

An Interview with A. D. Cromartie

This interview was performed under a contract with the Oral History  
Program of the National Library of Medicine, Bethesda, Maryland.

This document is a transcript of an interview with A. D. Cromartie conducted by Adelynne Hiller Whitaker concerning enforcement of the Insecticide Act of 1910 and the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act of 1947. The interview was held in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED], March 26, 1973.

Mr. Cromartie joined the Department of Agriculture as an inspector assigned to the Food and Drug Administration in 1931. From 1945 until his retirement in 1966 Mr. Cromartie was in an administrative position in enforcement and inspection with the Insecticide Division of the Department of Agriculture.

Mrs. Whitaker is a doctoral candidate at Emory University, writing a dissertation on "Pesticides and Regulation."

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Text. . . . . 1-127

Index . . . . . 128-132

Mrs. Whitaker:

Mr. Cromartie, would you begin by telling me something about your career, when you went with the Department?

Mr. Cromartie:

I first went with the Food and Drug Administration in 1931 as an inspector in Los Angeles, California. After about three years there I transferred to San Francisco, California, where I spent about three and a half years. Then, from San Francisco, I was transferred to Boston, Massachusetts, where I stayed until 1941, January the 1st, at which time I transferred back to the Insecticide Division in Agriculture. In 1941 I was transferred to Atlanta and covered the six southeastern states until April 1945 at which time I was transferred to Washington. I was transferred to Washington as a chief inspector at which time we had five, if I remember correctly. There was one on the West coast that covered the territory from the Canadian border to the Mexican border; one in Chicago that covered from the Canadian border down to the Southern states; one in Baltimore that covered part of the Southern states; one in New York that covered the Northeastern states; and the Atlanta station covered the seven Southeastern states which was cut back one state in 1942. From 1945 to 1966 I was employed in Washington as an administrative officer which covered the enforcement and inspection work. At the time I retired I was chief of the inspection and registration section.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Your time in government included the period when it was under Food and Drug and you were under the supervision of Mr. Campbell? When you went back to Agriculture, who was the first chief with Agriculture?

Mr. Cromartie:

Dr. Reed took over. Dr. Reed is the one that took me back to Washington. Dr. McDonnell was chief of the Division when I transferred over. The fact is, he had been chief of the Division from the time Dr. Haywood died until he retired at the age of 70. At that time we were under the Livestock Branch in PMA, AMS--they changed names during the war--and at that time in Washington there was Dr. Reed as chief of the Division, Dr. Griffin assistant chief. Each had a secretary. I was administrative officer. I had a secretary. There was a clerk typist and two file clerks. That was the force that operated at that time, along with the five inspectors.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Where were your offices? Were you in the South Building?

Mr. Cromartie:

In the South Building.

Mrs. Whitaker:

There were so many years that Insecticide wasn't even a Division. Was it a Division during those years after it went back to Agriculture?

Mr. Cromartie:

The way I remember it was this. Sections, Divisions, and Branches switched from one to the other and you didn't know what you were. You could have been a Section at one time and had as much authority as a Division later on. Division, I guess, right now is the highest. No, the Branch is the highest, then the Divisions, then the Sections.

Mrs. Whitaker:

From the records, I had the impression that the Department of Agriculture didn't really know what to do with you people after 1940.

Mr. Cromartie:

That is correct. When they took Food and Drug out of Agriculture, they didn't have anywhere to put the Insecticide Division. Someone came up with the idea that we had dealings with livestock preparations so that's where we wound up. We had about the same problem with the Livestock Branch as we did with all the rest of them. They didn't know anything about the work. The strange

thing about it, until they started raising cain about residues, Agriculture didn't have too much interest. When Ribicoff started investigating and all the rest of them, we got in the headlines. ARS at that time realized that it was more important than they had actually figured.

Mrs. Whitaker:

But it wasn't really until consumer pressures were put on . . .

Mr. Cromartie:

That's right. It really started branching out when the new act was passed and the new insecticides and fungicides started coming on the market. They just had to spend more attention with it.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Concentrating for just a little while on the personalities, people that you worked with . . . Tell me about Dr. McDonnell. I find very little on him as a person.

Mr. Cromartie:

You're going to have to censor some of this stuff.

Mrs. Whitaker:

We can take it out.

Mr. Cromartie:

He was very easy going. Dr. Griffin was the key to the whole thing. Of course Dr. McDonnell was chief of the Division but Dr. Griffin was the one that actually knew the background of the work and was familiar with all angles. He had knowledge of bacteriology, insecticides, and fungicides altogether. He had been in the laboratory before he became assistant chief. I would say that he knew more about the Act and its workings than anybody before or after.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Now, this was Dr. Griffin?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes. In fact, he practically wrote the insecticide act of 1947. He answered all the questions, he handled the industry, in conferences, They had certain objections that they didn't want in it. He practically brought the Act to its final form with the objections of industry corrected. At that time, industry had quite a power and we couldn't be too hard on them. In other words, they didn't want you to jump out and start cleaning up everything.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Was there any pressure from environmentalists or consumer groups?

Mr. Cromartie:

There wasn't any such thing. I never heard of them before. I don't remember anybody ever representing consumer groups. There wasn't any such thing as residues at that time. DDT, chlordane, heptachlore and the herbicides weren't even on the market. They hadn't even been developed.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Food and Drug was getting all of the flack about the arsenical residues on fruit? You really didn't have anything to do with that, did you?

Mr. Cromartie:

The only residues that I remember--and I'm sure I'm right on that--the residues they checked for were lead and arsenic. I've picked up hundreds of samples, fruit and that stuff, where they were checked for lead and arsenic. Those are the only residues that I know of at Food and Drug. After the new chemicals started coming in and it was found that they could be harmful, Food and Drug had to branch out on their residues. Up until '45 or later there wasn't any such thing as residues, except lead and arsenic. At that time they did a lot of checking on lead and arsenic. You'd get it in your food products, maple syrup for instance. They'd have the sap buckets painted with white lead paints. Syrup has a great affinity for lead, particularly, and when the sap was concentrated

down to about 20 to 1 or 40 to 1.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Where were you stationed in '35 or '36?

Mr. Cromartie:

In '35 I was in Los Angeles. No, up until about the middle of '34 I was in Los Angeles and then from '34 to '37 I was in San Francisco.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Then, in both stations, you would have had associations with the lead arsenate residue on fruit coming out of the Northwest?

Mr. Cromartie:

In those days we would set up stations in various parts of the West and we would stop trucks as they would be leaving Colorado and going to Texas and take samples. And there was a chemist there and we would test the samples. By the time the trucks got to their destination we knew whether the crops had excessive residues on them. We didn't have any authority to stop those trucks.

Mrs. Whitaker:

That's a matter of public record, I think.

Mr. Cromartie:

I worked at some of these quarantine stations in Arizona. They were the only ones that had them at that time and we would stop trucks there. I would ship the samples in. We would check the manifest to see where it was going. The samples went back to the laboratories and they were checked for residue. Of course, by that time the produce was already gone. Produce goes in at about two or three in the morning and it's gone by ten.

Mrs. Whitaker:

The Secretary acknowledged during that period that there was little authority for setting a residue at all. That was the big problem in the 1938 food law. They did want some method of setting a tolerance because before then it was simply an administrative act?

Mr. Cromartie:

You had to settle each case in court, if they contested it. We brought a trial case in Vermont with maple syrup with lead in it. We lost the case. If you get a jury in these states where maple syrup or something else is produced, you can't win them. But it was a test case. The last I remember lead and arsenic were about eight parts per million and they had been lower than that at one time. They kept changing them until more research developed.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Did you testify in any of the court cases? I was particularly concerned with fruit. Did you testify in any of those cases? Were you in the courtroom, for instance, when the case against the Washington Dehydrated Apple Corporation .....

Mr. Cromartie:

I was at the maple syrup case. I don't remember but one or two that I testified in. In other words, if there was a clear cut case, they wouldn't argue. When something new came up--dehydrated food or maple syrup--industry would fight something new that way but something that was established they would just go ahead and either plead guilty or nolo contendere and let the judge settle it.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Dr. Griffin had also mentioned the difficulty of getting a court decision where a jury heard the trial. Was it really difficult for you to win a case if it went before a jury?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Were the juries hostile to government?

Mr. Cromartie:

yes. They were invariably, particularly when you picked them up in the area where the industry was located. The Food and Drug lost a case up in North Georgia before I went in. The Food and Drug man that interviewed me was chief of the Savannah station then and came down home. He was telling about a tuberculosis cure in the mountains of North Georgia that the government lost. It was a jury trial. You have some juries that way that have a strange viewpoint.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I think some of your notices of judgment would indicate that.

Mr. Cromartie:

I think we had the largest fine in the Insecticide Division at that time on a disinfectant manufacturer in Baltimore. I think it was \$5,000. He pled nolo contendere. It was hard to get a case into court, believe it or not, even through the office of the General Counsel.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Why was that?

Mr. Cromartie:

We were not important. I sent cases down to the office

of the General Counsel at the time I was there and they just wouldn't file them. They kept putting them off; they didn't have the clerical help, etc.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I think the records pretty well indicate that it was difficult to get cases on the docket.

Mr. Cromartie:

We sent cases down that were clear cut. They just fiddled around and never did file them. I got so mad at one time I told them I wasn't going to send any more down. It took a lot of work working up those cases. When we sent them down, all they had to do was write out informations and file them. Of course, they had to go through the channels but they were pretty hesitant about it even up to the time I left.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Some of these cases would take seven years to get before a judge.

Mr. Cromartie:

And a judge isn't going to look very kindly on a case like that. I know we got some strange cases of these federal judges. They're powers in themselves so they don't have to worry.

Mrs. Whitaker:

You mentioned the disinfectants. That was one of the things I did want to talk about because it seems almost ironic that more of the cases that did reach the court involved disinfectants rather than agricultural insecticides. And you found this to be true even after you joined the Department in 1931?

Mr. Cromartie:

One reason I think is that at that time the manufacturers could control the output much easier. In other words, if you are making a 50 per cent lead arsenate dust, all you have to do is weigh up half with filler and half with that and mix it thoroughly. A lot of violations resulted from poor mixing. Either that or they would get too much of an overrun on the product. As a whole, agricultural insecticides were pretty well controlled. Not only that, there was another reason for it. The states spent more time on the agricultural insecticides than they did on the disinfectants. The fact is, a lot of the states didn't have laws to cover the disinfectants.

Mrs. Whitaker:

And so that became a federal jurisdiction?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes.

Mrs. Whitaker:

While the Insecticide Act was with Food and Drug, do you think the fact that disinfectants are so closely related to medicine influenced the emphasis on disinfectants? Do you think that Campbell was more interested in disinfectants?

Mr. Cromartie:

No, I don't think so. The whole reason was that the disinfectants the Insecticide Division covered were for use on inanimate objects. Food and Drug had the germicides and that type for human use. Another reason is that disinfectants are very competitive. There was a high profit in them. Some of the manufacturers were very unethical in their dealings. You'd go to these counties, in the South particularly, where the sheriffs did the buying and the salesmen would make kickbacks. The margin of profit was so high that they didn't have to worry, back in the early '40's particularly, and they would give away shotguns, traveling bags, or anything else in order to get the orders. You could almost tell when you went in a county office the way they reacted whether somebody got a kickback or not. They were very hesitant about your sampling the material. It was explained to them that we weren't interested in anything but the fact that they got what they paid for. Once it was explained to them, they weren't nervous at all. There was a lot

of competition, there still is.

Mrs. Whitaker:

You picked up a complete range of products?

Mr. Cromartie:

That's right. You had to. You had the whole area.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Was a project type thing assigned to you? Would you be advised what kind of product to sample at a particular time?

Mr. Cromartie:

No. The inspectors were on their own in the field. We would get assignments from Washington on follow-ups. They might have a product that was marginal and they'd want an additional sample of it. The inspectors, in checking the plants, would have shipments going out of their territory. With our correspondence between the inspectors, they would send over shipments for me to cover in New Orleans that were shipped from Chicago. Other than that, we had our sampling manual and anything in that that hadn't been covered we would sample. Now for each territory, the inspector was responsible for his products. If I picked a sample from an Atlanta manufacturer and the schedule called for only one sample

of that product from each manufacturer, then that was written off and I wouldn't bother with that until next year. We got most of our leads from checking the shipping records in the manufacturers' plants. We didn't have authority to do that either until the new Act.

Mrs. Whitaker:

In the period before the Insecticide Act went to Food and Drug, Haywood did not use factory inspection. It wasn't until Campbell took over that insecticide inspectors went into the factories. I'm not sure why Haywood would not use factory inspection. Do you know anything on that . . . why he refused to let his inspectors go into factories?

Mr. Cromartie:

I can tell you this, in my opinion factory inspections were of little or no value at all. It wasn't like Food and Drug. They can take action on filth conditions and close up a plant on it. On insecticides and fungicides, the condition of a plant had no bearing on the composition. I know under the Food and Drug I spent hours making factory inspections and writing them up. I made some that would take a week to write up. We did it on overtime mainly. We didn't have the time, you had your assignments during the day. As far as I know, under the Food and Drug Act, other than the shipments, I don't know what value they

were. We cut them out when I got to Washington. They don't do it now, I don't think. It was time wasted. In other words, we were only interested in the product that reached the consumer. They could take any kind of mixing equipment, some of it is very simple. You can take a steel drum and put a motor and a pulley on it and make as good a mixture of an insecticide and some as well as these million dollar corporations. It takes more time and you don't have the volume. That's the only difference.

Mrs. Whitaker:

When Insecticides went back to Agriculture in 1940, what was the practice in those first years? Did you continue factory inspections when you took over?

