petition, that lots of the handwriting looked like the same handwriting page after page. And people of all different ages and different names, and repeating of names. But when you get them all kneeling down there in the middle of the street, signing their name on a great, big piece of newsprint, it's quite a different thing. Very public signing; very dramatic. Buckwach was a wonder with ideas like that.

(Shot 11)

14:42 QUESTION: There of course now are many, many Hawaiian activists who claim that statehood was a terrible thing for the Hawaiians and that it was an awful travesty, and that there weren't any choices except statehood on the ballot, and every vote for it was—did you know any Hawaiians in the period of '46 to '59 who were strongly opposed to statehood and expressed it repeatedly and often?

15:11 TWIGG-SMITH: I don't think there was—at the time that statehood was coming toward its final resolution, there were no objections based on any eth—ethnic background. No Hawaiians came forward and said, We can't have statehood. The vote for ratifying statehood was over ninety percent, ninety-five percent in favor of it. We have pictures of the signing on this uh, petition with many Hawaiians in the picture there. It was—it was a political—politically correct thing to do at that time, besides being something that almost everybody was for. Because there were so many advantages to statehood, the—uh, we ceased to be a domestic market. I mean, we became a domestic market; we ceased to be a foreign country. So all the big insurance companies, all the kinds of companies that were really pro—prohibited from doing business overseas, suddenly they could do business in Hawaii on a domestic basis. It changed the whole picture, right off the bat.

(Shot 12)

16:08 QUESTION: I want to go back to something that you were mentioning, you were talking about, Lorrin Thurston writing those Dear Joe editorials. And yet, of course one of the reasons why some opponents on the mainland opposed statehood was the Communist issue, claiming that Hawaii was controlled by the unions and they were Communist dominated. So didn't the Advertiser in a way contribute to the opposition to statehood?

16:28 TWIGG-SMITH: Oh, yeah. This—you—uh, that period was in 1949. The Advertiser was every day commenting on the—on the Communism bit, and they [16:39-GURGLE] insisted on the Un-American Committee coming out here and holding hearings, and—I don't know whether it's right to say the Advertiser insisted; the Advertiser trumpeted the—they were coming out and they came out, every Congressman liked to come out to Hawaii. And they had these hearings out here. Uh, and that gave all kinds of comfort to the opponents to statehood on the mainland. No doubt about it. But—so it took another ten years after that for that to wear off. And um, in—in the final arguments, it was—it didn't go away completely. It was still part of the argument. Oh, we can't have statement because there are

still union—the unions are still in a very strong position out there, and they're all Communist. You know, that was a hard one to get rid of. So the Advertiser had—had an internal problem in that they were strongly opposed to—strongly in support of Communism, which negated statehood, and then all of a sudden the publisher becomes chairman of the Statehood Commission [CHUCKLES], and had switched horses. The mid-50s, that happened.

(Shot 13)

17:40 QUESTION: I wonder as a reporter or as managing editor, and you're watching, did you ever have to cover any of these Congressional groups that came out to hear statehood testimony?

17:51 TWIGG-SMITH: I didn't personally. By that time, as—as managing editor I was tied up in the office. But we were covering them and we were—we just treated it like a big newspaper s—story. I don't think that—I can't recall any conversations in our inner group. We had increased the staff maybe double or triple by that time. We didn't have any seminars on whether statehood was a good thing or not. We liked the idea that the Advertiser was editorially for it when we finally got to that point.

(Shot 14)

18:20 QUESTION: But do you remember anything about when these Congressional committees would come out and listen to testimony? Was there much testimony opposing statehood? I guess Walter Dillingham.

18:30 TWIGG-SMITH: I'm not sure that Walter Dillingham ever came out and testified publicly against statehood. Walter was very much a behind-the-scenes operator. And I don't recall his ever showing up testifying. The people that went to testify were the ones that the Big Five, their op—their heads, their people who were engaged in the labor negotiations or one thing or another would go and testify. There were a lot of people who were so upset by that 1949 strike. In the six months we were under siege here, it was very easy to get pretty upset at the unions. Remember the Broom Brigades, the women who were marching up and down the—the—the longshore lines with the brooms to sweep them all to sea or whatever. There was a lot of community feeling about it.

