

An Interview with
Rory Ellinger

at his law office in
O' Fallon, Missouri

21 August 2008

interviewed by Jeff D. Corrigan



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For further information, contact:

The State Historical Society of Missouri
1020 Lowry Street
Columbia, MO 65201

PREFACE

Rory Ellinger was born in Saint Louis, Missouri in 1941. He was raised in a Catholic household, and his parents were both active in local Republican politics. After receiving a history degree at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, Ellinger spent three years working with different peace and civil rights movements around the country. Ellinger participated in the Selma to Montgomery March, and briefly served as a bodyguard for the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. After moving to Columbia, Missouri, to pursue his Master's degree in American history, Ellinger was nominated as a chairman for the campus organization of Student's for a Democratic Society. Working on Senator Tom Eagleton's campaign team from 1966 to 1968 inspired Ellinger to run two small campaigns for the Missouri General Assembly, but they proved unsuccessful. Ellinger eventually obtained his law degree for the University of Missouri-Kansas City and became the director of Legal Aid of Northeastern Missouri before moving on to work in a law firm. These recordings predate Ellinger's successful campaign to represent the 86th District in the Missouri State House of Representatives in 2010. Rory Ellinger passed away in 2014.

The interview was taped on a 1GB CompactFlash card, using a Marantz PMD-660 digital recorder and an audio-technica AT825 microphone placed on a tripod. There are periodic background sounds but the recording is of generally high quality.

The following transcript represents a rendering of the oral history interview. Stylistic alterations have been made as part of a general transcription policy. The interviewee offered clarifications and suggestions, which the following transcript reflects. Any use of brackets [] indicates editorial insertions not found on the original audio recordings. Physical gestures, certain vocal inflections such as imitation, and/or pauses are designated by a combination of italics and brackets [/]. Any use of parentheses () indicates a spoken aside evident from the speaker's intonation, or laughter. Quotation marks [""] identify speech depicting dialogue, speech patterns, or the initial use of nicknames. Em dashes [—] are used as a stylistic method to show a meaningful pause or an attempt to capture nuances of dialogue or speech patterns. Words are *italicized* when emphasized in speech or when indicating a court case title. Particularly animated speech is identified with **bold** lettering. Underlining [] indicates a proper title of a publication. The use of underlining and double question marks in parentheses [(??)] denotes unintelligible phrases. Although substantial care has been taken to render this transcript as accurately as possible, any remaining errors are the responsibility of the editor, Sean Rost.

***Please note that Rory Ellinger passed away before this transcript was finished, so he was not able to review it or clarify any points.**

Narrator: Rory Ellinger
Interviewer: Jeff Corrigan
Date: August 21, 2008
Transcribed by: N/A

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[Begin Interview. Begin Track 1.]

10 JC: This is Jeff Corrigan, Oral Historian for the State Historical Society of Missouri. Today is Thursday, August 21st and I am in O'Fallon, Missouri, at the law office of Mr. Rory Ellinger. We're interviewing him for the first time for our Politics in Missouri Oral History Project. Mr. Ellinger, could you start by telling me when and where you were born?

15 RE: Born June 13, 1941, Saint Mary's Hospital, Saint Louis.

JC: Did you have any siblings?

20 RE: I have a sister who is three years younger than me who lives in Australia. And I have a brother, Jim, who's about thirteen years younger than me and was very instrumental in founding a community radio and other things in Columbia—and that's it. My parents both grew up in Webster Groves. They both went to Webster High School and I was expected to go to Webster High, but I ended up going to a Catholic high school, DuBourg High. I graduated from high school in either '58 or '59. Then I went off—I had a partial scholarship to the University of Kansas City and I got my degree in four years in, primarily, American history. I was raised in a pretty traditional—I was raised as a Roman Catholic. My mother was Protestant, but my father was a pretty, pretty religious Catholic. His family was of mixed German Jewish background and they had all converted to Catholicism somewhere along the line. My grandfather was—had not and some of his sisters and brothers. So I have this sort of— so I have Catholic and Jewish background, at least from my father's—
30 on my father's side. My mother's side, largely Protestant, very, very conservative on racial views. For example, they're from the South, they fought with the South. All the Ellingers fought with the North. Pretty typical—German, a lot of the Germans, fought with the Union during the Civil War as you know. And my relatives on both sides of the family were well entrenched in Saint Louis. My mother's side of the family were part of the—literally Boone, Daniel Boone and General Roberston. In fact, my brother's middle name is Robertson after the famous founder of Nashville or the Nashville Notch or something like that that he did back in the early 1800s with Daniel Boone. So they've been out here a long time and then the—my mother was a Republican committee woman of Webster Groves, Glendale, and Kirkwood. She was very active in Republican politics. My father was too, but he always had to make a living. Mom was kind of a full-time 1950s mom, but she was very active in Republican politics. So I went off to college, very much a Catholic. I became the National Treasurer of the National Vice-President of the Newman Clubs of America. The civil rights movement was in full blossom then from '56 on, back when the

Selma—Montgomery bus boycott. I'm not just reading all this stuff you know. I had uncles and aunts on my father's side who were very liberal. The artist Bob Biggs was married to my aunt Edith and they were at least socialists, if not further left than that. But, it was sort of a contrast, like I say, another book between their sort of lifestyle and very middle class life that I grew up in Webster Groves. I was very influenced primarily I'd say by the Catholic Church and the Social Gospels, John the twenty third and John Kennedy, not coincidentally Catholics. You know I had my hair cut the same way (laughs), I mean I probably even spoke, and—

10 **[End Track 1. Begin Track 2.]**

RE: —I was sort of recruited into a movement called the Young Christian Students because that was sort of a radical Catholic organization, sort of allied with Students for a Democratic Society. Several of the founders of SDS were active Young Christian Student movement people, most prominent being Mary Cunningham and Mary Varela. There's books being written about Mary Varela I think now. She was in the founding of SNCC, the founding of SDS, she got a McArthur Grant to help organize Mexican Americans in New Mexico. She's still alive and in her early seventies probably, or maybe just seventy. Talked to her recently on the phone. They made a great influence on me. And when I graduated from college, I joined this group, the Young Christian Students and I worked as a case worker and saw poverty in its—one of us had to go out to work because we lived—we received no salary, we just lived communally in sort of a slum area of Chicago, which is now, can't buy a house there for less than two million. But at the time it was really run down and crime ridden, so on. Had a lot of adventures living there, people being robbed and we had one of our young women raped terribly. I was a case worker, I saw—you know coming from a fairly well off family in Webster Groves, I mean we were comfortable, but we were never rich. In fact, my father's business went bankrupt during the Korean War. And I was pretty ordinary and kind of wasn't very popular, certainly not very popular with the girls. But then the movement came along and I was really swept up in it and my whole personality changed. It was very elevating. I mean I felt—we really believed all those songs we sang, "We Shall Overcome" and "We Shall Not Be Moved" and "Crossing Jericho" and everything else. I was in Selma to Montgomery. I, for five or six days I really was a bodyguard of Dr. King. Although, we didn't carry firearms, I carried a radio. Radios back then were like this big and I went in front of him. Actually I was never as close to him as I am to you right now. I was always I was part of this group of about twenty to thirty young people that were recruited and deputized by the Boston Police Department when he made his tour through there in April '65. I came back, I went to work, back to Chicago. I was sort of getting tired of movement life, frankly. It was very intense, dangerous. One of my good friends, Healy, Bob Healy, Robert Healy, good friend. Anyway, Haley, Haley. We were in Selma. He was jumped. He was knifed. He dropped me off at my place, and he got—if I dropped him off, I guess it would have been me. But, I was there when they took Mrs. Liuzzo body out of her car. We drove by that when the police were—after she was shot on her way out of Selma. I really found myself too. I felt much more, of course adult. And then I went to work for Abner Mikva. He was