Mr. Cromartie:

We didn't have time. We only had five inspectors at one time and we had to keep the laboratories occupied. At that time there was a laboratory in San Francisco, one in Chicago, one in New York, and one at Beltsville. Soon after I was transferred to Washington, due to funds, and the Livestock Branch was actually the reason, Harry Reed figured that we didn't need the one in San Francisco and the one in Chicago and they were closed out. And the personnel--they only had maybe one chemist or two at each station, they did all the analytical work in New York and Beltsville. They just closed them . . .

lack of funds, the main thing. They've never opened them yet that I know. They still have the one in New York, I imagine, and the one in Beltsville. When you have five men in the field, even if factory inspections had been of any appreciable value, we wouldn't have had time anyway. We visited the plants where they were making the products and checking the records but we weren't too interested in the manufacturing process. We did do a lot of sampling at the plants. That was because we were checking the materials that they got that they were mixing. In other words, it was to their advantage for us to do that because if a manufacturer sold them a five per cent dust concentrate, like Rotenone or pyrethrum and they were short changed, when they made their products their materials would check short. And that was the excuse that many of them used, that their raw material was deficient.

Mrs. Whitaker:

The old Act covered raw materials, I believe. You could bring suit against the manufacturer of the raw material?

Mr. Cromartie:

If it was shipped interstate. Now, of course, raw material in itself isn't very descriptive. By that term we'd mean a product that was further processed. Some of it you could use itself, as it was, if you wanted a concentrate. You could use straight Rotenone powder or straight pyrethrum

powder. But it was too expensive and it was only for certain uses. So a raw material, in the terms I am using, just means something that was to be further processed. It was an insecticide in itself. Otherwise we couldn't have covered it.

Mrs. Whitaker:

As we approach World War II, the emphasis again was on increased production. Were you in any way instructed to cut back on the amount of inspection that you did of agricultural products or insecticides for agricultural use?

Mr. Cromartie:

No, it didn't make any difference as far as I know. The fact is that as far as the war was concerned the only handicap it had with us was traveling conditions and things like that.

Mrs. Whitaker:

You continued the same kind of projects?

Mr. Cromartie:

The same routine that we had.

Mrs. Whitaker:

You mentioned a case in Baltimore on a disinfectant.

Did you testify in that case?

Mr. Cromartie:

No, I didn't testify. We presented the facts. They pled nolo contendere. We explained the case to the judge and that was all that happened. There wasn't any testimony except what we gave.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Very seldom did the courts impose any kind of jail sentence, though that was possible under the Act. What was the feeling from the administrative standpoint concerning jail sentences?

Mr. Cromartie:

As far as I know, they weren't too interested in jail sentences. The type of violation was more of an economic cheat and not a health hazard. Of course, under the new Act that made it different. I don't know whether anyone has been sent to jail or not.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Can you pinpoint the time at which judges became a little more exacting in what they imposed in the way of fines?

Mr. Cromartie:

The more publicity insecticides got, the more the judges

became conscious of them. We had a case--it was a Baltimore judge--where he'd never heard of the Act. He said that. But he didn't hesitate to fine them. Maybe that's one of the reasons that he did it. He was used to cases under Food and Drug in which there were health hazards involved. He fined them more than we expected. We would have been satisfied with a two or three thousand dollar fine. We had never had one that large before. That kind of threw the fear of God in the manufacturers. They know everything that goes on. Not only that, they take the notices of judgment around to their prospective customers and show what their competitors are in violation of. They would do anything to sell merchandise.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I wondered if manufacturers might object to the notices of judgment from the standpoint of publicity?

Mr. Cromartie:

They didn't like it at all. They would admit that they would rather pay a thousand dollar fine and forget the whole matter. But the law didn't read that way. These cases had to be published in some form or other. I'm just wondering now how they publish them.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I noticed in some of Haywood's correspondence in the

early cases that he was frequently frustrated by what he considered incompetence on the part of the federal attorney who would be handling the case because he didn't know anything about the law. Did you find this to be a problem when you . . .

Mr. Cromartie:

It was and probably still is. We would go in when we had a case to the U.S. attorney's office and try to explain the case so that they would know. They were completely ignorant of the Insecticide Act in most districts. Some of them might never have had a case. We would go in and have a conference with them and explain the case and then they would get a different viewpoint on it. On this case in Baltimore, Miller of the Office of the General Counsel and I had conferences with the U.S. attorney's office and explained the background of the firm and the violations involved.

Mrs. Whitaker:

That's Lowell Miller?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes, Lowell Miller. He was the one that handled the cases. We talked with the assistant down there that was going to handle the case several times. We had the case in good shape. There were several violations involved. It was

cut and dried. We still had to present it to the judge so he would understand it. He said he had never heard of the Act so it didn't make any difference in that case.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I read one case in which the judge had charged the jury with having to consider the intent of the manufacturer to defraud. Apparently he confused the Food and Drug Act with the Insecticide Act. You did not have to prove the intent of the manufacturer under the Insecticide Act?

Mr. Cromartie:

That must have been an old case.

Mrs. Whitaker:

It was an old case.

Mr. Cromartie:

I'll tell you why. It was a case of fraud. In fraud up until the new Food and Drug Act went in, it was difficult to prove fraud. It's difficult now. Even in income tax cases they have a job doing that. Of course, the 1937 Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act corrected that. But before '37 they had to prove intent. That was never in the Insecticide Act.

Mrs. Whitaker:

In this particular case the judge was confused and every-

thing the United States attorney did failed to convince him that it was not necessary to prove intent under the Insecticide Act. The solicitor in the Department of Agriculture was extremely concerned that they had lost this case. They tried for seven or eight years to convict this particular manufacturer.

Mr. Cromartie:

I bet he was from Baltimore.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I am not sure.

Mr. Cromartie:

He was a character. I never did see him. Dr. Griffin discussed him. The funny part is that he was right. He came in with a cane and a top hat and long coat. If it's the one I'm thinking about, it was a one-spot flea killer for pets--dogs and cats--and the way he got the idea for the name "one spot" was that you put it on the back of their necks. That's where the fleas concentrate, on the back of the neck and the back too. His argument was that fleas moved up towards the head, which they do. They never did get it off the market, if that was the case that I'm thinking of. It could have been one that was very similar. They never did get it off the market. It's still on the market and

labeled properly.

Mrs. Whitaker:

They had a lot of problems also with systemic insecticides. Under the old act, some of these were out-right frauds I would suspect. Do you recall any of these cases where they simply put a tablet into the poultry drinking water, for instance, and it was supposed to take care of lice and mites?

Mr. Cromartie:

They had those--I think it was potassium permanganate tablets that they used a lot in the drinking water--which were effective under certain conditions. We had very few poultry and livestock violations. There weren't too many manufacturers and most of them were pretty reputable. There weren't too many large companies. Of course, you would run across the shysters that would bring up a new product on the market and rush it through and it would be ineffective. I don't remember a single case of livestock or poultry violation that we had. There are bound to have been some but they didn't wind up in prosecution. We'd have citations and seizures.

Mrs. Whitaker:

What years were these?

Mr. Cromartie:

In the 30's I think.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Did you deal much with the cattle dips that the Bureau of Animal Industry would have been concerned with?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes, the BAI had at that time a list of permitted dips and disinfectants that they didn't approve but they accepted them. They had previously tested them. We sampled those the same as the rest of them. We did have violations on those but none went to court. Maybe we'd seize them but we never prosecuted. You see, if a manufacturer had a permitted dip and disinfectant, he wanted to maintain a standard on it because it was a selling point. In other words, BAI would use it. If there was an accepted dip, then a firm would have a much better chance of selling it to somebody that wasn't with the government.

Mrs. Whitaker:

You mentioned seizures. Haywood had tried seizures to some extent in the early period, not with a great deal of success however. But after Insecticides came under the Food, Drug, and Insecticide Administration in 1927 Campbell increased the number of seizures. What was the practice after you came in in 1931? Were you using

multiple seizures to any extent?

Mr. Cromartie:

Oh, yes. They still use them, unless they've changed. In other words, as I remember it, the courts held that the government could make multiple seizures on certain violations. On the economic cheats they had to settle one before they could make others. In other words, this one had to be settled in court before they could make others. But on the health hazards there wasn't any limit. We made multiple seizures all the time. In other words, there isn't any reason why if this wholesaler has 500 cases of a product that's deficient--somebody's going to get gyped or get ineffective material--and another fellow over here has the same amount or half the amount and it is deficient, both of them should be off the market. Not only that, you take a large produce grower, if he gets an inefficient product it can hurt him.

Mrs. Whitaker:

You mean as far as not protecting his crop?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes.

Mrs. Whitaker:

With the old arsenicals, not only were the crops not

protected but sometimes the products actually damaged the vegetation itself. Was that one of the concerns that you had?

Mr. Cromartie:

That was on the basis of water soluble arsenic. On all the arsenicals they had to state the percentage of water soluble arsenic. If there was too much soluble it would burn the crop badly. They had a lot of cases like that.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Did you see much of that yourself?

Mr. Cromartie:

We never came in contact with it too much. They could have had it; we wouldn't have known about it.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Your contact was almost exclusively with the manufacturer and distributors themselves rather than the consumer?

Mr. Cromartie:

We contacted the consumer a very small percentage of the time. There'd be a lot of direct shipments. A consumer will get maybe two or three packages or something like that. What we tried to cover were the large lots, the distributor or wholesaler. On some products where there

was a very small amount made and shipped we would contact the user. If a user got one container it was generally open so you had to have an unopened container. You had to have at least more than one container before the sample was of any value. We couldn't prosecute on open containers but we could seize and we did take opened drums of pyrethrum powder, etc. It could be opened--it might be 200 pounds--and it might be deficient and the manufacturer had used part of it. If the sample was deficient, we would seize the remainder because the value justified the seizure. We didn't ordinarily seize on a shipment unless it was \$100 or \$250. In other words, you had to figure your court costs. It may not be worth it. If there is no hazard involved, it is cheaper for the tax payer to let it go.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Especially in view of the trouble you had getting appropriations?

Mr. Cromartie:

Not only that, on an open container you ran a chance of it being used before you could get to it. It would take a couple of weeks for a seizure to go through once it was analyzed. We had to write up the recommendation which covered the violations and then send it around to the office of the General Counsel and they would have

to write up the libel and then it had to go to the U.S. attorney in the district where it was located. He had to file it and then it had to go to the U.S. marshal. I don't believe it would go through in two weeks unless it was a very urgent situation. It was a pretty slow procedure.

Mrs. Whitaker:

You mentioned the division being a sort of a step-child to the department after it reverted in 1940 to the Department of Agriculture. Did you have trouble during those years getting appropriations adequate to your needs?

Mr. Cromartie:

Harry Reed was chief of the Livestock Branch at that time and he was the one that brought Webster Reed in. They weren't related. He didn't know anything about it. Many of them felt that Dr. Griffin should have been appointed chief and Harry Reed did say later, I heard, that if he had known to start with what he did, Dr. Griffin would have been appointed chief. Dr. Griffin didn't have the personality; he had the knowledge. He was blunt at times, I guess. He understood the background of it and so he didn't hesitate in telling or expressing his views. Webster Reed came over in 1944. All of them had to depend on Dr. Griffin.

Mrs. Whitaker:

From some of the correspondence I have the impression that Dr. McDonnell had more or less groomed Dr. Griffin to be his successor.

Mr. Cromartie:

Not only that, when Dr. McDonnell retired everybody thought that Dr. Griffin was going to be appointed, but he wasn't. I don't know the reason for that. I've forgotten. John Coyne was never chief of the Division. Dr. Griffin retired in 1955 while Dr. Reed was still chief and Coyne was brought in as Dr. Reed's assistant. He (Coyne) later went back to Packers & Stockyards as administrative officer. I think Dr. Griffin retired as early as he did because he was not made chief of the Division. When Dr. Reed retired, Mr. Ward was made chief and remained so until Dr. Hays came in which was about May 1965. I retired December 31, 1966. White was Mr. Ward's assistant. I think Dr. Griffin was about 65 when he retired. All he had to do was sit up there and answer questions. He knew the answers. He used to drive me nuts sometimes on these seizure recommendations and notices of judgment and prosecutions. I had to write them up. There were only three of us there. He went in for commas and everything, and charges had to be just right. So I finally got where I could think like he did so then I'd send them up and they'd go through. I had to learn to think

the way he did. I learned more from him on enforcement work than anybody else. He just knew it, that's it. Back in those days, they were more accurate. I don't know why. I don't think it served a purpose, but it must have.

Mrs. Whitaker:

This was the mid-40's you are talking about.

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes. Every comma had to be right. You had to quote labels in the charges and sometimes you'd have two pages of a label to quote. He would check those labels just like they were printed and if there was a comma omitted, he would send it back. I don't think it made any difference at all. Of course, when you messed up a charge as it should be, that's entirely different. That's the only way I ever learned to write them up without them bouncing back two or three times, was thinking like he would.

Mrs. Whitaker:

In the chain of command, did you have much association with the Secretary of Agriculture or were you so far down the . . . ?

Mr. Cromartie:

We were too far down. Maybe once in a blue moon. I

sometimes think the Secretary didn't know anything about the Insecticide Act either. But you see, at that time, ARS, at least at the end, was over the Insecticide Division as well as all the others. So the head of ARS and his deputies were the ones we had to deal with. The Secretary would only come in when some Congressional committee would start investigating or Agriculture would start. The last two or three years I was there I think we spent most of our time writing up reports either for Ribicoff or the Secretary. There'd be complaints, kicks, and everything else. In the last one--to give you a good example of that--the records were in the office at Washington. Ribicoff spent months investigating the Insecticide Division, got all this publicity, but in the end when they wrote out the report in about three volumes, about one inch thick, hardback, the Insecticide Division was cleared. They'd enforced it. They'd done what they were supposed to but nobody ever heard of that. So we spent about half our time furnishing information; somebody was always up there.

Mrs. Whitaker:

This was after the new act in '47?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes, this was just three or four years before I retired. And then they weren't satisfied with that investigation.

The Secretary appointed a committee to investigate, that was about a year and a half, I guess, or two before I left. They appointed Dr. Hays as chairman of it and then they had several state people. They didn't have anybody from industry that I remember. They spent two or three months. Dr. Ward retired soon after that and then Dr. Hays, the chairman of the committee, was appointed head of the Insecticide Division. It is my understanding that he's been pushed upstairs now. He was with the National Academy of Sciences at the time.