(Shot 15)

19:17 QUESTION: I know that Jack Burns and his people were obviously unhappy with the Star Bulletin for a famous picture that was done in—I guess it was '62 or '59, and I can't remember which, in which they had him in a picture with (19:32-STOMACH GURGLE)

three union guys, two of whom had just been inducted.

19:37 TWIGG-SMITH: Oh, that was the uh, something-seven; what were they called?

19:41 QUESTION: No, no; that was earlier. That was a—

19:43 TWIGG-SMITH: Oh, okay.

19:44 QUESTION: This was when Burns was running for Delegate—

19:46 TWIGG-SMITH: Oh, right; yeah, yeah.

(Shot 16)

19:47 QUESTION: Yeah, and I remember somebody in the Star Bulletin actually ended up apologizing about it, thinking it was a bad thing that they had done. But there was this internal anti-Communism and yet pro-statehood thing that was there. In 1959, the Advertiser—you've already talked about it, hired George Chapman. And you would argue that the editorial board hired him in part because of his position on statehood.

20:22 TWIGG-SMITH: Almost entirely. No, actually, he was hired by Lorrin Thurston. Lorrin Thurston was a publisher, and the way we operated and many newspapers do that, the publisher picks the editor. So the edit—the newspaper board or the editorial board really didn't have anything to do with it. But—and Lorrin wanted George Chapman—as I've mentioned, he was a very strong advocate of statehood—wanted him here.

(Shot 17)

20:45 QUESTION: And you were not resentful when he did—

20:48 TWIGG-SMITH: Not at all. I was surprised, 'cause it happened very suddenly. I didn't even know what was going on, and all of a sudden he announces to the board, where I'm sitting as part of the group, that he's hired this wonderful editor. So I thought, well, this will be interesting, we'll see. I didn't really want to be editor any uh, anyway. I wanted to be publisher. [CHUCKLES] It didn't bother me.

(Shot 18)

21:06 QUESTION: So you moved upstairs immediately?

21:08 TWIGG-SMITH: No, not right away. Ju—about a year later, I guess. I stayed there with George, and then we were figuring out

where the weaknesses lay. The—getting the advertising program going was the big challenge, or the next big challenge. So with George there, m-m, George and Buck and I would be talking every day, planning things. And we just decided that we should get somebody stronger into the business office than was existing there, so I said okay, I'll go down there and approach it from that side. So I went down and I became the assistant business manager. And suffered a little setback, 'cause he turned me into the promotion director at the time. Which was great, because that enabled me to start the Contemporary Museum as part of a promotion for the Advertiser. So after about a—and during that year, without having to be involved in the daily operation of the paper, I could run around gathering more people in support of my revolution. [CHUCKLES]

(Shot 19)

22:08 QUESTION: Do you remember your own feelings in March of 1959, just wherever you were and whatever you were doing, (22:16-22:22-ZOOM IN to tighter CU) when the statehood bill passed?

22:18 TWIGG-SMITH: Oh, tremendous excitement. Both papers were ready for it days in advance, and we had worked out these gigantic page ones and all things ready to go the instant we heard about it. Oh, it was tremendously—a great—a great triumph, huge feeling.

(Shot 20)

22:36 QUESTION: And entirely positive?

22:38 TWIGG-SMITH: Entirely positive. And I think that's borne out by the plebiscite that came along later, where the—I believe close to ninety-five percent voted in favor of it. So all that stuff that the Hawaiian activists are going through now is ju—is all rewriting history. That's—that's not the way it worked out.

(Shot 21)

22:56 QUESTION: Tell me about in your estimate, if you had to give credit for statehood to individuals, to people for a moment, who would you give the greatest credit to?

23:08 TWIGG-SMITH: Well, I think it was the combination of Jack Burns' uh, political skills back there in Washington. But the long, long buildup in—over here, and then the Star Bulletin having picked it up in 1903 when Riley Alm was just coming over from the—well, I guess he hadn't quite come over from the Star, but the Legislature had passed the Statehood Bill in 1903, and the Star Bulletin supported it

and continued to back statehood from 1903 to 1959.

