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## **Interview no. 939**

Melvin Potter Straus

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**Interview with Melvin Potter Straus**

by Scott White

November 17<sup>th</sup>, 1998

**Interview with Melvin Potter Straus**  
**Professor Emeritus of Political Sciences at the University of Texas at El Paso**  
by Scott White, UTEP Graduate Student  
Recorded November 17, 1998, in Benedict Hall of the UTEP Campus

SW: This is an interview with Melvin P. Straus, the interviewer is Scott White, it is November 17<sup>th</sup>, approximately two o'clock in the afternoon.

MS: Are you sure that's a sufficiently sensitive microphone? You have an instrument on there that shows you if...

SW: Unfortunately it's fairly rudimentary, but I have tested it out and I've walked across the room and back and so...

MS: Oh, well!

SW: It does pick up.

Just to begin with, we talked about this before, and, as I said, I have looked at some of your papers. And from looking at that it was hard to get to the juicy stuff in the Faculty Senate.

MS: Yes.

SW: So what I was thinking is perhaps if we could just go through and do some of your own recollections, and then at some point we might then. If there's enough, come back and do a second interview just on the Faculty Senate.

MS: So you want to discuss the politics of the faculty senate, the politics of academe in part, rather than the public... Well, this is public government too, but rather than the state local and national.

SW: At some point... I'd just back up just a little bit. Part of it is just going back and beginning

with your own history, and where you got involved.

MS: Ok.

SW: I just want to go all the way back and just, for everyone's edification, where were you born?

MS: Chicago. And indeed I was going to raise my early political involvement, because from that I derive the values which I found you could not translate to the academic context without being disappointed. The values and the expectations.

I was born in Chicago in 1924, and my father brought me to the Regular Democrats Club of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Precinct of the 44<sup>th</sup> Ward on the day after my twelfth birthday, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of September of 1936. Roosevelt's second campaign was well under way by then. And my father in effect gave me to the party. [chuckles] My father had been a party worker — he died when I was fourteen, so he didn't have the opportunity to reveal whether he would have given as much time to politics as I have or not, even after years, but at least up to that time he had not given as much as it was to turn out that I was to the party.

My paternal grandfather was a party activist. When he came to the United States in 1887, at the age of 19 and alone, he rather naturally for one of his background affiliated, though he was not yet of voting (at age 19), and was not yet a citizen, with the Republican Party. It had been the anti-slavery party. It was the party which at that point, had a more nearly rational attitude towards labor organizations, it seemed to come closer to being the party of the people. For a young German socialist, who had come to the United States, having been forced to leave and go somewhere, in part because he was a socialist, that was an act of gravitation. I never met that grandfather, but my understanding is that time quickly showed him — not much time was necessary to show him — that the party basis of both the

major parties was changing, there was a factional realignment. He began to see more of the anti-immigration cartoons, the anti-German cartoons really ridiculing German people. Openly anti-Semitic cartoons that were emerging from the pens of those cartoonists who were republicans. He began to see what the change in the constellations of the two parties had made of them.

To switch: he was not happy with the Democrats either. To keep in their southern faction, and the south was essential to their stability and remained so, as you well know, for a very long time, he was not to happy with that, he was not to happy to be allied with the party of slavery, he didn't mind the rum, Romanism rebellion part [chuckles], it was just the slavery that bothered him. I am told. But he became a party activist before he was old enough to vote, before he was 21.

He worked briefly for the United States Custom Service, as a matter of fact. A sort of a gopher job. Then, through his devotion to Tam<sup>MA NY</sup>eny Hall, he came to New York. He came to the United States, through his devotion to Tam<sup>MA NY</sup>eny Hall and the perception of the leadership that this was a bright kid who could help return the neighborhoods, he made his way quickly in federal service, no longer in INS, and at the time of his death, was the executive director — that's not the right title, but the man in charge — of the old New York Harbor Commission. Now the New York Harbor Commission came to be not much once the Port of New York Authority was created. Once the Port of New York Authority was created, that's a federal entity, it's an inter-state entity really, excuse me, embracing three states. But the New York Harbor Commission was none the less preserved, municipalities don't destroy possible basis of patronage. But he was at the time of his death, the executive

director of the old New York Harbor Commission, and as there was as yet no Port of New York Authority. So he did well. He did well in the party, and in the respect he did well in the United States, though I gather the early years, were very difficult indeed, and one can only speculate what would have happened to him if he hadn't been subsidized, in part, by his absentee father-in-law, who was still in Germany.

When he had been betrothed to Amelia Loeb, as a child, and she was a still younger child, and when he was cast out by his own father for his views — my grandfather's views — which views if too widely known and too blatantly expressed might have, at least in my great grandfather's thoughts, caused him to lose those decided advantages, requisites and privileges which he enjoyed from the crown, and which his father and grandfather had enjoyed even before the unification of Germany from the king of Prussia, and seemingly — of course I never heard my great-grandfather's side of the story — seemingly because of that, Jacob Straus had to get the hell out there. But in any event he assumed that betrothal would be dead too. But the young ladies father appreciated his views, sent his little girl off to America to marry him, sent money too.

Well, that isn't telling you much about politics, except that it bespeaks the political background of the family.

So, on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of September, ninety hundred an thirty six, I was brought to that double store front property which had been rented by some Democrats in the 33<sup>rd</sup> precinct of the 44<sup>th</sup> ward, and given to the party, and my first duty was to sweep the floor. I had to be shown how to manipulate the broom. I guess I could see the operation and take the broom in two hands and move it, but apparently there's more to it than that. And I had to be shown

how to sweep the floor. I remember that. Soon I was promoted to filing the stencils, once it was realized I could be trusted with that, and running the mimeograph machine and other things. And I as I grew older in the service of the party I had somewhat greater responsibilities, but always those of a child, and a youth. When finally the party gave me a paid position at twenty-five cents an hour, when the minimum wage was twenty-five cents an hour — the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 had decreed the minimum wage be increased periodically until it would reach a whole forty cents an hour in 1942 or 44, I've forgotten which — so I was being well paid, for the party took care of its own. When my father died in my freshman year of high school in 1947 the party took greater care of me, they seemed to be making a point of insuring I was ok — and conferring with my mother my uncle (my mother's brother) stepped in and did many things which were in an effort to be sure I grew up a real red-blooded American boy, which I did not, I am happy to say — the party tried to just make sure we were ok. Among other things, knowing that I sought an appointment to the United States Military Academy, they arranged it. I could not pass the physical as it then existed, you had to have 20/20 eyes under refraction. Today that wouldn't mean a thing, but you had to, and that couldn't be bought, and that was that. But I have never forgotten the attempt.

I was the Cook County Scholar when I went down to the University of Illinois, that is to say each county in the state of Illinois may send one student on scholarship and other tuition to the University of Illinois. In those days it was \$110 a year. I realize that bought more than it does today, but even allowing for the present inflation, it's still low tuition. None the less, I was the Cook County Scholar, and so on.