Mrs. Whitaker:

The time at which he began the investigation?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes. But of course when he was appointed chief of the Division I guess he'd have to get out of it. But he didn't know much about it. Then everything was breaking down and there were a lot of headaches on residues and stuff like that. So he was in a year or so before I retired. He was very easy to work with. I never worked with anyone that I enjoyed more. I guess one reason that he didn't bother me, he didn't know enough about it. I always said I was going to get out as soon as I could, even back in '31.

Mrs. Whitaker:

you had some 30 years.

Mr. Cromartie:

No. I had over 35. But the pressure was getting too much. I mean, it was Sundays, Saturdays, nights, holidays; you just had more work than you could handle, that was the whole thing. We were understaffed. Now they have about three people doing what one used to do before.

Mrs. Whitaker:

How many inspectors did you have under your supervision at the time that you retired?

Mr. Cromartie:

About seventeen, I think. There at the end we brought in five or six in one year. I spent a lot of time traveling, interviewing them. We got most of them from Food and Drug. There were several reasons for it. They had a lot of inspectors that were dissatisfied, as many as they have, some are bound to be dissatisfied. It would take two or three years to train a new man if he'd never had any experience and maybe \$50,000 if you start figuring time and all. I knew them all anyway at one time or other so when we wanted a new inspector we'd have the inspector in that area inquire around who wanted a transfer and we got all we wanted already trained.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Were the salaries commensurate?

Mr. Cromartie:

They were the same. Some of them are probably making more now than they would have had they remained with Food and Drug.

Mrs. Whitaker:

When you took over the administrative part of the inspection you had only five or six men?

Mr. Cromartie:

Five, if I remember correctly. I'm sure it was five because we had San Francisco, Chicago, Baltimore, New York and Atlanta. At that time they had an assistant in New York and then when I was moved to Washington, we moved him to Atlanta, and we still had five.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Were you subjected to much pressure from manufacturers as far as not prosecuting a product that you knew was in violation of the law?

Mr. Cromartie:

Not at all. The way it operated is this. When a violation occurred, we would issue what we called citations. That

term is incorrect. They were actually notices of violation, and they had an opportunity to come in and show why they shouldn't be prosecuted. Or they could answer by mail. The larger ones would come in but the smaller manufacturers would tend to have their attorneys answer the charges. Most of them had some kind of excuse. One of the common ones was that the superintendent of the plant was responsible and he is no longer with them. That got to be a joke. The main purpose was to give an opportunity to show why they shouldn't be prosecuted. If we made a seizure, they either had to let it go by default, take it out under bond and reprocess it, or contest it. After that we would issue a notice of violation on which you could prosecute. As far as I know, there never was any problem at all on that. There wasn't much pressure they could bring. It was seldom ever done. Towards the end we had one or two that they'd fight but the way I remember it, they lost. One of the well known rodenticides .....

Mrs. Whitaker:

Was this under the new Act?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes. The old Act didn't cover rodenticides. We would have maybe fifty or sixty citations a month, and maybe twenty-five or thirty seizures. It would vary. From there on it would depend on the background of the case

in how far you were going and the reasons they gave why they shouldn't be prosecuted.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Some of the charges that were brought against the Department in the more recent years, after the 1947 Act was passed, was that manufacturers could put political pressure through their Congressmen upon the Secretary perhaps to not prosecute a product. What is your opinion .....

Mr. Cromartie:

I never had that experience. We would have cases like this. We'd have a violation and the fellow would write his Congressman and his Congressman would call us up or something and then we'd go up and talk to the Congressman. It never changed our recommendation one way or the other. Those cases were very few. We had the cases pretty well under control. We weren't getting out on a limb, really, because we were too small. We couldn't afford to. It was bad enough when you had a prosecution and lost it, much less bringing it when it was not justified. I would have thought that the objection most people would have had was that we didn't prosecute enough, and I think that came out later. I know we didn't prosecute enough. But we didn't have the personnel and the cases weren't too important. The U.S. attorneys and other factors were involved.

Mrs. Whitaker:

When you say the cases were not too important, do you mean not too important to the consumer?

Mr. Cromartie:

No, to the Justice Department.

Mrs. Whitaker:

So, if there was a delay or if the suit was not prosecuted, then it might sometimes be because the Attorney General's office did not follow through?

Mr. Cromartie:

They had the more important cases. An insecticide case in a district court wasn't a drop in the bucket, really. They had so many important cases that they had to handle, and there was probably more publicity to them than to an insecticide case.

Mrs. Whitaker:

You had already mentioned that even the solicitor's office .....

Mr. Cromartie:

They were slow in filing them. I don't know whether I'd want that in print or not. I told them that. I told them that several times. They had legitimate excuses. They didn't have the help and they had more important

things too, I guess.

Mrs. Whitaker:

So there really wasn't any pressure put on them to carry through on some of the things.

Mr. Cromartie:

There should have been. We'd call them up--"When are you going to file this?" "We haven't gotten to it yet." George is in the Insecticide Division?

Mrs. Whitaker:

Yes. He's with the EPA now.

Mr. Cromartie:

And Lowell Miller is too, I guess. Miller came over before I left. Miller wanted to get in a long time ago. And White, incidentally, getting back to that, was one reason I think he didn't get in earlier. He got in after Dr. Hays got in. I recommended him to Dr. Hays and Dr. Hays had him over and interviewed him. He impressed him very much.

Mrs. Whitaker:

This is Lowell Miller?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes. Way back Lowell wanted to transfer to the Insecticide

Division and I mentioned it to Mr. Ward. White said we didn't need any more lawyers up here with you to handle enforcement. Of course Miller would have been handy to have up there because of his legal background. I didn't have any legal background except experience. Somebody could have passed on these legal questions before they got down there to the solicitor's office. We never had any problems with them because we worked so closely together. I don't know what Miller is doing now.

Mrs. Whitaker:

He is not in General Counsel.

Mr. Cromartie:

I was in Washington a month on business about two or three years ago. They had built some new offices down there since then. I know from what I've heard that they've got it pretty well scattered now. Of course it's getting so big. I know in Atlanta there I called up the old office in Decatur last July, I think I was in Atlanta, and a girl answered the phone. I asked her where the inspector in charge was and she said he was in an office downtown in Atlanta. I didn't even know they had two offices. When I was there we had the one in Decatur. I only hear from them about once a year; I hear from several of the inspectors. They bring me up to date. I've never actually gotten a full run of how they're operating now except

that they are a whole lot larger than they used to be.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Speaking of how they operate, would you tell me something about the changeover in 1947, how your responsibilities changed and what problems presented themselves after you became responsible for registration of products?

Mr. Cromartie:

No, it was mainly a title really. They set up a branch-- they had a division and a branch and then the sections. When they decided to set up a branch, they asked Mr. Ward who to make head of the branch. He said I was the only one that he could think of so I was made branch chief of registration and enforcement. I couldn't even handle enforcement really. I mean, I had more than I could do there. He let White, his assistant, supervise registration. Of course we had a section chief in registration, who had formerly been my assistant. In fact, he was the first one I brought in after I got to Washington. He was made the head of registration. They operated pretty much on their own. You didn't have any problems. The labels went through and it was a clerical process really. Most of the time we had to spend was on enforcement. Registration took care of itself.

Mrs. Whitaker:

What were some of the first problems in enforcement after the law went into effect?

Mr. Cromartie:

We actually didn't have any problems. The problem was personnel and funds. The operational procedures were perfect. You didn't have so many inspectors and you knew each one of them personally. You talked to them on the phone if anything came up, and there wasn't any problem except overwork.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Did you change the procedure any as far as the kind of projects you wanted the inspectors to work on? Did you assign projects to the different inspectors in the different areas?

Mr. Cromartie:

We would send out assignments from Washington. More of them went out at the end than at first because there were fewer products to start with and later there were literally hundreds of them. You couldn't cover all of them really. After the new act came in we had to write a new manual. It changed everything completely. Number of samples, type of products you had to concentrate on, things like that--so we had to rewrite the manual and sampling procedures. After the new act went in, the volume was such

that what we did before was a picnic.

Mrs. Whitaker:

What was your reaction--this would have been during the war years--to the new products as they became available commercially? With DDT for instance, did it require any different procedure?

Mr. Cromartie:

We had to work out new methods and everything else. They got so involved and they developed so many new methods that they just had to keep working all the time.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Do you think your inspectors realized the significance of the new products that were coming on the market?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes. We'd hold conferences in Washington at least once a year. And I would get out in the field on trips and we kept them up to date pretty well that way. Their main problem was to cover their territory--that is, cover the products manufactured in their territory--and send in representative collections of what was manufactured in their territories. In other words, they couldn't stick to disinfectants which they wouldn't because they were so hard to sample, drums and that kind of stuff. They

couldn't limit their operations to just a few products. They had to give it a pretty comprehensive coverage for their territory. Now they have such small areas that they can do it. But then it was a job with the limited number of inspectors that we had.

Mrs. Whitaker:

It must have been a problem, especially in the Southeast where you had vegetable crops, cotton, fruit.

Mr. Cromartie:

I've covered the six Southern states from '41 to '45 and we had such a variety of products down here that there wasn't any limit to the number of samples you could collect. I remember one year I collected 499 samples in one month. That's the most I guess that's ever been collected and ever will be now the way they operate. I figured on 500 but I counted wrong at the end of the month. But I didn't do that often, it was killing work. That was in Florida, incidentally. I would get to Florida somewhere around the middle of January and leave after April 1st or April 15th and then I'd go back to Atlanta for maybe a month and then I'd start out for other parts of Georgia, South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana. You hit a town like New Orleans, you could spend a month there and not cover it.

Mrs. Whitaker:

What did you do? Did you go to feed stores?

Mr. Cromartie:

Feed stores, wholesale drug houses, wholesale grocery houses, retail places, those were the main ones we covered.

Mrs. Whitaker:

What was your reception in those places?

Mr. Cromartie:

Ninety-nine times out of a hundred they'd want to cooperate once it was explained to them. Of course, a lot of them when you got in, no inspector had ever been there before. I don't think I had but one time, and this was a so and so in Pensacola, Florida, a seedstore.

Mrs. Whitaker:

What year was this?

Mr. Cromartie:

I think it was the first year I was down there. Nobody had been there before and he was anti-Roosevelt. I told him what I wanted and he started raising hell about the administration. I said you can vote like you want to and I'm going to do the same thing, but I have a job to do and I'm going to do it whether you let me or not, whether

you want me to or not. Well, he cooled off without any problem. You wouldn't run into that once in a year.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Did you buy these samples?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes, you'd pay for them. But here's the problem there. When you got a sample, you had to get a copy of the invoice, a copy of the freight bill--you had to show it was interstate shipment--then you got a dealer's statement where a man signed that this material that you sampled came from that shipment. You had to be sure it was because he could come up later and say "I was mistaken." That sample didn't come from that shipment. If you had a prosecution, that was it. They would never do that because it was always explained to them why you needed that dealer's statement just to complete our records. But down South you didn't have any problem like you did in New York, for instance, or some of those other places. The people down here were more cooperative than they were any place I ever worked. In Los Angeles, you hit a lot of the shyster manufacturers and some of them just don't want to cooperate anyway but in the Southern states you didn't have any problem. I didn't have any in Boston and that area. I know around New York and that area and Chicago we had it all the time. You had a different type of manufacturer really. You

would go in a place of business and you might spend three or four days. There was a manufacturer in Plant City. I'd spend four or five days there where you'd get all these samples. Then it would take the girl maybe an hour or two to dig up the records and then by the time you copied them and got the dealer's statements, you'd taken up a lot of their time. I can see how they could have gotten irritated but they just didn't. But when the manufacturers would come into Washington they weren't antagonistic at all. They wanted to get things straight if they could without going to court. They were the ones that were actually behind the eight ball. They were the ones that had to justify their action. They didn't really have any reason to get irritated. Of course, they hated all that trouble and all but they knew they were wrong. At least we figured they were. They knew that they had an opportunity to fight in court but you don't fight those things in court if you can help it. Your expenses, your time, and all that. The large manufacturers would send their attorneys in-- they wouldn't fool with it--they'd have an attorney either in Washington that handled it or the attorney in their home office would do it or they would come in themselves. They had attorneys in Washington, that was all they did was handle Food and Drug cases, insecticide cases. Of course they knew what the story was. All they could do was to stick to facts.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Did you deal to any extent of time with the manufacturers' associations, insecticide, disinfectant manufacturers?

Mr. Cromartie:

Oh, yes, all the time.

Mrs. Whitaker:

What were your relations with them?

Mr. Cromartie:

Very good. I can't remember the names now. They were always there. They would send their representatives in on conferences, the Insecticide and Disinfectant Manufacturers Association and then the Agricultural Manufacturers Association . . . I've forgotten.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Mr. Hitchener, I believe.

Mr. Cromartie:

Mr. Hitchener was there. Is he still there?

Mrs. Whitaker:

He was until just recently.

Mr. Cromartie:

Joe Noone was Hitchener's assistant. He was a very good

friend of Dr. Reed. Hitchener was the one who sat in on all these meetings when they were working on the act. Hitchener represented the agricultural end of it. Dr. Hamilton would represent the disinfectant manufacturers. That was when they were going down the act paragraph by paragraph. I don't know how many conferences we sat in. That was when I first went to Washington, when there were only three of us there really.

Mrs. Whitaker:

That would be yourself and . . .

Mr. Cromartie:

Dr. Griffin and Dr. Reed. Dr. Griffin was the one who handled the technical end of it. Dr. Reed didn't know it; I didn't know it except what I'd gathered in twenty years working in the field. Dr. Griffin wrote the Act and he handled all the problems that came up in these conferences. Of course, Agriculture would have a representative there, ARS, or whoever was handling it then. PMA at one time and then AMA and then AMS and then ARS, I don't remember the order. I think it was PMA, Production and Marketing, that's what it was when I first went to Washington, no, when I first transferred over. Then it went to AMA, then AMS, then they took it out of that and put it under ARS, and now it's under EPA.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Was Hitchener particularly demanding?