running a campaign for Congress, we lost, but I gained great experience doing that. Then I went back to the University of Missouri. Got there in '68, ran into a fellow named Gordon Burnside who was the first president of SDS who I'm in touch with and you really ought to get a hold of. He's writing a history right now on Harold
5 Gibbins, the great labor leader. He's about done with the book. We've reestablished contact and friendship after thirty years. He was on the Meredith Walk too. And he nominated me to be SDS chair, he told me the other night (laughs). He was arrested on the campus five or six times. I usually demonstrated—

10 **[End Track 2. Begin Track 3.]**

RE: —after he got arrested. I was never arrested on campus interestingly enough. I had all the same marches, but they never picked me up for whatever reason. Might've been politics, I was always close to Democratic politicians. What do you want to
15 know?

JC: While you were at the University of Missouri, you were studying history again, is that correct?

20 RE: When I went back to graduate school—

JC: —yes.

RE: Correct.

JC: Is there any reason you just kept pursuing history, did you just love it or was it—

RE: I did, I still do. I read a lot of history and I don't know why, but I have a strong
25 interest in where we came from, history of the civil rights movement and so on. And I was planning to be a professor. I mean I was planning to be a teacher of history, but events keep intervening like, particularly the Vietnam War. I was really wrapped up in denouncing that war. We knew Johnson was lying just like we knew Bush was lying. Anybody that reads the paper knew it, just didn't want to face it. And I was
30 like a full-time activist on that campus for three years, which got my professors upset a number of times, but I got all the work done and I even passed my doctoral exams. But I never wrote the dissertation. I'm ABD. Instead, I ran for the legislature. As I say in that book *Prairie Power*, I would go back and forth between the campus and activists and going and working on a political campaign.

35 JC: Now you published an underground newspaper is that correct at the campus?

RE: Gordon and I did. Gordon Burnside was really— Gordon Burnside, Barbara Papish is someone—I don't know if Barbara is still alive. Do you know if she is? She's
40 really— she was the first feminist and I mean, I mean we see now that it all fits into place. Back then we just all—she's this mouthy lady. Why should we pay her any attention? She's a feminist before her time. And she's the one that said we would do

gentle Tuesday, or gentle Thursday or whatever it was. But Gordon really was the founder. Gordon and a guy named Professor William Allen, who's still alive.¹ He's a professor somewhere. Clyde or Betty Wilson could tell you, they keep in touch with him. But, I did all sorts of things. I was out—I worked full-time for Clyde Wilson when he ran against Ichord. That was sort of the political side of me. I helped—we'd helped register voters. It was a big deal, we had to threaten this lawsuit for that. We had a march in the State Capitol where they called out the National Guard. When they suppressed the newspaper, there were frequent arrests of students. We'd have massive demonstrations in front of the Student Union. I assume *The Maneater* would be your best source for all of that. I assume that they would have kept copies of that. Although stupidly, typical people that I understood in history—all the tapes that were taken were destroyed by whatever the TV station is in Columbia. They just threw them all away instead of giving them to the State Historical Society. So all the demonstrations, all the speeches given by Professor Kirkendall or Professor Phelan and all these things, you know, gone.

JC: Because I know we have in our collection, we have several of those underground newspapers.

20 RE: Yeah, *Free Press Underground*—

JC: Yes.

RE: Then it probably had some other name, yeah. But I wasn't the main guy, it started before me. And then it sort of died, and then I became 'quote' the publisher and Gordon was the editor. And I did that like for a year and then somebody else picked it up. It went on—

JC: Could you tell me who was funding those?

RE: We were. I mean literally out of pocket. There was no outside SDS money, Communist party money, or anything like that. We just literally—I remember advancing, I got a check because my parents had died. I got a social security check plus my teaching assistant check and I was raising my little brother at the time. He got a—we used, I think, the publication cost might have been eight hundred dollars and then we would ask people to donate a quarter or whatever to pay the cost for that.

35 JC: Okay, so that, okay—

RE: I think we kind of broke even actually.

JC: Really?

¹ William Allen passed away in 2013.

RE: Yeah.

JC: Okay—

RE: Because nobody funded us. I mean if it was, it was a professor giving us ten dollars, something like that.

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JC: I'm just curious because I saw—

RE: — that's a good question no one's ever thought about asking that. You know—

JC: Because I didn't know, depending on how much money you gathered each time—

10 **[End Track 3. Begin Track 4.]**

JC: —each month or each publication, if you had to vary the number that you could print because of the money that you had, or did you just print the same amount and you just made sure you got that money?

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RE: I don't remember that. I was always—they had wide circulation, one person would give it to another person. There was no way anybody—no organization could lose money because we didn't have any money, so it all just came out of individual's pockets. And probably there wasn't good bookkeeping either.

20

JC: We have a lot of those records too, of the actual student organizations—

RE: —Oh, do you really?

JC: Yeah, in the collection there. But that was just one question I could never kind of figure out—

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RE: Yeah.

JC: —you know it was run by students, but I wasn't quite sure if students were actually the ones paying for it out of pocket. Thank you for answering that. You mentioned the Peaceful Tuesday, or what eventually became Peace Park—

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RE: Well actually it wasn't in that area, Peace Park came as a result of the Cambodian thing which is years later. I was working full time for Clyde Wilson that year. That was in '70? I think the Cambodian Invasion was in '70? And Kent State and Jackson State I think were in 1970, I think. It was a long time ago. They dedicated that park which is called—is it still called Peace Park?

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JC: Yes.

RE: But that big demonstration—there were demonstrations all over the campus and everything on that, it wasn't just there.

JC: Is that where the one was you closed down the campus?

5 RE: No that was right at the—

JC: —Jesse Hall?