23:34 QUESTION: From 1903 to 1959 they supported it?

23:37 TWIGG-SMITH: Right. They were—they were for statehood from the very beginning. And that really was the beginning of our US relationship there when that Legislature in 1903 passed the resolution for statehood. So that combination, plus I think Lorrin Thurston gets a good degree of—of credit. As chairman of the commission, they had to do an awful lot of things, and they did all the right things working with Jack Burns back there. And uh, Bill Quinn. I'd—I'd say politically Jack Burns, and details and stuff Bill Quinn and Lorrin Thurston, the rest of the commission. But the—actually, by that time, 1957, 58, 59 when all these machinations were going on in Washington as how to do it—because there was a strong feeling aside from all the ethnic problems and the offshore problems, there was that political—what they thought was a political reality that Hawaii would come in as a Republican stronghold and Alaska as a Democratic stronghold. So they didn't want to pass—Democrats were running the Congress, they didn't want Hawaii to come in, and then maybe things would stop and they'd never get Alaska in to offset them. (24:48) So they got Alaska in first, and that went Republican instead of staying Democrat. And uh, Hawaii came just the other way, so it worked out. But that was politically uh, Jack Burns working with Lyndon Johnson ... and maneuvering to get the—overcome that political net that was—there usually is some stupid little thing like that that holds up progress.

(Shot 22)

25:11 QUESTION: Did Chapman ever talk to you about George Ley Leitner?

25:14 TWIGG-SMITH: Yes; uh, I remember the name, but I don't recall uh ... he was very much in favor of statehood, as I recall, and did ... a bunch of things that were very helpful in Washington.

25:26 QUESTION: Louisiana [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

25:29 TWIGG-SMITH: M-hm.

(B-roll 1)

25:30 GENERAL CONVERSATION (25:30-25:35-
ZOOM OUT from CU to MEDIUM CU; 25:36-25:41-subject sips water;

(Shot 23)

25:41-EXTREME CU-new shot; **26:00-26:04-PAN DOWN** to CU of subject's hands; **26:47-26:51-PAN UP** from hands to **MEDIUM CU** of subject's face)

(Shot 24)

28:18 QUESTION: (**28:16-28:19-ZOOM OUT** from CU to **MEDIUM CU**) A lot of things come together in about '59. I mean, you guys are getting a new editor, your guys are about to go into this operating—I think in the context of the—I'd to know what impact statehood had on Hawaii and also as a part of that, what impact did statehood have on businesses like the Star, the Advertiser and ...

28:39 TWIGG-SMITH: Well, statehood boomed all business in Hawaii. In fact, the rising tide raising all boats. The population went up rather dramatically. I think there was about a forty percent in the next ten years after statehood from around five hundred thousand to seven hundred thousand. So everything just began booming. With a bigger base here to eat and to read newspapers and all. The newspapers had tremendous increases in advertising revenues and—and uh, subscriptions and all that sort of thing. And the same thing went—trickled down through all the other businesses in Hawaii. The only people who suffered wasn't a result of statehood so much as changing economic times or the basic uh, for—the basics of Hawaii from earlier years agriculture. Both pineapple and sugar were no longer economically viable, because they'd priced themselves out of the market. So that was—that was tragic, but in a sense uh, all those people that used to work on there have gotten better jobs, the ones who stayed here and changed their uh, line of endeavor into something more practical.

(Shot 25)

29:50 QUESTION: Aside from the economic advantages that took place for a business like your own, what other advantages have? I mean, for example, Hawaiians who argue that statehood was not good for Hawaiians; do you feel that it was not good for Hawaiians? Is there any legitimacy to

that argument?

30:08 GENERAL CONVERSATION

30:12 END

Interview

THURSTON TWIGG-SMITH

Reel 3

(Shot 1)

00:10 QUESTION: (**MEDIUM CU**) Is there an argument in your mind that ... is there any legitimacy to the argument that some Hawaiians make that statehood was bankrupted and was not good for the Hawaiian people?