Mr. Cromartie:

Very, very reasonable, and so was the disinfectant group. They cooperated all the way and the fact is, I don't think the Act would ever have been passed without the support of the two groups. They could have fought it. They realized that the Insecticide Act of 1910 was obsolete and they could see that these new products were coming in and something had to be done. There wasn't any way to cover them. They were interested in the legitimate manufacturers. That's all they wanted to protect. Of course, they had their own members. They wanted products that complied with the law on the market the same as we did. As far as I know, there never was any rub. Even up to the end, the Division had the full cooperation of both groups.

Mrs. Whitaker:

About DDT now, when it first came in . . .

Mr. Cromartie:

The way I remember it, DDT first came on the market in this country in 1945. At that time Geigy had the American patent and theoretically everybody had to clear it with them before they could put it on the market. But DDT

was so easy to make that anybody could make it. I don't think Geigy ever exercised the patent on it. There was DDT all over the country. At that time people were coming in the office--and there was only a small force at that time, Dr. Griffin, Dr. Reed, and myself--and we didn't know too much about DDT. All we knew was that it was used in Italy for lice on humans. When it came over here as an insecticide, they would come in the office with solutions. All you had to do was mix kerosene and DDT. Kerosene would dissolve about five per cent DDT, that was as far as it would take without another solvent, I mean, like benzene and that type, the petroleum derivatives. They were selling it for anywhere from \$1.50 a quart. They wanted the labels corrected at that time before they put it on the market. So everybody and his brother that could get hold of DDT was coming in to get the labels corrected on so they could put it on the market. You could have taken \$5,000 worth of DDT at that time and retired, the price was high compared to what it is now. The main thing they used it for then that I know of was for household, mainly roaches, that type of thing. They were going to town on it. Things were hectic.

Mrs. Whitaker:

That was even before the '47 Act. All that you needed to do at that time was to check the labels.

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes, check the labels. Tell them that we didn't have any objections on it and they could use it. At that time I don't think they even had to have an adequate precautionary statement. It was just a household spray, to spray on the rugs or floors or whatever it was. They didn't know anything about DDT. They didn't know too much about the toxicity of it, for that matter. They didn't know that residues remained over an indefinite period of time. They were pretty liberal. Of course, nobody knew how far you could use it. From an enforcement angle, we had to be fairly careful. At that time, when it broke in this country, I don't think there were any agricultural uses for it. I think it was strictly household or human. Of course, after that they just went rampant on DDT, that was everything. It was good for what ailed you.

Mrs. Whitaker:

It replaced the arsenicals?

Mr. Cromartie:

To be frank with you, I never got as hot and bothered about DDT as a lot of other people have. In my opinion, and mine isn't scientific either, some of these other chlorinated hydrocarbons are worse than DDT. They just don't dissipate and that's the whole thing.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Was there any conflict between the Insecticide Division of Agriculture and Food and Drug over the use of DDT?

Mr. Cromartie:

Not at first. They didn't know too much about it. I still don't know what the tolerance is on DDT. It's not used now on food crops. To me it's still a good insecticide if you can keep it where it won't run into the creeks or rivers. After DDT came out and some of the other new chemicals, every time you had a fish poisoning or anything else they blamed it on DDT. We were always investigating these outbreaks. They'd have a fish poisoning down in the Mississippi River. DDT running off. Well, they'd find out it was something else. It was all over the country. We were always checking on these reports. Half the time it was something to do with nature or something else.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Before 1947 you couldn't have taken any action against DDT anyway, could you?

Mr. Cromartie:

Just on the misbranding or adulteration. DDT was the first one and then they just kept coming out .....

Mrs. Whitaker:

In the late '30's and early '40's, during the time that the fruit growers were so concerned about the spray residue, the arsenicals, there were a number of substances--rotenone was one of them--tried out as a substitute for arsenic. Was DDT viewed as sort of a . . .

Mr. Cromartie:

Not at that time.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I mean in the '40's when DDT was introduced. Did agriculturists look to that as the salvation from the arsenical problem?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes. A cure-all. And it was pretty good.

Mrs. Whitaker:

It did accomplish what they set out to do?

Mr. Cromartie:

It is about as good all-around as you can get. I don't think you can use chlordane on agricultural crops. You can't use DDT now. They had DDT for everything: household, agricultural. The fact is, you can't use it now. I've got a yard spray out there now--I don't know how long I've had it--part of it is DDT. I only use it on the

yard. I don't think you can buy it anymore. I think they've taken it off the market. Now they recommend chlordane for non-agricultural uses which is just as good. I think the residues build up in that. I don't see much difference. I don't know, I'm no scientist, it's just from the practical end of it.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Then after the 1947 Act you did have registration and the bulk of the products that you were registering involved DDT, I suppose?

Mr. Cromartie:

No, they had a lot more of them at that time. From '45 to '47 they started coming out with new ones. The advantage of the 1947 Act was that they had to have proper precautionary labeling. They also had to establish the effectiveness. They couldn't just say this is good; they had to show that it was effective. They had to have data to show that. Of course that ran into millions for these big manufacturers. They could spend millions on research to develop new products that were effective. After DDT, DDD came out and then they just kept branching off, making new products. I don't know how many. They'd change one of the chlorine groups and they'd have a new product.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Before the 1947 Act you had to prove in each case whether

or not the product was effective or not.

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes, we had to show it. They'd put it on the market and we'd have to pick it up.

Mrs. Whitaker:

And then after registration the product had to be shown effective first. Then if you picked up a product under the 1947 Act and it did not comply with the registration specifications you would have an automatic case against them?

Mr. Cromartie:

That's right. If they used a label that was different from what they had registered, even if the composition was different, there would be a violation to the effect that the labeling differed in composition to that accepted in the registration. If they changed directions, the directions were different. So there were two clear-cut cases. Once they registered a label, they had to use that number and they had to use the same label that was registered. Now, of course, there were times when we would find out later that we had accepted a label that later had to be changed. It wasn't anything serious. We might find out it wasn't effective for this one thing and then we would contact the manufacturer or registrant and they would bring it into compliance. Not only that,

if we found out something wasn't effective or the precautionary statement wasn't correct, we'd just cancel the registration. They had to start over.

Mrs. Whitaker:

The cost then of registering a product would have fairly well removed the small businessman from the insecticide or disinfectant business?

Mr. Cromartie:

Not on registration, for the simple reason that if he was buying raw materials--I mean by raw materials products that he could take into a small plant and formulate--the manufacturer would furnish him with labeling. He might say it was adequate. In other words, the manufacturer had already registered. So if he was buying DDT, say, from a manufacturer and he wanted to make a simple household spray, the manufacturer could give him a distributor's label that would comply. In other words, he could use the manufacturer's label which the latter had registered with a qualification. A lot of them did, disinfectant manufacturers and agricultural, too, for that matter. They could register one product. I know of one case that they had over five hundred distributor's labels. In other words, you took his label and took a stamp or printed your name on the bottom, "distributed by." All the manufacturer did was register their label and as they found a new customer they would send in his name as a

distributor and so the distributor was in compliance with the law. He used the same number, the same registration number. In other words a manufacturer could sell his product under numerous distributor's labels. Disinfectants were one of the types on which there were hundreds of distributors' labels.

Mrs. Whitaker:

For the same product?

Mr. Cromartie:

The same product.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Disinfectants remained a fairly substantial part of your enforcement work, then, after 1947.

Mr. Cromartie:

Very much so. I tell you why. They became such a value in hospitals, the sanitation end of it. Various institutions, jails, any public housing. Back in the old days, you could go by a county jail and you could tell what they used for a disinfectant. It was a coal-tar disinfectant. You could smell it two blocks. They wanted something that didn't have that obnoxious odor. They developed these disinfectants that were effective without giving off telling odor. Your bathroom deodorants are

aerosol sprays without the disinfectant qualities. Some of them have both characteristics. What's this well known one that used to be a coal-tar? It is used a lot in households. It used to be coal-tar and they've got it now where it's deodorized. They sell millions of it every year. I don't remember these names, it's been so long. We spent a lot of time at hospitals. About the best thing that a hospital could have would be a good housekeeper, as far as the sanitation was concerned. The jails and nursing homes and hospitals use many disinfectants.

Mrs. Whitaker:

You would pick up these samples?

Mr. Cromartie:

All the time. That's some of the points that we concentrated on for the reason that they would buy in quantities. The way we did in the war, the way some of these supply depots bought was funny. I covered one place, it was down in Alabama, they had 50 55-gallon drums of fly spray that they wouldn't use up in years. Not only that, for mosquito control these army camps would buy disinfectants from the disinfectant manufacturers and it wasn't anything but crank case oil with coal-tar disinfectant in it. Then the army camps finally got smart and with all these trucks and jeeps they had, they would use the drained crank case oil for mosquito control. If you get a heavy

rain down in Mississippi or Louisiana, you get water collecting and pretty soon you got mosquitoes and half the camps were in mosquito prone areas. They were paying \$1.50 or more a gallon for crank case oil for mosquito control.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Did you have a cooperative arrangement with the Public Health Services as far as your enforcement work . . .

Mr. Cromartie:

As far as I remember, we never worked with Public Health at all. The fact is, I don't know how they operate.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I don't either, for that matter.

Mr. Cromartie:

These supply depots, I don't know what they are, what the name of it is, but GSA I guess would be one good example. They would buy in quantities for the different agencies but we would only sample when they would ask us or when they had received something by checking and found it hadn't been registered. At first, they weren't too particular about registration. They did get to be later on. They'd call up if they were in doubt about anything. I know there in Washington, when I was there by myself as chief

inspector, they would call up about products and then I would go down and sample it. There wasn't anybody else in Washington to do it.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Some of them bought on their own specifications?

Mr. Cromartie:

That's right. They had their own specifications. GSA had it.

Mrs. Whitaker:

So actually a product that would go to GSA, for instance, under GSA specifications . . .

Mr. Cromartie:

We wouldn't do anything about it unless we had a special request.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Those products were generally not labeled in any way other than with GSA specifications?

Mr. Cromartie:

No. They would be labeled with the manufacturer's regular label but they'd have their own specifications just like Sears Roebuck and Montgomery Ward. They have their own

laboratories and they would check their products. The manufacturer selling to Sears Roebuck, either Sears Roebuck or the manufacturer had to have that label registered. They would check disinfectants, they would check everything. They had good laboratories.

Mrs. Whitaker:

To check specifications?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes.

Mrs. Whitaker:

What was the attitude within the Insecticide Division concerning the 1954 Miller Amendment where the tolerances were tied back in with your Act?

Mr. Cromartie:

There wasn't too much we could do about it. That affected mainly Food and Drug. At one time, I've never been certain, Food and Drug, right after the residue problem broke, would have liked to have taken the Insecticide Division back, when they saw that it overlapped so much. Food and Drug said they didn't. That was the last question that was asked me on this investigating committee when Dr. Hays was there. I was the last one they called in enforcement and ..... Lemon, I think he's commissioner of agriculture in California now, anyway he used to be state

Food, Drug, and Insecticide, he asked me if I thought that the Food and Drug Administration could enforce the Insecticide Act better than the Insecticide Division could. You know the answer to that. I wasn't going to say yes even if I believed it but I didn't think they could do it as good for the simple reason that I spent about ten years with them on the enforcement act and I knew how they enforced them then. It would have to have been different when all these other new products came out. Food and Drug was just too big really to take on any more. They have more than they can handle now. The 1947 Insecticide Act turned out to be a bigger job than a lot of them figured when it was passed. I still don't believe that Food and Drug could have done it better. I didn't have any prejudice against Food and Drug at all because my ten years or eleven or whatever it was were very pleasant. The only reason I transferred was because I wanted to get back South.

Mrs. Whitaker:

From the correspondence in the National Archives and other sources I do have a feeling that there was a little tension between the Insecticide Division in the Department of Agriculture and Food and Drug that perhaps Food and Drug might have felt, especially concerning tolerances, that Insecticide was not doing all it could do. Did any of this come down to the actual working level where you felt any of it?

Mr. Cromartie:

It wouldn't have come down to the enforcement end of it. It would have been mainly with the scientific section. I never did get into that residue angle. Of course, Food and Drug would get out in left field at times. You remember the cranberry deal. That's a good example where they were entirely wrong and the taxpayers wound up paying the growers for the damage. It wasn't the Insecticide Division at all. One of the state agencies, or county agencies, had just used the stuff and it wasn't even registered for that use. They'd get out in left field now and then. I'd see it all the time. They'd find a few cases of something. What was this potato soup that they had all this trouble about? They broke the firm and they only had one batch or two. Of course, I can see their viewpoint too, that they can't afford to take a chance. We've seen two or three reports in the papers here the last five or six months with tuna coming in. They'll find one, there might be one batch, that is bad. Of course, if it's botulinus or something like that, they've got to stop it right quick.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Their work is more immediate than the Insecticide Division. Perhaps you had a little more leeway in products that you were dealing with?

Mr. Cromartie:

The thing of it is that when they'd register a product, when they'd set up tolerances, the manufacturer had to furnish data to show that the uses wouldn't exceed those tolerances. At the end we were sending labels to Food and Drug to pass on and one or two other agencies. Well, it slowed things up so. A lot of these things Food and Drug didn't know the answers to. Towards the end there-- and I don't know what they're doing now--when a residue was involved then the label was sent over to Food and Drug for them to review. And there was one or two other agencies, I think it was entomology maybe, maybe it was just Food and Drug. At one time all our labels where a residue was involved Food and Drug had the final sayso on. They could refuse registration on it. These overlappings didn't work out too well for expediting registration.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Did the manufacturers generally . . .

Mr. Cromartie:

Oh, they were raising hell all the time about holding up the labels, five or six weeks, or two or three months. We finally set a deadline on it, that they had to be back within a reasonable length of time.

Mrs. Whitaker:

This was just an informal arrangement between you and

Food and Drug.

Mr. Cromartie:

An informal arrangement with Agriculture that pressure brought on. The two Secretaries had to get together on this.