I am trying to lay a foundation for loyalty to the party. There was indoctrination, it was not formal, only at times was I conscious of it. It didn't seem to come from any prescribed manual, but there was indoctrination. Obedience to your superiors in *The Organization*, we never called it the Kelly-Nash Machine, though the newspapers did. *The Organization*. Gratitude, I feel I have been reared so that I would experience and practice gratitude, but the party certainly reinforced that. And Loyalty. By all means, Loyalty. A deal was a deal, you don't even have to shake on something, just so you agree to it. But if you shake, that's much like inscribing your signature in blood. A deal is a deal, you don't undo it. If it was a bad deal, you grit your teeth and suffer. If those above you, in *The Organization*, appreciate what you have experienced by making a bad deal, they either conclude 'well, he's too damn stupid to advance because he'll make bad deals' or they'll conclude 'he's loyal.' One aspired to the second assessment. That becomes important in what I'll tell you of the politics of academe.

Now we worked within a context of pronounced power advantage with *The Organization*, of course it ran the county of Cook, not only Chicago. There were areas of suburban municipal governments from which it kept its hands (these were Republican suburbs), and yet, to the extent that those officials had anything to say there, it was the Kelly-Nash machine in action. It contributed mightily to the election of United States Senators from Illinois, could do it by itself because the population of Illinois was almost evenly divided between Cook County and what we call *down state*. *Down state* was basically Republican. Geographically, *down state* was in part up state, but anything above Cook County, or to its west, was still *down state*, so that certainly wasn't designated with precession. There were



pockets of Democratic strength *down state* too, but if you're gonna carry Cook County, well then the United States Senator or Governor...

So *the organization* determined the composition of the state Senate, so far as the Cook County delegation was to be served. The composition of the state House, approximately fifty percent of the seats of the United States Congress, and usually, most years, one out of the two United States Senatorial seats. The Illinois electoral vote is still courted, it was more so then; it was the second largest electoral vote in the union until after the war. It even had me performing the humble tasks, the hewing of wood and drawing of water, which were my lot. One had strong awareness of being part of a very powerful organization and one significant not only in the community, but in the United States of America. It was courted.

Now I will say, as I have not said aloud, strangely enough, until more recent years, that I realized that most of the men and the very few women with whom I associated in that organization and to whom I was subordinated, lacked veneer. A few whom one would see at a distance, had some respectable presence, but most did not. I did not think of them as criminal, and I doubt that few literally were. Few if any, literally were. And yet we grew up, and not only those of us who worked for the party (not so many young people did), but young people in Chicago, without respect for their social origins, grew up taking for granted the fact that much of the law was flouted in Chicago, and feeling that it was a sign of our urban sophistication, of our urbanity. Anti-prostitution laws were not enforced — well, that isn't quite accurate, the poorest working girl would be in trouble if she flaunted her calling on the street corners, this had to be done with some discretion. But a well established,

expensive brothel would be in no shade of trouble what-so-ever. Gambling was ignored. They'd bust six guys down on their knees in an alley shooting craps, but they wouldn't break up a gambling house. And we knew that liquor was sold on Sundays. I think the ordinance became that you couldn't sell liquor before 2:00 in the afternoon, Sunday, something much like that. But we knew it was sold. Anyway, we knew the pharmacy near my home where it would <sup>be served</sup> sold if you sat at the soda fountain and it would be served in a milk shake container, or chocolate malted container (the metal contain that they put on the machine to save it). And so we laughed at that. We knew that if we sought to buy alcohol in a neighborhood saloon, a working man's club, you wouldn't be served. The proprietor would be afraid of losing his licence, and would happen to be closed for the while. So he would not serve us, he also might think in all conscience it's wrong. But we also knew that if we went to the most expensive and exclusive night clubs in Chicago, we would be served unhesitatingly. There would be no problem. I never saw any of my friends of the young people whose circle I moved, misuse alcohol, in such circumstances. One also knew if one went down to the south side to the black and tan clubs (which meant — black and tan meant something quite different than it did in Ireland), that we would be served alcohol anywhere [chuckles] unhesitatingly. But one only went to the places that white people frequented, or to see the floor show, and so on.

You knew the horse parlors (this is bookies joint's) operated behind very thin facades, so nothing was done about it. You knew that the police were being paid off, or turning their backs. That the patrolman whose beat included a given establishment would receive money and pass onto his sergeant and some to his lieutenant, and we assume etc. We grew up taking

all that very much for granted.

But we also grew up very proud of the efficiency of Chicago municipal government. By and large you took it as a matter of faith if these people said we were head, shoulders and navel above even New York in the efficiency of municipal government. Time showed me this was true. It was a remarkable efficient municipal administration, and did not waste money. Now that may seem contradictory in the light of the prevalence of graft, but what I mean is that while your brother-in-law might receive a pavement contract, that might paid more and could conceivable be the case if the contract were put out on bids, on the other hand in the operations of the agencies of municipal government nothing was wasted and before recycling, everything was recycled, people were punctual, you always were served quickly and courteously if you went to any municipal or county agency, etc., etc. The garbage was collected on time. The garbage man did not drop anything on the alley floor and on and on and on. The police would come quickly if called. What have you.

Now from this background, I went down to the University of Illinois carrying with me a letter from the chairman of the Cook County Democratic Party, whom I had literally meant, but whom I doubted would ever remember me had he ever seen me again, none the less my ward committee man prevailed upon him to write a letter of introduction for me. (Ward committee men were elected in the party primary, they appointed the precinct captains, so if you struck a precinct captain's favor, you would do things, then you might come to know the ward committee-man through him.) I brought this to Mr. Pfeffer, who was then Champaign County Democratic Chairman and he hadn't seen such a thing. I judged, I never did ask him even after the war, but he never had seen such a thing, where as we took it very much for

granted. It was akin to the letter Protestant Church members' at least used to carry when they left one congregation and moved to another. And it was very much taken for granted in the Cook County organization. But Mr. Pheffer knew I was alive, knew I was an individual, though we were not yet doing much with student organization on campus, as you had to be twenty-one to vote.

I was not in the university long, at the end of that academic year I went into the army. Of course I was in the reserve and was called up. My partisan activities ceased for those three years. But when I came<sup>p</sup> out of the army I came back to Chicago, greeted people, then went back down state to the university, where Mr. Pheffer was still Democratic Party Chairman.

The Republicans were the dominant party in Champaign County, but under the system of cumulative voting, then operative under the Illinois Constitution (no longer provided in that state's constitution, but then operative) each voter would get to cast three votes for the state House of Representatives. You could give one vote to each of three persons, you could give two votes to one and one vote to another, or all three votes to one person. By that means, the second party in a district could possibly win one of the three seats. In other words, in a fundamentally Republican district, if the Democrats all bulleted their three votes for the one Democratic candidate, Champaign County would send two Republicans and a Democrat.