00:22 TWIGG-SMITH: (**00:22-00:48-SLOW ZOOM IN** from **MEDIUM CU** to **CU**) I don't think there's any validity to the argument that statehood had—had any bad aspects for Hawaiians. They benefited just like everybody else did. I think the problem the Hawaiians have now is ... only started thirty years ago when they began rewriting history and working themselves into a frenzy over being victims. And they weren't victims at the time of statehood, they rose with everyone else. You may recall a Hawaiian was running for lieutenant governor and was lieutenant governor when Bill Quinn was governor, and they were still active, you know, politically. They dominated the scene here at World War II, you know. And they had—even at that time right after World War II, they still had nearly half of all the government jobs. And they were very active politically and very big turnouts in the Hawaiian community. And this was their country, their nation, and they liked it. Now then what's happened thirty years ago, the early 70s that began this ... program to make Hawaiians out to be victims and try to change the—the picture here. So it uh, had nothing to do with statehood that I can see. Certainly didn't have anything to do with any particular ethnic group, Hawaiians or otherwise. Everybody got an equal opportunity and an equal chance to move ahead.

(Shot 2)

01:44 QUESTION: (**01:45-01:54-ZOOM OUT** to **less tight CU**) You've gone back a long way with this in your own writing, and essentially you've argued that for example, the overthrow was a legitimate revolution and a legitimate takeover, and Hawaiians haven't got it right.

02:02 TWIGG-SMITH: Right.

02:06 QUESTION: And there have been vicious attacks and strong opposition. Do you hear anything in any of that opposition or any of

those arguments against you that you have some sympathy with?

02:19 TWIGG-SMITH: No, I think uh, I wrote way back in 1993 in the—when the centennial of the revolution came on, that the revolution and subsequent annexation were the best things that ever happened to Hawaii and its people. I still believe that, because if it hadn't happened, we wouldn't have a situation where we—we're American citizens. You know, this would be controlled by some great power, but it might or might not have been America. There's no way that this place could be economically viable without alliance with some other major country, a major trade agreement, one thing or another. So it was destined to go—and all the kings realized that way back in the 19th century. **(03:03)** Uh, it's a dream world to think that this could be a separate nation again. That's just ... it's just weird that people even pay attention to it. It's unfortunate, because it divides the community, that people who believe that. And uh, unfortunately the—the ethnic studies group up there at the University is in charge of the history books that all their stu—students get. So they don't get to read both sides of the question, they don't get to discuss it. They're told what happened was a bad thing, and all uh, the Hawaiians were victimized and the government owes them a living. And it's not good for them, it's not good for the community. Especially with the intermarriage we have around here, you've got families divided. I don't—I think most families just treat it as something that can't possibly happen, so they don't get into or differ over it. Otherwise, it would be a very painful situation for—at the personal level. **(03:58)** Uh, right now, it's going—still at the political level and I think that we have the Akaka Bill bottled up for this year and I hope forever. That thing would be a disaster if it passed. It would undermine everything that's good about Hawaii and create a situation where decisions were being made based on race. And that hasn't been the case out here in the past. Uh, maybe long ago, back in the 19th century and the early part of the 20th century there—that could be argued to be a factor. But it wasn't a—a violent factor, it was never a pitting of one race against another race. But here, you have a situation with—if we ever come to the point where OHA begins to ta—uh, parcel out its money or take over the land that belongs really to everybody in Hawaii, not just to Hawaiians, uh, I think we'll see real problems. I think the Legislature will finally realize that this can't work out. How can you possibly divide—how can you take away some lands from the government and give them to just one race. Just simply can't do it; it's not constitutional. So just as—as we've argued before in the Akaka ca—suits that we have in court, and the uh, Arakaki suits, uh, those eventually are going to come around to su—they'll all go to the Supreme Court. One by one, they'll finally get resolved, and hopefully that will be over a gradual and a process that people accept it

and not—not get violent about it. There hasn't been any violence, so I think the Hawaiian—the old-time Hawaiians, the kupuna know this. They know that violence would just be a total mistake.

