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## Interview no. 682

Joseph M. Ray

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UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

INTERVIEWEE: Joseph M. Ray

INTERVIEWER: Oscar J. Martínez and Sarah E. John

PROJECT: History of the University

DATE OF INTERVIEW: April - November, 1981

TERMS OF USE: Unrestricted

TAPE NO.: 682

TRANSCRIPT NO.: 682

BIOGRAPHICAL SYNOPSIS OF INTERVIEWEE:

Born in Kentucky; received a B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Texas, the latter in 1937; President of Texas Western College - U.T. El Paso, 1960-1968; Professor Emeritus of Political Science.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW:

Tape I, pp. 1-32: First impressions of Texas Western College; how he first came to El Paso as a hitchhiker in 1927; how he entered the University of Texas in 1928; employment experiences from 1937 until he came to Texas Western College in 1960; problems with the administration at Amarillo College concerning ethnic and fiscal policies; the El Paso business community; how he helped improve the academic standing of the institution; administrators he worked with during his presidency; the establishment of the H.Y. Benedict professorships; Mexican-American faculty on the campus.

Tape II, pp. 33-62: His relationship with Frank Erwin of the Board of Regents; more on his relationship with El Paso businessmen; TWC's involvement with the Second Peace Corps training program; Mission 73; the name change from Texas Western College to the University of Texas at El Paso.

Tape III, pp. 63-93: 1966 NCAA Basketball Championship team; black athletics at TWC; athletics; Sports Illustrated articles on the exploitation of black athletes; the building of the Sun Bowl; more on the name change of the university; how he raised funds for the Excellence Program.

Tape IV, pp. 94-121: The acquisition of the Hoover House; the Faculty Senate; relations with the faculty; programs he would like to see carried on at UTEP, anecdotes involving faculty and students; his assessment of his tenure as President of TWC-UTEP.

Length of Interview: 8 hours Length of Transcript: 121 pages

Dr. Joseph M. Ray  
by Oscar J. Martínez  
April 16, 1981  
Tape I

M: Dr. Ray first of all, I'd like to ask you about your initial impressions when you first came to this university, what you thought of the university?

R: Well, my conviction which I held at that time, that this was the best institution among the lesser colleges in the state of Texas, was confirmed by appearance, by the attitudes I acquired in association with the people. My exclamation as I hung up the phone after talking with Chancellor Logan Wilson and learning that they were interested in me for President of TWC down the hall to my wife, telling her that, "I am a candidate for the presidency of the best college in the state of Texas!" That was confirmed by appearances. That was one of the things. I met with many people, some of them I didn't have a high opinion of, most of them I did. There's a large number, a large collection, of competent people as well as of fuds and duds and jackasses.

M: Now, which other colleges were you comparing this one to?

R: All of them, everybody except A & M and Texas. I thought it was primarily, not because of any substantive content of the institution, but the fact that it was affiliated with the University of Texas at Austin and operated under the supervision of the University of Texas Board of Regents.

M: Were you familiar with the faculty and administrators who were here?

R: I knew three people. I knew Haldeen Braddy, whom I had met at East Texas State College at Commerce when we were both teaching there one summer. I knew Gladys Gregory, who was Professor of Political Science,

and who had taken her degree at the University of Texas at Austin. And I knew Ted Myers, Sameul D. Myers, who still lives here in El Paso. He, for some reason that I don't recall at the moment, was forced out of his position at SMU where he was serving as head of the Arnold School of Government. At the time he took his Doctor's degree in the same mill I was in, at Austin. They both had degrees. They were two of the three people who had taken doctor's degrees in Government--Political Science--before I did there. S. D. McAlister of NTSTC also.

M: Weren't there a lot of people here at that time who didn't have doctorates?

R: Many. We had to work on that in our recruitment policy. We did not make any effort to discharge anybody.

M: And in spite of that, you thought that this was a very good place in comparison to the others. So the others must have had a large proportions of their faculty without degrees?

R: I had a good smattering of experience with other Texas Colleges. I taught for four years at North Texas, I taught in the summer at Canyon, and Commerce, and Southwest Texas at San Marcos, and all that before I first saw UTEP. I first came to El Paso as a hitchhiker in 1927.

M: Oh, really?

R: Never even then heard a mention of this college. It was just gradually getting its start, although it was at this present location.

M: You came here as a hitchhiker, you say?

R: I came to El Paso as a hitchhiker.

M: Well, how did that happen?

R: Well, now, we're getting off the University.

M: It's okay, we'll come back. I want to pursue this interesting point.

R: I was working in 1927, '26 and '27, for the Kentucky State Highway Department. I made friends with a high school graduate from Frankfort High School in 1927, and he and I planned to go to California to go to school. He had to run away from home; I was an orphan and my own man at nineteen. He was eighteen. We left to go to Bowling Green and Nashville, and Mulberry, Florida to visit my sister--all hitchhiking. And then we started out from Mulberry, up to Jacksonville and Tallahassee, Pensacola, Mobile, New Orleans. When we got to New Orleans--this was 1927--a great flood was on the Mississippi. And then Mississippi Flood relief was under the leadership of Herbert Hoover. Hoover was then Secretary of Commerce and he rounded out his reputation there. We had to ride freight trains across the flooded Mississippi Valley; there was water everywhere. I never saw as much water in my life. I'm an inlander, you know, and never had seen big water. We went to Houston and to Austin; visited in Austin with some of my partner's relatives. His name, incidentally, was Daniel Fowler; put in a career as a lawyer in Lexington, Kentucky, when he got back.

M: Were you hitchhiking out of economic necessity or out of adventure?

R: I reckon so--we didn't have any money. Danny and I spent \$28 between us on that trip the whole time. We had pooled our money and it came up to \$28. That's all the money we spent on that trip, catching meals from people that would buy them for us, or eating grapes through the fence, or some such things. It is fully described in my memoirs that I showed you.

M: One thing that I'm interested in is about your visit to El Paso at that time.

R: We came into El Paso and I saw

M: And that was the time of Prohibition?

R: Yeah, but it didn't have any effect for me. I had never tasted whiskey.

M: Oh, really?

R: I was nineteen years old and I... Oh, yes, I had, too, I had tasted whiskey. But it wasn't part of my problem.

M: Well, I just wondered if you went across the border and looked around.

R: Yes, but was too cautious to take a drink over there, and too innocent and inexperienced to take up with any woman across the border. We got yelled at by women out of second story windows in Juárez.

M: What was your impression of Juárez at that time?

R: It was a place I didn't want to get caught in after dark. There was a huge woman called "Tiny" singing torch songs. I remember one song was "Stormy Weather" that she sang. We heard her through the doors of a cantina. We didn't spend any money. Danny had about \$200 and I had about \$145, and we were going to California to go to school. We came here, got a room in the YMCA and washed our clothes, and stayed in the buff until they dried out in the YMCA, and put them on--and a change of underwear.

M: How long were you here?

R: Maybe three days. I can point out the way we went out. We had learned at Fort Stockton that we couldn't get a ride through the arid country. Traffic was too sparse and the cars were much too congested with passengers, no room in them--every car that was going, for example, from Fort Stockton to El Paso. The highways were gravel, unpaved, and you couldn't get a ride. We spent the best of one full morning at Sheffield, trying to get a ride. Really this is interesting

to you, but you can get a much better account of it from my memoirs, I think.

M: Okay.

R: El Paso was just a place, and we went out of here on a freight train. We rode freight trains from here to Yuma, Arizona, and then we hitchhiked a ride on a truck going to Los Angeles. And I can say, in summation, that our mission to California was aborted because we discovered we had had to move secretly because /Dan/ was running away from home, and couldn't inquire about whether we were admissible. We were admissible, but the California schools (UCLA) that year had a whopping out-of-state tuition that would have gotten the both of us into debt before we paid our first lodging bill. The other school, the University of Southern California, is a private school and its tuition was much higher.

M: Now, where did you go first? In California, which school did you go to?

R: U.C.L.A.

M: U.C.L.A. That's my school, by the way.

R: We wanted to go to U.C.L.A. but it was just beyond our means. So, I got a job. I was a stenographer for the Kentucky State Highway Department, and I got a stenographic job in Los Angeles. And my friend Danny frequented for a time the harbor at San Pedro and he got a job on a ship as an AB seaman and made a trip to Japan. He came back to the states and telephoned his old man for some money to come home on. I didn't have any old man. I stayed in Los Angeles for about three months until I got homesick and then I hitchhiked--and nearly all of this was hitchhiking. I went from Los Angeles; San Francisco and Seattle; Spokane; Yellowstone Park; Cheyenne, Wyoming; and rode a

freight train out there into Colorado and Kansas just to wait; and then got back on the highway to Des Moines and Chicago and back to Kentucky. All that was done in the summertime of 1927. Then I got a job as stenographer for the Consolidation Coal Company in Coalwood, West Virginia, and I spent the following year in Coalwood.

In the summer of 1928, I packed my trunk, put everything I valued and treasured in it, and shipped it to Austin, Texas, to be called for by me when I got there. Then I made myself another hitchhiking trip from Coalwood to Washington, New York, Boston, Albany, and Niagara Falls. In Albany, I got myself directed to the state capital and I saw in front of that building a wooden platform on which Al Smith was in a few weeks to accept the nomination of the Democratic Party for President. After Niagara Falls, I headed straight down country for Texas, through St. Louis. Got to Austin, enrolled in the University as a Freshman; had about \$150, \$200 in my pocket; got a job waiting tables; and earned my way all the way through three degrees in nine years from the University of Austin.

M: You got no help from your parents or anybody else to go to college?

R: My parents...my father died before my birth; my mother died when I was seven. My older sister gave me \$80 as a bribe to come home at the end of my senior year. I hadn't been home and she thought it'd be worth some money to give me some incentive for coming home. I used that \$80 dollars to pay the initiation fee for a fraternity. I somehow thought that I needed a fraternity in my life. I discovered to my amazement that I didn't need it, and somewhat later I went inactive and I've never had any contact with a fraternity since then. But that \$80 was a national chapter fee for a fraternity. I set that price when my



sister was dickering with me. "Do you need some money?" "Yeah, I'd like to join a fraternity." Anyhow, that's the story.

Then I went through the University of Texas, graduated with a doctor's degree in 1937, taught at North Texas for four or five years, and then moved from there to Alabama. I went there as an Associate Professor, at Alabama. I was there until 1946 when I was employed as Professor and Head of the Department of Government and Politics at the University of Maryland. I served in that capacity for two years and then was promoted to the Deanship of the College of Special and Continuation Studies--night school. It was the one which had expanded over the whole world. Wherever American military personnel were located \_\_\_\_\_, you could find the University of Maryland. I was Dean of that College for two or three years, made many trips to Europe in that capacity, flying MATS planes. Then I worked for the Air Force. The Air Force set up a position primarily for me. A good colonel friend of mine wanted me to work with him in the Office of Information and Education in the Headquarters of the United States Air Force, and he set up a civilian position for me. I succeeded him after a year as a civilian in a military man's job, simulated rank of Brigadier General. I never did get Brigadier General treatment. You couldn't expect it. I didn't want it. I got the money.

And I moved from there to the Presidency of Amarillo College, a junior college in Amarillo, and was there when Logan Wilson, Chancellor Logan Wilson of the University of Texas System, called me to come here.

M: I read in your manuscript about your time in Amarillo College. I recall that when you went for an interview, one of the members of the

Board asked you what you would do if a black student wanted to go to Amarillo College. Why don't you tell me about that.

R: Well, it was a dirty trick. He was the Chairman of the school board. The school board was doubling in brass as the school board of Amarillo, the City of Amarillo, and as board of Amarillo College. In other words, it had two insititutions, the public school system and Amarillo College. The Chairman of that board was a former quarterback, named M. T. Johnson, on one of Bud Wilkinson's teams at Oklahoma. And it was just a dirty trick. He immediately apologized after I had stumbled through my response, immediately apologized; said it was a dirty question "'cause we've already faced that one and have admitted blacks."

M: As I recall, your answer was that it wouldn't be up to you but to the community and the board.

R: That's right, in general. A President of a local college, or any kind of college, does not have untrammelled discretion. He can't ram through--no more here than any other place--he can't ram through solutions to problems that occur to him as being the proper solution. He is a negotiator primarily, and a finagler, a man who works his way out of problems, who relies on all the advice he can get, any advice he can get that bears on the subject. And if he didn't come to the job with that disposition, he pretty soon will come to rely fully on advisors and will in that process take some avenues of action which would not be his preferred choice. But that's another thing. But actually, in fact, I answered M. T. fine, and we had a good chuckle over it later, because he said, "That is not the problem. We met that one about six or eight years ago and we did it primarily for the basketball player named Charlie Brown," who came later to El Paso's Texas Western College and Junior College as a transfer (check with George McCarty).

M: Is that right? Were racial attitudes pretty unenlightened there at the time?

R: No, I think most attitudes in Amarillo to this good day are in major portion unenlightened. I felt a great relief when I moved to El Paso because the John Birch Society was just coming into play and it was very popular. And I, who am a Truman Democrat...and that's the extent of my liberalism. I don't think Truman ever did very much wrong. He wasn't the leader he should have been in a lot of ways, but in terms of attitude he and I are just like two peas in a pod. That was one of my disabilities in El Paso because businessmen in El Paso, all businessmen in El Paso, are reactionary Republicans. They're in hog heaven now with Ronald Reagan in the presidency. In 1968 after I retired from the presidency, I once wore a Hubert Humphrey button to a cocktail party in El Paso, and at least five guys cornered me and honestly pled with me to take the button off. It's just not fitting for a college president to wear a Hubert Humphrey button. That's the old story.

M: But a Nixon button would be okay?

R: Sure, that's in the groove. You're not deserting your class if you wore a Nixon button.

M: Let me come back to the ethnic question first. You said it was a relief for you to leave Amarillo and come here. By that I understand that you perceived El Paso to be much more progressive in its racial and political attitudes.

R: I think this is true. I have never lived in a place like Amarillo in which there was such a uniformity of reactionism among all the leading people. You get a board of regents in Amarillo...we changed it while I was there. I'm always changing things. Everywhere I have been, I do something like

that. We withdrew from the control of the public school board and established our own board, and the board members are elected in a popular election every two years. I never got one, a board member, that was really a liberal. They were all ranging from ultra-conservatives to moderate, never moderate really. I did something on my own. Now, no university president, no college president, should do that. He should get the Board's approval if he sees any doubt whatsoever about the propriety of what he's doing. I saw no doubt. It had to do with a loan program for students--the National Defense Education Loan Act--shortly after it was accepted. I acted alone, seeing absolutely no objection to it. It was some money that I could grab on to, not for my own grabbing but for the college's purposes. And so we entered an application for loans under the NDEA, National Defense Education Loan Act.

M: Was that here at UTEP?

R: No, it was at Amarillo. I'm showing you, I'm talking to the point of Amarillo's conservatism. One night at a board meeting (we always had our meetings at night, once a month), one member of the board expressed an opinion that it was approximating treason to take money from the federal government for these boondoggle programs the federal government had. I put myself at the board's mercy. I said, "Ladies and gentlemen, I've got a confession to make. I subscribed on my own authority, under the National Education Loan Act, for just the type of program that's been objected to here. Now, we haven't got any money from them yet, but we've already got an official application. We don't have to take any federal money; if this is reprehensible, I must plead

ignorance. It didn't occur to me that it was." The board said, "Well, it's easy enough to not spend any money. Let's just forget it. But come to the board next time when you want to tap any federal government largesse, because," in effect, they said, "we are members of the John Birch Society. We don't believe in living on the New Deal's squandering of money, and you can't have it." That was the atmosphere that I was glad to get out of.

M: Did you withdraw the application?

R: Didn't withdraw it; we just never took any money.

M: Were you offered money?

R: They responded favorably to our petition, because I in good faith asked them to let us be there, and had indicated the source and nature of the funds that we would match it with. After the board's attitude became obvious, I wouldn't have dared to spend any of that money for student loans. So, if we got any federal money, two members of the board, wealthy men, bragged (it was a brag) publicly before the other board members that they would take care of loan money for Amarillo College students and we wouldn't have to realize the option of federal money.

M: Did they do it?

R: That was nearly two years before I left. There wasn't a goddamned dime in the student loan program up to the time I left. Par for the course. And the John Birchers, I really think Amarillo is one of the headquarters of the John Birch Society. I found nearly...not all. I had a doctor who served for a year as chairman of our board, named Watkins, who was a sensible man. But in the main they hated everything ten miles off looking toward Washington.

M: In your manuscript I thought I read of a similar situation here at this university where you applied for that program and Judson Williams was

involved in trying to discourage you from doing it.

R: He didn't stand up. That experience occurred at the time of Mission 73, when he as Chairman...he himself is a member of the John Birch Society, I think. Whether he is a member of it or not, it's like the old fellow says, if it quacks like a duck and walks like a duck and runs with other ducks, goddamn it, it's a duck. All right, now in that definition, Judson Williams is a John Bircher. I don't know, nobody knows who's a member of the John Birch society. As a matter of fact, I think the damn thing's dried up and blown away now. (Ha! Reagan.) Nobody is running for office anymore. But it's still in my lexicon and it's a meaningful phrase for me. It has to do with everything that Ronald Reagan stands for. He talks like a duck, and walks like a duck, he quacks like a duck, and runs with other ducks; and damn it, he's a duck.

All right, at Mission 73 somebody was coming up with the precise attitude I had encountered at Aamrillo. They were declaring long-range policy for this institution, and he said, paraphrasing what he took to be the sentiment of the last speaker, having just finished speaking, "We don't want our institution to be seduced by any of that loose money from Washington. What do you think of that, Dr. Ray?" he asked. "I think if I find the government of my nation offering money to students for loan programs, I want my students here at TWC to have a shake at it." I said, with some choler, "I don't want to be any part with the tying of the hands of this institution to avail itself of federal funds. It's my government same as it is anybody else's." That's about the sum and substance of what I said. And I spoke with some vehemence. And Judson Williams, who was at that time a little more disposed than he was later on to court

my opinion, just folded up the whole problem and we quit talking about it. But I declared myself forcefully. I had to bow down to the board of regents at Amarillo. It's my boss. They can fire me and deny me, as could the board here, but the board here is not meeting with me on Thursday night the sixteenth. It meets in San Antonio once every two years and it doesn't give expression to ideas like this; it deals a step higher. And in Mission 73, /a/ fly-by-night board of visitors comes in here to talk with us about our problems. They haven't got the same substance that a board of regents has, and I could speak with greater courage and conviction with the visitors than I could in Amarillo.

M: Well, let me go back to your initial feelings of this institution when you took the presidency, and the community. You had mentioned before that you thought this was the best college in the system, aside from Texas and Texas A&M. And you started to tell me about the community and the business sector particularly.

R: The business sector, in any city in the United States, the power structure, is men of property, always, and is always conservative. If we let the business leaders dominate the local government as they do the Chamber of Commerce, for example, we would have a Ronald Reagan in every public office in the country all the time. It just works that way, for whatever its worth. The tendency is always in that direction because our University of Texas Board of Regents is men of that sort. Nearly every one of them got appointed--maybe this is an exaggeration, and I don't know the answer but I think it's true--nearly every one of them was called to the governor's attention for appointment to such a board primarily because of sizeable contributions to the governor's campaign fund, that compounded and confirmed by other actions that appealed to

the governor and to the ruling class of people. There is such a thing as a ruling class of people, and they are the ones who gain positions of honor and trust in our society.

Now, here comes a Truman Democrat. Not a man...I'll bet you couldn't find a man downtown that voted for Harry Truman. I voted for him twice, once as vice president and once as president. The point was that I am and always was a Truman Democrat.

M: When did you get here? Was it 1960?

R: 1960.

M: Well, tell me about your initial meetings with people in the business community.

R: I was taken willy-nilly by Thornton Hardy, the local member of the University of Texas Board of Regents at that time. He'd been on the Board for two years. He took me to Sam Young. I didn't like Sam Young from the start.

