SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AND UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES
UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

UIC

This oral history interview is part of the Richard J. Daley Oral History Collection at the Special Collections and University Archives Department at the University of Illinois at Chicago. It has been used to create content for the online exhibit, Remembering Richard J. Daley, http://rjd.library.uic.edu , published on July 20, 2015.

Special Collections & University Archives
Richard J. Daley Library
University of Illinois at Chicago
801 S. Morgan St.
Chicago, IL 60607
3rd Floor
(312) 996-2742

http://library.uic.edu/special-collections

Interview with State Senator Arthur Berman

Date 8 October 2003

Location: UIC Historian's Office, 815 W. Van Buren Ave., Chicago, IL.
Present: State Senator Arthur Berman, Dr. Robert V. Remini, and Dr. Fred W. Beuttler

Dr. Fred W. Beuttler: Why don't we begin? We're with Senator Arthur Berman, here on October 8. And we're here working on a project on Mayor Richard J. Daley. If it's ok with you, I'd like a little longer interview, some about your political career, your relationship with Daley, and even your relationship with the current Mayor if that's possible, especially how education works in Springfield. One of the things of my position here at the university is not only to work on the Daley Project, but also to do the history of UIC. So I'm quite interested in the history of Chicago and how education works in Springfield as it relates to the university and the rest of the state. We started talking in there about some of your educational background and I'd love to have that part on tape if we could. So tell me how you came to Navy Pier.

Senator Arthur Berman: Well, I'm a product of the north side of Chicago. At the age of two, we moved from the west side of Chicago, where I was born, to the north side of Chicago. We lived in West Rogers Park.

FWB: So you came from this neighborhood? So you were born around here?

AB: I was born in Lawndale, then moved to West Rogers Park, where I've lived between the ages of two through today. Do you want to know how old I am [AB and FWB laugh]?

FWB: We can always edit it out [AB and FWB laugh]

AB: I'm only sixty eight years old. So for those sixty six years, I have lived within a one mile radius circle on the north side of Chicago. I presently live in Edgewater on Sheridan Road, along the lake. But I've always been a north sider. That leant itself to my history. I'm a product of the Chicago public schools. Originally, I went from kindergarten through

fourth grade at Stone Elementary School at Leavitt and Granville. Then I went to Clinton Grammar School, which is on California and Granville. I then went to Senn High School, which is on the north side. When I graduated from Senn High School, I was a January graduate. We had mid-term graduations.

I had applied for and was accepted to attend the University of Illinois for my undergraduate work. I also wanted to become an attorney. So I made applications to a number of law schools. I was accepted at Northwestern School of Law. They had a program, which instead of the usual four years of undergraduate work and then three years of law school, they had a program where after your third year of undergraduate work, you could enter law school. And then after your first year of law school, which was four years of higher education, you could get your bachelor's degree. And then two years later, you'd get your law degree. I was very anxious to finish school and to get on with my career.

So when I graduated from Senn High School in January of 1953, I saw what the timeline would be for me to achieve what I've just explained. I applied for and was accepted to summer school at the University of Illinois, which was UIC. I don't think we called it UIC at the time. But we called it the University of Illinois and it was located at Navy Pier. I remember it very well because it was unique. The north branch of Navy Pier was the University of Illinois. The south side of Navy Pier was still a warehouse, so to speak. I took a class that summer, in 1953, in statistics. And for some reason I was seated in the rear of the class. So my back was facing south. My front was facing north. The professor was at the front of the room. It was the summertime. There was no air conditioning in the school at that time. So the windows were open to bring in a little coolness. And I could hardly hear what the professor was saying during the whole class because of the trucks delivering things to the warehouse side of Navy Pier and I couldn't hear it [laughs]. But somehow I passed the class and moved on.

I finished my undergraduate work after only two and a half years. I went to Northwestern Law School in September of 1955. Let me give you a little story that I think is relevant to Chicago, as well as the University of Illinois history. My father was an immigrant. He was born in what was, at that time, Palestine. Today it's part of Israel. But in those days it was Palestine. In 1921, he came over to the United States on a boat

through Ellis Island. He got a job in New York and a short time after that, he kept getting beat up being an immigrant. They used to call him a green horn. He moved to Chicago. He met a beautiful young lady from Chicago by the name of Jean. The two of them got married, moved to the west side, and lived there. That's where I was born.