(05:37) And even the ones who are on the firing line, so to speak, are not talking violence. They talk tough at times, but that they're trying to achieve something that—the whole business of try—of going—becoming independent on the one hand, which is another almost impossibility under the American flag, you can't secede from the union. It's already been decided. And the Akaka Bill, the distribution of land would be tantamount to se—secession. 'Cause you'd be taking land from the—the group that now owns it. The government of Hawaii, the State of Hawaii owns all that ceded land. It's not owned by individuals. It never was; it was government land from Kamehameha III's day. So it doesn't belong to Hawaiians uh, per se, it belongs to everybody. So when they start trying to physically carry out the distribution, that's when the fur will fly and the legislators will have to make tough decisions. (06:35) And OHA is now sitting on three or four hundred million dollars worth the money there that they can't spend because under the way they're set up now they can only parcel it out to fifty percent Hawaiians. Unless they parcel it out to their attorneys or lobbyists, which they're doing a great job of doing. Uh, millions have gone out for that cause. Uh, but they can't parcel it to the people. That money—if they—if there wasn't any OHA and if we had a system going where the ceded land revenues went to the general revenues of the State, and had to be spent for education or parks or the other five purposes that were listed in the—the bill that made us uh, in the ordinance that brought us into the union, that money would already be out in the community working. And Hawaiians, because they now constitute a very large percentage of the population, would be getting something out of it. Right now, nobody's getting anything out of it, except ... as I mentioned, a few attorneys and some lobbyists.

(Shot 3)

07:35 QUESTION: (07:40-07:43-ZOOM IN to tighter CU) What do you do with the argument that Hawaiian activists make that Hawaiians may have been through World War II having many of the better jobs, in the legislature, and in the bureaucracy, in private enterprise also, but that now they're at the bottom of the economic scale as an ethnic group, and higher rates of poverty, higher rates of illiteracy. Is that all because of the victimization, do you think?

08:05 TWIGG-SMITH: I think the whole question of the statistics that put Hawaiians—appear to put Hawaiians at the bottom of so many indicators is a fictitious situation. Really, when you—those are all based, all those statistics are based on the—your being Hawaiian if

you have one drop of Hawaiian blood. Well, if you have one drop of Hawaiian blood, you're really not Hawaiian, you're a whole lot of something else. So those statistics are not Hawaiians at the bottom of anything. They're just people who need help at the bottom of something. These people are of every background—Caucasian, all the way through to Hawaiian. And to—whatever happened to bring those statistics into play has done a great disservice, because it makes the Hawaiian people feel like they've been victimized. They—I have a daughter-in-law who's one—a tiny, tiny fraction of—of Hawaiian. She got free tuition at the University to go to law school. Uh, that's—to me, that's ridiculous. Why should somebody get free tuition just because they have a drop of Hawaiian blood. And uh, and she's a bright gal. But she doesn't see any problem with that, because who's gonna say—turn down a free gift like that. But what's gonna happen when everybody becomes part-Hawaiian, which is the trend. There's two or three hundred thousand now. The University will have nobody paying the t—tuition out there, and all the other taxpayers will be paying it. That—that'll never fly either. So you just—when you go down the—the road of basing distributions on race, or privileges on race or whatever, you're running into very swampy ground. It just—it just won't work in the long run.

(Shot 4)

09:44 QUESTION: Is statehood endangered by this continuing argument, or do you think that the Hawaiian argument has risen and is on its decline now as a result of the Supreme Court decision?

09:58 TWIGG-SMITH: No, I think it should be on its decline—the Hawaiian problem should be on its decline because of the Supreme Court decision. But unfortunately, as many decisions are that come out of the Supreme Court, that was a very narrowly drawn re—uh, thing. So that the—the group that's pushing the Hawaiian activist sovereignty route is able to go in new avenues, knowing that it'll take a long time to get them resolved, knowing that they got a lot more money than we do. I mean, we're a very small group. The Aloha For All group that's financing these lawsuits—I mean, peanut money. The OHA and the rest of the group, and the State are all involved in millions of dollars. They have seven or eight attorneys sitting around, and they have a million-dollar lobbyist firm. They—they have spent—and that's all our money that they're spending, all taxpayers' money. So it's just—it's an untenable situation that eventually will get worked out. Uh, we—we are positive about it. Uh, so that I think uh ... I forgotten what we're—what—what course we were pursuing at the moment, but ...