M: This was Sam Young, Sr.?

R: Sam Young, Sr. Sam Young, Jr. was just working for the bank. That was twenty years ago. I didn't like him. A lot of businessmen I do like, but they make poor friends. I like Fred Reed, for example, who was vice-president in charge of the Federal Reserve Bank. He's a warm friend. I like L. A. Miller of M & M Refrigeration, with whom I built a fond and lasting friendship, and I still like L. A. Miller. But in the main I realized from the first that a man cannot be president of a state college, because of the conservative complex of the ruling structure, unless he is a member of a church and unless he's reflecting conservative political views. So, I started out with Sam Young and everybody else. Nobody knew what my politics were.



One of the constraints I served under was in church membership. I've never much been a church man. As a young man, I joined a church, my wife and I joined the Presbyterian church together. She had been a Baptist and I had been born and baptized a Methodist. I'm not a religious man. I went through the forms of religion because I figured I had to, and I think the hypocrisy involved in that experience marked me late in life. I'm not an agnostic, I know there's a God. I think I do. But in the forms of a church dogma or ritual I was surprised. Years after I became a Presbyterian, something that's in the Presbyterian dogma to the effect that everything is preordained, it's going to happen, it's God's will, and don't worry about it--that just floored me. Somebody asked me, "Why don't you believe that? It's your church." I had to mumble and fumble because I don't believe that. This is for whatever it's worth. Now I'm inactive in church matters. I make a substantial church contribution every year but I don't go to church. I quit going to church when I left the presidency at UTEP. After I'm out of administration, it's nobody's damned business whether I go to church or not.

All right, now that is a reaction to the conservatism of the business community. I eschewed political discussion; I tucked tail and ran when politics came up. I talked to members of the faculty freely. I can't give you any more eloquent testimony on how I feel about the--what's the word that was so common?--the Establishment, except today I'm a Truman Democrat and the Establishment is not.

M: Did you have a natural feeling of not really belonging with that group, and did they sense that?

R: I would answer that by observing that in my best guess nobody gets to

be a president of a state college in the United States unless he's ultra-conservative Establishment, and I wasn't.

M: But you got to be president.

R: For a great variety of reasons. One is, I'm an educator; two is, I'm a guy who can get things done and people began to recognize that. And in "Everyone vs. Ray", you will remember my comment about one of my colleagues saying one of the reasons he came to TWC, accepted a job, was because Joe Ray was here and he'd heard that things happen under Joe Ray. And that's true. I did a whole lot of constructive things.

M: Did those feelings that you had about businessmen affect your efforts to raise money for the University locally?

R: No, no. I got a good laugh from the entire Board of Regents and their hangers-on one morning when old Bill Heath, then Chairman of the Board of Regents, was chiding me for making promises to El Paso businessmen about how we would get rid of some staff members, some that they thought were radical, and taking their money and then not doing that. I said to him, before the Board in that meeting, that, "I never promised anybody any kind of action on any kind of personnel at the University in exchange for a gift of money." I never did and I never would and I didn't and I couldn't. So.

M: But you got an offer like that?

R: Oh, yeah, I got 'em. Bill Loan Co. offered to double his contribution if we'd fire this history professor, Trexler. He marched in the Plaza against the Vietnam war.

M: Oh, in the history department.

R: Marched in the Plaza in protest against the Vietnam War.

M: Was this offer made in a meeting with other businessmen?

R: He sent me a telegram. I told it all over town. It's common knowledge. That sort of thing is done all the time. And my pitch was that I'm just not going to do it. I'm not going to have my relations with this assistant professor who marched in the Plaza shaped by Bill \_\_\_\_\_, no matter how much money he's got. And when Chairman Heath chided me as I adverted to you a moment ago, I said, "What do you want me to do when I'm trying to talk him out of some money, hit him in the face with a dead cat?" And that got a big laugh. I thought Don Walker would have a laughing convulsion. I'm not going to hit him in the face with anything while I'm trying to talk him out of his money. I want his money for a good cause at the University. And I'm not promising him a single damned thing. And he, if he were reasonable, would know that that's why we have Boards of Regents composed of people like you, Mr. Heath, to cushion the impact of monied people trying to talk us into chastising a faculty member for not believing the same way they do about something." But that's Bill Heath. He thought I shouldn't try as long as they'll give it to me.

Incidentally, I take full credit. A great many of these things that I've said here are things that I had very little to do with, but they all happened under my presidency and I provided the type of leadership under which they could be done. This is a point that I pause parenthetically to mention because while I didn't do them, I had something to do with all of them. For example, I jumped in with both feet when the County was voting on the issue to build the stadium. I think that's just the way stadiums ought to be built, with a public subscription, because the public is the one that wants the stadium, it's the one that wants us to play winning football. We would never get to play if it they didn't support it.

Side 2

Date: April 27, 1981

M: Dr. Ray, I wonder if we can begin this second part of our interview with your telling me about the things that you did when you first arrived at U.T. El Paso to improve the academic standing of this institution.

R: Well, I didn't make much headway. I wasn't really concerned with accomplishing new things but simply handling the job. This was the biggest job I had ever had, and I was concerned about doing it well and creditably rather than making a mark in the world, so to speak. A friend of mine some years ago asked me...I had come twice to the presidency of another educational institution, once at Amarillo College and once here. "What does a man do," he inquired of me, "when he walks into his position new?" I said, "Well, there's nobody there to tell you 'hello' and to pat you on the back. You go in and you read the papers they lay before you, you talk to people who come, and take it from there." That's about the way I did it at the University. Whatever I was able to accomplish in reshaping the academic focus of UTEP I brought with me. It wasn't in my pocket, wasn't in my wallet; it was in my head. I was an academic man from the very first. I had never been anything from the time I graduated from the University, except a professor; and I had deeply ingrained in me the various areas of understanding that all academic people have with a minimum of convictions about how I was going to do this or that.

The one place where we really refocused the University was the massive approach we made on Mission 73, and that came on the Golden Jubilee Year of the University, 1973. We got the commission from the Mission in '74. I don't know if that's the answer to your question or not. I didn't come here to sweep with a new broom. I came here to be president of the damned place and do the best I could.

M: I understand though that you were concerned with improving the academic status of the University and that you made personnel changes, or added personnel, in those years in which you were president.

R: There were. For example, just one thing, our engineering school was not in good order. Only Metallurgy was approved by its accrediting association, and that was, I felt, tenuous. And so we appointed an engineering advisory committee under the chairmanship of Lambert Moore with five others--one of them a New York businessman, a graduate from this program, named John Paine; and one was the engineering dean from the University at Austin; Tom Jones from Purdue. These are some of the names I could call off of about ten members of the engineering advisory committee, all of them competent men. We got them to examine our school the best they could and to make recommendations. They came to the campus three times. I met with them all the time they were here. They talked to the Dean of Engineering, who was a graduate of this program and who in addition had put in six weeks auditing some courses at M.I.T., I think it was. Auditing--he didn't enroll--and shortly came home on top of his Master's Degree from here. (I think that's wrong. He had a bachelor's degree from here, a master's from some other place.) But, in all events, we took a sounding on the quality of our engineering school. One of the recommendations of the group was that we would retire the Dean to teaching, and he wasn't qualified for that, in my judgment. But you got to do something; got to do something with him. You can't go scattering dead bodies around. It wasn't my idea; it was theirs. And we had one doctor's degree, Professor Heer was the only doctor's degree we had in Engineering.

M: In Engineering?

R: That's the way I recall it. And we hired Lonnie Abernethy with his degree

in Metallurgy. And we didn't hire anybody else except doctor's degrees for a long time. We finally got a quality establishment in Engineering. All of our systems are now accredited. Again, let me reiterate what I said to you the other day. I don't do all these things, but I'm here and I'm head of the damned outfit and I do the best I can. We were somewhat slow in raising the salaries of the amenable sodalities who were already on the payroll. In other words, there came to be a time when our doctor's degrees had salaries that were competitive with other engineering schools, whereas the old timers on the Engineering staff didn't go up fast enough to please the Dean of Engineering who thought we ought to have competitive salaries for everybody. I figured we didn't have enough money for that. They were here.

M: What about Ray Small? He came here during that time, is that right?

R: No, not during that time. He came here after my first year here. I knew Ray Small long and well at Amarillo College. He was Professor of English at Amarillo College. I needed somebody I could rely on. In my first year there was a move to bring back Dr. Joe Smiley from Austin, who had left here and left some of the town people--and I remember the Board of Regents--disgruntled. He left here for the Vice Presidency of the main University at Austin. He was personally unhappy and he and his wife put on a campaign for him to be brought back in my job. I was unsettled. I needed somebody like Small that I knew from old times who could help me do my job. And I brought him here as Assistant to the President.

M: And then he became Dean of Liberal Arts?

R: He didn't become, I appointed him. As a matter of fact, after I had Small in my office for a couple of years, we had Mission 73 and I there became acquainted with Milton Leech, who was the Executive Director of

Mission 73. And I was highly favorably impressed with him and was daily reminded of his superiority as an aid to the President over Dr. Small. The Dean of Liberal Arts was a man who overstayed his time; his name was Berkman. He's since died. Berkman was one of the confidants of our El Paso member of the Board of Regents, Mr. Thornton Hardy, in his effort to bring Smiley back. And when that effort collapsed, Berkman, who was due to retire from administration under University rules at age 65, stayed on, and Hardy kept him there. I tried to get the chancellor to let me on my own authority negotiate with Berkman to get him to retire. He stayed, I think, two years over his age limit. He was 67 when he finally retired.

At that time, to my later deep regret, I appointed Small as Dean of [Liberal] Arts as soon as I got Berkman out of the job. I thought he'd be better than he was, but his faults became apparent, in comparison with Leech, and became more deeply ingrained. And it's always difficult for a president to move somebody out of an official position. You've nearly got to have a crook or an incompetent if you remove a dean. Small was neither crooked...Small was highly moral, a responsible man. He did everything to the very best of his ability and he had considerable ability. He was just slow for me. When he left my office to become dean, Leech found in the bottom of his desk drawer papers dealing with four or five problems that urgently needed solution, action, and [had] just been left in the desk drawer. I, of course, had forgot them. It was part my fault in forgetting them, but I figured when I handed a chore to one of my assistants, he'd do something about it. He didn't keep a suspense list on them. But many problems of that sort suffered under Small when he was Dean. As a matter of fact, I heard [from] fairly responsible sources-- I'll not say where--that Templeton was set to retire Small from the

Deanship a year earlier than he did and Small just flat backed out on him. Just wouldn't take the option that was offered to him of a professorship. I've got no apologies. I did something the president of a university shouldn't do: I appointed a man to get him out of my hair rather than make him a dean. And it's one of the biggest mistakes I've ever made, I think.

M: What do you see as the major problem with Dean Small?

R: Deliberateness. He works carefully and well, earnestly and honestly. And sits on his ass when it doesn't work out.

M: Is that the biggest problem that you see?

R: I think so.

M: He sits on things.

R: I don't see any perfidy in Small at all.

M: I don't know. I'm just following up with questions.

R: I would be interested in debating somebody who thinks of Small as a perfidious man. I don't. I did not appoint an incompetent. I just appointed a man who was not the best man we could find for that job.

M: I do know since I've been here, and I've been here just a few years, that people in Liberal Arts didn't see him as a real scholar concerned with research and who had understanding of that part of the University's work.

R: I think this is true. This I would concede. And yet he paid some quite stalwart lip service to the fundamentally important thing in the way of research. He did it faithfully and religiously with me. I again don't think he's... I think we've got a Dean of Liberal Arts right now that's superior to Small in nearly every way, let's



put it that way. She's a vigorous women, top-drawer intellect, /has/ a command of the language that deans ought to have (Natalicio). I remember one time Small startled me by pronouncing the word emeritus "Em-er-EYE-tus." He just wasn't there all the way. I feel a loyalty and friendliness to Small. I violently disagree with his choice of avocation, running a saloon over here on Mesa. He offered me a free drink almost anytime I'd come. I never went in the goddamn place and I wouldn't. I wouldn't honor a place with my presence in which an educational administrator purveyed whiskey.

One of Small's greatest shortcomings as a man was his tight-fistedness. He loved money. He and his wife and my wife and I for a while got snookered into a girl's camp up at Cloudcroft, and we were involved. I finally bought him out. My wife is the one who wanted the Cloudcroft thing. Dollie Small got tired of it. Dollie and Ray are now divorced. But he got what little money we had in the Cloudcroft camp together and reinvested it in some apartments in East El Paso. He's an accomplished carpenter and electrician and plumber. He's got a union card in two of those fields, at least he had it as a young man. Whether he's kept it up, I don't know. But he's ideally talented for an apartment operator. He finally sold those and went with Gary Brooks into the saloon over here, and later bought Gary Brooks out. He didn't have to get permission for his outside work because it wasn't work for a saloonkeeper, it was the management of his own property. He didn't work as a bartender except in his own outfit, and didn't have to get annual approval for outside work. I still think it was highly reprehensible. The one line of activity...no, there would be another; I'd say running a bawdy house would be first line reprehensible, and a whiskey outfit, second.

M: I spoke with Mel Straus a few weeks ago, and in his opinion, during your time there was a transformation here at the University.

R: During my presidency?

M: Yes. And this is the way he put it and I want your reaction to it.

R: Who is this?

M: Mel Straus.

R: Oh yeah. Mel is undoubtedly going to come up with something grandiloquent.

M: Well, he said it wasn't his own terminology. He had picked it up from some book about the University. But he said that you essentially elevated this University from academic Siberia to the bush leagues. That's the middle category, and then I forget what the terminology along those lines is for the next category, which is a top university.

R: Big leagues.

M: Big leagues, yes, okay. As part of this, one of the things that he mentioned was that this University wasn't known very well, even in the state of Texas; that it didn't have faculty who had national reputations, or even regional reputations, except Sonnichsen. Aside from Sonnichsen, there really wasn't anybody else who...

R: I think that's accurate. For example, when we came up with the new wrinkle of the Benedict Professors. H. Y. Benedict was a president of the University when I was a student in the University, Harry Yandell Benedict. And we were going to have distinguished professors, pay them more than anybody was paid on the campus. The purpose was for our faculty to see walking amongst them the kind of guy that could make big money as a professor. Big in those days--it was around \$20,000. At least it got that high. It was

higher than anybody else was making at the time, except Sonnichsen. Sonnichsen published books continually, year after year, in his field, and was a nationally known writer. Those were published commercially, no in-house publications. He wrote his book, Judge Roy Bean: Law West of the Pecos; that one was a best seller. It had a long and highly creditable sale in paperback. I've got only a paperback copy. Maybe it was only sold in paperback. But Sonnichsen turned out book after book. He was the kind of man I was looking for.

I think on many of these points you and I are passing back and forth between us, I had more or less to do with the institution of the situation. I think I had as much to do with the establishment of the H. Y. Benedict Professorships as any other one person, if not more. I talked repeatedly to Chancellor Ransom, telling him what I wanted to do. I wanted to have somebody to walk amongst us as a professor that people would have to look up to. This is not a dean, this is not a registrar, this is not some official, not some vice president. This is a guy who gets paid good money for teaching students in class. This was the type of man, or person. They happened all to be male, which is par for the course, I guess. Well, we got some good ones. One of them is still here, but he's crawled into his shell after continued clashes with his department head. And for a while Joe Smiley and I were in on it, too--both of us appointed by the Board on retirement from the presidency, as I've said in my memoirs. "Everyone V. Ray", which you might recall. Smiley's a good professor, a good, solid man. Never had much of a literary output, but he's a first-class scholarly man. I could list some things

wrong with Smiley but I'm not in that pitch right now. I'm talking about Benedict Professors. And Smiley and I surrendered our Benedict Professorships when we left teaching.

M: How successful do you consider that program to have been, the Benedict Professorships?

R: Sonnichsen thought it was fine, of course, and has many times complimented me on treating him thoroughly right. A lot of people, as might have been expected, don't like sacred cows wandering around the pasture, too good to tangle with and not all that perfect anyway. For example, I think pretty much of a hatchet job was done on Pat Romannell. Pat Romannell was a first-class philosopher. He's published books that he wrote. He's got a system of philosophy of his own. The point is that he and his department head tangled over his penchant for interfering in departmental matters. Even in my day I had to side with the department head. He's just got too big for his britches and he had a weakness for laying his hands on women students in a way that was offensive to the girls and would cause them to complain. I suppose it's all right if they don't complain. It never becomes a case if they don't complain.

But, yes, I think basically the best response can be that we were so far down. Recall the word picture that Mel Straus painted for you: we weren't even in the bush leagues. We had a dean of engineering. He went to Harvard to take a master's degree, and ended up auditing some courses for six weeks. We had others who in a lot of ways were in junior college. Well, I didn't like junior colleges any more /than/ I do now. You wind up with too many housewives after they pay

out the furniture and getting convinced that they need that second income. We've still got them there, we've got dozens of them. Most of the women were not professional professors. They were English teachers and biology teachers who got in to help their husbands pay out the furniture when they first got married and stuck with it, it's too good to leave. I know one. I won't call her name because I like her a great deal, who, in working on her doctor's degree, finally got it. And I complimented her on her thesis and on the subject of her thesis which would be available for infinite pursuit. There were all sorts of things she could have done with the subject matter. She says, "I don't want to do that," she says, "I want to teach my classes every day and go home." Well, now, that's the attitude that I turned on. I like her but that doesn't doesn't mean I admire her, because I don't.

Well, the people who were here before the H. Y. Benedict Professors came on the scene were hypercritical, I would say, but not much of it came to my attention. And I still say that I never suffered from it as an H. Y. Benedict Professor; I doubt that I would have at any time. Riegel, in History, is a first-class man, came. He was a giant at Dartmouth and has written several books in history. I would say the better ones in History, Bailey, Fuller and others thought Riegel was on the move. They didn't hate him. Who did? I don't know whether anybody hated him or not. Tommy Cook in Political Science was a rock-head; he was as hard-headed as anybody could possibly be, and rigid, and never did produce anything here. He was through by the time he went to Johns Hopkins, twenty years before coming here.

M: Now, these people were lured here with a competitive salary?

R: No, we just combed the boards and got people for one reason or another. We got Harold Harding, in Speech and Rhetoric, because he was unhappy at Ohio State. Ohio State didn't see any future to the Department of Speech, as many universities never do. Hal Harding had published books on Thucydides and other great orators, and really is a grand old man in your definition and mine, as I would take your definition to be. He's retired in connecticut at 80 and I write him weekly when I'm able (whether he responds or not) sending clippings and cussing Reagan! He was unhappy in the cul-de-sac at Ohio State. Bob Riegel was in the full vigor at his retirement age and just wasn't ready to retire. And the boys (principally Bailey) got after him and got him. Tommy Cook was unhappy at Johns because his wife, who was a great favorite with the faculty biddies at Johns Hopkins, went to the insane asylum, and after about ten years of that he divorced her in the insane asylum and remarried. But his second wife, would never be accepted by the old biddies on the faculty. They were too pure. Tommy had done something that made his first wife go crazy and didn't stick by her, not for a lifetime at any rate. He just stood by her until it appeared hopeless for everybody concerned. At any rate, he had to get out of Baltimore. (Mostly done by Clyde Wingfield) We caught people on a situation like that, paid them something better than what they were getting.

M: And then offered them a light teaching load, is that right?

R: Tommy held to his teaching load of six hours until Templeton just flat upped him. He says, "You'll teach three courses, three courses each semester." I didn't mind because I'm a vigorous person who likes to stay busy. And I carried on all of my publication efforts with my 3 courses. That row down at the bottom in that bookshelf is stuff I

have produced in my time, a great mass of it here. It's not first-class stuff, it's not as good as Tommy Cook's best or as Hal Harding's best, or as Bob Riegel's best, but I've done my share.

M: Let me ask you about the relative absence of Mexican American faculty on this campus, and during your years as president if that was something you thought about or the faculty at large thought about, or was that something that came later?