My father became a person who, as one of his early jobs in Chicago, was in the book bindery business. He was on the production line. After a few years, the person that owned the company wanted to retire. So my father and another one of his other co-workers went out, borrowed some money, and bought out the company. They built a very successful book bindery business. At one time, they had over two hundred employees. So I grew up in the book bindery business.

Let me share with you a conversation I had with my father, I'll say, in June of 1955. I had finished the University of Illinois undergraduate work. I was about to start in two months at the law school of Northwestern University. We were having a conversation in his bedroom at our apartment on Mozart Street near Granville. It was 6136 Mozart Street.

I said "Dad, why am I going to law school? I've grown up in the business. I've loved the business. You've been very successful. I would like to be successful. I've finished undergraduate work. Why don't I go into the business? Why am I going to law school?" He looked at me and said "Artie, I don't even have a high school diploma. I came over here through Ellis Island. I've watched the way you've grown up. You're my oldest son. My goal was to have my oldest son become an attorney. That's what I would like."

I thought about it and said, "Ok dad. I understand. I will become an attorney. Now let me ask you a different question, dad. You've lived here on the west side of Chicago in what was then called the old Twenty Fourth Ward in Lawndale. What happens if, after I go to three years of law school, I decide that I don't want to go into the business, that I want to practice law?" He looked at me. He was shocked. He took a few moments and said, "I never thought of that. But that will be your decision, whatever you want to do. If you want to come into the business, I welcome you. If you want to go practice law, that's fine. He said to me "But, if you want to practice law in this town get involved in politics," my father said.

Now, I had been active in my north side high school, in undergraduate work, civic events, community groups, and student events. I said to my dad, "That's fine with me." My dad said, "Good!" He walked over to the phone, picked up the phone, and called our precinct captain. He was the Democratic precinct captain who worked the precinct where we lived. My dad said "Mr. Schiller, I want Artie to get involved in politics. Ok, he'll be ready for you." This was on a Sunday.

On Monday Evening, Mr. Schiller picked me up from home. We went over and walked into the Fiftieth Ward Democratic Organization headquarters. I met the Democratic ward committeeman and we had a conversation. His name was Jerry Huppert. He had been recently appointed to Democratic ward committeeman because his predecessor had passed away. So we had a nice chat. So Mr. Huppert said "Art, I think you'll do a good job. I'm not going to make you Mr. Schiller's assistant. I'm going to give you your own precinct. You're a precinct captain for the precinct a block away from where you live, on the north side of Granville Avenue. I'm sure that you'll do a good job." So I said, "Thank you very much, Mr. Huppert. I will do my best." And I was walking out of his office.

Now keep in mind, at that time I hadn't even started law school yet. I was walking out. And in great Chicago political style, as I was walking away ready to become a precinct captain, Mr. Huppert said "And Art, do a good job. I'll make you a judge [laughs]." I flew out of his office. It was very exciting. Well, I went out, started knocking on doors, and meeting all of my people in my precinct. And it was very, very exciting. I loved it. I became the extra member of two hundred families in my precinct.

Then I moved up the chain. But at that time in the 1950s, Richard J. Daley was the chairman of the Democratic Party in Cook County. He was the Mayor. It was a very exciting experience. I really had very little contact with him. But he was the head of my political party. He was the head of my city. And I loved Chicago. I loved the Democratic Party. I loved what I learned by being in contact with my voters in my precinct. Then I became active in the Young Democrats, both in the Fiftieth Ward where I became the chairman of the Young Democrats, and then I became vice president of the Cook County Young Democrats. And I got to meet a lot of people back in those days.

For example, there was Cook County board president John Stroger. When we see each other, we keep saying, "Hello Young Democrat," because we keep going back to when we were young Democrats. It was very exciting and very unique for this son of an immigrant [pointing to himself] to get to know all of these people and participate. It was wonderful. On occasion, I would be at functions where I would see the Mayor. And I had great respect for him because I thought he did a wonderful job promoting Chicago, as well as promoting the Democratic Party of Cook County and beyond Cook County.