RE: Jesse Hall at the Columns and we marched in and took over the—now, we closed
down Jesse Hall and they evacuated and the police were all there. We also once took
10 over the Student Union when they wouldn't let the *Free Press* be published. They
sold *Playboy*, they sold a lot of things that could be considered risqué. And they said
that our magazine was pornographic because it—the cover shows the Statue of
Liberty and Dame Liberty being raped by the Berkeley—it was clearly a political
comment. And of course the Supreme Court upheld the students in *Papish vs. The
Board of Curators et al.* That's again, that's the same Barbara Papish. But we closed
15 the Student Union down a couple of times, usually it would just drift away at night.
As we got it, we didn't know what to do with it. I mean it was a protest, and we then
would drift away, but we'd make strong—we were always very conscious of the
media. The whole idea of whatever we would do was to communicate with people.
So that's why you had marches, because people came out and either threw eggs or
20 they yelled, "Go Home Pinkos. Go back to Red China," or whatever. Or they'd
applaud, but people would be stirred up and they would talk about it. Or if we'd have
a demonstration every Wednesday in front of the Student Union, that the Quakers
sponsored, John Shuter(??), who's still alive I think on the campus and still there. He
sponsored it. I think he's still sponsoring it. Is it every Wednesday at noon in front
25 of the Student Union? There's this anti-war—maybe not, I don't know, but it was
there for like twenty-five years.

JC: I think they've moved that to the Speaker's Circle.

RE: Maybe so.

30 JC: —which is just on the west side of the library, Ellis Library, between that and the law
school, the new law school building and—

RE: —same area.

JC: Okay. They've kind of actually made it into actual circle that's kind of lower so that
35 students can stand around kind of on—

RE: —risers—

JC: —just elevated steps, going up and that’s still there. And there’s still, yeah, once a week there’s always somebody there. And then when that’s not going on, they usually have—there’s student organizations that will be passing out pamphlets—

5 RE: —Sure.

JC: So it’s used quite frequently.

RE: The biggest demonstration was when they shut the newspaper down and the kids that were in young conservative movements, they joined with us and they signed. Denounced SDS, but spoke up in favor of free speech and we’d get the ACLU
10 involved in a lot of those things too. Gordon was arrested several different times. He and five other students, I wasn’t there that day and I regret that actually. They said you can’t read that paper in front of the Student Union. So he stood up and he read it and he was arrested. Barbara read it and she was arrested and three other students, Trish Vandiver, and some other people.

15 JC: Now, you actually graduated with a master’s degree even, but—

RE: —sort of my boobie prize for, because you didn’t have write a thesis. You skipped your—went right to the PhD and NDEA fellowship, National Defense Education Act.

20 JC: And when was it that you actually left the campus?

[End Track 4. Begin Track 5.]

RE: That’s a good question. Probably—well, I ran for the legislature in ’72. It would have been then because I probably was still enrolled in graduate school when I ran for
25 the legislature, but that would’ve petered out then. I would have stopped and not reenrolled—I ran and won the primaries, you’re probably aware of by I think forty-four votes, had Eagleton’s help. I had dropped out of school earlier to work for Eagleton full-time.

30 JC: Well let’s move on to politics a little so we can get into the—before we talk about Eagleton, could you tell me when you—do you remember when you first got interested in politics?

RE: Sure.

35 JC: Or has it always been a lifelong—

RE: My father ran for Congress in 1948. He was the last Republican in the Saint Louis area endorsed by labor. Back then, there were two labor movements. There was the AFL and there was the CIO. The AFL would be made up of carpenters, electricians, high skilled workers. And then you’d have people that would work on assembly
40 lines, maybe drive trucks and that was like the CIO, Teamsters and so on. My father

had been a carpenter and then he went to work for his father in Ellinger Store Equipment. It was founded in 1905. And he was a businessman, but he still carried his card in the local and he ran—and he worked for the telephone company for a while too, during World War II. He ran for Congress in 1948 and of course, he was my father and I was all for him and that greatly influenced me. He didn't do very well of course. Then, my mother, in the 1950s, was a Republican committee woman, that's like that runs the party—you actually elect these people when you go and pick up your ballot. On the bottom there's committee man and committee woman. And she defeated the old guard that wasn't getting the Republican vote out. She was sort of a more progressive wing. And so I just sort of grew up in this atmosphere where politics was seen as being important like some people may grow up in an atmosphere where horseback riding or sports are really important. Politics were—at the dinner table I would hear my mom and dad talking about—well, they elected everything back then, like the Highway Engineer was elected, but they would all be strategizing everything, it was sort of the dinner topic. And Congressman Curtis would come by or a judge, all the judges were elected then and they'd all wanted to have my dad's support, he had a lot of influence in the community, so I grew up with that.

JC: Going back even further, can you tell me the first president that you can remember?

RE: Sure, Franklin Roosevelt. That's a wonderful story. I was five years old and I was two months short of five years old. And we were living on Art Hill Place and my dad was in a strategic job. So, he wasn't drafted, he had special work with the telephone company, so he didn't have to go to war. All my uncles did, but he didn't. So, my mother was crying and she was crying. We lived in a four flats—the places are still there in Art Hill Place, four family flats, I guess you call them shotgun, there's little balconies at the top. We were up one and all the women were home, and they were all together on the back porch and they were all crying. And I was very upset because I had never seen my mother cry before. I mean hopefully you don't see your mom cry a lot when you're a young kid, you know. I said, "Mommy, mommy, what's wrong?" I was tugging at her and she said, "The President's dead." Of course he had died in Warm Springs, I think in April of '45, I think that's the date or another day. As you can see—see, my mom and dad both lost their homes in the Great Depression. And my mother's home, they had to be broken up. One of her brothers had to go live at a farm with uncle so and so, she had to live with aunt so and so, her father, my grandfather, had to go to Detroit and get a part-time job.

[End Track 5. Begin Track 6.]

RE: I mean real, the Depression really hit both of my families heavy. They were both in college, both of my mom and my dad went to three years of college and the Depression hit. They never finished. So they loved FDR, but they went to the suburbs and became Republicans like a lot of people do out here. They move from North County where they're all Democrats. They move out here, now they're Republicans you know so, and that's—you know I've always loved listening to the

political conventions. So I remembered all the presidents, I mean from Roosevelt on. Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, all that.

JC: What was your first political position?

5 RE: I worked for my mom. I handed out leaflets for my mom on Election Day. And it was in an area we weren't expected to do well in because I kept telling everybody to vote for my mom that—I think we were carried it by three votes, and I was credited with that. (laughs)

10 JC: Now, you at some point were elected Chairman of the Boone County New Democratic Coalition—

RE: Yeah. (laughs)

15 JC: —and the Missouri New Democratic—

RE: I guess I was the last president. It died under my leadership. It doesn't exist anymore.

20 JC: When was that? What time period are we talking about for that?

RE: Seventies. I ran for the legislature in '72. Clyde ran—the height of the Democratic Coalition was probably '70 when Clyde Wilson ran for office. We had a big dinner—the anti-war professors and it was kind of a big sit-down dinner, like you're very familiar with, people go for fundraising. And the old time Democrats, I remember
25 one of them came and he—the room was filled, we must have had eight hundred or a thousand people there. And we gave out an annual award, Liberal of the Year. Clyde won the first award. It was a statue, it was made by Don Bartlett, who was a long-time activist and professor of art in the Art department. His wife, Bertrice is still alive in Columbia.² She's a retired teacher from Stephens College. She was a
30 democratic delegate for Gene McCarthy. We all worked real hard to get her elected. And I remember the guy saying, he was County Commissioner, at that time they called them County Judges. His name was Drew, Clarence Drew, and down home, country guy, a farmer. I remember he came, I don't want to sound classy, he came in white socks to this big event, looked around this room and he goes, "My God, this
35 peace thing's getting to be pretty big." (laughs) So anyway—

JC: In 1968, you worked as the Assistant Press Secretary and speech writer for then the lieutenant governor Tommy Hilton, is that correct?