Mr. Pheffer was also that state representative. Now, I raise something which you likely recognize as being abnormal in American politics, party officials are very seldom, indeed I'll say rarely, simultaneously public officials. They may play both roles at different times in their lives, but not simultaneously. Leo Pheffer was an exception to that. I found *down state* things were not as "up state" [chuckles] as they were up state, but I had been told that when

I went down to Champaign that 'no one's in charge of the political system there,' that 'it's Republican territory' and 'things that don't bother us in the least up here, bother those people very much,' or 'something's are not permitted,' and 'just go with the flow' (although that idiom had not yet entered the language, that was the message given me).

And I did little things for the Party my freshman year. I didn't give it remotely so much time as I had in my high school years, but you don't have the time when you're an undergraduate. And I very much enjoyed military training, as I had in high school. I gave the organizations ancillary to the university, the Illinois Brigade, a good deal of my time too. I went into the army, eventually the war ended, and eventually we came home, and I went <sup>back</sup> to the university. And here I am twenty-one years of age, so I could vote. So I could do more in the party organization.

Now I won't drag you at the same slow rate through the details of my partisan political activities. I'll make a few great leaps, but you need this background for my reactions to academic politics to have meaning.

SW: I did have a few other little things...

MS: Go ahead.

SW: You anticipated several questions I was going to ask.

MS: I see

SW: There is one, when I was digging through some old newspapers, I think it was the Herald Post, it mentioned your degree was in Philosophy.

MS: No, it shouldn't say that. I'm a Doctor of Philosophy, but it's not in Philosophy, it's in Political Science.

SW: That was something that bothered me.

MS: No, I didn't remember their saying that, but as you well know you cannot rely upon the press. Not in the least. Even the *New York Times* made a mistake in quoting me once. I was surprised at that. And even the *Washington Post* did; and that reporter, a man of advanced years it appeared to me, and I'm sorry I can't recall his name — you might recognize it, he's dead now, but he was well enough known as a journalist, so when you see it. And even he obviously made a mistake in transcribing his very terminal notes, and wrote something which *sounded* like the last words I had said to him, as he took his notes, but said something different.

Well, I don't have to tell you about having no confidence in the press. If you don't know the people named in the article, do not even assume that they existed, let alone that the episode set forth there actually occurred.

But, very briefly then, with much greater brevity. I have been a party worker in four states and six counties. Two Illinois counties and two Texas counties. Politics in Texas are different than different than the politics of Illinois. I was prepared for that, in so far as one can be prepared. And two immensely interesting years in North Dakota, where I went in the midst of my graduate study. I was not recalled to active duty for Korea. So in the academic years '50/51 and '51/52, I was a one man Political Science Department in what was then North Dakota Agricultural College (is now North Dakota State University, and has a three man Political Science Department). That was rewarding, greatly rewarding. Now only what occurred on the campus, where I had my most politically savvy students, they were political animals from whatever remote corner of the state or Manitoba they might come. Those who

did not come out of Fargo were not properly prepared academically, by the standards of the time; today I'd be delighted to settle for them. But they were political creatures. I was involved in many things, in which a non-Ph.D. instructor would not have possibly been involved in more mature institutions and other communities.

Fargo was quite progressive, it's forth thousand people with the ten thousand people across the river in Morehead, Minnesota maintained many civic enterprises which do not have the counterparts in El Paso, Texas. They maintain a repertory theater, they maintained a *highly* commendable institution called the Fargo-Morehead Open Forum, to which came speakers of note and status from throughout the world, not only from throughout the United States, and so and so forth. And I was very active in the Democratic Party in those two years.

[1958] And the best political food I have ever eaten, I had in those two years. North Dakota political food is superior. Texas political food would come second at a distance. Illinois and California political food are traditional political food; the phrase the 'rubber chicken circuit' comes from that tradition. [beaming] But I will laud North Dakota political food. Um, Well...

There I was for those two years a faculty member, the most junior faculty member...

Tape 1 — Side 2

SW: ...A department unto yourself.

MS: I was a department unto myself. I taught, as it has been put, astronomy through zoology and coached girls basketball. [laughs] So on some matters I communicated directly with the dean. There was a chairman of the combined social studies of course, a Harvard and Princeton

graduate — who incidentally gave me the notes he had taken directly from the lectures of Frederick Jackson Turner (though, that is an aside) they may turn out to be the foundation of my estate.

In any event, in the party there are again, in those days, the Republican party was the dominant party in North Dakota and the real electoral competition was in that party, in their primary because there were two permanent factions: the Republican Organizing Committee and the Non-Partisan League. The Non-Partisan League looked pretty much like the Democratic Party, as a matter of fact. So the real fight would be between the ROC and the NPL, and we Democrats knew we would get few if any people into state office. Once in a while [we did get] some, and indeed that changed. That changed after I left the state.

But I found that loyalty was still expected there, took that for granted, wasn't surprised at that. I found this *down state* too. I found that a deal was a deal, but that there were double crossers. They were not destroyed in some sense of the word. I don't mean killed or done away with physically, but in Cook County politics your business would be ruined, you would find yourself in severe difficulties in the practice of<sup>y</sup> our profession, and in some sense you would be destroyed; if you were treacherous, if you were perfidious. That was not so *down state* in Illinois, nor was that the case in North Dakota. But the double crossers were known and spoken of behind their backs. They could still come, for example, become delegates to the state conventions, if their counties would turn them, and so on. They would be pointed out, they would be ill spoken of (to leave a dangling participle). I took note of that. I was aware of that.

Obviously in neither *down state* nor North Dakota was there the patronage to



distribute accordingly, the problem of getting party workers was a real one. Not so aggravated as it has become of more recent years, but even in very well to do wards... Well, that's misleading. Remind me to clarify that later. In Chicago, there were people waiting to help work for the party. Well, I better clarify that now. What do I mean 'very well to-do wards,' thing are so very carefully gerrymandered so that no ward was of one economic stripe. The 44<sup>th</sup> Ward in McLaowery's zone stretched from Lincoln Park, which went to Lake Michigan westward, across Clark Street, west to Halstead Street. The social composition changes radically as the income changes. So that there was no such thing in the fifty wards, while they referred to some as 'blue stocking wards,' that was a matter of degree. There was no such thing as a ward wholly in the hands of those who would be Republicans. To go on... To resume...

When I came out of graduate school, finally, did my two immensely rewarding years in North Dakota, returned to graduate school. There a one man political science department, who had gone back to his graduate school to finish his degree. Came back and took his position and had it very briefly. Came back to Champaign, Illinois.

By now I was a daddy, my son was married in Far... No, it was I who was married, my son was born in Fargo, North Dakota. My wife also was a life-long Democrat, though her parents were Republicans; her father, my late father-in-law, a very rabid Republican. Though he was a Theodore Roosevelt Republican, he had been quite progressive.

I came out of graduate school, and I was honored to be sent to Austin: first assignment was to the University of Texas, which at the time was THE University of Texas.