R: I don't think it was a matter of major import in my days, or maybe it was toward the end, but I didn't see it. I just have the same sentiments for our Mexican Americans that I did for others. They've got to have a doctor's degree and they've got to have some kind of start toward publication. We had Leonard Cardenas for example. Leonard Cardenas, I don't remember where he did his degree, but he had it when he came.

M: Maybe Texas.

R: Assistant Professor. He got a job in San Antonio, I believe; I'm not sure. Maybe it was in New Orleans and left here. But at the time he was added to the Department of Political Science there was tempest in the department generated by Gladys Gregory, who was deeply prejudiced against Latin Americans. And she just didn't want any in that department. There were others like her on the campus; she was the worst one. She's since died.

M: Well, how did she act out her prejudices?

R: Throwing a fit, being hateful to Cardenas. Cardenas apparently had encountered the type before. She was vicious and hateful all the way. I don't recall anything specific, except that I do know, I was fully conscious, of her displeasure with the employment of Cardenas, primarily--not primarily, entirely--because of his Latin American origin.

And at the same time she was a high muck in the Latin American Round Table. What's it called?

M: Pan American?

R: Pan American Round Table. She would dress up in her best clothes and go to the Juarez Country Club and just live high on the hog. But to put one of the Latin Americans in her department, she just didn't want it. And I think there were others. I think the Dean of Engineering was strongly persuaded against Latin Americans. I don't recall any particular outbreak, but...

M: Did any cases come to your attention while you were president regarding any form of ethnic discrimination against Mexican Americans or blacks?

R: No. I got snookered, sandbagged, at a luncheon. I went to a LULAC chapter. I think the most bitter encounter I ever had, at least as bitter, was with a LULAC who was telling me that I got to make the coaches be fair to Latin American players. And it's the very time when we had that old boy named Luis Hernandez, who was a tackle and as good a one as we had and doing fine. And I recall, I used the illustration of Hernandez. "What's wrong with Hernandez? He's playing every game." But this guy was availing himself of an opportunity to twist the arm of the president because not enough Latin Americans get to play. Well, my answer is, not enough Latin Americans are big enough, burly enough, to play first-line football. I was thinking-- I guess this is my prejudice--I think they are built more for bull-fighters than for football tackles, inclined to be slight in build. That's not fundamental truth but it's the explanation I thought of at the time.



I don't think there was too much. I think I am honest when I say that whenever we could grab on to a Latin American, we did, in my day. But how many of them went off and got a Harvard graduate degree? Not too many. Not in those days. It's different now. One of the warmest best friends, I've got, I still carry on correspondence with him, is Rudy Gomez, who was our Graduate Dean. He and his wife came by to see us when they came back a couple or three weeks ago. I still write to him; I wrote him two days ago; still in November 1984. Lost a dressed up friend over him: Had them and wives to supper at my house and Rudy said to a big, rich Michigander that his father (in Wyoming) never learned to speak English. I knew that ripped it. Never saw the Michigander again. Hell with him. I sent him (Rudy) a clipping from the newspaper, a clipping about the Graduate Dean, the one to be succeeding him. [Both look at newspaper article.] He told me once he was not...what's the word for an activist mexicano?

M: Militant or Chicano.

R: Chicano.

M: That he was not a Chicano?

R: He was not an active Chicano and he couldn't attribute perfidy to all the Anglos he had direct contact with, even those that didn't treat him right, because he wouldn't have got nearly as far in the world as he did, without anglo help and encouragement. I heard him say his father never spoke English. (The Michigander) But he'd come a long way, a little Wyoming boy right off the ranch, with English as a second language, went to the University of Wyoming, the University of Colorado, and is moving right along. I think he'll go high. I think he'll be an institutional president. He's got everything that many others have got that will make it. If he rapes a woman clerk or a secretary

sometime, or robs a bank, he might disqualify himself. But I don't believe he will.

M: Well, I wonder if we can switch the conversion to...

R: Did we resolve to your satisfaction the H. Y. Benedict Professorship business?

M: Well, yes, unless you wanted to add something else.

R: It was just an idea to focus on quality. Who is the man that makes more money than anybody else? He's a man like Tommy Cook who wrote the best book in political theory to come out for about twenty years in his heyday. Who among historians makes more money than anybody else? Bob Riegel who wrote the history book used in collegiate classes and who was at the time working on the history of women in the United States. That is the purpose of the whole thing, this focus on quality. Let people walk among us who demonstrate, illustrate, exemplify, what we're trying to do. Now, on your part about some people who were unhappy with it, envy necessarily makes people unhappy with it, but we were so remote and underprivileged that it took something graphic like that to show it. I don't know whether if I had it to do from where we are now that I would advocate the establishment of such a program again. But at the time, and in our frame of reference at the time, I thought it was salutary.

Tape II

- M: Dr. Ray, I wonder if we can discuss your relationship with Frank Erwin in today's session. If you could start by telling me when you first met Frank Erwin.
- R: Well, it takes a lot of talk about Erwin himself, because he was a phenomenon. He told me once, at a time when our relations were better than they later were, that he waited on Secretary of the Navy, John B. Connally, in his office in the Pentagon and urged him to run for Governor in 1962. He was Connally's right-hand political man. When Connally had an appointment to make or he was in a position to select somebody for a job, if it was a political job, he always went to this man, never to anybody else. It is customary for a newly elected governor, if he has come in or whether it's the end of a term or not, he can turn the former man out. He normally wouldn't, but he can. Connally turned my life-long friend, Byron Skelton, out of the National Democratic Committeeman's job before his term was up and put this man in, Frank Erwin. He was designated also by the Governor as Chairman of the State Democratic Central Executive Committee. This to my knowledge had never happened before in that State of Texas. There are two prime jobs for a politician in the State of Texas in the Democratic Party. One is the one man from each fifty-six Democratic National Committeemen. Texas has one, and a Committeewoman. We got two: every one of the fifty states has two members, a man and a woman. One of these went to Erwin. Then, the Governor has to get into the fighting and win it for his man. But that's a state position--Chairman of the State Democratic Central Executive Committee--and that is the one Connally put this man in.

M: How did he do it?

R: I wouldn't know. Just got in there and did favors and expressed his preference. Connally was a man who could do favors. He was persuasive in many ways. I think the strongest Governor we've ever had, bar none. Now, strongest, I'm not saying the best. The strongest-- the man who could get things done with greater esprit de corps. Nearly everybody liked him. There were men who were more hateful, others were effective, but none so effective as Connally. Again, I disliked Connally intensely. I'm not saying he's nice and sweet; I'm saying he's a guy that gets things done. But, if he has a dirty job to do...

He appointed three members to the Board of Regents of the University of Texas. One of them was a former Supreme Court Judge who was then retired, named St. John Garwood. Garwood was a showboater; he made a bad mistake. He announced in a newspaper interview that if he were approved for the Board of Regents, we would find him always coming down the side of academic freedom and faculty tenure. That outraged some of the John Birchers in the legislature and it so happened that a majority of them were on the committee that was to approve his appointment. They disapproved it, refused to bring his name up for a vote in the Senate. The Governor was shaken; early in his first term, one of his appointments came up missing; and so he appointed Frank Erwin, figuring it's a tough political situation. And Erwin was appointed to the Board of Regents as a second choice. He's really Connally's first choice for anything, but second choice here because there was trouble.

He came on to the Board, he had not been there long when I had some official consideration requested. I had asked the Chancellor

personally, just him and me, to approve the money from the Available Fund for one of our buildings. He said he couldn't do it. The Chancellor in those days had what I take /to be/ a unique attitude. He equated a building fund request from TWC with one from the College of Arts and sciences at Main University. In other words, he had turned Arts and Sciences down at Austin and he couldn't give us preferment until their turn-down had been reversed. At all events, he said he was sorry, he just couldn't do it. And I asked him if he would permit me to make a pitch for it before the Board without his recommendation. And he said, "By all means, you can if you want to." It was a stupid thing for me to do and it was foredoomed for disapproval. I didn't know that at the time. But I learned it. And that was the first time I ran square into Frank Erwin. It was his first time to sit with the Board after his approval.

M: What year was that?

R: 1962 or 1963.

M: And he was a brand new appointee? He had just joined the Board a short time before?

R: He had just joined the Board for the first time that day. He went out of his way to be not only rude, but viciously rude to me.

M: That first time?

R: That very first time. He was a brilliant man, a man with almost a voracious mind. He could see right to the heart of any problem that might come up. But, he saw my problem. I was trying to get something approved to get some of the Available Fund for my school, and the Available Fund didn't go to outlying schools very often in those days. It's a whole lot looser now than it used to be. More money from oil inflation. Templeton, for example, got fifteen million dollars

from the Available Fund for the Special Activities Center here. I never got more than a million and a half, and that was for the library, and that was trimmed down from three million.

The point was that...I can't tell the whole story straight through in the time that's going to be available to you and me, but I think I will generalize to say that Erwin's method of procedure was the way he handled the docket. The docket was legal-sized pages on a stack about a foot and half high on the table--legal size, double-spaced, for one Board meeting. Anybody who wants to master the docket has his work cut out for him because he's alone, he doesn't have the University staff to explain it to him, every problem is written up, and where it occurs to the Chancellor's staff to have the details recommended, or a recommended solution. Frank Erwin would take that stack of papers every time the Board met, a prodigious worker, and go all the way through it, item by item, and make up his mind that he is going to do something. If it called for action, he would phrase, prepare, write out a resolution which he would present to the Board.

He had a crony named Jack Josey who was a brownnoser, par excellence. Erwin would make a motion; Jack Josey automatically would second it. And the other days, Frank Erwin just dominated. Although he wasn't Chairman, he dominated the Board. Finally, he got at cross-purposes with old Bill Heath, who was Chairman. Heath would make a big speech when he got to one item, Erwin's favorite solution to a problem, and really be intemperate, hot and angry, making points. When he was through, as calm as you please, Erwin

would make his motion, Josey would second it. The Chairman could talk but he'd already talked. And Bill Heath's last two years as Chairman were the most frustrating a man ever went through. Frank Erwin was finishing his first term. Connally was still Governor; he was a lame duck at the time. I think it's illegal, I really do, if anybody ever raises the point, but they never will, for an outgoing Governor to appoint members to one of the boards or commissions for the state. Connally, as one of his last acts, appointed three members of the Board of Regents, among whom was Frank Erwin for a reappointment. And Frank Erwin served twelve years on the Board of Regents. He bitched himself up pretty badly and was not chairman of the Board of Regents for the last two years, I think, that he was on the Board. But he still was the most effective Board member you ever saw.

The one thing that was wrong with Erwin's service on the Board of Regents is he was the wrong kind of man. He was a politician. Boards of Regents are supposed to serve as buffers for educational institutions, to stand between them in a rational way and interpret to the body politic. That buffer function is lost completely when you get an activist, a political man. Frank Erwin made up his mind that I was not the man he wanted, primarily because I didn't please the John Birch sentiment in El Paso.

M: What gave you reason to perceive Erwin's attitude toward you that way?

R: A lot of people reported to me that Erwin was contemptuous of me. I did not have his respect. Did you see that letter that was in the folder?

M: I don't recall it right now. I probably did when I when I went through it.

R: I'll have to find it and show it to you. Erwin wrote to me. Mainly Erwin's problems with me were that my mind didn't work the way his did. There are some things I exclude from my cognizance. I just don't worry about some downtown people who don't like the way one of our professors goes up into New Mexico and interviews Reies Tijerina. It's just not in my book. I just can't make room in my calculations for a man like that. There are people like that in El Paso.

I got a telephone call one Sunday morning about 1967 from Chairman Erwin. The first thing he said was, "Doctor, that fellow Knowlton has got to go!" Knowlton was a full professor, department head in Sociology, one of the strongest men in graduate work in Sociology, perhaps the strongest. I said, "Mr. Chairman, you just can't get rid of professors that way." "He's got to go." Knowlton had been sought out by the Governor of New Mexico to come up there and advise them. This was at the time when Reies Tijerina and his followers had shot a forest ranger and then run back up in the woods and they couldn't find him to talk to him. The New Mexico Governor comes after Knowlton, who has been with Tijerina in the backwoods of northern New Mexico and could locate Tijerina for the Governor of New Mexico. I didn't know there was anything afoot. I didn't know Knowlton had gone to New Mexico. The Governor, or maybe it was the Lieutenant Governor, sent the State airplane down here to pick up Knowlton. Knowlton cleared with Dean Small but not with me. I didn't have anything to do with it.

M: So that Sunday morning you didn't know that that had taken place?

R: I didn't know it had taken place. It just didn't get up to my level.



Knowlton went to the Dean and says, "I want to go; they want me up in New Mexico. The Governor of New Mexico wants me to come up there and help." If he said Tijerina, I don't know. But it hadn't got to me. And that's not the point. The point is not that I hadn't heard by that time. The point is that the downtown John Birchers... (Paul Harvey is one of them) were in a Hell of an uproar.

M: But did Erwin in that telephone call explain the situation to you, or did he right off the bat say, "Knowlton has to go."

R: /Yes./ He did that because he had, by that time, made up his mind that the Mayor of El Paso, Judson Williams, was going to succeed me in my job. He was going to hound me out of it. And figuring that by talking so forcefully on a sacrosanct subject, he'd make me lose my balance and do something. Well, I didn't lose my balance. The next day in my office, after I had all the facts available on campus, I telephoned the Governor of New Mexico and asked him, "Is it true that your office asked one of our professors to come up and help you? I'm not critical of your asking him to come, I want to know if he's there with official sanction." "Yes, he is." He was there and they needed him and he found Tijerina for them, and then he came on back to his job. This outraged the John Birchers downtown, all the reactionaries, everybody who saw Tijerina as an agent of Moscow. Maybe he was, I don't know. But the point is, Moscow can have agents as well as anybody else in a free society. But enough of the thing; that was the declaration of war of Erwin against me.

M: Did he explain to you why he thought that Knowlton should go? What was his rationale for it?

R: His rationale was that Knowlton is consorting with Communists up in

the backwoods of northern New Mexico, Tijerina was a wild-haired radical. I looked at it from the point of view that the Governor of New Mexico wants him, not Tijerina. Tijerina is a man he has interviewed and published articles about. Well, that went on. Later that particular spring, Erwin's war against me petered out because he sent a state senator out here, a state senator who later ran for United States Senate. And the state senator studied the matter and went back and recommended to Erwin that that's a tempest in a teapot. It's a bunch of those guys that look under the bed for Communists, getting excited about Tijerina. Somebody who has to deal directly with Tijerina, namely, the Governor of New Mexico, puts that stuff out of the pattern. They just wanted to talk to Tijerina, that's all they wanted. They had never worried about if he was tied up with Joe Stalin or not.

But, anyhow, that was one of the avenues of attack that petered out. Then later on we had a full-fledged face-off between Erwin and me before the full Board members in an executive session in Houston.

M: When was that?

R: December, 1967. When they had that meeting Erwin branded me a liar. He said I lied when I quoted what he told me that Professor Knowlton had to go. I leave it to you. A man whose whole life is tied up in a Board decision and he's standing up before that Board, is not about to make up some things, to coin some new stuff, and countercharge against a man like Erwin. Erwin has the strongest courtroom presence I have ever seen. I just told them the truth, and he said, "That's a lie." It wasn't in his list of causes listed later on.

M: Tell me a little bit about that Board meeting. Can you describe

how it went?

R: Well, it was jumping from the first declaration of war to the whole thing.

M: Okay, since we're on that one, let's go ahead and cover the details.

R: Well, I could tell you about the Board meeting. The Chancellor told me that, "We're going to have an Executive Session after the Board adjourns its public meeting, and I want you there for it." And then he told me later as we approached the door where the Board was sitting, he had come out to get me and bring me in, "Joe, don't lose your temper. I've seen you lose your temper. Don't ever lose your temper in this situation here." And I didn't. It was very shortly when I was on my feet before the group with the nine members of the Board of Regents that I stood up in the podium in front of a classroom situation and I heard Frank Erwin read the list of particulars. It didn't include Knowlton. And he was by that time pretending that the Knowlton exchange had never occurred.

M: What was on the list?

R: The whole story of "Erwin vs. Ray." You're asking me to give you the whole story. I know it's that big. It involves the trouble I had with Barnes.

M: It's all in the manuscript?

R: It's all in the manuscript.

M: Okay, well, we don't need to go through that.

R: It would take me too long to check it and I couldn't do it in nearly as orderly fashion as it's done in the manuscript.

M: It's not necessary because it's written.

R: And one of them is Barnes. That one was covered by the few words, "he nearly got the University sued"--Erwin saying about Ray. "He nearly got the University sued," or "He is not respected by the citizens of El Paso." I was not respected by a whole lot of them, till now. But I was not respected by the John Birchers, by the persons who were in general opposed to any kind of liberal or sociological approach to human motivation. They all had their minds made up in the same direction as Ronald Reagan has got his mind made up, and that's the kind of man that's never had a firm respect for me. That's in another letter; they're all in the manuscript. The whole manuscript points to that focus.

The thing that's hard to win conviction on is the fact that Erwin was an activist. He didn't fire a man that needed firing, he fired a man that he thought needed to be fired to make a place for somebody else. He made up his mind that Judson Williams would make a better president for this University than I was. I think in considering it back over the years, looking at all of it, that Judson Williams would have been a disaster. He really would. He himself is an ultra-conservative. He was feeding that ultra-conservative pap to Erwin. I don't think this is profitable. I think my attempting to give you something about my relations with Erwin with my old scatterbrained approach is a lost ball in the high weeds. Read the manuscript. Or let me hold the manuscript and I'll recite the manuscript into your tape.

M: Oh, no. I've read the manuscript. I just wondered if there were details you might want to fill in or elaborate on points that you have made.

R: I've got it all covered in that hundred pages, except for one thing, and I might as well say that into your tape now. This is one thing that is not in the manuscript. Our search committee, looking for a successor to me, came up with five names under the chairmanship of Ray Past. You might get some of this out of him if you want to. Judson Williams' name was hot on the list. I had told the Chancellor before, "What the Chairman is trying to do is to get his crony Judson Williams into the presidency of UTEP." It was UTEP by that time. And the Chancellor says he can't believe it. I saw him the following August at the Board meeting at Odessa and he said, "Joe, you were right as rain. I never would have believed it. He had the damndest conniption fit you ever saw because Judson Williams' name was not on the list of five nominees." They turned down all five. They were five of the ten best they could dig up--five best of the ten best. They were all turned down categorically, flat out, and commissioned the Search Committee to make up another list, thinking that Judson Williams' name would be on that second list. It was not. They got five, five second choices. They were determined that he was not a fit man for the presidency of the University. As it said in the manuscript, he was a flawed candidate.

Then, Erwin, still not used up, discharged the faculty committee; would not use that faculty committee anymore. A new committee was chosen, three members of the Board of Regents, three members from the Administration, three members from the faculty--somebody else than the ones who served. That committee was not submitted for approval by the faculty. The Chancellor had told me that our Faculty Search Committee was as near ideal as any he had ever seen, in terms of composition, method of selection. I had nothing to do with any of it. I just told the faculty

what the Chancellor told me to do. Well, the second list of five nominees was turned down. The Chancellor then had a special committee. (And that's the way they selected Monroe, two choices later. The Chancellor was Chairman of Monroe's committee. They had Board members on it. It's not a faculty committee any longer.) But that committee came up with Judson Williams' name included.

Then Frank Erwin arranged for Judson Williams to come to Austin and meet the members of the Board. And one member of the Board, in conversation with Judson Williams, saw him burst out with a heated denunciation of the radical students on the campus, some diatribe against rational approaches to the solution of problems. And that member of the Board, I was told by one of the Vice-Chancellors, said to Mr. Erwin, "He's not a fit man for the presidency of the University. I will not vote for him and I'll oppose him." All right. Frank Erwin never gained his way by bullying anything over a member of the Board of Regents. If a Board of Regents member spoke to him positively against Judson Williams, that would be it. And that's what happened, so I'm told. Judson Williams revealed himself as unfit for the presidency of the University where divergent opinions needed resolution. Students in those days were a little bit more activist than they are now. I never had trouble with them because I just let them talk the way they wanted to.