40 RE: Right.

² Bertrice Bartlett passed away in 2015.

JC: During his senatorial race.

RE: That's correct.

JC: Could you tell me a little bit about that job, what you did, what the atmosphere during the campaign was?

5

RE: Sure. First of all, we kept demonstrating against the war. When I was working for the Young Christian's Student Movement, I went to two—the first SDS demonstrations against the war, it was in 1965. Carl Oglesby, Carl Davidson, all the early presidents of SDS, well by today's standards they'd be moderate democrats, spoke. I went to Washington with busloads of young people I helped organize out of Harvard and all those places. I was assigned as an organizer during the civil rights period. And then when I—these demonstrations continued, 1965. We had a big demonstration on the Boston Common, turned out thousands of students against the war. Then, I left all that stuff by '68 like I said and I came back to the campus, and or whenever I went back to the campus, '66 I think. So from '63 to '66. And we would demonstrate constantly against the war, and the war never stopped, and it got bigger, instead of in the civil rights movement, we would demonstrate and they'd pass along. We would demonstrate, people would be killed, and Johnson will say, "We shall not move and move the country that way." And we could see progress being made. Not in terms of the peace movement. The war went on and on and on and then Nixon won, and more people were killed—

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[End Track 6. Begin Track 7.]

25 RE: —in the war after Nixon's election than before. So you got tired of it. So some people went into drugs, I mean, who were really committed. Others went underground, you know the Weather Underground. And I've always had a strong conscience, not that I've always followed it, but I turned my draft card in. I was indicted by the FBI, the FBI was going to arrest me, all this stuff, so I took my card back. I didn't want to go to prison, but I still made the protest. So, that was at Berea Church(??), that got a lot of publicity in the *Post-Dispatch*. That was the whole idea of it, to make communication. So Eagleton provided an avenue for people like me who thought that moral was moral—that war—not the people who fought it, who are very good friends of mine now. I just had lunch with one of them, who were in Vietnam, who went over, were drafted. It provided an avenue because demonstrations didn't work, so what's left? Bombing? Terrorist attacks? We were always non-violent, so a guy like Eagleton runs on the platform of opposing the war. And I had this experience working in Congressman Mikva's office, to become Congressman Mikva, at the time he was a state representative. I had worked as a reporter in Chicago briefly, I knew how to organize. He provides an avenue, so I don't ever recall hearing Eagleton even speak before I joined his staff. I remember just calling cold and saying, "Do you need anybody with writing skills? I used to work for Abner Mikva in Chicago, I'm sure he'll give me a great recommendation. Do you need a speech writer?" "Come on down." Went down to the Paul Brown

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Building in downtown Saint Louis, met with Jim Murphy, and Philippine(??), who was later a federal judge. They took me into to see Tom, was hired, boom. And I stayed there about six months. I stayed there through the primary and the general election. I did what a speech writer does. There was somebody else whom I don't know. It might've been Steve Vaughan, I don't know. There was somebody—probably a professor, we had a lot of professors from Washington U. working for the Senator. And they would write a speech on nuclear energy. They would write a speech on the environment. They would write a speech on the Biafran War that was going on at the time. And then I would get it, and then I would edit that or edit it down. I'd prepare it for press release too, because that's the only thing he really cared about, you know. I mean it gets to the media. And then it would come back to me. I had particular assignments. I was assigned to work with a guy named State Senator Southern, Richard Southern. He was actually the campaign manager, but he didn't have a lot of influence. He was in charge of—each county had a county coordinator, okay? And he was a rural guy from northeast Missouri so he was the logical guy to be the head of that part of the campaign. And I would work with him in drafting up letters and biographies and making sure that all the publicity of the local Eagleton events got in the *Farmington News* or whatever. Thousands of these little papers. We really did a lot of that. I mostly stayed in the office; I didn't travel with them generally. Except if he'd spoke locally, I'd jump in the car with him. It was heady. I took a call from Ted Kennedy once, who wanted to speak to him. He wouldn't let any of us go to Chicago. I remember watching the riots in his office with him and with the other staff members. There were like six or eight of us, all men, it was very—there was one woman who was chief typist, but she really had a lot more influence, I don't remember her name, I think it was like his cousin. And we were like four or five stories above his law office, which was Mark Eagleton's office, the famous Saint Louis politician, his father. And they called it the "dovecoat," which I think is kind of funny because the more—what should I say—harder-edged pols that he had around him.

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[End Track 7. Begin Track 8.]

RE: They knew I was in SDS. They knew I had been in the civil rights movement and Tom always accepted me. I have great reverence and respect. I wept at his funeral that is for sure.

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JC: One of the gentlemen with you in that group wasn't— didn't he become State Representative Steve Osmeyer(??)?

RE: Yes, he was part of that group.

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JC: He was one of those. Okay.

RE: And a very brilliant guy, and yeah.

JC: Could you tell me about the use of different things in the campaign such as phone banks or polling?

5 RE: Uh-huh. Well, nobody else has written about this. This guy—I'm covering the same thing again. The guy that was writing the book, was it Gilio?

JC: Giglio, Professor [James] Giglio.

10 RE: Yeah, I wrote him another letter and I said, "There's a few things that nobody's written about you, you should probably know about," I said, "We hired Matt Reece," who was like this huge guy and I didn't remember much about Reece but Giglio did. And he reminded me that he was already well known nationally, Eagleton didn't—I mean, this wasn't pioneered here, but it was sort of secret. We had two opponents in the primary. You know, this seated senator, and True Davis, a millionaire many times, in northeast Missouri. So, I think that's where he's from, anyway. We tried
15 this phone bank thing and it really was just fascinating to see how it worked, I mean, it'd all be through computerized everything now. She had a bank, they were all women as I remember and maybe a hundred of them in a room, each with their own phone and a phone list and a thing to say. And so you could just click off and hit all these neighborhoods and when you're in the African American—when you're calling
20 African American neighborhoods, they had black women in there doing it. It might've been men, I don't remember, I think they were all women. They paid a salary and if they didn't meet their quota, they were fired, I remember that. And it was all monitored, like the guy would sit up here, like in the back of the room, and he'd listen in on any phone call to judge how people were doing and to test things.

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JC: And where was this at?

RE: I don't know, I think it could have been in the Paul Brown Building in a vacant conference room. I remember visiting it several different times, so it was close enough that I could take the elevator and then go across the street or where ever, I
30 didn't have to take any transportation or anything.