Mrs. Whitaker:

After 1954, after the Miller Amendment, do you think that the pressures you were subjected to from manufacturers increased considerably from what they had been before?

Mr. Cromartie:

I wasn't concerned with that. You might say mine was off in a different section. I do know that the manufacturers wanted to get a product registered. In other words, you send a label in, say, November, you want to get that product on the market for the spring, particularly if it is an agricultural insecticide. If that label was held up two or three months, they would miss a whole season. So they probably put pressure on to get the labels handled. We had pressure all right because we didn't handle them quicker but we couldn't handle them quicker. Finally, a deadline was set on them. At the time we either had to tell them yes or no.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Were the enforcement problems compounded after 1954?

Mr. Cromartie:

It didn't make any difference to us. When it came to us, the labels were finished. The products either had to comply or not so we weren't in all those hassles. The rough work was done before they ever got to us.

Mrs. Whitaker:

You simply picked up samples?

Mr. Cromartie:

After it was through and after it was processed, then we took them from there. We didn't have any of those problems, thank goodness. There were a lot of problems from '50 to '65.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Did the Department of Agriculture, or the Insecticide Division rather, have its own laboratories or were you using the general laboratories that ARS furnished?

Mr. Cromartie:

We had our own labs.

Mrs. Whitaker:

In the South Building?

Mr. Cromartie:

No, they were out at Beltsville. We had testing stations

at Beltsville for fungicides and insecticides, then we had the rodenticide laboratory and chemical laboratory. They would actually do field testing. So if they had a fungicide they wanted to test, that they had registered and they wanted to be sure it was effective, we'd go ahead and test it in the field, you know, on actual plants. And, of course, on all your household insecticides when they weren't certain of these, they'd test them against roaches, fleas, lice, either on animals or on plants or on the areas, one of the three. We had a pharmacology lab, a bacteriological lab, and a chemical lab and the testing stations out at Beltsville. We had a chemical lab in New York. All they did was to analyze the samples and report whether they were deficient or not. They'd go to Washington and they would be reviewed. They went through each section. The Chemistry section would handle them first, then if they were a disinfectant or germicides for inanimate objects, they'd go to the bacteriological lab. If it had entomological claims, the entomological section would handle it. The fungicides, the plant pathology section would handle it. For precautionary statements, pharmacology would handle it. Each one of them would handle it before it got to enforcement. If chemistry found that it was deficient, they would make a report to that effect. If bacteriology found it ineffective, they would make their report. The rest of them would do the same thing. Then when it got to us in the enforcement end, we would have to consolidate those charges or violations.

if there were no violations, the cases were placed in permanent abeyance in which no action was indicated. That's what the section would say if it was all right. Then it would go on to the next section. It went through the rounds that way before it ever got to enforcement.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Somewhere in my reading I have encountered suggestions for registration on the federal level as far back, I believe, as the 1920's. When do you recall the question of registration first arising on the federal level? I wondered if it was before Dr. Griffin's draft.

Mr. Cromartie:

It was in their minds for years because that was one of the main things that they wanted to incorporate into the new act. It was easier to make the corrections before it got on the market because we knew that you couldn't cover all of them. All we were doing was spot checking. When we started out on registration, Dr. Reed asked us to give an estimate of the number of products that we thought we would register. I came up, I believe, with the answer 55,000. Before we got through it was probably 150,000. I don't even know what it is now. The number of products on the market then was tremendous, even in '47 and '48.

Mrs. Whitaker:

There would have been no way for seven inspectors to . . .

Mr. Cromartie:

No, a hundred couldn't do it.

Mrs. Whitaker:

And it was never significant enough to the Department to increase your appropriations to any extent at all during the years prior to 1947?

Mr. Cromartie:

They were fighting for appropriations even up to the time I left. We increased the inspection force as much as we could. They increased the reviewing sections, they increased the laboratories. But the products were coming on the market faster than you could handle them, that's the whole thing.

Mrs. Whitaker:

From your experience with all of the different Secretaries who handled the department, and you in a peripheral way, from whom did you get the most cooperation? Did any one of them express more concern with insecticides perhaps than the other ones?

Mr. Cromartie:

The Secretaries the last 12 or 15 years were the most

interested because pesticides had become more involved and the public was more concerned.

Mrs. Whitaker:

What were some of your experiences with farmers and other consumers?

Mr. Cromartie:

The users on these farms weren't too well educated. The owners and all probably don't know any more about it than they do. They just buy what the salesman tells them is good for it. What I was actually doing was sampling some seed treatment material, I think it was in Fort Valley, Georgia, down in your neighborhood, and I was talking to this Negro there and he was practically crippled and I asked him what the trouble was. He said he thought he had been poisoned dusting cotton seed. Those seed treatment materials for that type at that time were all mercury preparations.

Mrs. Whitaker:

What year was this?

Mr. Cromartie:

It was '41 or '42, somewhere back in there. I didn't say anything. I knew his time was limited. He never would get old. They were using this drum duster--you know it was a cotton gin, they sold cotton seed and fertilizer

to the farmers. They would buy the seed and then they'd treat them. They were using a drum, a 55 gallon drum with an electric motor, like I was telling you, for simple mixing. All this dust was coming back through there and he was breathing it. He would probably die an invalid but there was nothing to be done for him at that time, not on mercury. And parathion, people were careless with the use of it, as toxic as that is. I remember here in Tampa, whoever used the parathion threw the bags out and these kids, I think they were colored children, took the bags--you know these old time swings you'd put on a limb with a rope and a board. Well, the board got a little hard, I guess, and they covered the seat with parathion bags and it killed about three of them. There wasn't a thing in the world you could do. We had cases in Louisiana where these house to house salesmen were selling parathion for roach killers in the homes. Well, it's effective all right in more ways than one. It was just plain ignorance. A lot of them didn't know how to use it and didn't care if it was effective. Getting back to the Secretaries of Agriculture, I don't think any of them were interested or familiar with the Act until they started having these fish kills, these drifts of weedkillers. Spray them on one field, they'd drift over and they'd clean out the crop on the other. They got so much publicity on that that they just had to do something. These weed killers are dynamite when they aren't used right.

Mrs. Whitaker:

And the weed killers were not covered under the old act.

Mr. Cromartie:

Under the 1910 Act, they weren't. Tomatoes and cotton are particularly sensitive to some types. Weed killers, when they drift, will defoliate them. Those are things that they use for testing for drift; they use tomato plants. But I guess they've got those pretty well under control. They had so many law suits that the insurance companies would make them if nothing else.

Mrs. Whitaker:

We were talking a few minutes ago about the careless use of these materials. This brings up the question of use and application which is one of the criticisms directed against the 1947 Act, that it did not take into consideration the fact that a product might be recommended for a particular use but there was no way to insure that the consumer would actually use it under those conditions. Did discussion on controlling the use and application of insecticides come about while you were still in the Department?

Mr. Cromartie:

No. You can't legislate against ignorance. There's nothing in the world you can do. You can put it on the label. Everybody now says read the label but a

lot of them still don't read the label. If they follow the labels on practically all the products now, they're safe. When you tell a kid don't stick your finger on that hot stove, he may be curious and do it anyway.

Mrs. Whitaker:

And you think that by licensing operators or users of insecticides, or pesticides as they are referred to now, might eliminate this under the new law?

Mr. Cromartie:

On the new Act, do they license operators?

Mrs. Whitaker:

Yes. It is my understanding that certain products . . .

Mr. Cromartie:

I've got the new Act but I've never read it. I know they were talking about it for years.

Mrs. Whitaker:

This is what I wanted to get. Who introduced the idea, this concept of use and application? Do you recall when you first heard talk about that?

Mr. Cromartie:

No. A lot of the states licensed them but the federal government didn't. They should have made them obtain

licenses because these pest control operators.....I know the yard people here can't even use insecticides without being licensed. They'll put out fertilizer but they can't put out insecticides because they have to have a license. Some states have had that for quite a while. I didn't know the federal government had it. I know they had been talking about it. The operators were exempt under the '47 Act.

Mrs. Whitaker:

At the time that Dr. Griffin was writing the 1947 Act, was there any suggestion that use and application be included?

Mr. Cromartie:

I don't remember for sure but there undoubtedly was because the fact that they were exempt came up. I imagine at that time everyone felt there was just a limit to what you could enforce. What the new act covered was more than could be enforced, you know, with the personnel they had.

Mrs. Whitaker:

And the appropriations that you were getting.

Mr. Cromartie:

Not only that. I imagine they felt too that if some of the responsibility reverted back to the states, they would

have to do that. For years, some of the states didn't even have an insecticide act. Even when I left, some of them didn't cover disinfectants. They came under the old act for the simple reason they were fungicides. That's the way they incorporated them, the fact it was a fungicide. The old act didn't even cover disinfectants, I mean, as that.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I remember in my research I encountered the argument that Dr. Haywood was not in favor of having disinfectants classified as fungicides in 1912. By 1914 he had changed his mind and then, of course, the campaign against disinfectants became very active. What was your feeling on that? Do you think that disinfectants belong under the insecticide act?

Mr. Cromartie:

Definitely. I think it could be classified as a fungicide. And then you could stretch it on. You know how they interpret some of these laws now. The way they interpreted them then was very conservative to what they do now. It held up in court so that's all you need. Most people think of a fungicide as an agricultural product but athlete's foot is a fungus. When they start recommending athlete's foot preparations for use on your socks and dusting in your shoes, then it becomes subject to the Federal Insecticide,

Fungicide Act. As long as they confine it to your feet, then it's Food and Drug. As long as they can get an inanimate object in there they bring it under the Insecticide Act.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I noticed in the 1930's especially, about 1935 or 1936, the Insecticide Division of Food and Drug as well as Food and Drug itself were bringing suits against the same products. I wonder if you have any recollection about that, whether there was a particular campaign on at that time that required both acts to get some undesirable product off the market, for instance.

Mr. Cromartie:

I don't remember any particular cases but it could very easily have been on many products. The treatment of athlete's foot would have been one. If that was ineffective on your feet and socks and shoes, both acts would cover it so they'd cover it under both acts. Quite a few products overlapped, even some of the stock remedies would overlap. Even germicides could overlap, for that matter. In other words, if you had a germicide that you were spraying on your desk or your telephone mouthpiece, it's subject to the other act if recommended for human use. If they say spray it on for sunburn, then you got the two acts in it. I imagine there must be many many products that are on the market now.

Mrs. Whitaker:

That would come under both acts? I thought perhaps if the courts did not uphold the one case against an undesirable product, perhaps another judge or another jury in some other district might. I wondered if you might recall the philosophy of the thinking behind that.

Mr. Cromartie:

Well, I imagine if one district did turn it down on a situation like that, unless it was way off base, I imagine the other district judge would use it as a precedent and turn the same thing down. Of course, there could be technicalities. Another judge might have found them guilty without any question and the second judge would have found them guilty just on the precedent. This precedent thing is a big factor in these enforcement cases.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Did you find that it worked to the detriment of enforcement?

Mr. Cromartie:

I would say no. It would be kind of hard to say on it. In many cases an enforcement agency wants to get a precedent. They will go to court on a case that they know they may lose but they want to get a precedent. So they'll go to court on it and if they lose it, it's out then so they're through with it. If they win, then they'll start

branching out.

Mrs. Whitaker:

During the time that you had enforcement under your control, if there was a product that you felt should not have been on the market, but you thought perhaps you could not get a court decision favorable to you, would you withhold bringing suit on the basis that if you could not get a conviction against the company it was almost a license then for the company to continue operations?

Mr. Cromartie:

If you can't get it off the market, it is. Getting back to lindane vaporizers, we were never able to prove that they were dangerous to human use. We had cases where they had, but they were such examples, I mean they wouldn't have enough weight in court for you to outlaw them. So we would have to stick to either non-registration or ineffectiveness. I guess they're off the market now because we kept getting behind them so. I haven't seen a lindane vaporizer in years. When the fad got over, there weren't but two or three manufacturers that put them out. It was a fad, more or less, I think. Even though they were effective, if you didn't stay in the room and breath the vapors, that was all right. I think the fad wore off and then they got on these strips. We had letters complaining on those at times. They'd use them,

say, in a trailer and the strips had adequate precautionary labeling on them but we would have complaints about somebody becoming ill. We don't know whether that did it or not but we had to follow up on them anyway.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Going back to the vaporizers, I remember reading about that. There really was quite a controversy about that. I think the American Medical Association was involved in it and Food and Drug.

Mr. Cromartie:

Everybody was.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Do you remember any particular cases where you had taken a product to court?

Mr. Cromartie:

No, we never did take one to court. I don't remember one. I know we didn't take one on toxicity. I'm sure of that. I know we worked on it. I've forgotten it since you mentioned that. We tried to get the support of some other agency--it could have been Food and Drug, I won't say for sure--but we couldn't get them to back us up. So we had to stick to ineffectiveness and back to registration again. They couldn't register them unless under protest. We wouldn't register them for some reason or other. We

wouldn't register them for the fact that they hadn't furnished sufficient data to show they weren't harmful. If they would ship them out anyway, they could sell them intrastate but they couldn't ship them out of state. That was the only way we could control them. That's what happened in this Texas case where the courts wouldn't go through with the seizure, it wasn't registered. It was strictly in violation. That was the only way we could slow them up. We never registered it. After so much publicity came out about the danger of them, we'd register them under protest. They quit manufacturing them.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Did you have much problem with this registration under protest?

Mr. Cromartie:

At the time I left, I don't think there were more than one or two if that many. I don't remember one lindane vaporizer being registered under protest. We had trouble with it but they didn't follow through on it.

Mrs. Whitaker:

The manufacturer did not?

Mr. Cromartie:

The manufacturer would not because he knew if he followed

under protest, the penalty was a whole lot worse. The trouble was that they could register under protest and it might take us five years to show that it was dangerous. We might not ever be able to show it. Some of these things take a long time to support in court; some of them you never can really.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Do you think that the courts in the last years of your service with the Insecticide Division became more cooperative with you?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes. They just became more familiar with it. There was so much publicity on it that they couldn't help but become more familiar with it. Not only that, they began to recognize the importance of these types of products, weed killers, insecticides, fungicides, those types of products. There was so much damage done and in 95 per cent of it it was misuse. If they had used it according to the labels, there wouldn't have been any problems, that's the whole thing.