Now, that explanation of Judson Williams' outburst is not in the manuscript. I know it only from informed hearsay.

M: Do you want to continue or stop here? If you want to continue with another topic...

R: Let's try another. I've got another piece of sand in my craw, and that's the question you asked me the first time, when we first sat down: "Did your distaste for businessmen stem from your first interview here?" And I told you one of my first early meetings was with Sam Young, and we got off on Sam Young. My attitude of distaste for businessmen stems not from any one experience, not from any one person, but from the fact that businessmen are always after the almighty dollar. They are cynical. Even when they're praying in church you know the sons of bitches are hypocrites. And the loudest prayers are the ones that love God the most, according to the assumption. I've seen so much hypocrisy in church work, in business life. I've seen people disembowel other people. I saw Sam Young disembowel a good friend of his, turn on him. The man moved away from El Paso. He thought Sam Young was his friend and Sam Young turned against him, ruthlessly. We had a committee serve the college in the disposition of our lands. We've got 36,000 acres of land belonging to the college in the Cotton Trust, out close to Van Horn. We got a bunch of realtors to work with us. And no sooner /had we raised/ the point than they were seeking everybody down at the Chancellor's Office and on my trying to get to me first, to sell that land. We finally backed off and the committee disappeared. We just never called into a second meeting. This is the type of distasteful thing that businessmen can do. That's what Sam Young is good for.

You can't run a society, a free economy like ours, without businessmen, but I wouldn't be one of them; I wouldn't be one of them on any terms. I became a professor because I knew I couldn't be and wouldn't be a businessman. I couldn't sell

something I didn't believe in, and I would have to, sooner or later. I worked for a corporation for a while as a young man and I didn't like it at all. So, my dislike of businessmen stems from my conviction that a professorship, if he's a man who feels deeply and freely about social issues, is the life for a man. That doesn't mean that I don't want the son of a businessman going to my University, or we wouldn't have any students.

M: Did you ever have this kind of conversation with a businessman here in El Paso?

R: No, I didn't, because I never could reveal the heartiness of my distaste for the business ethic. I couldn't afford to reveal it. I couldn't have held my job as long as I did. I had many cordial relations with businessmen in my lifetime, but never one in which I could reveal my innermost thoughts.

M: Well, did that feel like a burden to you, to have to deal with them yet feel that way about them?

R: Not really a burden. That's not the right word; I don't know what it is. It's a responsibility not to alienate them because they are important and they are a part of our lives. Warmest businessman friend I ever had was L. A. Miller, and he would be shocked by some of the things I've said to this tape.

Side 2  
July 3, 1981

M: Dr. Ray, would you tell me about the involvement of UTEP with the Peace Corps during your presidency?



R: We got fifty or sixty young people in here at the beginning, at the very start of the Peace Corps. It was a program of training workers to go to foreign countries and help countries lift themselves by their bootstraps. The original suggestion for the Peace Corps came from Senator Humphrey to President Kennedy, and Kennedy inaugurated the program. One of the enterprising members of our faculty was Clyde Kelsey, who was then Dean of Students. And he and I, mostly he, went to work on a man named Lawrence Dennis, Larry Dennis, who was the Educational Director for the Peace Corps, carrying responsibility for allocation of programs to colleges and universities. They wanted to send fifty or sixty young people, men and women, to Tanganyika, and Kelsey and I worked on Larry Dennis. He came here and we both went to Washington and actually sold him our program, sold him our school. We went to Washington and had breakfast with Larry Dennis in the Maytower Hotel, and it was there where he succumbed to our blandishments, you might say. I really think it was my talking that was most persuasive with him.

M: What did you tell him about this institution?

R: The plan was for sixty days training in language and various other aspects of national uplift for Tanganyika. This was planned by the planners in the Peace Corps. We didn't do anything but lay it on. Kelsey was the director, Bill Timmons was the assistant director. And if I may get ahead of the game a little bit, Kelsey had something else to do on the weekend after the program went over when we were to go to the President's office and be congratulated and see our boys and girls awarded their diplomas. That's not accurate, because their diplomas had already been awarded here in Magoffin Auditorium. But

Kelsey had something else to do, and Bill Timmons and I went to Washington for the ceremonies, and we both met Kennedy and stood in his office and were congratulated by him.

M: And wasn't the class here at UTEP the first one to graduate?

R: First one to graduate. It started two weeks later than the one at Berkeley, California, the University of California, but theirs ran two weeks longer than ours. They had planned it differently and they graduated their corpsmen two weeks after ours. Ours was the first one to graduate and we had here for the graduation exercise Sargent Shriver, who was Director of the Peace Corps. I am falling all over myself and telling things out of order.

M: It's okay. I was going to ask you to go back to your meeting with this person in Washington where you sold UTEP. I'm curious to know what it is you told this person about the capabilities of this institution to carry on that kind of a program.

R: I think it was mainly not any particular array of capabilities that sold him, because he could assign things almost capriciously. But some of the advantages we had were a fervor on the part of Kelsey and me. We both were in it hook, line and sinker and wanted to do it. And I'm a pretty persuasive guy when I have my ducks in a row, and I did at that time. One advantage we had (I'm not sure that we knew this at that time) was that the language spoken in Tanganyika is a generic language from that whole part of the world, Urdu, I think; I'm not sure whether it's Urdu, but I think so. At any rate, the foremost person who was teaching that language somewhere out on the West Coast was spending the first six weeks of the summer term in Austin at the University of

Texas. And they agreed, at our insistence, to let him fly out here two times a week from Austin to teach language to the corpsmen. Mainly I think it was just urgency on our part. But I recall distinctly that I was talking when Larry Dennis threw down his pencil and says, "All right, we'll do it." And we were elated because we would be the second Peace Corps program. The only one that had already started, had already been announced, was California-Berkeley, and ours was a remote college. Later on, I asked Larry Dennis to come here as a commencement speaker a year or two later. I appreciated his throwing patronage our way.

M: Tell me about your meeting with Kennedy. Did you get to chat with him?

R: Kennedy is one of the few men I have seen in my lifetime who was larger than life. I've met several presidents. I've met Lyndon Johnson twice, I've met Truman two or three times, I've been in the presence of Eisenhower--I didn't shake his hand--and Kennedy. And Kennedy is the one who was larger than life. He just effervesced an aura. He was just a human being with real presence.

When we were in the Rose Garden, the two classes were meeting the President at the same time, the one from Berkeley and ours. And they went to the Rose Garden and heard Kennedy make a speech. I was possibly ten feet in front of Kennedy when he spoke. We were standing right close to the steps that led up to the Oval Office, from the outside to the Oval Office. Tim Timmons and I were standing side by side. And when they announced, "Would all the corpsmen and all the University officials who are here representing Texas Western and Cal come in, and you get to meet and shake hands with the President," when they announced that, the President had to step back from the microphone.

Then, Tim and I just busted up the steps, and were first or second. There wasn't more than one person ahead of us to go in.

The President meanwhile had gone in and was standing by the desk when they opened it up and went in. As I recall it, I was first in the entire gathering to shake his hand. He told me that they appreciated our going out of our way to do this thing. "It's something which you didn't have to do"--and they appreciated our decision and our contribution. I have tried many times to recall what I said in response (chuckles), and I can't recall a word. I do think I thanked him for his kind words. I'm pretty sure I would have, but I don't remember it. And, in general, I would have said, "Think nothing of it," or "We were glad to do it." But I don't recall it. I stood and talked with him possibly thirty seconds to a minute, and then the black man, Hatcher, who is now Mayor of Gary, Indiana. He was for many years, may still be, Mayor of Gary. He was Kennedy's assistant at that time. He told me and Tim, "Go out that door there." As we moved over, I grabbed Tim's arm and said, "We don't have to leave. Let's stand over here and watch him meet our kids." And we just stood there. Hatcher saw us stop and didn't make anything of it at all. We wanted to see the proceedings. The President was standing in front of his desk and talking with each one of them briefly, and then they would cut in front of us and go on out the door where we should have gone. Timmons, I'm sure, has recollections that are more dependable than, or as, dependable as mine.

M: Tell me how the program functioned here. Did it go well? The program here training the kids?

- R: The program went fine. Not all of them children; some of them older people, in thier sixties. It went fine. We had them quartered in the old house to the north and northwest of the Union Building. The house is still up there. Most of the lecture sections were held in the old Union Building, in the southwest corner of the second floor. The language, there was a big to do about the language. It was a strange language and they just had time enough to get a working knowledge of it. Kelsey and Timmons worked with them, the planning of the curriculum was entirely Peace Corps. It came to us and we executed as best we could.
- M: Aside from the language, what other training were these students given?
- R: Mostly highway construction, road construction, compaction of substances to make roads out of them, and bridges--bridge construction. We could do that; we had at that time the rudiments of an engineering school, and particularly would have been competent in simple road building. We weren't as good in engineering in those days as we are now, but we were good enough for that. Geology, a smattering of various other. carpentry. We made adaptations where we weren't competent within our own staff. Again, the details, I had very little to do with instruction, and the details are no longer with me.
- M: What do you recall about Sargent Shriver's visit?
- R: It was most interesting. The President gave him the President's airplane to fly down here and get back. Ours was the very first one. I figured he would have a written speech; most politicians do. And they refer to it as an address. "The address, you are gong to give our graduates." And we had lunch in the athletic dormitory, the

old dormitory down at the far side of the campus, they made us a lunch with him. Fletcher Knebel was the reporter who was along, and Sander Vanocur was one of his flunkies at the time. I remember those, the only names I can call. But as we walked over to Magoffin Auditorium when the people had gathered, he said, "Dr. Ray, you referred to my address." He says, "I don't have any address. I was going to write one last night and I asked Mr. Knebel here if he could help me, but he begged off, he wanted to play poker. And so I haven't got an address." Well, that just floored me. No first-line politician would come to an important engagement with no formal preparation, but he did. I had seen too many movie news shots of people who pulled a manuscript out of their coat pocket and read their speech.

But anyhow, we went on over to Magoffin Auditorium. We were about ten minutes ahead of time. I sat in the third row. In the second row was Vanocur and two or three more of his aides, a group of four, and he sat on the front row. These four bunched around him in the second row and talked to him for ten minutes, obviously pumping him up with things he should say. And then he and I went up on the stage, and I presented him and sat on the stage while he talked. He made the best speech I ever heard in my life, all pat phrases taken out of the lexicon of the PeaceCorps. But, it was perfect; it was truly perfect. He must have talked twenty-five minutes. The crowd was gratifyingly large. It was a curiosity. It was, as I recall, a Sunday afternoon, and a large enough crowd of the curious. This is not always the story for gatherings on our campus, as you may have known.

This is not relating to the Peace Corps, but I recall three years later when we had our jubilee convocation, we had the stage crammed to the far corners with faculty and the Board of Regents (the Board was meeting here) on the stage, and in the audience we had seventeen people. Seventeen. I counted them forty-four times while I was sitting on the stage. My wife was one of them, so without her there would have been sixteen. But, that's not Peace Corps.

M: How long did the training program last here? Did it go on for a few years, the Peace Corp Program at Texas Western?

R: No. Just sixty days.

M: That was it?

R: That was the only one we ever had. We had one of the first ones.

Some institutions had more than one. We were a curiosity. We were not one of the big universities that would normally be picked. I think it was my urgency that Larry Dennis said, "Aw, hell, why not?"

M: Well, I see on your list you've written down Mission 73. Would you like to tell me about that?

R: I think Mission 73 is the biggest thing that happened in my years of the presidency--so salutary indeed that President Monroe announced at the Four Centuries Convocation that in 1982 he was going to have a Board of Citizen Visitors from El Paso appointed to be called UTEP 2000; but he never did. In other words, I led the way. At his house at a reception--at the Hoover House--I congratulated him on UTEP 2000. He said, "Did you reckon out where I got the idea?" And I says, "Of course." He said, "Where did you get it?" I had never been asked the question and I'm not sure, but I think it came in a suggestion from Vice Chancellor Lawrence D. Haskew, who was my advisor in Austin. But he's going to have a thing just like Mission 73, he said. The name

Mission 73 arises from the fact that '63 was our semi-centennial. We were going to celebrate our Golden Jubilee. To help celebrate, as a part of the celebration, we were going to have a citizens' study group, and so we appointed thirty-six citizens of El Paso. Big names in the community. One juarense was the man who owns the distillery, Waterfield and Frazier. I can't call his name (Mascareñas) he's a prominent Juarez citizen. He never came to the meetings.

M: Mascareñas?

R: Mascareñas. He never came. I don't think he could have contributed much. The commander at Fort Bliss was named; he never came. He sent a Lieutenant Colonel, who attended every meeting faithfully, and was a little bit more political than I liked. I can't remember his name. I can get his name for you later, or you could get a copy of the Mission 73 Report. It has a photograph of all the members, and this Lieutenant Colonel would be in it. There was at that time a woman, the wife of a medical man, and her name won't come. But she was a perennial candidate for Mayor. And I spoke to her about serving as Chairman of Mission 73.

Let me interject here the name Mission 73. This was in '63. Our Mission was to project where our institution should be in 1973, ten years hence. And that Mission 73 name was contributed by Francis Fugate, Professor English, now retired, I think, who recently published a book on Earl Stanley Gardner.

So, we met in the Union Building, at 7 p.m., about once a month, for several months. Haskew came out every time, by air, and somebody



met him at the airport and brought him to the meeting. And each time he would take the late plane back to Austin from the airport. The Director of Mission 73 was Milton Leech. That's how I got to know Leech, and my admiration for him never flagged. He's a first-class man for anybody about getting jobs done. The man could handle detail and move a thing like Mission 73 through. I had at that time an assistant to the president, Ray Small. Ray Small and Leech and I were the three from the campus who were most active in Mission 73. We had representatives from both newspapers. One of our women members was Hilda Kitchen, whose husband Jack Kitchen is the president of a building and loan association; and Maxine Steele, Thad Steele's wife, a former Dean of Women at the College.

I mentioned the surgeon's wife to whom I spoke about the chairmanship. She was most interested, but she was going to run for mayor and we never got further. The last talk I had with her was the understanding that I was going to check her out, and if the people in Austin were agreeable, we'd go ahead. Then I was talking once with my constant advisor, Jack Vowell, a buildings materials man whom I consulted about nearly everything I had to do that related to the community of El Paso.

M: Jack Vowell, the current State Representative?

R: His father. He must have died, oh, in 1970, at the age of seventy. This is Jack Vowell, Jr., who's the representative. But I consulted with Vowell, Sr. He said, "Judson Williams would be interested in that."

Immediately I was interested; he was by far really the best candidate I had thought of or had been suggested to me, and here I'm being told that he would accept it if I asked him. So, I went to see Judson Williams, leaving the surgeon's wife on the hook, and he and I closed the deal right there. I knew the people in Austin would approve because he was a former faculty member, a good community worker; he accomplished things. He was later three-term Mayor. He told me at the time he was going to run for Mayor. I said, "Well, will that rule it out?" He said (he was a very confident man), "I don't think I need the help." And I didn't (I was a very confident man), "I don't think I need the help." And I didn't think he did either. It was open and shut. So, he ran for Mayor in 1964, or maybe it was in 1963. But it was somewhat a betrayal of the woman candidate. I am embarrassed not to be able to recall her name, the woman whose husband is a surgeon. But in all of this I left her on the vine, unplucked, so to speak, because Judson Williams was somewhat better.

Judson Williams served as Mayor for a third term and then was instrumental in having me run out of the presidency by conniving with Frank Erwin to become my successor. He wanted the job, one of the best jobs in El Paso. He was under constraint to stay in El Paso, his wife wouldn't leave. He couldn't be the General; he couldn't be the Federal Judge. He could be the County Judge and the Mayor and the President of the College, those were his options. He got all the Mayor that he wanted. I think he might have been elected another time if he had stayed, but he got all of it he wanted. The County Judge's job wouldn't appeal to him, so he fell short of getting it. But

that's no minimization in any respect of his performance on Mission 73. He came two or three times, I thought, when he was in his cups, but his free-wheeling policy as chairman was a real smoothie.

We met maybe five or six times, Mission 73. In consultation with Haskew, Leech and I prepared the agenda subject to the approval of the Mission, the members of the Mission, and we moved through it by committee. I was available for any committee as a consultant or a contributor. I think if I had to assess the importance of the contribution to Mission 73, it would be me, and Haskew, and Leech, and Williams, in that order. But, this is me talking. I did make my contribution every step of the way, attended every exchange of intelligence under Williams' chairmanship, and we had a collegial approach to the management of Mission 73. Afterwards, we published the recommendations of Mission 73 and a little volume called Jubilee Papers, which is the speeches made on the campus at the convocation, at the celebration of the Jubilee. And the press put out a tri-volume study, Fugate's Frontier College, Mission 73, and Jubilee Papers--a little package of three.

M: What were the principal recommendations?

R: First, this is most important, that we should abandon the then controlling assumption that we were a community college--we served a community, we're here, and we're a college. We were a cut well below the university level. There were ambitions frequently expressed for university status, but no moves. None was feasible. Before we would become a university, we would abandon the community college concept and work in all things toward quality. We were for full accreditation. We were accredited in engineering only in one program--

that was mining and metallurgy. In other words, we would work toward quality on everything. I think the details could best be accomplished out of the Mission 73 Report. I edited the Mission 73 Report.

M: Were you satisfied with the way it came out?

R: Eminently. I think there's a maxim involved: that in a Board of Visitors or a community enterprise, each participant (there were thirty-seven) strives to perform creditably in the presence of everybody else. And we had our eyes on the main ball, and everybody was wanting to reflect credit on himself and on Mission 73. There was a fairly strong representation, support, from maybe as many as five or six members who thought we should do things to serve the community first, but they were...I started to say howled down, but I don't think there was any howling. They were just outweighed by the people who wanted us to have a university.

Incidentally, we did some very difficult things, some things that were initiated by Templeton. One of them was limited admission. We set up a system of limiting admission. Higher ranking high school graduates would get in automatically. But we never did close the door. Anybody who graduated from a Texas high school or from any accredited high school could go to summer school, take two courses, make B's, and be admitted to the University in September.

But the main point is that we got a grip on our goals. I don't recall any great contribution that Small made, but he was a staunch academic man, and he was there helping all the time. Leech made a superb contribution.

M: What were some of the main things that needed to be done to bring about

that change that you wanted, to convert this institution into a university? What were the specific, major things that needed to be done?

R: Limiting admissions would be one, the first. The other would be more sustained attention to recruiting a larger number of doctoral degrees on the faculty, and things of this sort. They all are in print in the Mission 73 Report, all the things we wanted to do. The fact that they don't come to me at the moment is a function not of their lack of scope, but my absence of mind.

M: Well, looking at the University in 1973, did you think then that those goals were accomplished?

R: I think we had them all realized by the time 1973 got here. Leech and I were still working together. He was in my office and many times we'd compare notes. That's another Mission 73 recommendation that we can lay aside, we met the requirements for. It wasn't all as a result of Mission 73, but Mission 73 gave us the goal. It phrased the avenue we were going to travel in, and even to the name. Again, Mission 73 didn't bring out the name change. The name change was brought about through the virtuosity of Frank Erwin. One of the things he did best was influence the legislature in behalf of the university system.

M: Why was that name desirable?

R: Well, the prestige of the University at Austin goes in a good measure with the name. We're a more important institution. I thought we were when this job was first offered to me. I thought Texas Western was a premier state college and I was delighted to be invited to preside over it because of the prestige that goes with the name in this state. It's not the most prestigious university in the country,

but it's one of the most, it's right up there. I didn't have the hope that we would ever get the name University of Texas at El Paso.

M: Oh, really?