JC: So they were using these women to kind of see just—

RE: —No, what would happened is that there'd be a script. They'd say, "Hello, Are you aware there's a United States Senate race going on? There's three candidates—which
35 of these candidates"—first of all you try and get a poll done, and then "Here's what Senator Eagleton stands for." And these are not scientific polls, you know, "Senator Eagleton believes in equal rights," if you're, say you're calling a black neighborhood. So, "Are you for that?" You know, "Yeah, sure". "Do you realize that ninety"—you know, "Your views and Senator Eagleton's are ninety percent equal." I mean it was a
40 pitch. It was a pitch. But they're highly organized, see? They'd paid a lot of money for that. That was a big deal. I don't know how much this guy charged. And I have no idea how they got the money. The money man was a guy named Lou Susman, s-u-s-m-a-n. He was Jewish and very connected. He became very close to George

Lehr, who became the State Auditor, Teamsters Head of the pension plan. Susman left years later, many times a millionaire, no one's ever questioned Lou Susman's honesty. I understand he's died.³ He'd be in his seventies. He was so gregarious. He was—in fact, that was the thing that got me. I was a sort of—I didn't go to
5 Country Day like all the rest of these people did and I always felt a little uncomfortable, although I was middle class. And everybody around Eagleton had a pedigree: Princeton, Yale, Harvard. Married to the Dolans, the biggest real estate company in town. I mean Tom was society. His wife was society, Barbara. All Catholics, but not very religious, I mean. We didn't talk much about civil rights.
10 Civil rights was not big in the Eagleton campaign. The war was.

JC: Wasn't there an issue specifically relating to a gun issue or something?

RE: Oh yeah, almost blew the campaign. He was in favor somehow early on of gun control. You know he was a city—youngest circuit attorney ever elected as a
15 prosecuting attorney. I think he was right out of law school and he got elected. And of course, like right now, a young teenage black kid is killed every other day in the city of Saint Louis. I don't know if you're aware of that. If it was white, in the county, we'd have the National Guard in here. It's just a—

20 **[End Track 8. Begin Track 9.]**

RE: —crime, it's just incredible. I mean, North Saint Louis is very dangerous. We're losing about four or five black young men a week, right now.

25 JC: Really?

RE: From gunshots. So, almost any urban politician, unless you live way out in the suburbs, like out here is for gun control, at least for hand guns. And he took a moderate position about we don't want Saturday night specials. Boy, the NRA went
30 crazy on that. And I forget who they endorsed, one of the other two candidates. And we lost a number of state county chairmen, they quit. That was a big deal. (laughs)

JC: Senator—or who became Senator Eagleton, he had a nickname for you, is that correct?

35 RE: Calhoun.

JC: Is there any reason for that name or were—

RE: Yeah.

³ As of 2018, Louis Susman is still living. He served as US Ambassador to the United Kingdom from 2009-2013.

JC: Okay.

RE: Well, first of all, you're too young to remember him, but there was a movie star, a cowboy movie star, a B-movie, not A-movie, it wasn't Hopalong Cassidy or Roy Rogers, but he was Rory Calhoun. But, at the same time, *The Amos and Andy Show* 5 was on, on the radio. I remember—we didn't get our first TV until I was like sixteen years old. And there was a lawyer on there named Calhoun and everybody called him on the show, "Calhoun". So there was a bit of a racial thing there. First, the senator had problems, like a lot of people do, saying "Rory". It frequently becomes "Roy", and I don't ever correct anybody. But "Rory" is hard for some people to say. So, I 10 became "Calhoun". But—and his views on race were, I would just say, typical for someone of his age, pedigree, and background, but he grew so much in that area. You know, he was one of only two United States senators to go to Jackson State, where those—everyone else was—there was a lot of discussion about Kent State, but he went to the memorial service for the black students killed at Jackson State and became a very strong champion of civil rights in the Senate. But it wasn't his—they weren't his people. They were not, they—it's sort of like right now, Jay [Nixon]. Jay 15 has never been, but now, he knows the importance of the black vote. He grew up in DeSoto, they're not going to be a big civil rights promoter, if you're white and come from DeSoto, normally. I mean, you might be for equal rights. So now he's very close to former Supreme Court Judge White and everything else. But a there's a sort of maturation that occurs with urban politicians, whites and blacks, you know everybody—otherwise, I mean the blacks just sort of organize among themselves and the whites, but when you run city-wide, all of a sudden you know you need coalitions and you become friends and that sort of thing. And Eagleton went all through that. 20 And he really was, by the end of his Senate career, was considered a great, great friend of African American people.

JC: Now switching gears a little bit and then I'll come back to Senator Eagleton again. In 1972, you did run for the democratic candidate for the House of Reps in the 111th 30 District, which is Boone County.

RE: Not all of it. It was all of Columbia, and I think we went up to Hallsville and so on. There was somebody else—I don't think it was all. I think at that time Columbia might've had two—I mean Boone County might've had two, like Ashland south 35 would have been another, I don't remember having to run in Ashland. Anyway, anyway—

JC: Could you tell me about that campaign a little? Do you remember who you ran 40 against or—

RE: Sure, Dorsey Bass. Old time Boone countian, back generations, farmer, active in the Democratic Party, beautiful daughters, I dated one of them. (laughs) Nice people, nice people, and he had all the old guard who were solidly in favor of the war. They were Dick Ichord Democrats, and they were called Dixiecrats. And I'm right out of being 45 head of SDS, and leading this big march on the State Capitol and being the chair of

this big dinner for the New Democratic Coalition, and about three months later I announced and it was—no one gave me a chance. And I went door-to-door and I worked full-time. I didn't have a penny. I was working as a janitor at a Head Start center, riding a bicycle. Finally somebody loaned me their car for three months.

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[End Track 9. Begin Track 10.]

10 RE: And I worked more or less full-time on that campaign and I had a great coalition with Harold Warren who've I been reading about lately, unfortunately, in the papers, the black mortician in Columbia. The NAA—lots of people supported me in the labor unions and so on. And all the students got out, and all the professors and it was sort of old Columbia versus the town and gown, and I won by forty-four votes. Then I lost in November against, I can't think of his name. He was a commissioner or a county judge, a farmer from Illinois who had moved to Columbia with his business, whatever it was. And a real solid kind of guy, ran a clean campaign, didn't ever red bait me. Just ran on his own record. Reverend Reisch was one—there were two state representatives, that's it. Reisch was one, and this other guy was the other. They elected two Republicans. And Larry Marshall, a Republican, was elected—these were very liberal republicans, by the way. I lost by about four or five percentage points, I don't remember exactly. It was a good race, but it wasn't enough. My brother had gotten arrested; we had gotten a lot of bad publicity—I had bad publicity going in and my brother was arrested over marijuana, got all over the front pages of every paper, people wanting me to get—I was amazed I did as well as we did, finally.

25 JC: That's after the primary?

RE: After the primary, before the general election, my brother was arrested and there was that and then just the fact that I was this SDS guy, a lot of Democrats would not vote for me.

30 JC: Were you surprised that you won the primary because you hadn't—?

RE: When you're twenty-eight or thirty years old like I was, I wasn't any kid that's for sure, I mean I wasn't twenty-two. We expected to win. We knew the race in November would be a lot harder.

35 JC: But it just sounds like because you had—you went door-to-door, you didn't have a lot of money, I just didn't know if—

RE: We raised probably more money than he did.

JC: Oh, okay.