(Shot 5)

11:07 QUESTION: The argument that it's peaked and that the Hawaiian activists' approach has peaked. You think it has.

11:17 TWIGG-SMITH: No, I don't—uh, perhaps it has, but I don't think so. I think that uh, it's peaked in the one sense. You don't hear an awful lot of uh, talk from Haunani Trask and the others. I think they're waiting to see how the thing is—works out. I think that—I would hope that it's peaked. I think what'll unpeak it is to begin to allow the schools to discuss both sides of the problem so that everybody knows what the problem is. And then many minds can get to work on how to resolve it. There's a lot of forgiveness involved in it, both sides. People have to sit down and say this is ... what I've been doing is wrong, or there's some parts of it that are wrong, let's work on something that goes together. Pulls us—pulls all together instead of splintering us.

(Shot 6)

12:02 QUESTION: Isn't this a national thing? I mean, your generation came along out of World War II and the 442 guys, and so forth. Statehood, making Hawaii a state (**12:11-PAN LEFT**) is, as you said, ninety-five percent—

12:18 TWIGG-SMITH: Yeah.

12:18 QUESTION: --of the people wanted it. But we're also at a time where there are survivalists in Texas and there are parts of Texas that want to secede, and there are ethnicity and ethnic pride is strong, not just among Hawaiians, but native Americans and Blacks and—is this something that we've got to somehow deal with within the context of statehood?

12:42 TWIGG-SMITH: I think one of the side effects of statehood that doesn't get much voice but should be getting, and will be getting more attention, is the effect it has on other parts of the country. The people in Texas have an equally strong basis, just as strong as the Hawaiians for claiming that they should get independence again and get control of the lands, because those are Mexican lands, Spanish lands (**13:05-13:18-PAN RIGHT**) that were just taken over, and those lands all went into the federal land bank. Not like Hawaii's lands that went into trust and came back to Hawaii. Same thing in California, where groups of—of uh, Spanish-based uh, people that are of Spanish ethnic background who have every right to do just exactly what the Hawaiian activists are—activists are doing. So there's a terrible effect that could spread what happens if the Akaka Bill passes, and if these things come about. And I don't think they will come about, because I—as I said, there's gonna be lawsuit after lawsuit. It will drag on for

twenty to thirty years. But if it were to take uh, if it were to take effect and all the other people began to follow the same path, how could the—how could they be denied if people here who are not really ... this gets into a whole 'nother argument—indigenous to this country, they were—they were indigenous at the time of the revolution, they uh, their beef is with the re—republic, not with the United States. (14:06) United States never conquered Hawaii. The repu—the people who conducted the revolution did, and they should be the ones involved in this thing. But it's much more profitable to go after the United States, so that's why that's happening. But I don't think the Akaka Bill you—uh, ju—some people have questioned whether the Akaka Bill means the end of statehood for Hawaii. I don't see that. I think it means the—the end to the kind of Hawaii we now have. The—the—the possibility of Hawaii disappearing as a state is not valid. I don't think there's any potential of that happening. But if you were to get a situation where we had—the Hawaiians are recognized as an in—similar to an Indian tribe, and you were able to figure out what land they could occupy as a tribe and where they could have the casinos and all that, then you'd have a uh, something to argue about. But ... Hawaii is a different situation since there never were tribes here. So there's no base, there's no tribal base of land or anything else to go back to. All the Indians had some kind of a base, so they get land on which to build their casinos and their reservations. But here, although you remember uh ... Clayton Hee talking about taking over the inside of Diamond Head, 'cause that would—that's ceded land, and make it—make it a lovely little casino up there and that, be very picturesque.