Now when I came back to Illinois from North Dakota, I was already a member of the

American Association of University Professors. So I would go to the chapter meetings, though I would sit in the back of the room and just observe. I thought 'back here I'm just a student. A graduate student, a graduate teaching assistant, highly privileged indeed. But I'm not a faculty member.' And so only if asked would I say anything. And sometimes after meetings I would make private observations to faculty members who I could tell were effected by the AAUP organization. I played what became in my life an uncharacteristically quite role. But I did notice this, and the reason I raise the AAUP (The American Association of University Professors), which is now moribund, was because I could tell at these meetings these were the activists. These are the people who may be willing to fight. But there wasn't a hell of a lot of fight in them.

I had just begun to appreciate the fact, I hadn't really understood it before... I had just begun to appreciate the fact that as American universities, that is American tax supported universities went, Illinois came closer to be a true self-governing community of scholars. There were things the Trustees (they were not Regents but Trustees) — were things the elected Trustees would not do that they would do unhesitatingly here. On the other hand, on the last analysis, these corporate giants, and their lawyers were, in charge of the university and they would make and break its Presidents and so on. But the faculty really made the curriculum. The faculty really picked it own leaders, and you could not become the President of the university without the assent of the faculty. True, the faculty could not pick a President over the objections of the Trustees, but the Trustees knew that we'd some kind of consensus. As tax supported universities went, in slow rewarding — that isn't the norm in America... As tax supported universities went, it was a self-governing community of scholars, and there

would be no interference in the internal operations, of the kind I found when I got to Austin, to my shock, dismay and disappointment.

So, I was indeed. I remember even as a Teaching Assistant with the College of Liberal Arts I was choosing a new Dean. I cast a ballot. I didn't know that I was going to be entitled to cast a ballot, that the TAs could vote, but there were notices in the TA offices; on such and such a day we go at this hour. It's Political Science department's turn and we go to this room in the College of Law building and you cast your ballot there. Now, I'll admit it was an advised ballot. We somehow came to understand for whom we're supposed to vote. But, on the other hand, no one would know it was a secret ballot, or know for whom you voted. By the way the Dean for whom I voted — the man for whom I voted as Dean — was then chairman of the French Department at Illinois, became President of this university [The University of Texas at El Paso] later on. That was Joe Smiley, that is an aside. So I left that venue, where even as a TA I had some kind of obscure voice in picking our own Dean. I had no voice in picking the President, but picking out own Dean. And, by the way, the structure and power varied highly from college to college. Each college, as is common, in mid-western institutions had a great deal delegated to it. Things that are centralized in most other places, were highly decentralized there. Even the entrance requirements were determined by college.

So having left that I came to Austin. Now, on the one hand I was honored, and various members of my faculty told me 'you'll be on the conveyor belt. This is a good way to start.' I understood that. It was supposed to be a temporary position. It was supposed to be one or two, but not more than three years as an instructor. And I would thereby be

subsidized for the completion of my Doctoral dissertation, while I was teaching basic courses in American Government. Not a bad deal, you start out respectably.

[517] But I quickly found this, the University of Texas was not at all supported financially the way the University of Illinois was supported. Now it's idolized by the Texans, even the illiterate Texans, whereas in Illinois, the down state people of money will send the sons and daughters there, but the Cook County people of money will send them elsewhere. They acknowledge the accomplishments of the faculty, but there just isn't an emotional attachment to the damn thing. Even though the university sent football teams to the Rose Bowl two years out of all the years I was there (and I would have been happier if they hadn't), to most real red-blooded Americans that's a great thing, it still didn't have the impact of the counterpart would have had in the state of Texas. So while there was much (was and is) stronger emotional support for the University of Texas, the financial support was disappointing.

Now I knew my salary wasn't going to be very good, I understood that, \$3,900 for the academic year — a little low, not much low — but things cost much less down there too. But I was there two weeks when, and this put me off, the hat was passed downtown by the President of UT, the hat was passed downtown and funds were contributed by business and professional men so selected instructors could be raised to \$4,200 a year. I was one of those so selected, so why did it put me off? Because this was one of those many steps that puts a university, an ostensibly self-governing community of scholars, in the hands, not only of those who hold the capital, but those who were immediately locally available. And indeed they may not be capitalists of great stature, and they may not be men of much education either, but

whether they are or not it's bad.

And then I began to hear stories from the other members of the faculty, and whereas those three people on my faculty who had been at UT one time or another had told me UT stories, one had been a student there. Francis Graham Wilson took his undergraduate degree at Austin and then went to Stanford for his Ph.D. and went out from Stanford to the University of Washington and then to Illinois. Francis Graham Wilson warned me, he said 'that department is acutely divided between liberals and conservatives.' And he said 'if you hear one spokesperson refer to the other as sons of bitches, you run, do not walk, to the nearest exit. Don't become involved.' I thanked him, but I don't know how the hell I could not become involved. My own graduate advisor, Edward G. Lewis, had been on that faculty — he was a Berkeley Ph.D. — but he'd been on that faculty before he came to Illinois. And Charley Near — the late Charles Near — had taught there for a few years before he came to Nebraska and then Illinois. Charley Near was a Ph.D. and JD. And Ed Lewis, my graduate advisor, told me of the division and the passion in the department, so I went fully aware of that, and aware of who was in what faction.

But no one told me how grossly under financed the joint was. In days when oil was \$50 a barrel, and they may long for those good old days, but I will tell you things were at best, less bad, they were not good. The University of Texas could not support the kinds of enterprises which we took for granted. I had been spoiled. I thought this is what you do at major state universities could not support the kinds of enterprises that we came to take all too much for granted. Illinois and Wisconsin, for example, tended to run neck and neck (I always felt Michigan was somewhat ahead of us).

I saw further, these people don't fight. There were a few fighters among them, and maybe the percentage was no less than it had been at Illinois. Now I attended the AAUP chapter meetings and spoke. I found that the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts Howey Ransom, whom I liked instantly, assembled the whole Liberal Arts faculty in meetings. I thought 'that's sort of one horse,' but, on the other hand, it was small enough so you can do it, and it's very nice to see them, and I'm very happy he wants some of these decisions to be made collegially. I'd sooner see them delegated to departments, but I see what he is trying to do, and I approve of that. None the less, it struck me as sort of small, country college to have a whole college faculty meeting together, unless exceptionally.

I was disappointed in the library, and yet my mentors at Illinois told me how many volumes they have in there, it is in the catalog. But I just didn't have an image of how little that is. The University of Illinois had the largest state university library in the United States. It had the tenth largest library, of *any* category what-so-ever, in the world. And I thought 'ok, so this isn't as big. Well that doesn't mean a thing, it's the university library. And I walked into the tower, in those days the library was housed in the university tower (along with the administrative offices), And into the large central room and here are the catalogs, and I looked around orienting myself. I introduced myself to a librarian, and I said 'where is the catalog room? Where are the rest of the catalogs?' And she looked at me, said 'well, this is the entirety of the catalogs.' And I realized I'd been impolitic. I had not been tactful at all. I said 'well, excuse me, the very size of the room alters the proportions, and I don't get a sense of the sheer number of the drawers that there are. Well, I do beg your pardon. And where is the public catalog?'