Mrs. Whitaker:

You said you cannot legislate use without having registration of the operators.

Mr. Cromartie:

That's right. You can't legislate against ignorance. Never been able to yet. There at the end we were spending hours and hours where damage had been done either to humans or crops or something strictly from misuse. I know we'd get a complaint on Friday on somebody killed, say, in Missouri. Well, I'd have to get on the phone and call the inspector in that area and tell him to get over there. He could get over there on Saturday. We liked to get there as soon as we could. He'd get over there and he couldn't get any reports from the family particularly. What you'd wind up with, this fellow was out spraying in the summertime in his shorts and he had had several drinks and he wasn't using any care and the spray got all over him and consequently killed him. You can't stop that. I know I spent a week down in Mississippi, or up in Mississippi from here. A fellow had about sixty cows killed. I went over there and I couldn't get too much information from the vet. He gave me enough that I could start operating on. You see, the insurance companies get involved in this. There are claims. And if it's misuse or something like that, they aren't going to pay a claim like that. So what had happened was that this fellow turned this Negro loose to spray the cattle and he used cotton spray. Well, you can imagine what it did. It killed the cattle right off. There wasn't anything we could do on it. It was strictly misuse.

No federal violation was involved. All we could do was just write up a report on what we found and what had happened. Of course, it was a pretty expensive experience for that grower. He was a big grower. I don't know whether they ever collected on the insurance or not.

Mrs. Whitaker:

They were time-consuming on your part.

Mr. Cromartie:

We had to follow them up. We'd have calls from the Secretary's office and everybody else. What had we done on it. All those reports took time. And a lot of running around.

Mrs. Whitaker:

After the Rachel Carson book, Silent Spring, came out in 1962--that was in the last years of your service there--what was the department's reaction to Miss Carson's publication?

Mr. Cromartie:

I don't know what the department thought. I got an idea. She was a marine biologist and didn't know too much about insecticides in my opinion. Of course it was spectacular and that's what it took to sell the book. She did bring it to the attention of the public. I'll hand that to her, which was good. I never thought too much of the factual end of it on what she wrote.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Do you remember Albert Deutsch? Does that name call up any memories for you? He was in New York, a journalist, and he wrote the first series of really sensational articles about DDT as a danger to human life. Shortly after his articles appeared in 1947, Food and Drug and the Department of Agriculture issued a joint statement concerning the use of DDT in dairy barns. Have you any recollections on that?

Mr. Cromartie:

I don't remember the name. I remember the Food and Drug started checking residues in milk. They found a lot of it. Dairies all over the country were stopped from selling milk until they cleaned out, and it was quite a job. Wisconsin, up in there, we worked with them closely. I know they had several dairies closed. I've forgotten the details on it. I know we had volumes of literature both pro and con where DDT wasn't as harmful as they made out. It was effective, I'll say that for it. I'm still not convinced that DDT is as dangerous as they make out. As far as I know there's never been a case of death caused by DDT. Whether they've got it now or not, I don't know. There have been cases where DDT was involved but it was petroleum distillate. In other words, you can drink kerosene. You know that as well as I do. There've been dozens of cases of death from just drinking the kerosene

and turpentine. But as far as I know, there's never been one death that's ever been tied down to DDT in itself. The theory, I guess, is that the residues build up. I guess the reason is I went through that period when it first came on the market and they used so much of it that I never could get excited about the use of it. I would use it now if I could get it but I would know what I was doing. I'll use chlordane around the house for roaches and down here you get them by the millions but I won't spray it inside. I'll take a paint brush and go around the door sills and that way I'll know in my mind it's perfectly safe. I think they let them use it that way, I'm not sure. But I wouldn't spray it in a room and stay around very long. I wouldn't do that. They hopped on fifteen or twenty of the others that were, in my opinion, worse than DDT. Of course, the residues do build up. It seems to me like I read an article somewhere where they found DDT in some fish that had been frozen in the Arctic for 200 years.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Yes. I have read similar articles. In fact the most recent one concerned traces of residue in some Egyptian tomb that had recently been unearthed.

Mr. Cromartie:

I remember reading that but I've forgotten the details on it.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Did you make any changes after all of the controversy about DDT in milk as far as the registration, the recommendations?

Mr. Cromartie:

Oh, yes. They cut it out for dairy use and food crops for cattle. When Food and Drug started finding residues in anything that they considered dangerous, of course we would have to automatically cut out its use. We'd cancel registrations for those uses right away.

Mrs. Whitaker:

What was the manufacturer's response when you cancelled the registration?

Mr. Cromartie:

He couldn't do anything about it for the simple reason that he hadn't shown that the use of that product for that purpose would not be dangerous. He'd shown to the best of his ability but they come along and find other things. Well, they're always finding things that cause cancer in anything now, you know. I guess if you ate enough corn meal it would probably cause cancer.

Mrs. Whitaker:

After 1947, did the major manufacturers object to charges

brought against them for the same reasons that they would have in the earlier years, that is, the use of a notice of judgment for instance by a competitor?

Mr. Cromartie:

They couldn't object because there wasn't anything they could do about it. It was public information. They knew it was unethical and they wouldn't do it. The larger manufacturers didn't worry too much. If you'll check the notices of judgment, you'll find very few serious violations against them because they would fire a plant manager. If he didn't have control, they fired many of them that way. If you take a firm like Niagara, Standard Oil had them, and two or three others, but take any of the large manufacturers, they weren't going to tolerate many violations for the simple reason that they are so set up that their operation will give them a guaranteed profit with making a legitimate product. So they don't want the publicity anyway so they just won't tolerate it.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Most of the violations that you did find in the later years were from small operators?

Mr. Cromartie:

Either that or unintentional. Now a lot of the small ones were unintentional. Where the small ones had problems was that they didn't have any control measures.

You see, these large manufacturers had their own laboratories. Not only that, they would keep samples of every batch for two or three years so if anything came up they could go back to their check sample and find out whether what we found was right. If it was, then they had no argument. It could be poor mixing, you see, something like that. Another sample might have been bad but it would never come up because they'd never have any occasion to use their laboratory sample. We had never sampled that particular batch. The larger manufacturers tried to have good control. They don't want violations. It isn't worth the trouble to them. They're going to make a profit if they sell it at the price they're asking and if it's made according to the formulation, so they aren't worried. But the smaller outfit--you take a disinfectant manufacturer, for instance--he can make a mistake unintentionally. Small agricultural mixers--and there are a lot of them--that just do intrastate business. If they're honest and want to put out a good product, which they should for the simple reason they want repeat orders, they can get these formulations without any trouble. It's just a matter of weighing, that's all. But some of them cut corners or some of them will get too big an overrun, say a 2,000 pound batch of insecticide dust. They'll mix it up for that, for 2,000 pounds, and if they get a 200 pound overrun they know something is wrong somewhere, even if that's only 10 per cent. But if we picked

up a sample 10 per cent short, we'd take action against them so they shouldn't get any overrun like that. They may get a few pounds. Now if they get too much of an underrun, then somebody's in trouble with the head office. When they start with the reports, you're supposed to have 2,000 pounds there and you got 1,800, they're ten per cent short on the sales right there. They have to have it pretty well under control. I think 95 per cent of the manufacturers are legitimate, maybe higher than that. The way things are now they have to keep the good will of the customers. Say, we made a seizure with a wholesaler on a particular product, they're going to hesitate on buying anything from that man next time because it's a lot of trouble to them. They've had their merchandise tied up. They've got to get their money back from the manufacturer. They may be out of that product for two or three weeks. Most of them want to put out a legitimate product.

Mrs. Whitaker:

In the later years, then, you found less need for multiple seizures? For instance, if there were not as many grossly violated products on the market.

Mr. Cromartie:

That's right. You might make one seizure on a manufacturer and you might pick up ten more samples. Each one of those

samples might be all right. If you picked up five more of his samples which were bad, then you'd go ahead and make five more seizures on it. Whether they've cut out multiple seizures in the Insecticide Division, I don't know. It seems to me like they have; why, I don't know.

Mrs. Whitaker:

But they were still making multiple seizures in '66 when you left?

Mr. Cromartie:

We'd make up to 50 if there were that many violations. Of course, there weren't that many. It's just a figure of speech. They weren't in compliance and they were either ineffective or adulterated or misbranded, or all three. You had to get it off the market. It is my understanding that they have loosened up on seizures during the last five years.

Mrs. Whitaker:

In the later period, in the 1950's and 1960's, anything that you can think of that is significant that I have not asked about, I would like for you simply to tell me about it.

Mr. Cromartie:

If you ask questions, I could answer them. The reason I can't think them up is because for the last five years

it was wiped out of my mind. I was through with it and that was it. There wasn't any occasion to do it. I even had long distance calls for doing consultant work. I wasn't interested in it. When I left I was through with it. What occasion would there be? If I was going into outside work on insecticide after retiring, I would just have stayed up there because I made more money and I was building up retirement so what was the reason to do it after I got out.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I think it was in 1954, perhaps, when Mr. Ira D. Cardiff-- does that name ring a bell?--brought a case against Food and Drug to stop factory inspections and got a court decision that did stop factory inspections. It didn't affect your work? You were not using factory inspections anymore by 1954, were you?

Mr. Cromartie:

No. To start with, we didn't have the personnel; we didn't have the time; we didn't have the money. In other words, you could go in a plant and it would take all day long to inspect it. You could take two days, or two nights, or one day and one night to write it up. All you have there is just the way he's manufacturing. He can give you all these formulas he's got. Now, how do you make nicotine dust? Well, 99 pounds of this and one pound of nicotine

sulphate or whatever type of formulation he wants. That's no good. When he makes the next batch, he may cut it down 50 per cent and then what good does it do. Now, on sanitation, food products and drugs, it is entirely different. On insecticides, I did much of that under the Food and Drug Act that I thought was a waste of time.

Mrs. Whitaker:

That was under factory inspections.

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes. Of course, they worked on the principle that . . . well, there's another principle, I guess . . . you had to spend so much time on the insecticide act in order to justify the allotment that they gave them to enforce it. The Insecticide Act is mainly regulatory and other than registration it's just a question of whether the products comply with the registered label or whether it's up to its composition. It's just that simple.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Walter Campbell set up, I think, the factory inspection at the time that he was still chief inspector.

Mr. Cromartie:

I don't know how that started. Of course, 1927, I was in four years later. I know we did it up until the time

I left. Even one of the original inspectors for the Insecticide Division was in Boston at that time. After they took over he was appointed inspector for the Boston area but he died soon after that and they never put another one up till years later. Years after I got in, we put one back up there. Even at that time they were making factory inspections. There weren't too many to make up there. It was mostly disinfectants and that type. There weren't too many agricultural insecticides manufacturers in New England for the reason that agriculture isn't the main crop there. I never did see any except apples and that kind of stuff.

Mrs. Whitaker:

This may be outside of what you were concerned with in that time but if you have any recollections on it, I'd be glad to have them. The matter of a phenol coefficient on a label for a disinfectant was the subject of a great deal of agitation during the 1920's and again in the 1930's. After about 1936 I have seen nothing further on that. Do you recall the circumstances, why the manufacturers dropped their push for including the phenol coefficient on the label?

Mr. Cromartie:

No, I didn't know that had ever been a problem. They didn't have to make a statement but if they made it it had to be correct. In other words, no matter what they

put on the label had to be true in its entirety. So if they said the phenol coefficient was 7 and it wasn't 7 it was just misbranding. We've had cases, I'm sure of that, we had charges where the phenol coefficient wasn't what they claimed. The product was effective but the phenol coefficient wasn't. I don't remember that ever coming up in the '40's or even before that.

Mrs. Whitaker:

The push for that must have dissipated about the time, or before the time that you went to Washington.

Mr. Cromartie:

It would have. It could have been something like this: that the Insecticide Act--and I don't remember this-- could have required them to put the phenol coefficient on and they didn't want to.

Mrs. Whitaker:

No, it did not require that it be stated on the label but a certain group of manufacturers was trying to get the Act amended to require a phenol coefficient. It was never done and I wondered if you remembered the circumstances on that.

Mr. Cromartie:

No, I don't remember that.

Mrs. Whitaker:

It probably was no longer a problem by the time you went to Washington as the head of the inspection and enforcement in 1945. It had probably already worn itself out in the course of time.

Mr. Cromartie:

I can't see that it would have been much of a major problem. The fact is that anything they put on their labels had to be a true statement so they didn't have to put it on. Something else though, that could have been a selling point for the disinfectant manufacturer. Something's coming back to me now. One manufacturer might put on the same type of disinfectant the coefficient of  $7\frac{1}{2}$ , another one might put 5. Well, his competitor would take that label and say our coefficient is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times more than his. You're getting a better product. He wouldn't necessarily have been getting a better product. I can see where something like that might come out in the sales end but as far as use and effect was concerned, it's been so long I've forgotten how the phenol coefficient works. I'm no bacteriologist so I won't comment on that. I had it down at one time but it must not have been too important because I don't remember ever running into it. We had a very good bacteriologist in Washington. He died of a heart attack. He was capable, easy going, and well liked by industry.

Mrs. Whitaker:

What was his name?

Mr. Cromartie:

Stuart. They gave him an honorary doctor's degree from a Pennsylvania University and they don't give them out unless you are worthy of it. He was the head of the department there. He was really good. The whole country recognized him as an outstanding bacteriologist and he was. We never had any trouble on disinfectants but they knew that he knew what he was talking about in what we found. They never questioned those findings.

Mrs. Whitaker:

After 1945 when you did go to Washington and it was just you, Dr. Reed, and Dr. Griffin, you must all have known pretty well what was going on between the three sections?

Mr. Cromartie:

The way it operated was this: Dr. Griffin would take care of office calls and that kind of stuff and Dr. Reed would be the one that signed the actions and I prepared all the cases. I had to go through Dr. Griffin and he'd review them and Dr. Reed would sign them and they'd go out.