40 RE: Liberals have a lot of money, by and large. They're upper-middle income people, professors and so on and they give. I probably had a bigger budget than he did, the guy I beat.

JC: So what did you do after you lost the general election, what did you do next? What was your next step?

5 RE: Well, I was crushed, I didn't have anything to do and so, I remember Eagleton had asked me to come to Washington, the second time he'd asked me. That's when I should have gone to Washington. First time I didn't want to go. I wanted to just go back to the campus and finish my PhD.

10 JC: When was the first time he asked you to go to Washington?

RE: He asked me a number of times when I was in his office. When this is over—I kind of didn't go and we had this big deal, we would all flew out—all the staff flew out to someplace in South Carolina or Virginia for a big bash, and I decided I wasn't going to go that and then I stayed though for the rest of the campaign, but I knew I was going back then to campus. Then, after he asked me to come to work for him after I had ran and lost for the representative seat—never forget it was all in the paper about me being in SDS and everything. I mean I was in the paper all the time when I lived in Columbia. So I then I went to work for the Missouri Association for Social Welfare which I still serve on their endowment committee. I'm active on their endowment— manage their portfolio. I did that for three years in Jefferson City, I was a lobbyist against the death penalty. We organized the prison reform projects. I organized groups like I did in the Young Christian Student Movement around the state, against hunger. That was the time we were switching from commodities to food stamps. Medicare was just getting geared up, so we had a lot of government grants that we had. There was like a staff of twelve of us, I mean SW's been around since 1905. It's still around; small group of people. And then I got tired of that and I decided what do I want to do with my life. Do I finish the PhD? No, I'll go law school.

30 JC: And then you graduated law school in 1978, correct?

RE: Or nine, I'm not sure.

JC: Okay. That was from the University of Missouri-Kansas City, correct?

RE: We ought to be able to tell that, though.

[End Track 10. Begin Track 11.]

35 RE: There's my master's. There's 1978, yeah.

JC: And that was Kansas City, correct?

RE: Yeah, I had to get out of town. I was waitlisted on the MU-Columbia, which means I would have made it in. And I said, "If I go to MU-Columbia, I'll never get through

5 this school, because I'm just, I'm involved in so—I have to make a break.” And they
were generous to me in Kansas City. I got a scholarship, not a huge one. And I got a
low-cost loan. I graduated from law school with virtually—very small students loans.
I'll always be thankful for Kansas City University for what they did for me, not that
I've given much money or anything to them, but I mean I really, you know. And it
was tough, I was thirty-six years old, thirty-four, thirty-four. I remember I was in
class with people who interviewed me for *The Maneater* when they were freshman
and they kept calling me “Mr. Ellinger” in law school, and they turned out to be three
times brighter than I was. My best friends in law school were returned Vietnam vets,
10 I remember that, because we were older.

JC: Okay, but that's how you ended up in Kansas City, you decided that you needed a
break from Columbia, but you did apply there though?

15 RE: Applied two places, I could only afford two, I had no money, I didn't make very
much money working for MASW. I bought a little house, I became a home owner up
in Mission Hills or something like that, some little—Indian Hills, up on Mohawk
Avenue. I owned a home up there and decided though that I wanted to be lawyer for
my life. So I got out of law school, I was thirty-eight, went to work for the Public
Service Commission under Alberta Slavin and Joe Teasdale. Joe always was kind to
20 me, too and—

JC: Now you weren't too far out of law school, was it just a couple of years when Senator
Eagleton helped you get a job as the director—

25 RE: What happened was I went to work for the Public Service Commission and I
eventually ended up Chief Attorney for the Water and Sewer Departments for all,
what they do at the commission. And then did a good job as a young experienced
lawyer, learned a lot about business law, and then Joe lost, he lost to Bond. It was
30 Bond's second term. Bond won a term, then Teasdale won, and then Bond won
again.⁴ So the liberals were leaving town. When Bond came back in, he didn't run as
a liberal. The first time he was a very reformist governor, because it had been all
Democrats and kind of corrupt and everything, the Democrats were in power in
Missouri for so long, Warren Hearnes and all that. So, Alberta left the commission.
35 My—you know, it was only time when I was going to have to go. We were real
strong consumer advocates and so there was an opening right over in the newspaper,
legal aid, one of the last positions in America, so I applied for the job. That letter I
just showed you, Eagleton wrote me like one of those letters, but he did more than
40 that. He made a few calls to the board members. And those board members
remembered me because they were the old county chairmen.

JC: Because the people that you were—that were also going for this job were—

⁴ Christopher “Kit” Bond was governor of Missouri from 1973-1977 and 1981-1985. Joseph Teasdale was
governor of Missouri from 1977-1981.

RE: —a lot of them were more qualified than me, let me just put it that way.

JC: Because some of them were from Harvard and—

RE: —wherever. Or had been lawyers for ten years. I had been a lawyer for two and a half years.

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JC: You were fairly new. That's why I said, I knew it was it was only a couple of years outside of law school, so he had helped you secure that position.

RE: Yes, but I want to add that he never promoted people he didn't think could do the job. It wasn't just political payback. And I remember his staff, guy his name is Abels, we never got along, we don't like each other, Mark Abels, he thought I was nothing but trouble, "Stay away from that guy," "Why do you want—" "He is a friend of mine, he backed me when I needed support. He helped us with the students on the campus, I'm going to stay with Eagle— you know, with Ellinger." And I understand Abels position, once your candidate or your person to get involved in these side issues—like Obama's involved in some side issues with some peace people from the sixties now, right? So, I got the job and I did a good job, and I got tired again of that (laughs) and I ran for the legislature again, which was not a good move. (laughs)

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20 **[End Track 11. Begin Track 12.]**

JC: And that was in 1980 in Hannibal, correct?

RE: Yeah, could have been '81, '82, I don't remember, could be '82, I don't know, was it '80?

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JC: I think it's 1980 from what I could look up.

RE: Yeah, okay.

JC: Could you tell me a little bit about that campaign?

RE: Oh, I was horrible. I had a lot of really good decent people supporting me but, boy was I red-baited. I mean they trotted the whole thing out: the SDS, they said they had a film of me burning an American flag and, you know. The *Post-Dispatch* endorsed me, but of course it doesn't get widely read up in Hannibal. At the same time Schoemehl ran, we were running at the same time for—he was running for mayor of Saint Louis, and I was running for State Representative in Hannibal, and they both red-baited us but, Schoemehl won. And I lost terribly; I got twenty-five percent of the vote. There were two other candidates. There was a retired educator who had been in the military. He was sort of the middle-of-the-road and there's the guy who won, I forget his name, a young unmarried guy, I forget his name, farmer's son, prominent farmer's son and all the old pols went with him and he's now a lobbyist, I understand.

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JC: They never produced—

RE: —Steve Carroll.

JC: Okay.

RE: Oh no, there couldn't have been.