R: I didn't think we could primarily because the people at Austin would rebel. Most of them didn't even know us. We had a committee from Austin come out here, and one member of the committee, a professor from the faculty at Austin, stood in my presence and expressed amazement when he was told that we were part of the University System. He just hadn't known it until I told him. He served on a committee appointed by the Board of Regents to come out and do something for them.

M: What is it that Judson Williams did that resulted in the name change? What kind of political work did he need to do?

R: The name change came in 1967-68, well after Mission 73. What did he do? He was by that time well ingratiated with Erwin and I'm sure he saw him every time he went to Austin. He went to Austin frequently as President of the Texas Municipal League, the organization of mayors in the state. I'm convinced that Williams was apprised of the name change to where we and Permian Basin, San Antonio and the others would become the "University of Texas at." But I don't think he carried any weight in the legislature, it wasn't needed. He had Frank Erwin to tote the ball. Frank Erwin was the best ball totter in the state of Texas, in the Texas legislature; his strong suit.

M: So does that mean that it was at the initiative of El Paso that the other campuses got the name change also?

R: I think it all happened inside the cranium of Frank Erwin, is my

guess, as he cogitated on the name change. It had happened in many other states, notably California, at U.C.L.A. and finally tacked on at Berkeley, at Irvine, at San Diego. As he lugubrated the ambitions of El Paso for the name University of Texas at El Paso, the logic of the whole situation asserted itself. Now they've got the University of Texas at Tyler, the University of Texas at San Antonio.

M: Did it all happen at that time? Did San Antonio get its name and El Paso and Arlington all at once?

R: The system was set up. I know that Arlington and El Paso and Permian Basin were in the making at the time the law was passed. San Antonio set up later, and Tyler and San Marcos. That was at San Marcos, Southwest Texas State Teachers College. I taught there one summer. It has become a part of the University of Texas System. But I think Frank Erwin, as he cogitated on the problem, thought, "That's the best way to do it. Arlington and El Paso are already a part of the system; they are subject to our beck and call. We can name them any god-damned thing we want to, and if the legislature passes, that's it. And why not give them the name they want, and let them achieve a motivation from the name itself?"--which I think is the case. We are a whole lot more institution than we would have been if we had stayed Texas Western College of the University of Texas System, all the way across the board.

M: Was there any opposition here to the name change? Were there local people opposed to it?

R: No, everybody wanted it. Their hopes were forlorn. They just didn't

see that they measured up and could have it. At that time I think we could not. We had not then accomplished a complete realization of the Mission 73 report. We got the name, I think in all candor, before we were entitled to it, and used it as a stepping stone to measure up to be worthy of it. Not that we are now fully worthy of the name, but I think we're as good a college as there is in the System now.

M: I wonder if we should quit here. I'm almost out of tape actually.

R: I'm about to peter out.



J: Looking through the outline that you had given Dr. Martinez earlier, I noticed that you had as one of the topics listed the 1966 NCAA Basketball Championship that TWC had won. I'd like to ask you first for a little bit of background before we get up to that. The first thing I wanted to know is, how was TWC able to recruit these players and make such a strong team?

R: Well, we didn't recruit national championship players, we recruited good players. All the real good ones were black boys, came in part from New York City where our coach, Haskins, was a warm friend of the black man who was the Director of Athletics for the New York City Public Schools. And he got Bobby Joe Hill from Detroit, Orsten Artis from Gary, Indiana, and David Lattin from Houston. The rest of the boys-- nearly all of them--came from New York City. They were good players. We didn't recruit to win the national championship; we just got a team under the leadership of the spark plug of Bobby Joe Hill. It really worked. Nearly won every game, and we won about five games by one point. One thing happened. We were hanging on to it. We had a schedule of twenty-six games, and we won every one but the last one. We lost the one in Seattle, the last game of the season. And we lost it because the boys had been playing so hard, were keyed up, that they sneaked out on the town the night before the Seattle game and didn't get enough sleep. But Haskins realized that they were so keyed up that there was nothing he could do that wouldn't wreck everything. So he didn't do anything, he just forgot it. Any team that wins twenty-five games straight is real good. Bobby Joe Hill had a faculty for seeing when a man who was dribbling the ball had eliminated him from his vision, and the man would go down the field and Bobby Joe would sneak

back behind him, reach under, and get the ball. He did that twice in the final game. He got the ball; nobody between him and the basket; and he made four points of our seventy-two points, I guess it was, in the final.

J: Were you at that Tournament game?

R: Yeah.

J: How did the people that were there receive our team? I know that we were sort of unknown to most people.

R: They were dumbfounded that we would field a team of all black boys. Nobody had ever fielded more than three men on a team. And that's part of my report. My recollection, I told George McCarty, the Director of Athletics, to tell Don Haskins that we couldn't play more than three black boys. And Haskins himself came to me when he realized they were not doing what I had told them to, they were playing more than three black boys. He says, "It'd just be outlandish."

J: No other school at that time was doing that, then. We were the only one.

R: No more than three black boys were playing in any school, anywhere, anytime. Kentucky had no black students at all. That was our opponent in the final. But Haskins came to see me and said, "Dr. Ray, George told me what you said about the black boys. The way our boys line up now, my six best boys are black boys. And if I leave them out because they're black, two or three of them, they'll know it. They'll know it, the white boys will know it. They all know who the best basketball players are, just as I do." And I said, "Well, Don, you let me study about this overnight." I called him the next morning and I told him, "Don, you coach the basketball and I'll try to do

the rest of my job myself." And we were the only ones who played five blacks. Matter of fact, the president of one great state university not involved in the tournament at College Park said, "Joe Ray will rue the day he has played an all-black team."

Only one white boy played in the final game, and he was just a guard, he wasn't one of the top stars. He's a fine old boy, good basketball player. The whole team just gave it to a T. I think we could not have got there if it had not been for Bobby Joe Hill and David Lattin. David Lattin was six feet nine at a time when seven footers weren't around, and he's a real good basketball player. He played later with the Harlem Globetrotters. But, it was going to reflect on me, no question about it, if we played all black boys. One of my friends from the University of Alabama where I taught many years ago wrote me after we won the National Championship with black boys. "Where did you recruit all those 'Indians' that you got on your team?" I wrote him back that we didn't go to College Park Maryland to the National Championship game to compare epidermal pigmentation, we went up there to play basketball. And we showed them how it was done.

J: That's right.

R: I have noted with satisfaction many times later, my friend on the Alabama faculty there who wrote me that letter has long since died, I noted repeatedly with immense satisfaction that the University of Alabama at Mobile /and the other two, all three of them have fielded an all-black basketball team repeatedly. I've seen them for years now--three, four, five years. But I think I can say, with my pride showing entirely too much, that I did a whole lot of things that made

good sense and would bring down criticism of one sort or another in my day in the presidency.

Well, I think the funniest letter I got after the victory and we were back home, was from an industrialist in Cincinnati, Ohio. He wrote on his firm stationery, an engineering firm. "I am pleased," he said, "With your victory in the NCAA finals. I have always been in favor of integration. I've always been opposed to segregation. And it satisfies me to see the National Championship won by a small Negro college." (Laughter)

J: How do you recall what happened here? First, how the community received the fact that we had really a black team, so to speak?

R: Nobody ever raised a murmur. We were used to them. And everybody who had the least scintilla of enthusiasm for the team was long since over it. You couldn't escape that, if you're a basketball buff. My old friend Jack Vowell, who was my confidant, advised me on how to wade through the complex society of El Paso. Several times during that year, he had to turn off his television--we were showing all the games--had to turn off his television and go to bed and quiet down because his heart was weak. But everybody, I think it's the biggest thing that ever happened to unify this school with the community, and to unify the community. It was really an electric thing. You just can't get in a remote station like this and win the National Championship. It was of the same pattern when one of the high schools won the state championship, only a great cut lower. But in the community there was no opposition on account of the blacks at all. It was only when national television saw the Kentucky lily white team

and we didn't even have a pale Negro, a pale black on the team. They were all...Bobby Joe is about the palest one there was. This would not come from anyone else. We had captured the imagination of the basketball world all the way across the country.

When we went to Lubbock to play in one of the playoff games, we invited a young Texas Tech faculty member and his wife as our guests. His wife was the daughter of a lifetime friend of my wife's and mine. And she came to the game on time, just barely got there when our game started--we were the second game. We had won our twenty-five games and one other; I think one at Wichita, or maybe it was at Dallas, the first playoff game. The second one was at Lubbock. And she got to the game just as our game started. And there was a lot of fancy talk. My wife hadn't seen the girl, and she met us at the game. And her husband couldn't come, by the way, and she had come by taxi. And she said that the taxi driver in Lubbock who brought her to the gymnasium to see the game predicted that the game she was going to see would be won by Texas Western College in the third overtime, by one point. And that's what we did. But the taxi driver said that before the game. He was too busy even to come to the game, but he knew that Texas Western College would win it in the third overtime. When we went into the third overtime, I turned to her, I said, "Sue, it's coming true." And she said, "Yeah, but we've got to win it."

J: He must have known something. He must have kept up with us during that season because I know that we won so many in overtime.

R: That's the point I was trying to make, that everybody was thinking

about Texas Western College.

And I got one other thing that's special to me. I can't remember who it was; I think it was Ross Moore, but I'm not sure. Ross was an old hand in athletics. I don't want to attribute this to Ross if it isn't true. I recall it to being Ross. As we were going to the final game, he said to me, "Don't worry, Dr. Ray, we're going to win." I said, "How do you know we are going to win it?" And he says, "'Cause those niggers there won't let those white boys beat 'em." And there was a fierceness in the competition. The little Worsley boy played very rarely, but he was death on long shots. He could just deliver from anywhere. And he got in that game and he didn't miss a shot, and he made more points than anybody in the game. He just played. And I think the edge of the quality of his play in that final game was black pride: "We can beat 'em. We'll do it."

Bobby Joe said to me on the bus the night before, we were all staying in the same motel... Incidentally, College Park was my old stomping grounds. I was at the University of Maryland for eleven years. And the motel where we stayed put up the basketball players and the buffs that were along. And Bobby Joe, the spark plug of the team, was in the seat behind me. And he tapped me on the shoulder as we drove back to the motel and says, "Well, we won all the games for you, that's why, Dr. Ray. And we're going to win the one here." And that was the first time it really soaked into me that, by God, we were going to do it. And the boys just flat did it. A superbly knit basketball team. I haven't seen a team anywhere that meshed their actions and their abilities any better than our team did in the National Championship.

J: They seemed to be able to work well together. There wasn't just one star; they all sort of worked together.

R: They were all good. Artis never showed it until the last part of that last season. He was good. Worseley was good, but he didn't get to play regularly until the last game. They put him in because the Kentucky boys were a little bit taller, taller than everybody but Lattin. Well, those are some of the highlights of the action that I remember. I since have had a communication from a television broadcaster who broadcast a little squib on his program about the time TWC won the National Championship. That was maybe two years ago, and I wrote him, we exchanged ideas. But my friend, who was at that time at the University of Maryland and saw the game, and is since at Arizona State, wrote this guy whose broadcast he monitored. "You've got to get in touch with Joe Ray who's the retired president of UTEP," and I never heard from him again.

J: I remember that after that win, there was an article that appeared, I believe, in Sports Illustrated that criticized the College for using an all-black team. Was that the gist of it? Exploiting, I guess it was.

R: Exploiting a black team.

J: I don't know who wrote that article. Do you recall who that was?

R: It was not anybody that I talked to, and it was an example. I can say this authoritatively. I really ought to sit down and write this to get it right because my mind wanders. But Sports Illustrated came in to interview some of us, wanted a story. I'll tell you who it was; Tom Brookshier was the man who came to see me. And Tom Brookshier interviewed me and he did a fair job. And he wasn't

pushy, he wasn't grabbing for some theme to hang on to. I think the reason we were panned was that they were looking for a school that would exemplify integration of black athletes, and who better than we, who'd won the National Championship the year before in basketball.

Now, the tempo of the times was such that anybody who wanted to locate and isolate a disaffected black, all he had to do was talk to some black athletes, because there was still...as a matter of fact, I read in Texas magazine two years ago, the fact to me is abominable, but to people who go to the Super Bowl football games with the Dallas players, the big shots out of Dallas (it takes real money to ride on the plane with the players) customarily refer in their conversation on the plane to the players' section in the front of the plane as "the niggers." /If/ whites play with the niggers, they're niggers, by their definition. That is silly. We have this thing in our society, it's still there. But all the big shots haven't any reason in the world to disparage Drew Pearson, for example. He's a black boy, but he's one of the best football players you'd ever see.

At any rate, they were looking for a whipping boy, and they picked us. After they interviewed me, I talked to Tom Brookshier. He asked me, "Do you feel any guilt? Do you feel any guilt exploiting these black players?" I says, "We don't exploit them. They are doing us a good turn and we're doing them a good turn. There's not a boy on any one of our teams that feels enslaved. He's not a slave, he came here by choice." As a matter of fact, two of the football boys...one of them was the big tackle that played with Green Bay for ten years. I can't call his name.



J: Charlie West?

R: Charlie West played with Green Bay, but he wasn't the one. But the point is that that big boy left the junior college that he played two years with to come and play here with Bobby Dobbs, because he said Dobbs was a winner. And he came here, walked on--they didn't recruit him. He walked on and was given a scholarship. Later on, he played right at ten years with Green Bay. But he was one of the boys they located who had a grievance. It would be hard not to, with the coaches telling the boys, "Stay away from the white girls," and all sorts of stuff, or scowling at them when they did. For whatever, there was a grievance and they located it. But I think we were the victim of circumstance. We were just the logical one to seize onto.

I got back on these big shots from Dallas and the blacks on the football team of the Dallas Cowboys to show that there is this under-current of censure or criticism of black people. It's not me, I don't think I have got that kind of prejudice, but I myself think that there's a difference between blacks and whites. I think it makes a difference. For example, I heard a raunchy old story one time. I'll tell it to you right now. It's a conundrum. The question is, what do they call a black man in Plano, Texas. They just call him a plain ol' nigger. Now that to me is excruciatingly amusing. But that doesn't mean that I disparage black people. Matter of fact, we had the five or six best team players in that conference. I saw the whole thing, every game.

J: Did most of those players stay here or did they go back to New York City? Do you have any contact with them?

R: Orsten Artis is a city Police detective in Gary, Indiana. David Lattin never was good enough to make a big basketball. He played on the opposition team, the American Generals, I think they were called, /who/ played with the team from New York City, the Globetrotters, and he went somewhere else. He's a fine looking boy. He's now a liquor salesman in Houston. Bobby Joe is still here in El Paso. And Willie Cager developed a bad heart condition and there was a great deal of publicity over that, blaming the hospital for malpractice.

This is not a matter of great moment, but Bobby Joe had gotten his girlfriend pregnant at the time of the Championship. And then her mother bugged him during the course of the spring to drop out of school and provide for his coming family. And he was so unnerved that they took measures to get him back into school where he had dropped out. He didn't drop out; he just quit. And they took measures and started sending somebody to pick him up and bring him to school. And even then he spent his day in the Union Building and never went back to class. So, some businessman--I can't remember who--and some trucking outfit gave him a good managerial job. And he's still well employed in El Paso. He couldn't have played basketball as effectively as he did without having a brilliant mind.

I can't call one of the other of my boy's name, he's one of the few basketball players who graduated from this school, actually graduated. (Willie Worsley). He stayed and finished. He was already married; had a wife and baby. His mother-in-law worked for us at the Hoover House once in a while. I think she was an employee at the dining hall. But his wife divorced him and ran off with an Army sergeant somewhat later.

And Ossie was his mother-in-law--incidentally did me one of the greatest favors I have ever been rendered. This is that basketball player's mother-in-law. When her daughter ran off with the sergeant, she took the baby home and raised the child. It's somewhere around eighteen years old, in El Paso.

This is a random thing, nothing to do with basketball. The Chairman of the Board of Regents did not hold me in very high esteem. I'm just a plain ol' boy, and I wasn't the big shot he wanted. The big shot he wanted was Judson Williams, who at that time was Mayor of El Paso. So the Chairman undertook to run me off, vacate my job, and get it for Judson Williams, just as no other incumbent in the presidency of UTEP has ever been as good as president as I was. (Laughs) And I don't mean good, what I mean is effective; I got things done. We built the Sun Bowl; we won the National Basketball Championship. That's just athletics. We did a whole lot of other things that took some savvy to accomplish, and nobody else has even come close. And this man, although the Mayor of El Paso, would almost certainly have fouled up long before Templeton did. Templeton fouled up. You could count a university president an almost total failure when the faculty votes, with only token objections, to the proposition that he ought to resign. And that's what happened to Templeton. He did a lot of good things but not the kind of things that a first-class president would do. he did things that a first-class business type would do. If the owners of MacDonald Hamburgers were looking for a man to head that hamburger chain all over the United States, they couldn't find a better one than Arleigh Templeton.

I possibly will not survive to find whether our incumbent president now...he looks to me like he could make a far better one than I was, and last longer, because I was rough around the edges and didn't please the Board chairman. The Board chairman was an activist. We have in the United States a custom of governing our educational institutions, our universities, by a board of randomly selected public spirited citizens, almost to provide a buffer between the university and the community. We don't elect a president of the university from the community of El Paso; we have to buffer their relationship. I had Jack Vowell help me. Our present president has a man on his staff who was the mayor's assistant to help guide him through the reefs that beset the public waters in El Paso. (This man's job was later abolished.) That takes a great deal of doing, I can assure you, and anybody knows. As a matter of fact, Monroe got some real good advice. He went down to my associates that I worked with in the main university, the ones who were in the Chancellor's office at that time, and got good advice.

But, I tell you this, Haskell Monroe will not make it for a long time unless he changes course, that is, courageously making decisions in the athletic area that accord with what the athletic buffs want. You've got to let them at least have a part in the say-so. The fact that he kept the coach for another year, no predecessor can bind the president of a university on a matter of that kind. Michaels was given a five-year contract. In the first place, it was not a promise that Templeton could give; he didn't know he was going to last five years. No president can promise anything of that sort, but that was what he promised Michaels. Monroe did the fine, true, stalwart, upright

thing by giving Michaels another year. He shouldn't have done it at all. An athletic coach is entitled to no more seasons than he can win most of his games. It's just that simple. And he wasn't one of them. That handsome athletic budget that we saw in the newspaper some time ago depends on a winning season. If we have a winning season, we sell a lot of tickets, and we come out of the hole. But, I can't see us doing it. I hope we do. But I can't see us winning the majority of our football games.

As a matter of fact, football is our main money-maker, and we get a lot more money from gifts. I imagine most of it's already in hand, but we are playing teams every one of which...we won't have a game this year, any university on our schedule, that doesn't have a program better financed than ours is. Bum Phillips was our coach. He had a successful season, successful for us in those days, maybe won seven of his games. Showed up in my office one day, says, "Dr. Ray, I've got to resign." I said, "Bum, what are you talking about? You don't have to resign. There's nobody after you. We want you; I want you; George wants you." He said, "There's no chance of my ever winning consistently in this conference. They all get more money than me." In those days, at the time he was talking to me, the legislature of New Mexico gave \$150,000 a year outright to the athletic program at New Mexico State and the University of New Mexico. We never got a dime, and never will. As God is my witness, I predict we will never get a state appropriation for collegiate athletics in this state. Brigham Young--rolling in dough. Those rich Mormons come up with money hanging out of their pockets.

J: And it's amazing because that is a private school.

R: They, incidentally, caused us a little trouble on the black history.

Our boys were scheduled, at the time Martin Luther King was assassinated, they were scheduled to go to Brigham Young on the Saturday following the Wednesday or Thursday when Martin Luther was shot to participate in a track meet, and they staged a boycott. They wouldn't go to that lily-white university. I later got a letter from the president congratulating me on backing up the coaches who had withdrawn the scholarships of the black boys who refused to go to the meet. That is automatic. If you refuse to go to a competitive engagement for whatever reason, that ends your scholarship. And that's all I could do. I wrote back to him the congratulations he gave me were small comfort, because we lost some good athletes, partly because of the anti-black posture of BYU. One boy's still got a record. I can't call the boy's name. He was the broad jump boy. Got the world record in the broad jump in Mexico City in the Olympics.