Mrs. Whitaker:

To the solicitor's office?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes. Then it got so voluminous that each section would sign them. I would sign them all. Then they would go out that way. At that time the volume of work we did compared to what we had to do later is not even comparable, for the reason that we didn't have as many cases, and we didn't have as many inspectors. The amount of work that five inspectors could turn in that you'd have to process and the amount that fifteen or twenty could turn in was a different situation altogether. You've got more seizures; you've got more notices of violation; you have more prosecutions; you have more responsibility in directing inspection work. We had to keep them so they were covering the right fields. And then we got word we had more investigations to make and things to follow up on. I think back in '45 and what it was in '55 and it's not even funny.

Mrs. Whitaker:

You were not given a proportionate increase in appropriations or in personnel?

Mr. Cromartie:

The more work you had, you had to do it yourself. The output doubled. Of course there was a limit to that. Things have changed a lot since that time. It used to be when I was an inspector, you didn't quit at 4:30 or 5:30. After the war, eight hours was considered a day.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Whether the work was finished or not.

Mr. Cromartie:

They'd put it off till the next day. Conditions were so changed that they could do it. The way it was in the old days you worked during the day and wrote up reports at night. If you didn't get them written up at night, you did it over the weekend. I guess everybody thinks they work harder than the ones that move up.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I'm sure you did have a tremendous work load. The records indicate that and especially when I review the amount of appropriations that you had and the meager increases that came through the years.

Mr. Cromartie:

Well, they were even fighting for appropriations when I left. I don't know what they were. I think we did at one time get over a million and that was big money. You start working on \$250,000 a year or \$300,000, that isn't much even for a limited number of people. You didn't do any travel much. All the travel had to go to the inspectors. Of course, at that time I've traveled on \$3.50 a day per diem, then it would go up to \$4.50, and then \$5, and when I left I think we were on \$17 or \$18. Even at that you'd

lose money on these short trips. I'd go for two or three weeks and it would cost me \$200 or \$300. Hotel bills would be \$16 a day and then the incidentals added up. They're much more liberal now, I imagine. I don't know what they get.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I don't know either. I would welcome any further recollections you have, anything that I have not covered.

Mr. Cromartie:

It's hard to add to it. If you have certain questions to ask.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Did you do much cooperative work with the states?

Mr. Cromartie:

We did a lot at the time that the 1947 Act went into effect. The new Act authorized the department to cooperate with other federal and municipal agencies, I think is the term they used. Of course, that brought in the cities, for that matter, and the states. Pretty soon after the Act went in they started contacting the various state agencies that had insecticide acts and several of them didn't have them at that time. The main states that had them were the agricultural states like California, Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, Georgia, and Kansas.. Wisconsin

(they were mainly dairy) but they were very cooperative. There were three or four more. It seems to me like we had fourteen states on the cooperative program. Well, the way it started out was they would have the state enforcement officials come in to Washington once a year on a conference and there they would discuss registration policies, labeling policies, and new things that would come up. Some of the states after the 1947 Act went into effect also passed acts that required registration. Quite a few of them did. By checking there they would give us the information on their registrations and then we could double check. If they had a product registered that we didn't and it was shipped interstate, we knew right off that that was in violation. Most of the states worked on the basis that if the federal government accepted the registration they would accept it. That's all they had to do was give them their number and label. Then on the enforcement end of it at that time the Department was short on personnel and funds so we set up a program where they could collect samples and analyze them and we would take action on what they found. One problem there was that the state inspectors weren't familiar with the federal procedures in that they didn't have to have interstate records. They would see a product on the shelf and that was it. They didn't care where it came from. We tried to work out a program where they could collect samples for us and send them in and we would analyze them on their collection records. We set up what was really a very informal

procedure where they could collect samples and we made some seizures on samples they collected which were in violation. We would take action on their findings, mainly chemical, that's all they had. That took considerable work because you had to describe the sampling procedure to the state inspectors with which they weren't familiar because we went into it in much more detail than they did. We had to furnish them the forms to obtain the information that we used. You can't send an inspector out that has never had any experience in collecting a sample that was subject to the federal law. That ran into a lot of work in trying to clarify that. When the inspectors would get into the areas where the state inspectors were cooperating they would work with them and try to clarify the procedure that we used. It was very effective as far as it went but there were limitations. You couldn't expect a state man to go out and collect a sample like a federal inspector who had had years of training.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Would it have helped you particularly during the growing seasons when certain seasonal kinds of poisons were on the move--cotton poison, for instance?

Mr. Cromartie:

You could be more productive at that time than any other for the reason that there were more products available.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Was this a problem for you when you were controlling inspection, that is, that it was so seasonal? Did you have to collect samples at a particular time of the year?

Mr. Cromartie:

Well, you have to, really. You take Florida, for instance. They would start shipping economic poisons, insecticides, fungicides etc. down in November and December that they were going to use in January and February because the crop is much earlier here. We would try to cover these products before they got out. Of course, your season right now is still running on some products. Second crops of tomatoes, they've been planted within the last month or so, the last six weeks at least. Pretty soon your Florida crops are going to be over. That's why you move up to Georgia and South Carolina and the other Southern states where the season might be three or four months behind, anywhere from two to four.

Mrs. Whitaker:

You seldom had more than one inspector in a region even in the last years that you were with the government?

Mr. Cromartie:

No. We wouldn't have more than one in a region. You might take a region of four or five states and have only

one man there.

Mrs. Whitaker:

You were always understaffed then?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes. You take five or six states, it's difficult for an inspector to cover that many states. It just gets down to spot checking. Of course, they didn't know where we were going to check and if they didn't know, they were going to try to keep it under control everywhere. Not only that, we could, under the cooperative agreement, if we didn't have a man in a particular territory and we knew that a shipment had been made there by some inspector checking the shipping record, we could request the state to pick up a sample. We had twelve or fourteen states that cooperated fine. California, Mississippi, Georgia, Wisconsin, all of them cooperated fine. They were very interested in the federal act for the simple reason that it made it easier for them, since they were dealing with registered products. That is, they were going into the state so they didn't have to do the research work or the labeling review that we did. They took our registrations per se and that was it. A few of the states had no pest control act at all. If I remember correctly, I think Kansas was one and Nevada was one.

Mrs. Whitaker:

This was in 1966?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes. The main ones on the West coast were Colorado, California, Washington, Oregon, and Arizona. They were in the cooperative program. Then you got into Arkansas, they were very cooperative, and Mississippi, Louisiana, Wisconsin. I don't think Illinois . . . they might have had an act but it wasn't very comprehensive. Whether they passed another act or not, I don't know. I imagine they would though by now. Quite a few of those states had acts that went back as far as ours, you know, the 1910 Act, and it wasn't as comprehensive as that really.

Mrs. Whitaker:

This is a complete change of subject. Yesterday you mentioned something I was interested in and did not pursue. During the time you were a Food and Drug inspector you mentioned the hydrocyanic acid gas on the dried fruit.

Mr. Cromartie:

What they had to do, they had to fumigate it in order to keep insects out of the fruit. The dried fruits were not only on the docks, they were in the warehouses down in the fruit growing area. Of course, they treated them. The dried fruit would take up the HCN and of course when

they shipped it out they had some poison cases on it. They had it on raisins. They had it on all of the dried fruits for that matter. It was a tremendous amount of work at that time spent on checking dried fruit for residue.

Mrs. Whitaker:

What year . . .

Mr. Cromartie:

That would have been around '35 and '36 when they were having a lot of labor problems on the West Coast. Harry Bridges was head of the Longshoreman's union and I guess still is. They tried to deport him but the Supreme Court ruled against them.

Mrs. Whitaker:

He had instigated these strikes . . .

Mr. Cromartie:

And the longshoremen didn't know too much about it really. I know at that time the salmon industry would ship all the canned salmon down to San Francisco and put it in the warehouses. We did have inspectors up there in Food and Drug days but then they found it was easier to ship all the season's pack down there and then sample it at one time. At that time I was sampling salmon and it was in these warehouses. The cannery would furnish the labor

which was longshoremen to handle the cases. They'd be stacked up fifteen high and there'd be forty-eight cans to a case and we only took two cans out of a case. If you'd talk to the longshoremen, half of them just went by what the union said. And it happened along about Thanksgiving or Christmas that a lot of them . . . well, it hurt them at that time of year.

Mrs. Whitaker:

While you were collecting samples of foods, were you working with drugs also?

Mr. Cromartie:

We were working with drugs. We'd work with all of them. You might go out one day and pick up a drug sample, an insecticide sample, and a food sample, and a caustic poison sample; it was possible, because they were enforcing those different acts. Whatever the assignment happened to be . . . You could go in a wholesale drug house and cover your drug, your caustic poison and then on another visit to a wholesale grocer house you might pick up a food sample and an insecticide sample too because insecticides were handled by some wholesale grocers. Well, you take all of your household sprays, that type, they handled them. We didn't do much on the import milk act at that time; it was pretty well under control. On the tea act, they generally had a tea inspector and a tea

examiner but if he got sick or something they might send you up to sample tea coming in. I've done that at times. So you had all the acts to cover. It was possible, you could actually cover four acts in one day.

Mrs. Whitaker:

About the caustic poison act, you were, of course, not in the inspection service at the time that was passed. Do you recall anything in particular. Who was really agitating for the caustic poison act?

Mr. Cromartie:

I don't remember who that was. I think they revised that after 1940, that stayed with the Food and Drug. I know the labeling on certain of the poisons had to have certain type labeling and certain precautionary labeling. I don't actually know who started that caustic poison. Of course, I imagine it originally started with children eating lye and that type of thing.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Lye would not have been covered under the Insecticide Act unless it were a component of an insecticide in some . . .

Mr. Cromartie:

Or recommended for treatment of inanimate objects which lye was. They used it around hog raising places. It's

a good disinfectant.

Mrs. Whitaker:

And if it had disinfectant qualities or claimed disinfectant qualities then you could pick it up under the Insecticide Act?

Mr. Cromartie:

That's right.

Mrs. Whitaker:

You had to check the labels then as you were picking up samples.

Mr. Cromartie:

We would only check it for the insecticidal claims or disinfectant claims, whichever it happened to be. Of course, then it could be in violation of both the caustic poison act and the Insecticide Act, particularly if it wasn't registered. Food and Drug didn't require it to be registered. If they sent a product in like that to be registered, it would have to be forwarded to Food and Drug for them to comment on claims that came under them. In other words, you had two different agencies that were involved. They would have to pass on it too before we would register it.

Mrs. Whitaker:

That was after 1947?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes.

Mrs. Whitaker:

During the 1930's and I think as far back as the 1920's there was a great deal of agitation for requiring a coloring agent to be put into insecticides which might in some way resemble food products. The insecticides were sometimes mistaken for flour. Do you recall any experience that you had with that particular problem?

Mr. Cromartie:

The way I remember it, the arsenical and fluoride dusts were required to be colored. Tints of pink and blue.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I think some of the states had laws or amended the existing laws to require that.

Mr. Cromartie:

Now they did have a few products that did . . . sodium fluoride, for instance, it had to be a certain shade of blue. There have been many people killed with sodium fluoride, using it instead of flour. Of course, there

were many of them killed with other products too, I mean, you know, lack of color. Sodium Fluoride and the arsenate dusts are the only ones I can think of right off that required coloration.

Mrs. Whitaker:

In your inspection work then that would have been one of the things that your inspectors would have checked for, I suppose.

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes, and the arsenicals if I remember correctly had to have a certain hue. Certain products were required to have certain hues but I've forgotten. They had a standard. They had a color chart that they would compare it with. Arsenicals and sodium fluoride are the only two I can think of. There could have been others.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Have you thought of anything since our last session that I did not ask you about that you might like to add to this?

Mr. Cromartie:

I couldn't think of anything. The last I heard the state cooperative program had pretty much gone out. They probably have some kind of cooperative program but what it is I don't know. I am not familiar with the latest amended

act. The last I heard, the last time I talked to anyone that was familiar with it, they said that the state cooperative program as we had set it up in the late '40's was nonexistent. It may be that they increased the number of inspectors to where they wouldn't have to depend on outside help.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I do think of one question that concerned the earlier period. Do you recall any discussion concerning an informal arrangement between the Federal Trade Commission, for instance, and the Insecticide Division in the days before rodenticides were covered, that is, before 1947? I noticed in the Federal Trade Commission records that the FTC did occasionally bring suit against a rodenticide manufacturer for unfair trade practices and that seems to have been the only control over rodenticides. Can you recall anything on that?

Mr. Cromartie:

I don't know of any particular case but I do know that we cooperated with the Federal Trade Commission. In some instances that was about the only way you could get to false advertising.

Mrs. Whitaker:

To the manufacturers?

Mr. Cromartie:

Yes. That was at a time that Miller was with the FTC. He was familiar with both acts. I don't remember too much about the extent of cooperation that we had with Federal Trade except that we did exchange information that way and they would take action in some instances in cases that we couldn't.

Mrs. Whitaker:

If you could not touch a product. Most of the inter-agency arrangements must have been done on an informal basis, just person to person, or by telephone, perhaps.

Mr. Cromartie:

That's right. You would call up and ask them something and they would give you that information. At the end there it got where there were quite a few agencies involved. There was Food and Drug on the residue end of it and Agriculture on the labeling end of it and other agencies too for that matter. It got pretty involved at times.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Can you think of a particular instance of another agency being involved?

Mr. Cromartie:

No, I can't for this reason that most of that would have

been with the registration section because mine was strictly enforcement after everything had been cleared, either not registered or found to be in violation.

Mrs. Whitaker:

After 1947 it stopped being a three-man operation as it had been before.

Mr. Cromartie:

That's right. It ceased to be. It kept getting larger and larger and still is, I guess.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I think we touched on this yesterday about the lack of attention given to the Insecticide Division or Section however it happened to be described at a particular time. When you reverted to the Department of Agriculture, did it seem that the Insecticide Division was almost a nuisance to the Department?

