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A short excerpt from a 1974 interview between Walter de Vries and Alabama Governor George Wallace. This interview took place at the beginning of Wallace's third term as governor. Jack Bass, another interviewer, asks Governor Wallace a question about a quote made by an historian, who had written that an Alabama judge named Frank Johnson had more power than the governor and the legislature. George Wallace expresses his views on the federal government and comments on the court orders related to busing children to different schools in Montgomery, Alabama.

Audio

File:

Duration: 2:03

Transcript:

Jack Bass: I wanted to get your reaction to a point he makes in that book. He contends that in Alabama that Judge Frank Johnson has had more impact on basic government as it applies to people here than you have because of his rulings on reapportionment, on property taxes, on mental health.

Governor George Wallace: I readily agree that the federal court system has had more impact on everything than the Congress, than the president, than all the governors. Not just governor of Alabama. When one federal judge can strike down in one line what an elected legislature of the people can do, and there's no recourse because they're automatically upheld by the circuit court of appeals and the Supreme Court, yes. You're absolutely right. It didn't have to be Frank Johnson. It could have been you. Whoever was a federal judge. And they talk about supreme, and the executive branch and the Congressional branch abrogating and making the presidency stronger - why the strongest branch of the government is the judiciary. They even legislate. They even come along and put - even draw up the plan themselves. They don't pass on the constitutionality of the plan, they go down there and draw it up and put it into law. And they legislate it. You're right. That's exactly what Thomas Jefferson said was going to happen someday. And that's what we oppose. And that's what I oppose. That's what people in the country oppose. Busing children all over Montgomery. Seven court orders. Seven straight years. Every time they issue a court order they obey it. Next year that's not good enough. Another court order. Hundreds of little children go to school this year this school, this school next one, next year go to school here. You're right. The federal courts have had more impact on the people's rights and prerogatives than has the legislature of the state and the governor of the state.

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