‘That’s the public catalog.’

‘I’m sorry where is the...’ My word, I am getting senile, I forgot what you call that catalog which is listed not by author or title, but by call number. Where everything is ranked up by call number, so that once having the call number in a given area you can, from the cards, find out all other materials in that area of subject matter. And she said oh, we don’t make that catalog... That catalog is not a public catalog here.’ That’s a lesser degree of service. I didn’t say anything though. She said ‘but the faculty may use it by arrangement.’ [laughing] Jesus, by arrangement.

And I went back into the stacks, and they were filthy. And I realized this was one of the many ways in which they evidenced not having money. The maintenance budget wouldn’t support the personnel to keep the stacks immaculate. There was dust coating books and light bulbs would burn out and they wouldn’t be changed for a time. In the stacks at Illinois we had what I called the “man without a face” and that took hold. It became part of the folklore of the institution. The man who walked around in the stacks, they had low ceilings so you could reach right up and touch the bulb, with his face up like this. [looking toward the ceiling] He’d have a basket on each arm, and he’d be looking like this, [talking to the ceiling and holding out his arms] one of burned out bulbs, one of replacement bulbs. Every day you’d see him walking around the stacks. Every day! All levels of the stacks, the “man without a face” would be there.

Well that would be unthinkable. That would be unthinkable. The physical plant, looked nice, it, (the UT campus) looks nice. It doesn’t have much open space, not as much as they have at Illinois, but the city grew all around it, hemmed it in, that’s understandable.

It wasn't as flawlessly manicured as the University of Illinois campus. You saved some money. You don't out this whole army of gardeners out there. And I learned that their physical plant personnel, their staff personnel, were not unionized. Well, I should have anticipated that. I was mildly surprised at that. At the University of Illinois the campus mail men are unionized, the clerks, the stenographers, the everyone! Let alone the guys who get down on their hands and knees to manicure the grass. Also, it penetrated my skull, that at Illinois the state must issue their work clothes, because they were perfectly uniformed: and here they worked in whatever they had. They were paying for their own work clothing too and were not very well paid.

Another little sign, the way they support the university, at Illinois we would have the Festival of Contemporary Arts, which started after the war, in which we would be brought annually, the latest in music, painting, sculpture, theater, dance, architecture and so on, in the fine arts. The Festival of Contemporary Arts. One biennium higher education was hit. So we could only have the Festival of Contemporary Arts only once in the biennium, instead of each year. That's what's what we would consider a "blow."

The University of Illinois Library was the giant collection it was because they would appropriate vast sums every year to maintain it as such. You could get materials simply not obtainable elsewhere. You'd get some strange things too, like complete collections of science fiction magazines: but I never laughed at it, though other people did. If you were going to assess the American culture, you damn well better have those. I thought they should of had comic books for the same reason, and at least when I left they did not. Not that I would do my work in comic books, but they're political science works, and we'd wanted comic books



to assign, so we realized. It wasn't financed the same way, but still, that isn't what soured me.

One, these guys wouldn't fight, two, it was shocking the regent led meddling in the internal affairs of the university. And when members of the Department of Government there would say to me, 'oh, you think this is bad, let me tell you how it used to be.' And they'd tell me unbelievable horror stories, believable, I regret believable horror stories. I was still young enough to have illusions, I suppose, even though I was 31 when I got there (or turned 31 shortly after getting there). That was profoundly disappointing, and I was less honored — and I was less honored. I felt the able people ought to get the hell out of here as quickly as they can.

Now I can understand what was keeping them — climate. Now that I live here the climate of Austin is not so appealing as the climate of El Paso, but coming from Chicago and from *down state* Illinois is wonderful. And the availability of domestic servants... The easy availability of domestic servants, even faculty could afford them. And the pace of life was easier. It was the South, and Austin is the South and not the West; even though Linden Johnson, when he was seeking the Presidency, did strive hard to make Texas the West, not the South. And he reasonably well succeeded in projecting that to the greater part of America.

Now, I forgot to mention this, I would not have gone there at all. I wasn't gonna go there. I wasn't going to go to Austin, had school desegregation not obtained. I had this big opportunity to go to Austin, and that was the South. I'd been in Texas for basic training. I'd been in Georgia and South Carolina, during the war, before going over seas. And while I

enjoyed the parts of the physical environment, I despised the social environment. I had said, and then I found Texas boys to my delight — I found Texas boys who had said what I had said. I'd go into the South again, as part of an army to conquer it! It was with that attitude, 'no, thank you. I appreciate what you are telling me, but I don't want to go to the University of Texas, they'd lynch me!' And my own graduate advisor said, 'No, no it isn't bad. Things are changing more than you realize.' I didn't say to him 'so why did he come here?' Well, he came because we were a much more mature university, and we had a wonderful library, and we were close to self-government, and he'd have a sabbatical. UT didn't give sabbaticals then and they still don't. Now they've been authorized, just not been funded. They were authorized shortly after I came here, but they have never been funded. I can understand why he came.

SW: Social justice was...

MS: Social justice was of another order down there.

Now, I had an opportunity at the University of Cincinnati, which was a respectable minor league school. I think it can still so be described. I liked it's atmosphere. I was called there and to Washington University in St. Louis, and San Jose State in California; which I didn't really want though the salary was attractive. They were way above the rest of the United States in way they offered. And X fell though and Y fell... Oh, yes. Let's see Cincinnati — oh they wanted me at Cincinnati and the department chairman to expedite things to my papers and carried them through the chain of command to the Dean, who had already interviewed me, to the Vice President for Academic, to the Graduate Dean, to the Vice President for Academic Affairs who'd interviewed me, and right to the President's desk. He

put them down on the President's desk. As I got the story later, from Harold Van Ike (who was the chairman then) the President actually had picked up his pen to sign. 'Now let me see, this man is going to have to be a member of every Doctoral committee?' (That was the understanding in this subject matter area)

'Yes, he would.'

'Well why don't I give you five thousand dollars more and let you get someone with more experience.' [laughing] And it died right there on the President's desk.

At Washington U. we had what I felt was a successful interview. My friend and fellow Teaching Assistant, Robert Salisbury — Bob Salisbury — just drove me to St. Louis, he had no lead there, but he talked to people and wandered around and they hired Bob for a position that did not exist. They brought him on as an instructor first, but he made his whole career there and achieved status in American Political Science. He was a member of the American Political Science Association for a time. Well, in any event, it took hold though Bob. But finally they wrote to me and said, 'well, we find that...' Um, goodness, a name I should not forget, his father is an immanent sociologist. '...so and so wants to out of the State Department and get back to academia and he is willing to come here.' Well yes, I thought 'well, yes. If I could have him or Melvin Straus, I'd take him too.' And they did. That fell through.