Mr. Cromartie:

Well, it was a stepchild, I'll say that. They weren't familiar with it. It was a small organization. Until the new chemicals started coming in after '45, there was very little that the public even knew about it. You know when a federal judge doesn't know it, it's not too important. It was a pretty small organization from 1911 until 1947.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Haywood seems always to have worked very diligently to keep the Department aware of the existence of the Insecticide Act. He seemed to have been a very forceful man. Did Dr. McDonnell continue that same kind of forceful attitude?

Mr. Cromartie:

I didn't know Dr. Haywood. I knew Dr. McDonnell. If Dr. Haywood was aggressive to that extent, I would say that he and Dr. McDonnell were two different personalities altogether. Dr. McDonnell was easy going, not aggressive, so you'd have to have a pioneer or somebody at that time to push something like that. We didn't have many in the Insecticide Division.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Dr. Griffin was not particularly aggressive either in his relations with the Department ?

Mr. Cromartie:

No. No one was as far as I know from the time that I went in. We had to operate . . . we had funds which were limited. We had limited personnel and they had to do the best they could with what they had. Until all these spectacular cases came before the public after '45 no one had ever heard . . . I'd never heard of it until

I went with Food and Drug. Of course, I wouldn't be supposed to, really.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Food and Drug also was less interested in the Insecticide Act, I should imagine, than they were in their own act from the period 1927 to 1938 or '40. It would have been shunted aside to some extent even there, I would imagine? Under Campbell's control.

Mr. Cromartie:

At that time they would appropriate so much money for the economic poison act which I imagine was very small. The Insecticide Act was larger so they would have to prorate the inspectors' time on the appropriation he had. So they had a lower appropriation, they wouldn't take an inspector off Food and Drugs to do Insecticide work because food and drug naturally was more important and they had a much larger appropriation. It just got back to--they had to do the best they could with what they had, even Food and Drug. The only advantage was that they had more inspectors and they could cover more of it with less time and less expense.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I would imagine there was more public concern with Food and Drug's activities than there was with yours.

Mr. Cromartie:

Oh, yes. Food and Drug was always very aggressive. Campbell, Dr. Dunbar, Larrick, John Harvey, all of them were very aggressive and they were before Congress all the time for more appropriations. Of course, Congress could see the need of it but I guess they were limited on funds, too.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Actually the insecticide situation was as significant in its own way as food and drug was but no one seemed to have pushed during those years, from 1930 to about 1945, for increased appropriations.

Mr. Cromartie:

Well, it wasn't as big a problem then as it was later because the number of products involved just weren't as hazardous. You take that list on those annual reports there, I don't think they had more than 25 or 30 types of products--the arsenicals, the sodium fluoride, nicotine preparations, the lime and sulphur solutions. Right now they'd be classed very elemental. They're not comparable at all to the number of products now. I haven't seen any sodium fluoride in years. I doubt if they use it for roach control anymore. As far as I know, the amount of arsenicals used now is so much smaller than it was back in the '20's. That's all they had was calcium

and lead arsenate, Paris Green and a few others for fruit and vegetable and cotton crops. It's just so far advanced in the last twenty-five years.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I read somewhere in my research that Paris Green continued to be used in the late 1940's because of its effectiveness in the control of mosquitoes. Did you work any with the mosquito control program in any way?

Mr. Cromartie:

No. I didn't know it was used for mosquito control. It was used mostly for insects. At one time the main use was the potato beetle. They used tons of it for that but then they got DDT and other things that were more effective, cheaper too, I imagine.

Mrs. Whitaker:

You were not in the Department, of course, at the time that calcium arsenate was used so heavily for cotton. They continued to use that, I suppose, all the way through the 1930's?

Mr. Cromartie:

Until '45. I sampled carload after carload of calcium arsenate. And you wouldn't find one violation in a hundred. They had it so well standardized that there just weren't

any violations. Another reason is the larger manufacturers-- the main ones that made it, you didn't actually have many manufacturers of calcium and lead arsenate--would take the calcium and lead arsenate and mix it up into different percentages, you know, blend it, they'd use anywhere from maybe one per cent to ten per cent, I guess.

Mrs. Whitaker:

And most of that was in dust form.

Mr. Cromartie:

In dust form.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I noticed also in my research that there was some controversy in the 1920's about the advantages of dust over spray and spraying equipment then became available for liquid applications of certain products. Was this a continuing controversy?

Mr. Cromartie:

I don't remember its ever being controversial, that is, to my knowledge. Of course, at that time they hadn't developed the spray equipment like they have now. I don't know whether they even dust down here now. I think it's mostly spray material. I know in the cotton areas where they have large acreage they can dust. For the

small crops, very few of them do it to my knowledge. Of course, you know you had your airplane duster of beans, peanuts, cotton, corn, anything else, and it was so much cheaper. To what extent dusting is used now . . . I imagine it's limited to certain crops and large acreage. At least I would think from a layman's viewpoint. All these orchards in the South, peaches, citrus, etc. as far as I know there it is mostly spray equipment. You can do it so much faster and you can have better control. If the wind's blowing, you can't do much dusting. I guess you can get better coverage with your sprays anyway. You take even your small gardeners, 90 per cent of them-- I guess more than that--they use a spray; they won't dust.

Mrs. Whitaker:

During the 1930's when you were inspecting rather than acting as an administrator, were those sprays generally sold in a concentrated form and then diluted by the consumer?

Mr. Cromartie:

That's correct. The object was why pay freight on water. And of course they still do for that matter.

Mrs. Whitaker:

That left it up to an uninformed operator to make the dilution. Was there a problem with getting the right concentration on the crops?

Mr. Cromartie:

If they didn't follow the directions. There was one case where they would have excessive residues after '45 even. If they didn't follow directions, they'd use too much. Consequently they wound up with residues in excess of the tolerance on many of the crops and it was just simply misuse. If they sprayed or dusted according to directions for use, the tolerances should not have exceeded that set by Food and Drug. They didn't always do that.

Mrs. Whitaker:

As a kind of overview of the whole program, looking back from 1966, do you think that actually the Insecticide Division accomplished as much as you were able to, given the Act that you had to work with and the appropriations that you had to work with?

Mr. Cromartie:

I would say it did. I'd say that they covered more than they could have been expected to because 99 per cent of them were conscientious workers and they did the best they could.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Is there any aspect of it that you might have done differently or might have recommended that it be done differently? I know this is Monday morning quarterbacking,

hindsight, but was there any aspect of it that you might have handled differently?

Mr. Cromartie:

I really can't think of anything that I would have handled differently. The way the conditions were and what you had to work with, I don't know how they could have done it better, really. The fact is, I think the Insecticide Division, if they had any way of proving it, operated as efficiently and productively with what we had to work with as any government agency. When you consider the number of people they had and the amount of money they had to work with and you go back to the annual reports on what they accomplished, I don't see how they could have done any different. I don't see how they did as well as they did.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I'm inclined to agree with you from what I have read to date. One of the criticisms leveled against the department--you know them better than I do probably--was that there was too much cooperation between industry and government in the years after 1945, perhaps to the present time. Do you think that industry actually was a hindrance to you or do you think that . . .

Mr. Cromartie:

No. I think industry helped a lot because they cooperated

and, as we said yesterday, the associations wanted to comply. They wanted standard products on the market. You will find these overnight manufacturers everywhere. You have it in anything for that matter. All the time I was in Washington to my knowledge we couldn't have had any kick on the type of cooperation that industry gave us. Of course, we worked with the Associations. The manufacturers would cooperate when we got out in the field. I don't know how it could have been any better.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Then the pressure from the environmentalist groups came at a period after you left.

Mr. Cromartie:

After I left, thank goodness. Of course, it had started two or three years before, a couple of years maybe, when Ribicoff . . . you know his investigation. They only had two up until the time I retired, the one Ribicoff initiated and then the other one from the Department itself. Of course, that resulted from complaints from either the environmentalists or congressmen, the political ends of it. When an agency investigates itself they aren't going out, you know, and pick out every little detail. As far as I know, the Insecticide Division never did come up on the bad side.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Can you think of any products that might have been registered on which there was reservation within the Department, that you had perhaps not the scientific resources available to you to stop registration of any products? Did you yourself personally ever feel that any product should not have been registered?

Mr. Cromartie:

No. They were very careful in those days. Of course they found later that they had registered products for certain uses they shouldn't have but they didn't know at the time. They had to work on the data that was available and on knowledge of the uses. There wasn't any way you could correct that. In other words, time. Many products on the market used years and years ago are not in use any more. You take back in the old days, turpentine and castor oil used to be a general family remedy. I don't think they ever use turpentine any more for medicinal purposes. They learn by experience.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Some of the criticism then would not be justified simply because you did not have available to you . . .

Mr. Cromartie:

There was nothing you could do about it. Of course you'd

stop the use of these chemicals like they have DDT. They can't stop them all. Aspirin you know has killed more people than insecticides. You just can't say this or that should or shouldn't be used.

Mrs. Whitaker:

Were you ever personally called upon by any congressman or representative of any of the environmental groups or ecologists that you can recall during your last years there? Did they ever come to the agency and talk with you or Dr. Griffin or Dr. Reed about perhaps amending the Act as it stood?

Mr. Cromartie:

Not at that time. I don't remember any. The only dealings we would have with the congressmen would be where some of their constituents complained and then the congressman would want to hear both sides of it. They had to satisfy the constituents too so we had to satisfy the congressmen. We didn't have too much of that. It was pretty well cut and dried. The only experience I would have had, anyway, would have been the enforcement end of it and of course, we had that all the time. The congressmen never gave us any problem on the enforcement end of it. I had to go up and talk to one or two congressmen about some of it but once they saw what the situation was there wasn't much they could do about it. They passed the law, we

didn't. The experience that we had during the time that I was there was very reasonable. They weren't trying to put pressure on you not to prosecute this man or don't seize anything like that. If his constituent called him or wanted him to do something, they had to do the best they could. The whole time that I was there up until the very end things were working very smoothly. Of course they got more complex and are still getting more so, I guess. Outside of the pressure from the work and the limitations you had on personnel and funds, things were very smooth. If I had to do it over again, there are very few things that I think of that I'd do differently. The fact is, I can't think of any. Of course, I made plenty of mistakes.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I'm sure you could not have made very many to have come through with as fine a record as you have.

Mr. Cromartie:

That's questionable too.

Mrs. Whitaker:

I can't think of any more questions now. I'm sure I will have some when I reach home.

Mr. Cromartie:

If you do, just write them down in longhand and send them

down and I'll try to answer them.

Agricultural Research Service, 32  
Airplane dusting, 120  
American Medical Association, 80  
Appropriations, 29, 70, 99  
Arsenate of lead, 12, 26, 27, 118

Bureau of Animal Industry, 25

Calcium arsenate, 118

Campbell, Walter, 2, 13, 25

Caustic Poisons Act, 108

Coloring Amendment, 110

Coyne, John, 30

Cromartie, A. D., as inspector, 1,  
7, 44-46, 61, 98, 103, 107; in  
court cases, 9, 19; retirement,  
33; as administrator, 34, 35,  
97; under FIFRA, 41; dealing  
with manufacturers, 47

DDT, 50ff, 85

Department of Agriculture, 3, 29,  
49, 114; Insecticide Division,  
3; Livestock Branch, 2, 3, 29;  
Bureau of Animal Industry, 25;  
investigates Insecticide Division,  
32, 123

Disinfectants, 10, 12, 13, 18, 25,  
57, 58-60, 76, 89, 94, 109

Dried fruits, 105

Environmentalists, 125

Factory Inspection, 15, 16, 17,  
92-94

Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and  
Rodenticide Act, prosecutions  
under, 37; court cases, 78, 82;  
writing of, 49; registration  
under, 55ff, 60, 69, 124; labeling,  
57, 66; tolerances, 66; laboratories,  
67; use and application provisions,  
73-74; registration under protest,  
80; DDT, 87; State cooperation  
program, 100ff; attitude of USDA  
toward, 114; effectiveness of, 121

Federal Trade Commission, 112

Food and Drug Administration, 13,  
116; inspection under, 6, 8, 15,  
27, 107; contact with consumers,  
27; court cases, 12; investigations,  
62; and cranberry cases, 64; tol-  
erances, 65

Food, Drug & Cosmetic Act: tolerances,  
8; court cases, 10, 20, 78; intent

to defraud, 22; seizures, 25;  
and Miller Amendment, 62

Food, Drug & Insecticide Administra-  
tion, 25

Flea killers, 23

Fungicides, 15, 76, 82

General Counsel, 11, 21, 28

Griffin, E. L., 5, 9, 23, 29, 30,  
49, 75, 97

Hays, Harry, 33, 39, 62

Haywood, J. K., 15, 20, 115

Health hazards, 71-72, 83, 86, 117

Insecticides, 6, 12, 15, 18, 19, 24,  
43, 55, 82

Insecticide Act of 1910: penalties  
under, 19, 20; court cases, 21,  
22; seizures, 25; pressures under,  
35; and DDT, 50-53; limitations, 73

Inspection, 1, 14, 16, 34, 42-46

Lindane vaporizers, 79

McDonnell, C. C., 2, 4, 5, 30, 115

Manufacturers, 89

Manufacturers' associations, 48-50,

123

Miller Amendment of 1954, 62, 66

Miller, Lowell, 21, 39

National Academy of Science, 33

Notices of Judgment, 20, 88

Paris green, 118

Pesticides: health hazards, 71-72;

environmental hazards, 72

Public Health Service, 60

Pyrethrum, 17, 28

Reed, Harry, 29

Reed, Webster, 2, 29, 30, 97

Rodenticides, 36, 68, 112

Rotenone, 17

Salmon: inspection of, 105

Secretary of Agriculture, 31, 70,

84

Seizures, 25, 90

Silent Spring, 84

Solicitor's office, 10-11, 23, 38

Spray residues, 4, 6, 8, 33, 52, 85,

106, 121

State Cooperative Program, 100ff

Tolerances, 65

Ward, Justis, 30

Weed-killers, 72-73, 82

WW II, 18