J: Bob Beamon.

R: Bob Beamon. He's one of them. I don't know whether he lost his scholarship at that time or for just lingering. But he lost it at that time, right close around that time. Wilkinson (President of BYU) is a man who got an \$8 million fee in one lawsuit. That's the reason he's President of Brigham Young. He had money coming out of his pockets and he'd give it to the Mormon Church, and the Mormon Church would see to it that he got to be President of Brigham Young. He wasn't an academic man at all. But he won before the Court of Claims. He won, oh, a tremendous award--I want to say \$50 million--for the Indian tribes in Utah against the Government of the United States because the government promised in their treaty with the Indians to do some things that they hadn't

done, and the Court of Claims just socked it to the Government. And Wilkinson's fee, his legal commission was \$8 million.

J: Well, do you want to go on for today or should I come back?

R: I peter out. You let me talk.

Side 2  
October 8, 1981

R: I'd like to add a couple of things to the subjects we discussed last time, athletics. Last time we talked about athletics and were discussing the Sports Illustrated story on black athletes. The boy who nowadays is making commercial television episodes for State National Bank, he was a Sports Illustrated columnist. It's hard for me to call up a given name. But, at any rate, he came to me and was most courteous. And the only inkling I got that they were after any kind of special purpose in there was, "How do you feel about the way the University exploits the black students?" And I said, "We don't exploit them. We exchange benefits. They get out of the ghetto and make a flash of notoriety, and we get a good performance out of them. We don't exploit them. They get everything any white athlete would get." And he says, "Well, I guess that's right." And I concluded from that, after the articles came out, that he knew the magazine was going to put the collegiate interpretation on the articles, and who better than us at TWC. They were looking for some body to make the Goat or whatever. And they chose us because we had had such startling success with our basketball team and some of our football. That was the year we won the Sun Bowl from TCU.

J: Was that Tom Brookshier?

R: Tom Brookshier. And he was most courteous to me, and that was the only inkling I got that there was going to be something sensational. In the series of articles, they did the same thing to the St. Louis Cardinals in the pro ranks, just blew up every morsel they could find and showed our bad blood. We didn't have bad blood with black students. The only bad blood we ever had was after, I think this was after, the articles had come out, when Martin Luther King was killed. The black track men, it was a week after the murder, and black athletes refused to go to a track meet at Brigham Young, which then was lily white, and it still is. They once got one black man on the football team, and he's just obviously a concession for publicity. This year they got one; first time they've ever had. And the Mormon dogma holds that blacks are inferior, and this flat holds to it. I asked old Wilkinson one time, about this time, "What would be wrong with a black athlete in your place?" He was the Lawyer non-academic president. And he said, "If a black athlete should present himself and be qualified for admission, and play well, we would take him." But the hooker in that is that recruiting does not work that way. No black athlete, no any kind of athlete, presents himself to Brigham Young. Brigham Young goes out and gets him and buys him and pays for him.

But that's the one point. Now you got something you want me to talk about?

J: Yes. On the list you had given us you had written "The Sun Bowl and Sun Bowl Champs." We really didn't talk too much about the building of the Sun Bowl and also about the football team winning that year. Would you like to start with the building of it?

R: Yeah. I'll have my usual trouble calling that. The man who's in



insurance here, he hasn't been given full credit, Bob Kolliner, He's an insurance man, former football player for the University of Minnesota. He sells insurance for one of the companies here. He didn't get his fair share of credit for the Sun Bowl because at some Sun Bowl observance we were called on to name a group of downtown operators who had been most influential in getting the Sun Bowl. I think Bob Kolliner is the guy that did the heavy work, and leg work, too, all the way through for which had not been given credit. I don't think, I know. I am partly responsible for the neglect of it.

At the time of this observance in the Sun Bowl honoring people who worked for the stadium, or just before, Bob Kolliner's son, Bob Jr. (who incidentally was a football player at UTEP earlier), had graduated--at least he'd left the University--and got in a scrap with the husband of a former sweetheart. And the big bruiser, the husband, tackled him, and Kolliner pulled a knife out--he'd been planning on it--pulled a knife out from between his shoulder blades and stabbed the man fatally. So we had a big murder trial, and Kolliner, the father, didn't fare too well in public opinion. Then I went to Jack Vowell for advice about who all should be honored, and Jack turned thumbs down on Kolliner. He said, "Just don't put him in." Kolliner was not a big businessman, he didn't appeal to Jack Vowell. And Jack and I had a disagreement. I thought Kolliner had done much, meeting deadlines and hustling through the plans for the authorization of the building of the stadium and for the passage of the bond issue. But Jack said, "You just can't do it. He's in ill favor publicly and it will reflect on the whole operation if you put Bob in it."

And so I left Bob out. And for a while thereafter he was publicly critical of me. I couldn't do things right to suit him. I had done him a foul trick, no question about it. But I got advice I couldn't refuse that he shouldn't be in it. As it was we had Mike Brumbelow and Marshall Willis and somebody else. There were three that we honored. We should have honored the four. I think Bob Kolliner is still in town. And I would hope this would come to his attention, because I personally treated him shabbily, advised in his case, and I want him to know I regret it. Bob Kolliner actually hustled the arrangements for the Sun Bowl bond issue. Mike Brumbelow, the former football coach, died not too long ago, helped with getting the location where the Sun Bowl would go. Marshall Willis was a publicity wizard. He is the one more than anybody else who made sure the work went right.

J: What years did talk about building a Sun Bowl or a new stadium for the University start, more or less? Who started talking about it and what years did people start talking about building this new stadium?

R: I wouldn't know. There was talk about it. I never paid much attention to it early on because I didn't think that we could do it until these guys worked up a bond issue election with county Judge Woodrow Bean. And in the bond issue election, there were eight items on the ballot with the County bond issue Sun Bowl proposal, and seven of them lost. The Sun Bowl's the one that carried. I got about a half a dozen telephone calls, anonymous, as usual. I hadn't by then polished up my "no" on talking with people who wouldn't identify themselves.

J: What did they say? What kind of things were they telling you?

R: "It's not the County's business!" And it wasn't! Nothing to do with it except that Woody Bean, who was the County Judge and who is

the single person most responsible for the bond issue, said once in a public speech, I heard him, "I bucked these guys, Mike Brumbelow and the rest of them, for years. Now I decided I'm going to join them." And he just flat did something that was popular for the County to do. It wasn't the County's business at all. What I had to do was to get a deed of the land for the County. When we saw that rocky old place for the Sun Bowl there, it was not a prepossessing location, as you can imagine. And we had to get the Board of Regents to approve the transfer of the land to the County. And then the County, all in the same deal, would agree to lease to the University the Sun Bowl for a dollar each year, for ninety-nine years. Well, that shows you how much business it is of the County. And the money, the pay-off, comes from the taxpayers paying it off the bonds every year till they pay it off, and that, in sum, is as it should be.

I publicly complimented Woody Bean. We were having a little ceremony over there in what is now north parking. It was just open, rough country. And everybody was getting credit. This is while construction was under way at the Sun Bowl. This was Sun Bowl Day and we were celebrating, and everybody was saying nice things about everybody else. And my comment was, "Everybody's being complimented around here, but the guy that really did the whole damn thing--Woody Bean. This ought to be called Woody Bean Day." And old Woody was about to pop his buttons. He and I have been warm friends ever since, not for that reason but because we just like one another. I never could understand how he got in bad tax trouble; I can understand, too, but we're not talking about Woody Bean's tax troubles.

Anyhow, the first bidder on the construction fouled up, went broke or something, and defaulted, and they brought in the builder who finished it up.

J: What year was it finally completed, do you recall?

R: It was maybe '63 or '64.

J: Who went about deciding what teams you wanted to bring into the Sun Bowl? How did you decide on that and how did you get the teams interested in coming to El Paso to play in the Sun Bowl?

R: You're not talking about the regular football schedule?

J: No, for the big Sun Bowl game itself. How did you entice those teams to come in?

R: The University has no managerial contact with the Sun Bowl game. The Sun Bowl game is managed by the Sun Carnival Association. They have a selection committee. You watch the newspapers carefully as Christmas approaches and you'll see that the chairman of the three-man committee appointed to serve the Sun Carnival Association in the selection of Sun Bowl competition will make announcements. The selection committee obviously has to leave out the ones that are going to play in the Rose Bowl, the ones going to play in the Orange Bowl, Cotton Bowl, all the other bowls, and we have to wait. And teams will not tell them, will not make a rush decision to play in the Sun Bowl until they've been passed up in all their other bowl game chances because there's a lot more money in the other bowls. Incidentally, this expansion of the Sun Bowl that is currently under way stems from the Sun Carnival need for a bigger bowl to make more money to pay more to the teams competing and get a better and bigger crowd.

J: What about the year that UTEP, I guess it was still Texas Western

College, played in the Sun Bowl and won that year? That coupled with the fact that our basketball team had won a National Championship, did that sort of put us on the map, you think?

R: No question about it! I went and saw the finals in the basketball competition in Maryland where we won the championship. And one of the things I said in my comments at the banquet that night was, "I have been for the past several weeks listening to people ask where on the map is Texas Western College. You boys showed them where it is tonight." They really did, they put us on the map.

J: Do you think that had anything to do with awakening the U.T. System's attention to making us an actual part of the U.T. System and calling us a university?

R: No, I think there's no connection at all, because it was done for Arlington and Permian Basin in Odessa, and Dallas, all the rest of the institutions. And Dallas and Arlington had never even peeped, as a chicken peeps, on that subject, never to this good day. Oh, once in a while one of them will be plagued by some such. But we're the only Texas team that had ever gotten close to an NCAA National Championship.

J: When did the paperwork start for the name change to a university here?

R: Now, I must give the devil his due. I have no use at all for Frank Erwin, who was in my last days in the presidency, Chairman of the Board of Regents. If you read the paper I've written up, the way Erwin ran me out of the presidency--that's in your file. But this was Frank Erwin's work, pure and simple. Frank Erwin--he's dead now--if he had one sterling quality it was as a first-class politician and he drafted that scheme--I didn't even know about it--and it had nothing to do with the quality of this institution anymore than it did Permian

Basin, San Antonio, or any of the rest. All of them were wrapped in as The University of Texas at San Antonio, The university of Texas at the the Permian Basin, at Dallas, at Arlington, and at El Paso. They changed our names, all of us, made us the University of Texas at. And it was Frank Erwin's work entirely. He just dreamed it up I'm sure he talked with the Chancellor and a variety of other people; he talked with them, but it was his project. He got it passed through the legislature. I've got a pen that Governor John Connally used to sign the name change bill. I don't know where it is; I must have given it to the UTEP Library.

J: Did you find it a good thing?

R: Oh, yeah, it was all plus. For many years people wanted something like that. I don't think very many people had come up precisely with the regimen University of Texas at Dallas. We did it just like the Californians had done--UCLA, the University of California at Los Angeles and at Irvine. They've got nine or ten state universities. The mother university at Berkeley is still the diadem in their crown, but UCLA is a first-rate university and they didn't make any change in our relationships. For example, even after the name change, if we came up with a new proposal, the Chancellor would refer it to the appropriate department in the U.T. Austin faculty for advice. We used to call it the Main university. It was the Main university; it still is. But it's disparaging to the others to call it the main; they are all full-fledged branches.

We are not much more of a university than we were before the name was changed. We've made progress. I think it lost ground under

Templeton, but that may be a personal bias on my part. I haven't got too much respect for Templeton. I'd tell him if the occasion properly presented itself. He knows it. We accomplished so much. A nice thing Templeton said about me, except that he was wrong, was that he couldn't serve as successor to me without noting that many first-class developments took place in my day. We did some things and they were good things, and worked for the benefit of the institution and we improved it. Wynn Anderson, who works with the president, told me one time that Dr. Templeton wanted him to say to me that Templeton had said in some public meeting somewhere that, "Shortly before my coming here, we had a truly strong President at UTEP." Well, Templeton meant it as a high compliment, but I wasn't strong. I wasn't strong at all. I had moxie, I had savvy, and I worked hard and intelligently, but I have never considered myself as "strong". "Effective" is more like it.

We did a whole lot of good things. I don't have to list them for you. One thing is, we started a development program. I got out on the street with advisors and went around to business houses. At the time I don't think there was a major business house, a bank or a company that I didn't go to, with a friend, to panhandle some money for the Excellence Program. That's just one thing. There were many others. I'm not just tooting my own horn; it's on the record.

J: But you should talk a little bit about that--for example, the Excellence Program. I think it would be something that people who are interested in the University should know about.

R: You mean right now, just go ahead and talk about it?

J: Go ahead and talk about that, sure. That's one of the things that I'd like to hear about myself.

R: Well, Mission 73 said that we ought to raise annually from the El Paso community about \$300,000 for funding causes for the improvement of the institution. It was then Texas Western. The \$300,000 figure came from Dr. Haskew, the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at the University. I at the time put pencil to paper and figured the way he got the \$300,000 figure. But he just pulled it out of the sky. He lumped some things together, said, "You could this with it." So, it's up to me. After Mission 73, we've got this responsibility. I talked to Harry Ransom, the Chancellor, and tried to get him to give me some advice on how to do it. He was a fundraiser, he raised millions for the University at Austin, but he never raised any money for the other branches. It just wasn't his deal.

Incidentally, I ought to pause parenthetically to tell you a story that involves Chancellor and fundraising. He had a wealthy man in Dallas who invited him to come out Saturday and Sunday to work up the process of getting a bequest from him of \$200,000 for the library at Austin. The man had already agreed to give the \$200,000. Harry went up to the football game in Ft. Worth--the Chancellor, Harry Ransom. He met with the man Saturday morning before the ball game--they were playing TCU, and they were high in the national rankings, as they are now--and arranged all the details and agreed to meet Sunday morning. Saturday afternoon TCU beat the University miserably. It was just a rout. They just folded up. They were first in the nation, as I recall it, going into the game, and they came out miserably defeated. And Sunday morning the prospective donor wouldn't even talk to the Chancellor.



Somebody says football has no part in the University program. It does. It's a simple fact. If things are going well with the football team, everything's lovely and the goose is hanging high. If they are going poorly, as they are now, you're damned if you do and damned if you don't. You're in the doghouse on everything you try. But Ransom lost the \$200,000. I don't know whether it ever got back on track or not, but at the time he told me the story the man wouldn't even talk, he just didn't want to talk about it. He wouldn't make any kind of compromise or reduction in the amount or anything else, he just didn't want to have any more to do with it.

But you can readily imagine what Monroe is going through now, because you can't get lower in football than he is. Anytime Brigham Young could beat us 98 to nothing, which is what they were doing to us, they gave up, quit trying. After the first half, they beat us 48, twice 48 to nothing. Well, now, that's embarrassing, even in a spitting contest. When I was a boy in Frankfort, Kentucky, a bunch of us boys roamed the town. We used to go up to the Capitol and sit on a big banister in a row, a big marble banister, and chew tobacco and see how far we could spit a straight line. Well, it would be embarrassing if one boy could beat everybody else 98 to nothing. Anyhow, what were we talking about?

J: The Excellence Fund here, getting the money for the Excellence Fund.

R: I had a big problem. I relied during my presidency on one particular downtown operator, and that was Jack Vowell. He was a sagacious man and had lived in El Paso from his youth and knew the town. I never got bad advice from him. I got advice from him that I wasn't going to follow and I would row with him. He saw when I was being fired that he was losing his entree to UTEP with my departure from the presidency

of the University, and he tried to get me to stay on. "Frank Erwin can't do anything to you. He can't fire you." And he couldn't. I think I could have stayed on the way Jack was urging me, but it wouldn't have been a life fit for dog, to have the Chairman of the Board, like Erwin, hounding you and finding things wrong. And anybody can find things wrong with a guy like me who barges in sometimes where angels fear to tread, doing things. But Jack Vowell said to me in the last conversation we had that he couldn't do anything to me, he couldn't fire me, go ahead and face him down. And I said, "What if you, as I have, come to the conclusion that the job wouldn't be worth having with that son of a bitch clawing on my back." And I said it too loud and all the girls in his office heard it. But the point is that he backed down.

I talked with Jack Vowell about nearly everything that concerned the community, or that could be stretched to the point where it did. And And a surprising scope of problems a prismatic thing, a surprising range of problems have relevance to popularities in El Paso. This will illustrate Jack's wisdom, sagacity and appreciation of what I had to do. I made a speech to the Republican Women's Club. They asked me to speak at their monthly meeting which I did. This was at the time Tower was running for the Senate for the first time, and I gave them some old textbook stuff that I had been teaching my political science students for years to the effect that you've got to make a broad appeal. You got to try to convince everybody that you are on his side. And the Republican Party, to be a strong party in Texas, has got to be a party of policy, not a party of principle. The Socialist

Party is a party of principle. The Democratic and Republican parties are not parties of principle, they are parties of policy. They decide what they are going to favor to help give them broader support. Tad Smith's wife popped up and she said, "We've come this far on principle," and that was the end of the discussion period; she was a big Republican in her own right and started a brawl with me for saying that it needs to be a party of policy and make a broad appeal. I talked to Tad later on, and he said, "You were right and the women were wrong, but you couldn't expect me to say anything at the time we were encouraging the ladies to help us in electing our first senator since the Civil War."

But at any rate, I had a bad night. My wife was away and I had nobody's shoulder to cry on, no one to confide in. And so the next morning, that was a weekend, the next Monday morning I went down to see Jack. And he said, "Why did you pick that subject?" "Well, it was something pertinent to them. They wanted me to talk and I talked on something that as a political scientist I think would be appropriate to the Republican women. No criticism as a political scientist of Republicanism at all, one way or another." And he told me, "Oh, put it out of your mind, forget it. Just remember, don't you ever make another speech in El Paso about any subject but Texas Western College." And I never did. I didn't talk about the Republican party's chances or anything else, and that's the kind of advice I needed. I should have been able to see it myself and now it's obvious, but I'm a guy who had had a fairly extensive career in making public speeches, and you got to talk about something, and it's something that I know about. This was a good speech I made them, a sound speech, well-grounded in common sense. But it got me in trouble. That was at the time I lost the

friendship of Marshall Hale. Do you remember Marshall Hale?

J: I remember that name.

R: A newspaper reporter on the Herald-Post. He called me the next day and I told him that I would in confidence tell him the whole story of what happened as to why were the women ugly to me, and I begged off, went off the record. He listened to me and I told him the whole story, and it appeared on that afternoon's issue of the Herald-Post, front page story, telling the whole thing. He couldn't have got the story except that I told it to him. I never afterward had anything to do with him. He violated a confidence so atrociously that I never had anything more to do with Marshall Hale. He was a good reporter, but he just flat fouled me. And years later a good friend of his and mine took both of us to lunch. He liked both of us and thought we could make our peace. I said, to Marshall Hale after lunch--it was Ray Past, Professor Past, and Ray was buying our lunch--I complained about the treatment I had gotten on the Republican women's story after I had trusted him to confidence. And Marshall Hale said, "The president of Texas Western College in El Paso cannot speak off the record." He didn't say that, he didn't tell me that when I was telling him the story. But he said, "Anything you say, at this lunch or anywhere else, will be on the record and we'll have to use it." In effect, I said pretty soon to Ray Past, "Let's go on home. I got no more to say to this man." But that's the type of advice I got from Jack Vowell and it was sound advice. I had no business making speeches about the Republican Party or anything else while I was president of UTEP.