[740] There was San Jose State College, it didn't grab me too much, except for the salary. Oh, I got things out of order.

As I was going down stairs to get into the cab to go to the railroad station to go to Cincinnati... Here's a telegram, a Western Union boy (they still had Western Union boys).

I unfolded it, I could not comprehend it — which was proof positive of the degree to which I had repressed any thought of going to Austin. It was out of the question. I couldn't make head or tail out of the words. I understood the words. It appeared to be an offer from the University of Texas, and slowly, slowly it came back to me as if from a dream. It was extraordinary, it was of clinical proportions. 'Oh, yes! I sent my papers in there.' And I had repressed it, that thoroughly, I didn't want to go there. I just tucked it into my coat pocket, got into the cab, went to the railroad station. And in Cincinnati took it out and showed Van Ike, who said "I best work quickly on this, because they'll want a reply." *That's* what caused him to hand carry the thing. That was it.

Well, those others fell through, and I got a call from Austin saying 'well is he is, or is he ain't?' I accepted, and what had made up my mind is that the news told us the Austin public schools were desegregating. Texas was complying with a mandate, Austin was taking the lead, the governor was pushing them. And I must say once I got there desegregation was going apace.

Now mind you, I found attitudes among the black people which dismayed me. They would still bow and scrape. I remember being at a grocery store, wanting to buy a watermelon and the groceries clerk said 'well let's look at some of them here in the cooler.' And he opened the door of the cooler, and as I stepped in a black man was coming out, he worked there too. So saying "I beg your pardon sir," and stepping aside, he actually bowed and backed up 'and yes, I'm sorry sir.' 'Oh, Jesus... God, I can't take *this*!' And I would meet that often; I deeply regret.

SW: I know from the paper clippings, you've been involved in Blacks' Right issues.

MS: Yes I certainly had. Indeed I met my wife in the student community inter-racial committee in Champaign County, Illinois. We broke racial segregation in Champaign County. It was illegal in Illinois, but practiced. That's another interesting story in itself. I'm very proud of having participated in all this folly. Finally the occupants, the residents of the north end and northern extremities of Urbana and of Champaign, which were divided along racial lines, developed enough fortitude to establish NAACP chapters and they took this on themselves, and then events just...

Tape 2

...The law was being obeyed. Now I perceived other things, in the racial connection. In *down state* Illinois, in Champaign County at least, there was overt, readily and frequently expressed racial hatred of black people; and I did not find that in Austin, Texas. People there had grown up in the segregated South, no question about it, there was some degree of patronization, and yet it would have been unreasonable, I came to recognize, unreasonable for a black person to live in physical fear. Not unreasonable at all in Champaign, Illinois.

Still the South, every once in a while something went — as my wife put it once — it's most enjoyable to live here, but every one in a while something reminds you that you are in the South, **SOUTH, SOUTH!** You could not have the charm which was present without all aspects of the Southern culture. And perhaps it was mitigated to a degree, by the Western rather than the Southern influence, which also was thrown in. The central Texas dialect didn't disturb me as much as the *down state* Illinois dialect did. It wasn't hissing, as nasal, as the hideous speech of *down state* Illinois, Indiana, and its variations across the Mississippi into Iowa. It is not painful to audit. So I didn't have the difficulty some other Yankee's had.

In fact the most delightful dialect in all spoken English is that of Tidewater, Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina. Northern Virginia, North Carolina are quite different from that of central Texas, and by all means different from the of east Texas. Which later is not too pleasant to the ears. But that is far afield. None the less, it reveals just how Yankee this Yankee was.

I met good minds there. Good minds, great minds. On the faculty of Illinois they had great minds, there were some great minds in my fellow graduate students at Illinois, and I met good minds and great minds on the faculty. I would often think 'gee, these fellows deserve a better university.' But I could also recognize what could keep them there. You could become entrapped. It would be like drinking the waters of the river Lief. I understand that one's money *did* go father (I am not sure this is any longer true). When I got that whole \$4,200... Well, when they made me an Assistant Professor, they turned the temporary position into a permanent one and made me an Assistant Professor. I got a whole \$5000! And I realized this goes a hell of a lot further than \$5000 in Champaign, Illinois. I hired a yard man, a maid. Well, not a maid, we only had a pressing woman. I didn't have a maid yet, but a yard man. I sent my son to nursery school. My wife had become Deputy Chief Psychologist at Austin State Hospital. Goodness, we were rolling. So I could (I was underpaid too) see how people could come to stay, even if there was that in the social environment, the milieu that bothered them. The city had charm. It still has. As it grows in size, and the actual aroma of the night, literally changes, the charm is less intense that it was then.

As I said, when I left, to sign with San Jose in California, why in Austin, even our

slum had, did I say charm, I may have, but I used another superlative designation. Be that as it may, we did leave. We left, one, because there were many things that put me off about the situation, so won't have the lies and the fighting here. We will not have the lies and fighting. I also tried to create an American Civil Liberties Chapter there. I joined the American Civil Liberties Union in 1950, when I joined the AAUP. Bob Freedman, who retired as Chairman of the Political Science Department at Penn State sat next to me in Political theory seminar, the Francis Wilson seminar, where he sold me my first membership (a student membership). He had done his undergraduate work at Johns Hopkins and had joined the student chapter there. But I tried to form an ACLU chapter, I envisioned "Capital City Chapter, Lone Star Division of the American Civil Liberties Union." And while New York sent me a list of ACLU members in Austin, and in Travis County, (1) there weren't many, and (2) I couldn't move many of them. I saw that 'if you do this at all — if you do it at all — you will have done it all by yourself.' And that's commendable, I should feel proud of that, but it told me something about the kind of operation I would then get.

There was an anti-homosexual pogrom while I was there. A shocking, outrageous thing. Countenanced by the administration, Harry Ransom was by then Vice Chancellor... No he became Chancellor of the system. He was the executive officer of that campus. And he called me, I was delighted to see him, and we rescued one person. The total misuse of the polygraph that was involved, and that shamed me. The graft that was involved, and that shamed me. Shamed the university. Made me ashamed of the participants. I heard unfortunate stories about the then Dean of Students and the Assistant Dean of Students (both have since died). A building on that campus is named that Dean of Students. I thought ill of

both of them. Not mainly because I thought their view of homosexuals utterly primitive, those of an ignoramus (that was not extraordinary in those days), but because of the zealotness that manifestly possessed them in pursuing this matter. I described it as a pogrom — a homosexual pogrom. Things sickened me, and I was more readily sickened in those days, than had come to be the case. At which point San Jose... Oh, when I had accepted Austin, San Jose then sent me an offer, back then in '55, and I explained 'I'm sorry, but a deal's a deal.' But then they kept tabs on me, now they had another opening, they asked me to come, I really didn't want to do that. Oklahoma had something. Oklahoma is a minor league university, but San Jose wasn't even that. It's at best bush league. Well paid bush league, but bush league, and it was San Jose State College then. I liked the idea of being near San Francisco. I knew California was psychology land, so there might be great opportunities for my wife. Minnesota... I had friends in Minnesota. Minnesota, had... No, that came later, I'm sorry. But Oklahoma had a possibility, which didn't develop. American University, for a third time... A second time (the third time was to come later), had an opportunity tailored for me. Again they didn't get the funding. It would have been a natural pathway to administration. So I ended going to San Jose, for a hell of a lot of money, to an academic person.