15:32 QUESTION: Yeah.

15:33 TWIGG-SMITH: That kind of thing would happen, it's bound to happen. And they all say nothing in the Akaka Bill permits gambling or casinos, but nothing in there prohibits it either. So it's just gonna be up to the Legislature. And the kind of pressure that comes from Indian casino money, not even Indians or Indonesians or whoever the big investors are, on an international scale, that money can corrupt any kind of—any politician. You know, there's no limit on what the Indians can give to politicians. We're limited to two thousand dollars to Dan Inouye. The Indians can give Dan Inouye two million dollars. They don't have any—any restriction. So Dan Inouye wouldn't weaken or yield on this, but somewhere down the road, a politician in charge of the Indian Subcommittee might be impressed with a couple million dollars [UNINTELLIGIBLE] put up a casino out here.

(Shot 7)

16:27 QUESTION: You've given me a whole 'nother perspective on that Indian [UNINTELLIGIBLE] that Dan Inouye [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

16:34 TWIGG-SMITH: Yeah.

16:34 QUESTION: Have you ever been in there?

16:35 TWIGG-SMITH: Yes.

16:36 QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

16:37 TWIGG-SMITH: Yeah. Well, I understand he—he's going off the Indian Subcommittee this year, 'cause he's been on it as long as he can be.

16:44 QUESTION: Yeah.

16:45 TWIGG-SMITH: I think that'll get him into ma—many more fruitful areas. [CHUCKLES]

16:50 GENERAL CONVERSATION

(Shot 8)

16:55 QUESTION: (16:55-17:00-PAN DOWN to CU of subject's hands) [UNINTELLIGIBLE] having seen Hawaii change in the years, is there anything you miss or anything you feel that we've lost? (17:05-17:08-PAN BACK UP to MEDIUM CU of subject's face)

17:08 TWIGG-SMITH: I think looking back on what's happened to Hawaii just in my lifetime ... uh, we do miss the simple, easy life that was once our—our situation out here. We used to get—send the summers over in Lanikai and we wouldn't come into town for a month or two. And that was uh, a nice, pleasant way of life. You could go around to these—these beaches, (17:31-18:00-SLOW ZOOM IN from MEDIUM CU to CU) nobody was building gigantic hotels over them. So there is a certain amount of nostalgia that develops. But I like the new vigor that's come to Hawaii and the fact that people can move in and out of here, uh, invest uh ... share the wealth, build their own little beach houses or whatever. There's no restrictions on what anyone can do. I think it's a lot—a lot better place than what it was before.

(Shot 9)

18:01 GENERAL CONVERSATION

18:04 ZOOM OUT to MEDIUM (background in shot);
subject takes a drink of water

18:28-19:56 (MEDIUM of subject) room tone recording, take
1 (focus in and out; PAN UP to mic and around room, PAN/ZOOM
IN on art

(Shot 10)

20:06 crew member crosses shot

20:15 GENERAL CONVERSATION (PAN to CU of
subject's face)

20:34 PAN DOWN to CU of subject's hands

(Shot 11)

22:30-23:02 (CU of subject) room tone recording, take 2 (PULL
FOCUS on subject's face; PANS)

23:04 ZOOM OUT to MEDIUM; crew member crosses
shot and removes subject's microphone

(Shot 12)

24:07 ZOOM OUT to MEDIUM WIDE shot of set with
lights and stands (no sound); subject shakes hands with interviewer
and exits frame.

24:48 ZOOM IN on subject talking to director; subject
exits room

B-ROLL

(B-Roll 1)

25:11 EXT. rock terrace with view (PANS)

(B-Roll 2)

25:38 EXT. Diamond Head view (ZOOM OUT)

(B-Roll 3)

25:58 EXT. branches, Diamond Head view, scenery (PANS)

(B-Roll 4)

26:41 **EXT. sky to Diamond Head (PAN DOWN)**

(B-Roll 5)

27:13 **EXT. Diamond Head, skyline, buildings (PANS)**

(B-Roll 6)

27:34 **EXT. hillside to house (PANS)**

28:04 **END**