Well, on the subject of fundraising, I asked Chancellor Ransom, "How do you go about raising money?" "Just get out and raise it," he

said. So, then I talked to Jack Vowell about who I could get to help. First he mentioned Frances Morgan. Morgan and Sons were building contractors, and I went to see him and got him, and it wouldn't work. Jack didn't see, his sagacity didn't extend to University development work. And Morgan was a Catholic and all his big, heavy lifting had been done in Catholic causes, and he was in full swing as the head of his firm and he was too busy to give me the amount of help I needed. He was good with the Development Program for a long time, in many constructive ways, but he wasn't the man I needed. I tried working with the president of Zork Hardware and he was a little stiff and didn't have the gift, and it didn't work. Finally, Jack Vowell told me, "The man you really need is L. A. Miller of M and M Refrigeration." I went to see L.A. and asked him to help me, he was telling me "no" from the start. And the faster I talked, the more I started sparking. And he got with me, he said, "All right, I'll go with you, I'll do it."

L. A. was president of M and M. His brother was doing all the work while L. A. was doing the public relations, like fundraising and support of political candidates. L. A. and I would get together; I'd give him a call at ten minutes to nine, "I'll be down there at nine. Are you ready to go?" He says, "Yes." And he plotted our itinerary. I'd go wherever he wanted to go. I think I'm the only president of UTEP, TWC, that's ever been in the business offices of every businessman in El Paso. We went to see Sam Young, and he pledged us \$500. We went back to see him. L. A. said, "Let's go back to old Sam." And we went back and I said, "Thornton Hardie," "who was a member of Sam's Board," gave us a thousand dollars." So Sam Young gave us the extra \$500, saying, "That son of a bitch cost me \$500." (laughter) And we went to everybody,

large and small, every business place. Some people I've got no use for would not even give us an audience. When they found what we were after, it was, "Goodbye." But by far the majority would do something. All we had to do at the State National Bank was to tell George Matkin that Sam Young was giving us a thousand dollars. We went to the Tony Lama Boot place. I don't know where old Tony Lama was. He was still alive, I think. But Tony and Louie, two brothers, Tony was the president, Louie was the vice-president, got together. And Tony says, "I'll write a figure down and you pick one, and we'll see how close we are." Tony picked a thousand dollars a year, and Louie picked \$900, and they went ahead with the thousand dollars. So far as I know, they've given that much or more every year since.

As I recall, our Excellence Program came to about \$125,000 the first year. We passed \$300,000, which is the figure that Dr. Haskew had picked out of the air, in about the third year. Now we are up to around \$2 million and going strong. I myself give a lot; not a whole lot because I haven't got a whole lot.

I guess there are many more things I could say about the Development Program. We authorized a director of the Development Program and several people thought they could do it. Mel Straus came to see me once and told me he could head up the Gift Program. And I talked with Jim Triolo, the development man at Austin. They've had a terrific program down through the years. They'd get better than \$10 million in the days when we were starting. That is obviously more than we'll ever get. I asked him to see Straus and see if he would be the proper man. Triolo came back, says, "Absolutely not. He's the worst person

to do it, because he's so egotistical. The Development Program has got to be headed by somebody that's self-effacing and quiet. His ego is not involved in anything. Straus exudes ego. Every word he speaks is grounded in a colossal ego." He says, "The man they need is Steele Jones, the fellow who works in your information section there. He's the type of guy you need. He isn't argumentative." Well, that fit me to a T, because Steele's as smart as a whip.

Well, let's let that get it for today.

J: Let's see, the other day we were speaking about the Excellence Program, and I just wanted to know if you had any other comments you wanted to make about that before we went on to something else.

R: I think not. I don't recall having been conscious of omitting anything.

J: The next thing that we have here that you wanted to talk about was the Hoover House.

R: It was my idea in the first place. Someone told me that the Hoovers were not enchanted with the house, they didn't want to live in it because it cost so much money to keep it going. And I established contact with Ricky Feuille, husband of Lou Ann Hoover, the only daughter of Bob Hoover. Jack Vowell told me that Bob Hoover bid the Hoover House in on a government sale for \$10,000. Sometime, I don't know when, it was before my time, the house was built by a man who was State Senator and Mayor of El Paso, Mayor Dudley, and Dudley built the house in 1920 or thereabouts.

Incidentally, I must pause parenthetically to tell you about Mrs. Dudley. She gave us a silver service that she had used in the house when she lived there. She lived to be a very old woman in a small town in New York, I don't know where in New York, but in the state of New York. And before her death, we were in the Hoover House and she gave us her silver service, and we corresponded with her.

The house ultimately came into the hands of a Mexican, a rich Mexican named Blanco, and the government got a judgment against him and for fear of having to do prison time, Blanco just decamped and went back to Mexico. And that's how the government got title to Hoover House, and they had a sale and Bob Hoover bought the house. He lived there



for several years, and Mrs. Hoover and Joe Hoover, Joe and Mary Hoover, were living in the Hoover House at the time I had tackled Ricky Feuille with the proposition to let us trade him the Donny-Brook home for the Hoover House. I think it was a fair swap.

J: That was the President's home at that time?

R: Up on Donnybrook. I can't call the number anymore. It was a fine, luxurious house, a splendid residence, but not at all fitted for my conception of a college president's home. It was the house that was bought for a president's home when Joe Smiley was first president at El Paso. That is a long story. The President's home was an old house on University Avenue, called College Avenue in those days, and sat where the Liberal Arts building is now. In the early days of Texas Western, story has it that a bowdy house was operating out of the house that later became the President's home. They had to move out of that one, and Joe Smiley, while he was president, got the house on Donnybrook. And the former bawdy house was torn down and they built the Liberal Arts building on the site of it. It would be just across the street from the Union, now taken up with the easternmost section, the newer section, of the Union building.

Well, Ricky disapproved my proposition. There's always a question in the Legislature when some president comes out trying to get himself a house. I didn't feel that way about the Hoover House. I have what I think is the appropriate attitude toward the Hoover House, toward a president's home--namely, it's a public building. Neither of my two successors, Templeton nor Smiley, had, I think, the proper attitude about a President's home. It's not a place for the President to live in in splendid luxury, it's a public building that the faculty uses

along with the president. That's my theory. Mrs. Ray, I think, was the most nearly perfect President's wife in handling of the President's home of any woman I have ever seen or heard about. I didn't bulldoze her into it. She had the same idea I did. And I don't think she just got it from me, I think she knew instinctively, from her years as a faculty wife, how the President's wife properly should act. At all events, she would work with the ladies, help them put on their parties at the Hoover House or whatever. She used to complain to me somewhat bitterly, saying that the State got two people to work for my salary. But she did it right, dadburn it, just exactly right.

We, Ricky and I, couldn't get together. He had another proposition. I don't recall it precisely, but it involved a substantial difference in the Donnybrook house value and the Hoover House; but we had no loose money. Finally, one day Ricky called me and said, "Let's talk." He came up with the idea that the four heirs of old Bob Hoover (he died the month I moved to El Paso)--Joe Hoover, Louie Hoover (Louisiana Hoover, Mrs. Hoover), and the three kids, Joe and Bob Jr., and Ricky's wife and their mother, all could take a three-year allowance on the gifts on their income taxes, and the three of them were agreed to give the house to the University for our president's home.

One day Templeton's administrative assistant, Joy Riley, telephoned me in my office to ask me if the Hoovers, Mrs. Hoover, when she gave us the Hoover House, had decreed that the Hoover House would always be used for the Women's Club parties. Templeton wasn't about to do it; he was a palace dweller. Mrs. Ray not only would move aside and let them do it, but she'd help them plan the damn party. Well, Templeton didn't want to, Mrs. Templeton wasn't going to do it at all, and they called

me and asked me if Mrs. Hoover stipulated that the annual party would be held at Hoover House. I told them, "No, she didn't stipulate anything. She gave us Hoover House as a home for the presidents of UTEP and that's all."

Well, I've rambled about Hoover House. One other point, the most distinctive room in Hoover House was the basement underneath the dining room.

J: Why?

R: It was a secret room. There was a trap door through the middle of the dining room floor. You'd go down a ladder to an old bare rock, unimproved room. There were big rocks on the floor. Someone told me that Mayor Dudley dreaded the coming of Prohibition and wanted a place to hide his whiskey. But the secret room showed no signs of use of any kind. It was enclosed on four sides by twelve inch thick concrete. They had to cut through that from the basement to install the air conditioning. I never could get Mrs. Ray to go down there to see it. She said I had read too many mystery stories to be trusted. (Laughter) And she never did. I went several times. And that room turned out to be the only unoccupied space big enough for the air conditioning system. We lived in the house amongst all the filth, primarily because there was a delay. We couldn't get an appropriation through, to be permitted to use the proceeds of the sale of the Donnybrook House for the air conditioning and all the other improvements of Hoover House.

No one person named it Hoover House, it just had been called that in the neighborhood. It is much superior to all the other houses in the neighborhood and was a landmark. They made that official and called it the Hoover House. Mrs. Hoover and Joe and his family moved out, they left the dining room furniture. Have you ever seen it?

J: No, I've never been in there.

R: It's not what you might call antique furniture, but it is old. Hoover bought it, I was told, in New Orleans, and shipped it here. But Mrs. Hoover was not ready at the time she moved out to give that furniture to the University, but she said we could go ahead and use it. Nobody anywhere around had any money (we didn't have it) and maybe we'd have to lay out a fund that would get it. Louisiana Hoover, Louie, had contracted cancer and was in a bad way. She was living catty-corner across the street from Hoover House in an apartment house, an old cheese box duplex. But she was happy there, in her old neighborhood, and she was living there. I asked Ricky did she have some use for that furniture, or had she made up her mind that she would give it to us. He said, "I don't know. There is no way to find out except for you to go ask her."

So I went to see her in her apartment. This was maybe two or three weeks before she died. I had no idea she was that sick, but she was. She was in pain when I was there with her, and as soon as I spoke my business, she said, "Oh no, I have intended for a long time for the College to have that furniture." So she gave us twelve chairs and the big dining table. I had a feeling of guilt later on for imposing on a woman so deathly ill, but truly, I have to plead innocent because I didn't know that she was in such bad shape. And I can understand why Ricky didn't want to tackle her with a piece of business himself, knowing the situation.

At any rate, we got the furniture. The delay came in financing it. We were held up, as I said, because we had to have money to redo the house. I knew if I asked the Legislature for that money we wouldn't

get it because there's a bias always. But the money used for the purchase of the Donnybrook house was not the state's money to begin with, it was Cotton Estate earnings. We paid I think \$65,000 for the house, the College did, before my time. And when the Board of Regents and the State Legislature approved our acceptance of the house, by that action, they authorized us to sell the other house. And we had a bill before the Legislature at the time we had already moved into the Hoover House that would allow us to use the proceeds of the price of the Donnybrook house to carry on improvements.

We had that money some two months before old Mr. Thornton Hardy, who was recently retired from the Board of Regents, wrote a two-page personal letter to every member of the Board of Regents decrying the acceptance of the Hoover House. I don't know what the letter contained but it was opposed. Vice Chancellor Haskew told me about it. All I know is it held us up for two months. And when the whole case cleared up finally, we were given Board approval. I don't know the contents of the Hardy letter, but Hardy didn't like me and my wife and he did like Joe and Mary Smiley. There's no reason for his not liking Jettie and me, he was just a bullheaded old man. At all events, I knew at that time I couldn't successfully ask the Board of Regents to let me live in more fitting circumstances while the Hoover House was getting redone, so we lived through the torn-down plaster and dirt and everything else.

The Duke of Paducah, a member of the House, had a vendetta against me also. He had come out to El Paso one day, about a year or two before, as a member of the House and Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, working for the election of George Cook to the State Senate in the place of the man who's still State Senator Pete Snelson, one of

our TWC graduates. I called in some of the deans for the Duke of Paducah, a member of the House of Representatives, who was nicknamed the Duke of Paducah because he comes from the little plains town of Paducah. He snagged onto our little bill that authorized us to use the proceeds of the sale of the Donnybrook house to rework the Hoover House; he pigeon-holed our bill.

Ned Blaine was a member of the Legislature and I entrusted him and others to steer our bill through the Legislature. It got away from him and he didn't know where it was; it was hidden. Pete Snelson was our Senator. I got Pete Snelson to go over to the House with me, to the chairman of the conference committee. I told him that it was not state appropriated money that was in the Donnybrook house in the first place. It was estate money, the Cotton Estate, that bought the Donnybrook house. And he, I can still hear his deprecating chuckle when I was giving him the fast talk, and he said, "All right, Doctor." But during the time the bill was held up by the Hardy letter and the Duke of Paducah.

J: What was his real name, the Duke? Do you recall?

R: Yeah, his name was Bill Heatly, a disgrace for Texas.

J: That's an interesting nickname.

R: He was from Paducah and was notorious for hateful and spiteful shenanigans. Well, that's in the papers that you all have, this whole story is, and I told it at leisure without being under pressure. He was, the Duke of Paducah, was an unconscionable man. He blamed me for a newspaper story in El Paso telling of his try to bulldoze our support for George Cook against Pet Snelson, who wouldn't kiss Connally's behind. Ned Blaine told me later (he was with the Duke's party) that he later made the same pitch before a downtown group, including newspaper reporters. We were not guilty of his charges. He had a brother in the Department of

Prisons and Corrections and who was drawing the salary of a psychologist for prisoners, who had not one scintilla of qualification for the job. He was sore at me because he came out to tell us we should abandon our support of Pete Snelson and work for George Cook, another member of the House. We were all for Pete Snelson. He was one of our most illustrious graduates. But we didn't take political positions. I never expressed a preference for or against George Cook, and I wouldn't. None of the officers of the College would any more than I would. Pete Snelson was re-elected happily.

The Duke came out here working for Governor Connally, and Governor Connally could get along with George Cook better than he could with Pete Snelson. Pete Snelson told me later he was not for or against Connally either. He just wanted Connally to speak to them about it and do what all of them agreed was best for the state." But Connally made a deal with the Duke, and the Duke came in to tell us that we supported. I'm telling you in just about these words, in the President's conference room, "You're going to support George Cook or you're not going to get anything from the Appropriations Committee next time." He said that to us. We held our peace. I would have been speaking to him and Ned Blaine, one of our local representatives, if anybody spoke, and I didn't say a word. I'm not about to promise an unprincipled legislator that I am going to swing a deal with him. And we never spoke anything except courteous words to him when he was there. And he went downtown before a business group and spoke the same words with a journalist, newspaper reporter, present in the room at the time he talked. That's where his story got out and that's where the newspapers were critical in the story about the unprincipled behavior of the Duke of Paducah. He's no longer in the Legislature, thank God. They had him

right, but he picked the wrong governor once and lost the chairmanship. I don't know whether he ever got it back or not, but he's gone now. Well, I think that about covers all the points that I can identify.

J: Another thing that you've got on your list is about the Faculty Senate and some things that the Faculty Senate was involved in when you were President up there.

R: Control of the curriculum at a college or university represents an area that is no man's land for a college president. The faculty, number one, can be depended on--don't put it that way--they will take it and control it. A president can recommend only. Matter of fact, Templeton's trouble with the faculty stems from his attempts to make decisions that the faculty was going to make regardless of him, and he got in duteh. The faculty voted that they would be glad to see him resign. When I got here, the Faculty Senate was one year old. My first year was the first year of effective operation of the Faculty Senate. Just hadn't had a faculty organization of any kind before that.

In my eight years in the presidency, I disagreed with the faculty senate only once. We had an understanding that the minutes would be formally kept and submitted for my signature, and I recall disagreeing with it only one time. That one time was a vote on the question of parking stickers. The business office had gone out of its way, I think properly, to check on the use of parking stickers. Most faculty members have two cars, one for the professors to come to school in and one for the use of the rest of the family. The rule that raised the suspicion of the business office provided that a faculty member would be issued two car stickers so he could put a parking sticker in each one of his cars and thus cause no difficulty when he got there with the second



car. Except, I don't recall how many, but an appreciable percentage of all the requested second stickers were on the campus moving in traffic between the hours of nine and twelve every day. They got a record of Professor Whosits who had two stickers moving at the same time. He had a son or daughter on campus. After the survey, the Business Office provided that they had to buy the second sticker for how ever much, \$6 for the year, and the faculty rose up in rebellion and said, "No, we'll continue to do it the way we always have, where the faculty member gets two stickers."

That came to me for approval, and I got to the bottom of it and found that they were cheating. They really were using both cars on campus. The rationale was that it's a backup sticker, not that your son Jim is going to use it and you're going to use yours. So Gretchen Gabriel--she was the first woman chairman of the Faculty Senate, a big wheeler and dealer on the campus, in campus politics, and she was that year chairman of the Faculty Senate. I called her in and told her, "Here's the rationale for two stickers. Here's what the Business Office did of checking on the number and the use of cars. And this is what they tried to do to counter the abuse, and this is what the faculty did to reestablish its privilege. And I can't approve it. Isn't there something you can do?" She says, "Yes, I'll just get the Faculty Senate to undo, reconsider," and she did. That's the only faculty action that I ever disagreed with, never on an academic matter.

One time Dean Small and I got our heads together and produced a list of rules called a manual, we called it a manual--a list of rules under which the University would operate. It had twelve chapters. Two of those chapters were related to matters of interest to the faculty members, and the

other ten did not, as I recall. So we submitted the two chapters to the faculty. The faculty asked about the other ten. I explained, casually that we assumed the faculty would not be interested in them. Dean Small asked me if we could not withhold the other ten, and whether or not the faculty had a proper commission to involve itself in those ten. My response to him was, "The faculty concerns itself with whatever it damn well wants to. We don't tell the faculty what to do." So I gave them the other ten. They picked one or two points and we never had any trouble. But that faculty parking sticker was the only point in which I ever disagreed with the Faculty Council.

J: Well, you seem to have backed them up pretty well on other things that they came up with, or at least you had the same kind of thinking in a lot of things.

R: The fact of the matter is that my experience, a president learns that it's bad medicine to disagree with the faculty. They are not going to decide everything that is truly debatable, anyway. It's an exercise. I don't mean to say that they don't decide important things, because they do, but they are not debatable. It takes an officious president to try to run them. For example, Templeton, this scandalous thing that happened where they bent a rule and let Nate Archibald graduate from the University, the president shouldn't have been in that in the first place. It wasn't any of his goddamned business whether or not the man graduated.

The Sims case was comparable to the Archibald case, came up in my day. A 50-year-old man went to school here and passed everything but analytical geometry. A member of the Board of Regents, an old buddy of this man's, asked me if we couldn't let that man take some other course because he had come back three times to take mathematics and failed it

every time. I told him, "I'm sorry. Not a thing I can do. That's not something I can do, that's for the faculty to do, and the faculty has already made its rules." Its rule was that if you bust a course for the third time, you can never take it again. Well, he can't graduate from this institution, and there's nothing I can do. I could have done the same thing Templeton did. I could have wrangled with the registrar, and if he were a fool, he would have gone with me as our registrar did do in the Nate Archibald case. And it is important. You simply cannot.

I'll give you another for instance. Frank Owen, when he was our State Senator back in the days of old Pete Snelson, he was our senator at the time. He came into my office with a boy, a recent high school graduate from Anthony, I think it was. Not Anthony, the little town up on the state line.

J: Canutillo, maybe?

R: Canutillo. And the boy's father. The senator and the son and the father came to my office protesting the boy's exclusion from admission. He just was not eligible for admission, and they were appealing to me to order his admission. I called the registrar, who was later Superintendent of Schools, Whitaker, and asked him, "Why have you turned this boy down?" He said, "He graduated from Canutillo High School, and Canutillo has got one less year of school than all the other accredited high schools." In other words, it's a three year high school. The State Senator was standing right there. I said, "Mr. Whitaker, have I ever ordered you to admit a student you didn't think was admissible?" He says, "No, Dr. Ray, you haven't." I said, "Well, I'm not going to now." With the Senator right there. I think I'd have lasted longer if I'd have done like

Templeton, I don't know. But I couldn't bend the rules. The senator had been appealed to by the boy's father and he came to my office. He was adamant, he came in demanding that they boy be admitted. I let him go back home and reflect on the fact that the state senators don't decide the admission policies of colleges. He was as sorry a state senator I ever saw anyway in Kentucky, Alabama, Maryland and Texas.

J: How about some of the outside activities that the Faculty Senate was involved in, if any?