I immediately made myself available to the party in Santa Clara County, as I had in Travis County. I didn't tell you much about that. I learned some interesting things working for the party in Travis County, but that is not our focus. I went to Santa Clara County, California and was available to the party. Did some things. My department chairman wanted me to organize a Democratic club, the club movement was underway in California. He said



'go to a few meetings of some of the clubs in existence and get an idea of where they are going.' I went to two, I thought (still think of) myself as a liberal, a bleeding heart liberal, a tax and spend liberal, but I was appalled by their naivete, their utter naivete, and their economic conceptions staggered me. I thought 'hell, I'm not going to affiliate with *this* part of party activity.' And I never raised my little finger to form a club, my chairman never forgave either. I paid for that in real conflict, but you must never bring your partisanship into your vocation.

I didn't like San Jose State from day one, it was a jumped up teachers' college. And while they accepted people only from the next twenty percent of high school graduates. The top ten percent could go to the University of California system, the next twenty percent could go to the California State colleges, below that you couldn't go. Well, you could go to community college. None the less, I was appalled at the preparation of those in that next twenty percent. '*This* is the next twenty percent?' I heard, unfortunately, highly critical, negatively critical comment of California public schools from childhood. It was born out by the product. I was not happy about that. Obviously there is no library worth a damn, it had a hundred thousand volumes, though I was entitled to use the library at Berkeley. I more often used the library at Stanford, because at Berkeley there was a highly gieselschaft atmosphere that obtained. I had a little card, they would process me through, another body.

At Stanford I'm a visiting scholar, a colleague, and they would dance attendants upon me. I wanted to use a part of the collection that was not ordinarily used, and was filthy; they didn't dust regularly either. So they brought an easy chair down into that part of the stacks and an old bridge lamp that would shine over my shoulder (it was so nice), and they would

send a student about an hour before lunch saying 'would you please join the faculty at etc., etc., place for lunch.' I was a visiting scholar at Stanford. SO I'd use the Stanford Library by all means. It was only slightly less convenient, if less convenient at all. I wasn't using that as a matter of right, and I was using the Berkeley Library as a matter of right. We taught twelve hours, there was no expectation of doing research; nobody gave a damn. My good friend Bill Vatcher — William Vatcher — wrote two books, and *goodness* that was unusual at that time. He's the author of *Pan Mu Jan*, if you remember it.

SW: Doing a search for you, his name turned up.

MS: Yes, he and I did an article together. Bill was found beaten to death on the street in San Francisco one Sunday morning, long after I had left San Jose... Bill was a Stanford Ph.D.

I was going to go to Columbia, after the Masters Degree, by the way, for the Ph.D. They offered me a \$300 subsidy at that point. At that point I can't do it. I'd love to have had a Columbia Ph.D., but at that point I just couldn't do it. I was foolish because it would have been increased stature there, and more employment opportunities. What might have been? Who knows... New York — Tammany Hall — might have put me to work.

In any event, I knew 'boy I not going to stay here in San Jose' And at the end of the first semester my chairman wanted to fire me; I failed to many students. It was approved with regrets by the social sciences area coordinator... No, he expressed no regrets, the Dean of the college expressed regrets. It went all the way to the President's desk before AAUP got to them and said 'hey, you can't do that. You could be in real trouble if you don't renew someone because he fails too many people. That's a dismissal for a reason violative of academic freedom.' But that confirmed things. 'I am not staying here.' I was going to stay

a second year, it looks bad to disappear after one year. So I informed the department back home, and they immediately began getting things for me.

That's when Oklahoma became available again, Minnesota became available, and American U. became available still a third time for the same position. And I say that would have lead to administration because, you see, I would not have gone to graduate school at all, had I not been as certain as I was of the rising of the sun, that I would be an administrator. I just looked at my fellow graduate students and thought 'well hell, who else is going to become the administrator of my generation.' That turned out not to be true, and as I put it to one audience at my retirement festivities six years ago, 'I should have realized you do not become President of General Motors by organizing for ~~the~~<sup>the</sup> United Automobile Workers.'

In California I saw another part of the party, and important part, growing important still. And I saw faculty wouldn't fight, at all! There was an AAUP chapter, its chairman had the reputation, perhaps undeserved, of being too compliant. I don't know. I saw very little scholarly production. I saw the atmosphere of a higher high school manifested in multitudinous ways. If we had here the money they pissed away, in that state college, we would... We know how to use a dollar, and they do not. They were spoiled. That changed in the intervening years. I liked my proximity to San Francisco, that was a great fringe benefit. As my wife said 'Well if we stayed here, we'd take our retirement money and go back to Texas.'

American U. for a third time... American U. is a poor university, financially poor university. Couldn't finance the position they had in mind. Oklahoma said, 'Well, we're sorry, we've obliged ourselves to friends and colleagues to consider their candidates and we

are not through that process yet. Please bear with us.'

I knew one person there, I... No, no, I was to come to know him later — I had come to know him through the American Civil Liberties Union latter. Well, I had made the acquaintance of one person when he had been a visiting professor at Illinois one summer. But I did not think he would look at me with favor, because he really could have charged me with a breech of the code of student conduct, had he wished to do so when I spoke out in unseemly fashion in class one day. We were studying the... He was a visitor in the Introductory to Constitutional Law course, the undergraduate course in the department, and we looking at *Tirubiashi* versus the United States and related cases. He said under the conditions that then prevailed, they had to keep these people confined to protect them. And I stood up in class and shouted out 'Is that why the machine guns were turned inward, not outward?' People cowered and were shocked. Now today that wouldn't make a ripple. It would make a classroom ripple, but the student wouldn't feel himself in jeopardy. I suddenly realized I could be in real trouble. He did nothing about it. So I thought this man will remember me, he's not going to want me for a colleague, the young lunatic for a colleague. It turned out he did, but I didn't know that.

Minnesota had sought to create a position that would be part-time Political Science and part-time interdisciplinary survey, and my wife and I had, just playing, worked put a psychology in politics survey, and they thought that was wonderful. And I had friends there, and then they didn't get the money to add it. This was to be an added seat, and they just didn't get the money.