5 JC: No there wasn't, but that—

RE: I would have admitted it, I threw my draft card in. I admit, I didn't burn it, but I turned it in, and I admit that. Nothing I—I mean I never did any of that—

10 JC: —They just kept putting that information out there though and you could fight it as much as you want, but it didn't matter if they could produce it—

RE: —They wouldn't let me come in the VFW hall, or the American Legion hall. So a couple of my veteran buddies, we just walked in and they were going to beat the shit out of us though. (laughs) So we stood our ground and I just gave my speech anyway, but they all said, "No, no, get out of here, you had your say, now get out of here." "Peacenik!" "I lost my buddy in Vietnam." And I said, "Well, I know seven people's name on that wall, too and I think that, you know, you're blaming the wrong people. But that's, I understand."

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20 JC: Now did you get another letter then also—for each election that you ran for. I mean Eagleton wrote a letter for you, he would let you use—

RE: Yeah, absolutely.

JC: —let you use pictures of him and literature. I saw a pamphlet for your campaign, so he was—anything he could kind of do if you needed his picture, if you needed a letter—

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RE: —including his people.

JC: —so he was very—I mean whatever support you needed, he was there for you.

30 RE: He wasn't for everybody. I remember now that Dick Southern is deceased. He wanted to come to Washington to work, he had lost his job as State Senator and he said no. He didn't think he'd fit into that culture.

JC: Now, beyond after the election, Senator Eagleton—you're a lawyer. Is that when you moved to the Saint Louis area then, or—

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RE: No, I moved back to Columbia and that's when I was with the Public Service Commission and then I moved to Hannibal. After I lost that, yeah, then I moved to Saint Louis.

5 JC: Okay.

RE: And I was not hired by a big law firm. So I worked for a series of smaller law firms as their associates, first in Jefferson County, first for a guy named Lou Green, who was the leading environmental lawyer in Missouri, who is known as such. You should have his papers by the way. You really should get Lou Green's papers because he knows all environmental stuff for Missouri, go through every law case, trying to stop the Meramec Dam, trying to stop the Page extension, he was a lawyer for all that stuff. And, I came back to Saint Louis. I worked for a former judge. I stayed active in liberal politics. Eventually, I ran for the school board in University City; served on a school board for twelve years. Since then and during that time, I've maintained my activities on all sorts of activities including like this one which is the largest not-for-profit foundation in the State of Missouri, 1.4 billion, the Carnahan—and Jay appointed me to that board and one of fifteen people to oversight. And there were some very prestigious people on that board and then there was me. (laughs) I mean, people like Alberta Slavin, people like Bill McCalpin, President of the American Bar Association, chief partner of Louis Rice Law Firm. There was the president of Deutsche Bank. I mean all these very prominent people, doctors and so on, and I helped put that organization together, and I remain active. I am the treasurer of the Crider Center, the largest mental health organization in Saint Charles, Lincoln, and Warren County and I am on the Board of the Directors of the Black Repertory Theatre and I'm—

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[End Track 12. Begin Track 13.]

RE: —in charge of the endowment for the University City education foundation. In fact, I have to raise twenty-five thousand dollars for them in the next two months, which is worrying me. And I was very active in Margaret Donnelly's campaign. I'm bitterly disappointed in her loss. I gave all I could financially, which was quite a bit for us and I'd be strongly inclined to vote for her right now if she ran as an independent, but she lost. I'm very much for Jay Nixon, I think he'll do a lot for health care, that's a big issue of mine, health care. And I'm a lawyer. I had a three-day jury trial, just got finished with it yesterday at five o'clock.

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JC: And that's what you are currently, I mean that's how you spend your time, you're a practicing attorney—

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RE: —I am a practicing attorney and nobody knows anything about this background except for older people, they just know me as hopefully a nice guy and a competent lawyer. I don't live around here. I live in—a lot easier to be a liberal in Saint Louis County. I got an anti-war sign in front of my house. I don't put it in front of my law office, I admit.

45

JC: So you live in closer to Saint Louis?

RE: I live in University City.

JC: Okay and—

5 RE: —Married my wife in this time, had two kids. My wife's a director at MasterCard. She's got a very lucrative, very high-end job.

JC: And her name's Linda, correct?

RE: Linda Locke.

10 JC: Linda Locke.

RE: She was the head of the Equal Rights Amendment Coalition. I met her at a rally. I'll show you out in the hall. I've got it framed, with Bella Abzug who was a pioneer civil rights leader and Congresswoman from Brooklyn, I think. And I met her at the Democratic National Convention when Linda was elected a delegate for Ted

15 Kennedy and I went up to Bella and I said, "You know, you're kind of responsible for bringing my wife and I together." And she looks at me, very imperiously, with a big hat and she goes, "Do tell." (laughs) She wasn't a very gracious person.

JC: I'm sorry. (laughter) You have two children, right? Is that—

20 RE: Maggie is a freshman in law school, starting last month at CCNY in New York City where we have an apartment now in New York City where my wife—she comes, I pick her up at the airport at night, at ten o'clock on Thursday and she goes back on Monday. So we have homes in two cities. And like she'll be gone for a month to Dubai and she does all sorts of interesting things. We just got back from Peking or

25 Beijing. Went over with her on a business trip for her. And my son is in the Peace Corps, just like his mom.

JC: And that's— His name is Martin, correct?

RE: He's in Moldova.

30 JC: Moldova? Okay.

RE: I talked to him this morning. He was officially sworn in yesterday.

JC: Oh, so he's right in, just in to—

RE: Five hundred miles away from the fighting.

JC: Okay.

RE: Right across the Black Sea, its five hundred miles. You got to go through the Ukraine to get to where he is. Where he is, is a breakaway state from Romania and the Ukraine.

5 JC: So he's just, what'd you say—

RE: —He's been gone two months. He went to Cornell College in Iowa. Maggie went to Antioch, which is now bankrupt. (laughs)

10 JC: Which campus in Antioch?

RE: The one that went bankrupt (laughs) and the one, I forget the name of the town. It's a real colorful kind of name, pretty name like Wichita Falls or something, I forget the name of it right now, Antioch in something, Ohio.

15 JC: I can't remember off the top, but I knew they had campuses in different places.

RE: They used to have a law school even but it merged with Howard.

JC: I have a friend actually that works at Antioch in Los Angeles—

RE: —really? Yeah.

JC: I was just wondering which campus of Ohio, okay.

20 RE: She got her degree in eco-feminism. People say, "What's that?" I say, "Well, it's a woman hugging a tree." (laughs)

JC: And what was your son's degree in?

RE: Anthropology and Black Studies. He went to a school that was eighty-five percent African American, so he has a lot of African American friends.

25 JC: What—I know you mentioned some of the organizations that you're involved in, things that you've done in the school board and that, but are there any other organizations whether they're political, religious, fraternal, social that you're

30 involved in in your community?

RE: Well, I am not religious. We are members of the Ethical Society. I dropped out of the Catholic Church twenty-five, thirty, forty years ago, sort of when I left the civil rights movement. But it's not because of priest abuse or because the Catholic Church is rich. In fact, I think the Catholic Church is the only systematic organization—

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[End Track 13. Begin Track 14.]