FWB: Okay, I have a couple of things. Let's see, from law school you'd be graduating in about 1956.

AB: It was 1958.

FWB: It was 1958. Ok. Do you have much recollection about the 1958 campaign and the 1958 mid-term election? There was a big bond issue that was there and that they were pushing. Do you remember that at all? The bond issue was defeated. It was kind of an unusual setback, at least initially.

AB: I really don't recall that.

FWB: Okay. Tell me about the 1960 election. You were still a precinct captain?

AB: Yes.

FWB: You were just starting to practice law?

AB: Yes. I started practicing law in 1958. But I was still a precinct captain. I continued to be a precinct captain until I had the opportunity to be slated to run for office, which was in 1968.

FWB: Ok. So you had a ten year period that you were a practicing attorney?

AB: Yes.

FWB: And you were very active in the Democratic Party?

AB: Yes.

FWB: You were still as a precinct captain and working your way up?

AB: And one of the things that I always get a kick out of is that my conversation with my father and my introduction to the Democratic Party was in 1955, before I became a lawyer and before I started law school. I was only twenty years old at that time. In those days, you had to be twenty one to vote. So I was asking my voters in my precinct who to vote for and urging them to vote for the Democratic slated candidates and I couldn't even vote [laughs].

FWB: Tell me about the 1960 campaign. How did it work on the ground? There was a big bond issue. One of the reasons I'm interested is that there was a big bond issue for the University of Illinois here at this campus. Do you have any recollections of the politics in 1960?

AB: Not really.

FWB: All right. It was a long time ago.

AB: The Democratic Organization up in my neighborhood, the Fiftieth Ward, was a well-structured, hardworking organization. I was starting my law practice. I got married in 1960. I started to have a family. So a lot of these things I don't recall. When you get to be my age, I can't tell you what I had for breakfast yesterday. But I had the good fortune, and you've heard the phrase timing is everything. In those days, we had what they called cumulative voting and multi member house districts. What that meant was that for the

Illinois legislature, every community was within a house district and a senate district for the Illinois legislature. People would elect one senator from that district and three house members from that district. It was very unique. And the reason I'm explaining that is because this was the opportunity for me to become slated to run for office. In 1966, I believe it was Richard Nixon who was still president.

FWB: In 1966, it was still Johnson.

AB: Well, in the 1966 election, there was a big Republican sweep in Illinois and in Chicago. What happened was that in these house districts, what was usually in Chicago was two Democrats and one Republican elected from every house district. In the 1966 election, two Republicans and one Democrat were elected because of that change in the 1966 election. It was a midterm. 1966 was a midterm. The Democratic Party wanted to recapture those seats that they had lost in 1966. They wanted to recapture it in 1968. As a result of that, I had the opportunity to be slated to run for one of those house seats in the 1968 election.

Things went back to what they usually were. We elected two Democrats from that house seat on the north side of Chicago. It included, I would say, the north half of the Fiftieth Ward, roughly from Pratt Avenue to the city limits and West Rogers Park, which was roughly from McCormick Avenue on the west to Clark Street on the east. It also included parts of the Forty-Ninth Ward, which was East Rogers Park, Edgewater, which was the Forty Eighth Ward, and Albany Park, which was the Forty Seventh Ward. So those were the parts of the area that were parts of my district that I ran for, to which I was elected. That started out my legislative career, which involved eight years in the Illinois House.

Every two years we would have a primary election and a general election. 1968 was the election. In 1976, I ran for the Illinois Senate seat. There was a vacancy and I got elected there. I spent twenty three years in the Illinois Senate. And some of my stories involving Richard J. Daley really centered on that 1976 campaign for the Illinois Senate. It was fascinating. In retrospect, it was thrilling and very challenging during the time of the campaign. Should I go into some of those details?

FWB: Yes, very definitely.