R: I don't think they were. I don't know of any involvement of the senate in outside activities. I don't know how that got on the list. Let me look at it.

J: Was there something special you might have had in mind?

R: No, it wouldn't be the Faculty Senate. It would be faculty members, individual persons, in outside activities. The organized Faculty Senate would have no outside activities. A faculty member might very well properly have outside activities. I'll tell you the case, this is not my presidency. We adopted some rules that were faulty--they leaked--in my day, that a man could engage in outside activities at his own discretion when it involved property that he owned. The leak came after my day when Dean Small started running a saloon. It wasn't any of my doing and I've never been involved in it. In other words, if he owns a saloon, he can do anything he wants to. That was the rule we had. He ran this saloon for many years up to his retirement from the University. Matter of fact, it's still running. I don't think my conscience would have left me alone if I had been in Templeton's position for eight years with an official of the University operating a saloon. Small asked me many times to come by for a drink. I never went inside the place. It's not moral. It's just a misuse of position. I'd take a drink of whiskey with the

next guy, but I won't countenance the type of thing Small did. Again, it's not moral. He's not going to hell because he did that, in my judgement. It's just wrong for a University official to run a saloon.

J: Why don't we close it down for today?

Side 2  
November 19, 1981

J: This interview, I think, is just about going to wrap everything up.

Offhand, is there anything specific you would like to talk about that we hadn't talked about before, that I hadn't asked you about?

R: No, I haven't anything. My head is full of recollections about everything in years past. One thing that old people are well-equipped to do is to recollect. And I could talk from now on, but I would have to have some directions to encourage me to do it. I don't have anything specific.

J: Well, how do you think UTEP has moved up, developed, since you've been away from the University? How have you seen it change, and do you think it's for the better?

R: I think a great many assumptions and commitments were tampered with in Templeton's day. Templeton was not an educator, in my definition, and many things were done which militated against the prime assumption of the University. It's not that he's a crook or a dog. It's that he wasn't of the proper temperament for a University president, in my judgment. Templeton would have made an excellent corporation president for a hamburger outfit that ran a hundred hamburger joints from here to Los Angeles and New York. He would have made them good money. He is an able man, but he wasn't a university president. Matter of fact, he started out in the age-old pattern in Texas of a man in education. He started out as a football coach and moved from there to administration, public

school administration. When I first knew him he was a superintendent of schools and, wearing a minor and different hat, president of the junior college, which was a part of the school district. The school board ran both the junior college and the public schools. And he used that as a stepping stone to get into university work.

J: Where was that?

R: Somewhere around Houston. I can't call the name of the district anymore. I knew it at the time. I knew him. I was president of the junior college in Amarillo at the time I knew him. I don't want to malign the man, and I don't intend this as such, not by any stretch. He did a lot of fine things.

J: What areas do you feel that UTEP should try to improve upon or develop? What kinds of things do you wish they could develop, let's say, in this next decade? What kinds of study programs or things of that nature would you like to see, if you have any preference?

R: Well, I'm not loaded for such a thing. I'm not a big planner or dreamer. I'm a man who likes to keep his nose to the grindstone and continue to play it out along well-proven lines. One thing is to improve the student body, another is to improve the faculty; and these are things that require constant application. To improve the library, to improve the physical plant, to get it in better shape to do the job; and that calls for the application of continued loving attention, and it has to be loving. If it's the hamburger profit motive, hamburger stand making money for the company, that's not what I'm talking about. You have to be a man who is committed to university work.

I think, for example, Monroe is committed. It would surprise me if

Monroe, for example, started a move to reduce admission standards at the University in response to the call for more money. We would get more money if we had more students. Okay, let's get some half-wits in here and build up the student body that way. It's a simple deducible fact that if you've got a university class of twenty students, and ten of them shouldn't be there, the standards of the institution will be lower. If you've got a faculty member who is not well-trained and is not imbued with proper attitudes, the institution will be cheaper. If you've got a library with paperback books in it and no substance in the library holdings, you'll have a cheap university.

Well, I would plan and hope and strive for the opposite of that, and I think Monroe would. I don't think Templeton necessarily would. Too many things happened in those days to indicate the contrary. He got fouled up with the faculty, that's one thing--one big, overwhelming thing. Any president who fails in that department is not a great educator. And we had him for as long as they had me. I did some things that I'm not proud of, but it was because in each case I knew it was wrong, shouldn't have been done, and did it reluctantly because I had to. But my commitment was, to put it in the vernacular of the old Southern evangelical preacher, "The Lord was with me in my heart." (Chuckles) What else you got?

J: Well, I thought kind of nice way to end our interview would be if you can give us some of the funniest experiences that you have had, or amusing anecdotes that you have from your days of the Presidency.

R: There was a head of the Department of Art. (I won't need to call his name, if I do inadvertently, we'll ignore it) who was a dishonest man.

He came here from the University of Tampa. He was a good artist, painter, but had acquisitive instincts. The word kept coming to me that he had in his home a coffee table about like my coffee table here in the room, only a foot longer. It had huge legs, about that big around, obviously had been sawed off. It was recognized by his callers repeatedly. It was in his living room in his home. It was recognized by many different people who came to me and told me that this man, this professor, had appropriated a huge table out of the Art Department and sawed the legs off of it and made a coffee table out of it in his home. Other things surfaced. A clock disappeared and was reported as having been in his home. It was an expensive clock, cost, oh, a hundred dollars, a wall clock.

The rumors increased in such numbers that finally, one day I asked the Dean of Arts and Sciences and the Business Manager to walk with me over to the Art Department to confront the professor about all the rumors I was hearing, and ask him to accompany me to his house and let us three interlopers observe whether or not the coffee table was really in his living room and was really the huge table that the Art Department used to use for displays. He refused. I was welcome to come to his house anytime but not under the circumstances of suspicion like this. There wasn't anything for us to do but to come back to our offices, I couldn't go to his house. I think I would have recognized the table, but I couldn't go to his house if he wouldn't let me in. I'm not a sheriff. (Chuckles) So, we came back to the office. That was it. Next move was somebody else's, not mine. I can't hound a thief out of the community.

The next morning, they found the disappearing table and clock and some other things in the Union Building, in the ladies' restroom in the Union Building. He panicked when he saw we were after the table.



Then one of the custodians in the Union Building, unbeknownst to me-- I did not precipitate this development but it happened--the plant maintenance people down on the far edge of the campus, got a copy of the Flowsheet, found this man's picture and showed it to the custodian. "That is the man I saw bringing that table into the Union Building last night just before we locked up." That was the Art Department head.

About that time, and this is what's amusing (I'm telling you too long a story), what was amusing was that I got a letter from the president of the University of Tampa addressed to West Texas College, Amarillo. It was relayed to me. I don't know how it reached me, I really don't, it wasn't addressed to me by name or even to the right university. The letter said, "A man by the name of /the Chairman/ resigned from the University of Tampa go to your University a year ago. We haven't heard from him or seen him, but there disappeared a motion picture projector at the time he left. We wonder if you know anything about it." I told the Dean of Arts, Dr. Small. He was just starting out, he wore himself out there a long time ago. But anyhow, Small then told the Art people, and one of the professors in the Art Department says, "Yes, that professor, when he got here, had a motion picture projector that he didn't want, and I traded him a shotgun for it. I had no need for the good shotgun I had, and I traded that to him for a projector." "Go home," the Dean told him, "look it over, and see if you can find any property tag on it with the University of Tampa." He did and it did. It had belonged to the University of Tampa.

Well, there was bad blood in the department. This gentleman had other failings; he was a highly contentious man. And the result was that he and one of the Art Department men had ceased to

speak to one another. The girls in the President's office had known that bad things were developing from the long faces that this man and his colleagues had on when they walked in our place, and watched everything guiltily as it transpired. The upshot of that was that we shipped the projector back to the University of Tampa, since it was surely their property, and the culprit, the perpetrator of these crimes, was persuaded to give the shotgun back to the man he'd traded the stolen projector for, and to bring the shotgun back and give it to the man he wasn't speaking to. He couldn't do that, so he brought the shotgun to the Dean of Liberal Arts. One of the girls ran from the front office into the President's office, back to me just trembling, scared to death. "We don't know what's happening, she said, "but the Art Department Chairman just walked into Dr. Small's office with a shotgun. (Laughter) I told them it was the stolen shotgun, he wasn't going to shoot Dr. Small.

The upshot of it was then that I asked the Vice President to sit with me as a witness, when I called the offending professor in. And I told him that there was enough substance to these charges that it made it impossible for us to go on with him, and that his tenure with us was going to have to terminate at the end of that semester. That was about this time of year, well up towards Christmas, so he'd just finish the short part of a semester and leave. He asked what could he do to counter such proceedings? I said, "Well, we'd have to appoint a committee to go into it, a committee of the faculty, three full professors just like you, the same rank you are, not in your department, to hear all testimony that has been developed and hear your response to it, and then the decision is theirs whether my ultimatum to you here stands or falls.

I can't fire you out of hand, but a committee can, a faculty committee."

He said, "I think I'm feeling a little bit sick to my stomach," and rose and left without saying any more. And he was gone the next semester. I've never heard of him again.

J: So, he just left on his own?

R: No, I told him, that was my decision. He could appeal from my decision in that way. He didn't appeal. He was sick to his stomach. He didn't want to appear before a faculty committee. But things like that happen all the time. I remember one morning Dr. Leech, my vice president, said, "We've had all kinds of cases in this office except sodomy." And I said, "You'd better hush or we'll have one soon." And we did! (Laughter)

One of the most comical things that never happened to me, the Business Manager was inclined to be bureaucratic, Mr. St. Clair. He wasn't inclined to be dictatorial, he just didn't mess with students. They wasted his time. He'd get forty appeals to one thing. We had constant trouble coming out of what we had then called Vets' Village. It was a species of World War II shacks over where the tall dormitories now are. Students lived there. One boy, I recall, bragged to me that he made \$10,000 the year before and carried a full load at UTEP, working on his outside jobs and just barely attending his classes. But all kinds of trouble came out of Vet's Village. The Business Manager would kick him out if he wasn't taking enough courses or wasn't passing his work, and all other comparable matters. I thought the Business Manager was being high-handed, and so I brought those cases into my office. They ran me crazy for three days with the damndest collection of problems you ever saw, and I promptly got rid of them. And there were some preecedures in

connection with the business office that could be appealed from, but I quickly learned that I couldn't handle all the appeals.

The thing that precipitated the trouble was a dog ordinance. We had in the contract a requirement that you couldn't have a pet dog in the dormitory. It was just a shack anyway, no reason in the world why you couldn't keep a pet. Even if he pissed on the floor or out in the hall, it wouldn't matter, nobody would care. It was just a hovel in their eyes. They all felt that way. A pet dog bit a small child one day and they had an uproar, and that's what got me in. On leaving town by air during this period, I ran into a girl who knew me by sight. She was out at the airport shipping her pet mongrel to her mother and father in Philadelphia because she couldn't bear to turn him over to the dog pound. And I went around the Maypole for three days over the dog ordinance. I never did disagree with the dog ordinance, they just had to let them go. It was in black and white in the contract they signed with the University when they moved in that they would never own any pets.

Sometime later, we had the same kind of contract with the kids in Vets' Village over by the gymnasium. One morning, I was out walking early, and the cutest little girl you ever saw, a student, ran out of Vets' Village, "Here Magdalena," or whatever her pet's name was, calling here dog. A little Chihuahua puppy came to her call, and she took it back in the dormitory. And there I, in my full majesty, monarch of all I surveyed, witnessed the girl take that damn dog in there. (Chuckles) I said, "I wouldn't touch that with a ten foot pole." (Laughter) That little girl would shoot herself if I seized on that dog or seized on that opportunity to harm that dog. That's another amusing one.

Once, another one, a history professor named Trexler took it upon himself to organize a group of fourteen people, about six of them were students, and he was an assistant professor, to paint some signs and march downtown in the Plaza in protest against the Vietnam War. A good many people were displeased, including me. He didn't have to do it. There wasn't any law, any compulsion, except he was a troublemaker in my book. I talked to him, pleaded with him, asked him not to do it. He did it anyway. Then later, this is what's so funny, he and two or three of the students were working over on the big, outside patio at the Union passing out pamphlets in protest against the war. There wasn't any reason he shouldn't do that. I wouldn't even have objected if I had full authority. Written materials nobody is going to argue with. At any rate, I went over when I saw a mob of students gathering, pushing and shoving and noisy. It was in the middle of the school day. I figured it was my responsibility to go over and warn the objectors that there's nothing wrong with passing out pamphlets. They've got a right to do it, and you've no right to interfere. I stood up on the table and made an impassioned speech at that point, to no avail obviously. The crowd was growing and possibly at its height. There were two thousand students. It completely filled the patio, and it overflowed. I came back to my office and looked out the window, and the crowd was about twice as big as it was when I first went over there. I said, "All I did was to draw a crowd." (Laughs) I can't think of any other ones.

J: One thing I'd like to ask also, if you were to describe how you felt about your administration at UTEP, how would you describe it? What did it mean to you, what do you hope it meant to the student body or to the University itself, the faculty?

R: Well, I'll have to indulge in some immodesty because I think I got more things done than any of my successors or predecessors--more of the right things done. We limited student admission, later decimated by Templeton. We had the Mission 73, which was a Board of Visitors from the citizenry of El Paso to help us devise or phrase a statement of where we were and where we ought to go. It was in 1963, and our mission was, where should we be in 1973? Thereafter we started raising money for gifts. I think I was the university president at UTEP that was in, far and away, the largest number of business offices in El Paso, went in asking for money for the Excellence Program. The Mission '73 group report called for \$225,000 a year contributing to the support of the University by gifts. We long ago topped the annual mark of a million dollars. These are some of the things. So, you let me be immodest.

I won't say I was the best 'cause I doubtless wasn't, but I was the most effective president UTEP ever had. We got things done. One of my colleagues later worked in my office as a vice president. I asked him one time, "Why did you accept a job at Texas Western with all the chances you had elsewhere?" And he said, "I came primarily because you were President. I had heard it said that things happen where Joe Ray was in charge." And I think that's the nub of it. We didn't stand back and wait for somebody else to do it.

Elkins was a good academic man, sound. I can't point to a single thing that happened in his years as President of the College. The same thing's true...Joe Smiley had two cracks at it. He didn't do a goddamn thing either time. There is not a thing you can point to either time that Joe Smiley came to this school that changed when he was here for the better.

We won the National Championship in basketball, so that's no great shakes. (Laughs) I was proud of it. But we played better basketball. We won the Sun Bowl the year we were in it, so no great shakes. Now, we don't win any ball games. We won them in my day, by God, 'cause we were willing to do what it took to get things rolling.

J: Well, what's the difference then? You say you were willing to do things, but compared to now, what isn't being done? Was it the people involved, were they more committed? What was the combination of things that made things move?

R: One of my bosses one time telephoned when something had gone wrong, and says, "Joe, I'm mad as a boiled owl." "What's the matter?" "Have you been rushing in again where angels fear to tread?" (Chuckles) He was wrong at the time. He was bellyaching for something, but he was wrong, in my judgement, till this day. He was wrong to call me because his objections to the thing I'd done were not sound. He was a University President when I was a Dean. But the lump of it is an old hackneyed phrase, I didn't hesitate to move in when something needed to be done. Witness the fact that the business manager and the dean and I went over to see the Art professor. There wasn't anything we could do. Chances were better that he wasn't going to take us to his house anyway. When we had to do something, damn it, we did it.

J: What did being the President of this University mean to you personally? After you were through with your presidency, how did you feel?

R: It was the biggest job I ever had. When the chancellor of the University System telephoned me in Amarillo at home and told me they wanted me to come to meet with the Board of Regents, I ran down the hall yelling to my wife, "Logan Wilson, the chancellor, called me and is talking about moving me, to El Paso, which is the best state college in this state."

It was because it was affiliated with the University. I worked for him and his successor, about as any intelligent man would work for his boss. I would sit in my office and make a list of things that I needed to talk to him about, and when the list got long enough I'd go to Austin and talk to him. I was as dutiful as I know how to be. I was never knowingly headstrong, determined to do something that central administration didn't want to do or the Board of Regents didn't want me to do. The chancellor asked me one time if I'd like the additional duty and the addition title of Vice Chancellor. I told him, "I have no use for it. I'm where I ought to be and doing what I need to do." Those observations bear upon the question you asked. I was never unbearably egotistical. I had a good opinion of myself. I'm a man of strong intelligence who does the best he can with what he's got.

For example, take the Hoover House. This is one of the things we did. Somebody told me that Mrs. Hoover was having trouble financing that big old house. I went to see Ricky Feuille, her son-in-law, and he and I worked over a period of two years to get the title of the Hoover House transferred to the University of Texas at El Paso. It took two laws to pass through the Texas Legislature to get it done. The second one was in doldrums and was defeated, when I went to Austin on a special trip and got it raked out of the fire. Then we sold the President's home up on Donnybrook to get money to air condition the Hoover House. I didn't leave it alone. I would worry over something and work on it until finally we got it through. Witness the fact that I wasn't too proud. We had to sell the Donnybrook house and get the money before we could improve the Hoover House. My wife and I lived in the Hoover House while they were tearing down the wallpaper, every damn room, and sand on the floor. You



could walk through the house and see where you brushed the dust off of it.

During that period Mary Hoover hadn't heard anything about what had been done to the Hoover House. She came to the front door to ask if she could see what we'd done. That's Joe Hoover's wife. Admidst the trash and the dust, I opened the door. "Come on in." She wouldn't come in when she saw it. What had happened was that her uncle, our former board member, Thornton Hardie, had gummed up the details. I'm too bitter about that, I oughtn't tell you. But at any rate, when it was all over, we had Mrs. Hoover and the wives and husbands of her three childreenn to dinner at the Hoover House. It was at that luncheon--my wife still tells the story--it was at that luncheon for the Hoovers, Joe Hoover graduated from Texas A and M and Ricky Feuille told Joe an Aggie story at the dinner table. The aggie had been on a train on a trip, and the man talking with him on the trip concluded that he was a Texas Aggie. And he said, "Well, how did you know I was a Texas Aggie?" And he says, "Because we saw your class ring when you were picking your nose." (Laughter)

Well, I don't know. I just went to work every day, early, and stayed there till quitting time and did things that I found time to do. Sometimes there were things that I myself had dug up, like serving as an Appeals Court for the Vets' Village people. I buried it again very soon. (Chuckles) I would go to faculty committee meetings. I attended the Athletic Council meetings regularly, and the building committee. I attended the graduate faculty when it was established, the meetings of the graduate faculty, until finally I was insulted at the meeting. A bunch of them were picking on me. I lost countenance and realized that I

shouldn't be there anyway and left. But I found things to do and did the best things I knew how. Sometimes I would be rebuffed.

It occurred to me one time that the Faculty Council could appoint a committee to explore the community activities that members of the faculty engaged in--church work, whatever--and it would make good talk for community relations. We are not a bunch of robots. We're people, we have kids in school, we go to church, we belong to lots of clubs, I got that idea item recommended to the Chairman of the Faculty Council. A movement against it started in the Faculty Council on the ground that the President was trying to gain a foothold in the control of the lives of the members of the faculty. No further thought from mine could have been dreamed up. I was looking at it, never did enter my mind that a protest like that would come, but it did come. I said, "Forget it, I'm sorry I thought of it." (Chuckles)

J: The things you've talked about, they seem to have worked well and you were always working hard. From what you tell me, everything just worked very well while you were up there.

R: Well, what you must do as an administrator is to keep your irons in the fire and watch when one of them gets hot, and what's next on that one. That's what I did--just watched the pot boil, and when it boiled, poured the instant coffee.

J: Well, Dr. Ray, I just want to thank you for all these interviews. I don't know how many times now that I've been here, but every time I've learned something new and it's been a great experience talking to you. I appreciate you doing these interviews for me.

R: Well, I've enjoyed it. And if you think of something else you want me to talk about, well, we'll do it again.

J: Sounds great to me. Thank you very much.