RE: —that sticks up for the poor in the world, unless you include the Gates Foundation or something which is not small potatoes. But, I just don't believe so that's it, yeah.
5 Our kids were raised in the Ethical Society. I'm just—I'm a liberal democrat, I'm a strong supporter of Jay, strong supporter of Margaret, I hope Rachel Storch does well in her life. (laughs) I hope the state goes Democratic, we need health care badly. We do more bankruptcies here than any other law firm in three counties. You cannot believe the number of people that are having to file bankruptcy because of medical costs. They got to put it on their credit card, you know, no health insurance. In
10 America, we have the seventeenth worst death rate in the world today. I mean, now, we're not at the top. Everyone thinks we're the top. We're seventeenth. Almost every European state, even some Asian states are better than we are, like Shanghai, places like that. Life expectancy is older for those people than it is Americans.

15 JC: Would you say that you're still—do you heavily follow politics on both the—?

RE: Heavily, read two papers a day, yeah.

JC: And not just in Missouri, I'm assuming you follow—

RE: Oh yeah, I'm really caught up. I was for—we were for Hillary, but we're strongly for
20 Obama.

JC: So you follow it throughout. Can I ask you a question? And I usually ask this with most politicians and that, but there was a big change in Missouri in the State Legislature when they got term limits back in 2000, do you think that's been good—
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RE: —bad idea.

JC: Okay, I was just curious—

RE: Really bad, I'll give you a good example of that. Two people, one of whom never really supported me and one who has and I've worked with, John Schneider. John is
30 Catholic, very strongly pro-life, I certainly respect his opinion on that and he's done a lot for this state. He served in the legislature—but we've never been close personally. I see him now and then in court. He should be in the legislature still. He knew that place up the back and backwards. People could depend on him for different things. He was honest. But an even better example of that is Senator Wayne Goode. He
35 founded the University of Missouri-Saint Louis, has done more for health care, he serves on the Missouri Foundation for Health now. He knew everything about business law, about cable television, about how to figure the state tax for education, very complicated, the formula that you have to use to figure the tax rate for school districts. He understood the school formula. He left—I don't know if anybody
40 understands it down there now. And so what happens is you're going to have a stronger and stronger executive when you have a weaker and weaker legislature.

There's not enough time to build up seniority. They elected Roosevelt four times. He was our greatest president in the Twentieth Century.

5 JC: Can I ask you this? A couple of the different politicians that I've interviewed, they said some were for, some were against them, but most of the ones I've talked to were surprised at the actual number of years. They didn't think term limits were bad, but from what I understand, most people never thought they'd be eight years, they thought they would be ten, twelve, fourteen. Are you opposed to term limits all together?

10 RE: All together.

JC: Okay.

15 RE: I serve on a number of different boards where we're term limited off. We lose institutional memory. We're term limited off for two terms in the Missouri Foundation for Health. Because of a quirk in the law, I have to serve not just six years, but eight years. There was only one other person and I who that did that, Mickey Brewster, who was the wife of the former school board president of Saint Louis. She and I served eight years. We ended up with the institutional memory for the new members. Now where do you got to go to institutional memory? To the staff, and I think it's a wrong imbalance. I think that you should have a mix of people who have been on there forever. ACLU is a good example of that. They can serve their whole life, but they constantly want to get in one third new members. That's a good mix.

25 JC: I've heard that in Jefferson City, just talking amongst some people, that they think a lot of the staff members now actually have more power—

30 RE: —Absolutely. How are you going to memorize about sewer systems or water control and all these things? You can if you're going to be down there a long time. You carve out your—When I was on the school board, I carved out a niche. It was the finances of the district. I knew a lot about the finances. I knew if we were over spending or under spending. You get to know that area. Somebody else carved out an area in science, so I mean—

35 **[End Track 14. Begin Track 15.]**

40 RE: —if like you wanted something done in a certain area, you would go to Wayne Goode. We used to joke about it. There'd be this senator from the big banks, the senator from the little banks. And I don't mean that in a negative way, but they come from that—the senator from labor, that sort of thing.

JC: Okay, and you've mentioned health care. Do you think that is Missouri's biggest problem right now out of everything; its health care?

RE: I do, I think it's unconscionable that you cut a hundred and twenty thousand people off the Medicare rolls, eighty thousand who are children and you call that a cost saving benefit. It's just—I don't know how Republicans can go to church on Sunday and call themselves Christian and hold that position. Now I know they can say to me,
5 "How can you support the killing of infants in the womb?" So, I'll be fair, I mean I know shouldn't cast—just because they believe abortion is murder, okay, and I'm in favor of a woman's right to choose. But, I think that was just a terrible move for the Republicans to save money off the backs of the poor.

10 JC: What do you think about the—there seems to be a surplus this year—

RE: —there isn't. If you add in just giving back the hundred and—if you put the people back on Medicare, there's no more money left. I mean there'll just be a few million, that's already been done, and so there won't be a surplus for Nixon, if he goes ahead and puts that back in. He's going to have a big, tough time keeping his promises
15 about no tax increase. The state's really hurting, particularly in a recession. We need something—our highways are terrible.

JC: Is there anything else that maybe we didn't—

RE: —by the way, I'm not a politician. I don't know why you're interviewing me. I
20 know why you'd interview me for SDS, or the New Left, or my relatively minor connection to Senator Eagleton—

JC: —well we have his big collection, Senator Eagleton's collection—

RE: —sure, and I just feel so fond and loyal to the man that he would do this for me, and
25 that—who is nobody. You know, I am not a big partner at Louis Rice, you don't read my name in the *Business Journal*, helping to bring the Rams to town like a lot of the senator's close friends. I never ever passed myself off as being an intimate. I was never invited to his home or things like that. I worked for him. But, I have had an interesting life being around, being a bodyguard with King, marching from Selma to
30 Montgomery, doing some good, I hope, on a school board. But, it ain't over yet. I may even run for office, I don't know, at my ancient age. If John McCain can, I don't see why I can't.

JC: Now if you don't have any other stories to share, I do appreciate—

35 RE: —(laughs) I got a ton of them, but believe me, that's okay.

JC: Oh and well, we can always talk some other time too.

RE: No, that's alright.

JC: But, no, our political collection, we try to get a wide range of all aspects of Missouri politics whether it be lobbyists, whether it be former governors, whether it be senators, representatives—

5 RE: —have you talked to John Britton?

JC: —chiefs of staff. I haven't, no.

RE: He's the chief lobbyist in the state for the last fifty years.

JC: We usually try to talk to people retired or former ones or ones that we think may be are—

10 RE: —Hah (laughs), over the hill.

JC: That aren't going to run anymore because it does—people feel more comfortable—

RE: Yeah, that's true.

15 JC: —if they talk about things in the past. So definitely no, I wanted to speak with you because you did have a different side of Eagleton, but I was interesting—to go along with your connection with the University of Missouri. You have a collection at the Western Historical Manuscript Collection so, that is why I kind of wanted to

20 interview you and get a different political aspect to add that collection.

RE: Sure.

JC: So we really do appreciate it, and I really appreciate you taking your time—

RE: —I enjoyed talking to you.

25 **[End Interview.]**