In the meantime, a person who had been one our graduate students at Austin, and was

on the Texas Western Faculty then, as an Instructor, John Howho, got in touch with me and said they're separating History from Political Science and will be looking for a chairperson. Why don't I apply. Texas Western College? What? I'm going down the ladder rung by rung, I don't want to fall that far. I didn't say that to John. We visited him, here in El Paso, for four days on our way out to California. I didn't think EL Paso amounted to a hell of a lot. It was nice to go over to Juarez, I liked that. The college was a *sad* little thing. He invited several members of the department to his house for dinner to meet me, and they were enjoyable people. I'm not addressing myself to the question of whether or not I'd want them in my family, that isn't it, but they were academic non-entities. There was one person on the whole campus of whom one had ever heard, and that was <sup>Sonichson</sup> Leland Sonechson, who had made a name as a folklorist. Period. That was it. Again, this is a higher high school atmosphere. And I saw what they were paid, and I saw what the library wasn't. Though in those four days I didn't venture into it, but I'd ask John questions about it. It too had about one hundred thousand volumes then. Why would one want to do this?

The campus wasn't landscaped as it is now. Interesting looking buildings, I liked the Bhutanese architecture. But, basically, the place looked like hell. You didn't want to be part of anything called "Texas Western College." I hadn't even know that it was part of the UT system. In fact, no one in my department knew it when John received an inquiry from Texas Western College and showed it to me. I looked at the seal, I looked at the letter head and said 'well in some ways that resembles the University of Texas Seal.' And he said 'well it *is* a part of the University of Texas!' I didn't know that. And the other people of the department didn't know that for years. These are our colleagues out there at El Paso, we

didn't know they were alive. They teach mining engineering out there, and it is not unreasonable when you think of it, that the University of Texas College of Engineering would teach mining engineering. And it is not unreasonable that, that calls for a satellite campus. Hardly satellite when it's that far away. But a detached campus.

Interesting, but I wasn't going to be a part of that.

He said, 'Ah, come on, put in your papers. What do you have to lose?' I did, and they made an offer as Associate Professor.

I was an Assistant Professor at San Jose, and Assistant Professor at Austin. As an Associate Professor, with the same salary I was getting at San Jose, but I knew it would go farther in El Paso. Boy, it didn't go far in San Jose. With Tenure. That was the concluder. With tenure. Because I had come to take very much for granted that I'd be in conflict with the community where I lived, in conflict with the administration. Tenure was important.

But I was put off, not only because of what I already mentioned to you, but because of the President himself. The President was engaged in recruiting. What kind of one horse operation is that? Now once I came here and got to know Joe Rey — Joseph Marcus Rey — I said to myself, 'Yes, were I in his position, I would take personal charge of the recruiting, because all these people do is replicate themselves. And you're gonna have the same damn academic garbage pile. He's doing the right thing.' In that context I was flattered that he saw me, When he gave me these inducements... The other things fell through, and Joe Rey called one day and said, "I'm sorry, I can't give you any more time professor.' And I was wanting Oklahoma; didn't come through. So finally, I stayed up all one night and at eight in the morning, nine o'clock Austin time (no ten o'clock) (no, nine o'clock El Paso

time) I telephoned and accepted with a sinking heart, thinking 'oh, God, what have I done?' And I knew if I hadn't had a family I wouldn't of done it. If I hadn't had a family I would have left the whole damn thing ad gone to law school anyway — as I should have done in the first place. This is how we came to El Paso. This time I did not bear a letter from my county chairman. I had carried a letter to my county chairman in Santa Clara County, and did things with him as I say.

So what did I meet when I came here? Well I already knew that I came with a heavy heart. And these guys aren't gonna fight. But I found that an AAUP chapter had been started, even before I visited here, with great difficulty. But <sup>it</sup> had been started. Al Eibman, who used to be a member of our English department. Francis Alan Eibman, a Knight of the Court of Gold, by the way, the highest international fencing honor. Former fighter <sup>pi</sup>olet in two wars. Francis Alan Eibman had been its chairman and when Joe Rey came he gave it his blessings and said 'of course you have to have such a thing on a campus.' As he once stated to me quite candidly, "This is not what a state college should be. I have to make some changes here, and its going to be painful."

Well certainly in terms of self-governance, it was not what a state college should be. There had been no tradition of self-governance. There had been no tradition, let alone legal requirement of faculty having a decisive voice, at least a veto voice in the selection of a President. They had a system of "Headships" here. I was happy to see Rey moving away from that toward rotating chairmanships. That was a good beginning.

But I looked around at the raw material and though 'God almighty, these are school teachers, these are not scholars, not learned ladies and gentlemen. This isn't the mileau in

which you thought you might possibly enjoy life. With whom will you communicate here? Well, you'll have more possible sources of communication than you might have in some other calling. But, to what have I descended? And I gave even more time to the party in town (to the El Paso County Democratic Party) than I had since the war, to my party organization.

Now, I realize at this point, at twenty minutes to four, that I have made passing references and tangential comments on the politics of academe. I've just gotten us here, and I have not gotten us into the senate. I realize that. So, if you would like to have another session, in which I'll come to the meat of this, then I'll gladly do so.

SW: I do have just a couple of questions, that I dug up. That might be of interest. One, you had mentioned earlier, how the President was chosen down at UT, and...

MS: The President chosen at UT?

SW: I'm not sure if it was UT, but at other universities.

MS: Well what I said is the faculty had no real voice. No decisive voice.

SW: And at some point here, you were somehow tied up with a petition so that the then Mayor, I believe it was, would not suddenly find himself President of this university.

MS: Yeah. I tried very hard to keep that from occurring. It did not occur. I don't credit my efforts. I don't flatter myself. I learned after the fact, years after the fact, that Mayor had talked himself out of the position. He was interviewed by the Regents and he embarrassed them horribly. They realized, 'No, this cannot be.' So he kept himself from being the President.

By the way, before he died, he and I became friends again. I am glad that happened before he shuffled off his mortal coil.



Here the faculty elects members of the committee, but those three fore-members are submerged in a massive committee of students, community, Regents... They're a minority vote. That wasn't even the case in North Dakota. But, in Illinois, while the faculty can't pick the President... [they can veto the election of the President.]

Tape 2 - Side 2

...There would be a committee of the junior faculty, and in addition a committee of the senior faculty. And what was sought by the Trustees was a "Quaker Consensus," or if they couldn't get that, at least concurrent majorities (however so <sup>we</sup> bear each or some or all of those majorities might be). That apparently ain't natural in American academe. Certainly I went nowhere where our Deans were picked with democracy comparable to that demonstrated at Illinois. Now, I should say even at Illinois the Dean of the College of Agriculture had to have the imprimatur of the Farm Bureau Federation. That's not unusual in powerful agriculture colleges, or even weak agricultural colleges. That seemed to be the case in North Dakota Agricultural College, which was no seat of cutting-edge research.

But, if you'd like to get together another time, now that I finally have us delivered to El Paso and this campus and actually get into faculty government here, I'll do it. I've devoted two hours to the prolog, which is perhaps a misuse of your time, and I apologize. I was gonna do all this by way of providing a comprehensive context.

SW: I think it sets up a wonderful foundation, and goes...

MS: That's kind of you to say.

SW: I was afraid that I wouldn't get an hour.

MS: Oh my! Oh, we'll have more than another hours worth. ... It has been my pleasure. It has

been too much my pleasure.