AB: Ok. People that are reviewing this information and for your study, if they're north siders they will remember some of these names. In the Forty-Ninth Ward, which is East Rogers Park, there was an alderman. This was in the late 1960s. There was an alderman by the name of Paul Wigoda. Paul Wigoda was the alderman in the Forty-Ninth Ward. The state senator from that district, which included the district where I was serving as a result of my election in 1968 at that time, was a woman by the name of Esther Saperstein. She was a lovely elderly lady. She did a very good job. I was one of the state representatives under Esther Saperstein in the house district, under her senate district. Alderman Wigoda ran into some serious problems and had to leave the city council.

It's interesting. You and I can talk about the committeeman and we know who the committeeman is. When you talk to someone outside of Chicago or outside of Illinois and you mention the word committeeman, they look at you like, "What the hell is that?" Just to refresh everyone's knowledge and memory, Chicago is made up of wards. What that is, is that they divide the whole city up into fifty geographic boundaries, which is labeled a ward. We have Ward One. You've heard me talk about Ward Fifty and Ward Forty Nine. I make a joke all of the time. It's really true.

In fact, our Catholic Cardinal in Chicago now is Cardinal George. When he first came to Chicago a couple of years ago, I had the privilege of meeting him. I told him that in Chicago, we don't live by a street address. We live by ward and parish. I've grown up in the Fiftieth Ward and I live in and I'm a good Jewish boy living in St. Ita's Parish [laughs]. But that's much the truth because when we had these wards, each ward has both a Democratic and Republican committeeman. They are elected every four years. They are the head of the political party in their ward. Because it's Chicago and it leans Democratic except for maybe one or two wards, the Democratic committeeman is many times the very active political participant. The Republican committeeman is secondary.

The Democratic committeeman in those days, in the mid-1970s, was a gentleman that has a very distinguished public career. Neil Hartigan was the Democratic committeeman in the Forty-Ninth Ward. Because Alderman Wigoda had to leave the city

council, Committeeman Hartigan contacted Senator Esther Saperstein and asked her to leave the Illinois Senate and to take Alderman Wigoda's seat in the city council, which she did. Then, Committeeman Hartigan called Representative Berman and spoke to me. This was a conversation, I would say, in the spring of 1975. He asked me to leave the Illinois House and take Esther Saperstein's seat in the Illinois Senate, which to most people would be a promotion. I told the committeeman that I would get back to him because we were in the middle of our legislative session in 1975.

So I walked over to the Senate side of the Illinois House chambers. I had an opportunity to talk to the then president of the Senate, a gentleman by the name of Senator Cecil Partee. I was in his office and I explained to him that Alderman Wigoda had to leave the city council. Senator Saperstein resigned, which he was very familiar with, to take the alderman's seat. I'd told him that I'd gotten a call from Mr. Hartigan the committeeman to come over and take Esther Saperstein's seat. And I said to him, "I've been very active in the House." I wasn't the chairman. But I was one of the top activists in the House Education Committee. And at the time, I had about twenty or thirty bills that I was sponsoring on the calendar in the middle of that session.

I asked Mr. Partee the president, if I came over immediately to take Esther Saperstein's seat, could I become chairman of the Senate Education Committee? He looked at me and said "Art, how can I do that? There's about ten Democrats on the committee. Each one of them have greater seniority than you. There's another senator from the north side of Chicago who's the vice chairman. He's expecting to take over the chairmanship immediately. I can't do that. It's just contrary to our process and our rules." I said, "All right. I'm just asking. I want to know." So I went back and called the Committeeman Hartigan. I told him that I wasn't going to go to the Senate and I explained to him why. He was very upset with my response. He said to me "Art, not only do I want you to go to the Senate, the Mayor wants you to go to the Senate."

And I remember this was a phone call, on a certain Wednesday, in the middle of the legislative session. I said "Well, I'll be glad to explain the same reasons, if the Mayor wishes to call me. I'll be happy to talk to him." So this was, let's say, a Wednesday. Wednesday comes. Friday comes. We went home on the weekend. We went back on the following week for the legislative session. Meanwhile, you know in our business in

politics, we know very well that there are no secrets. And word got out that Berman was considering leaving the House and going to the Senate to take Esther Saperstein's seat. A week passed and I didn't get any phone calls from the Mayor.

So I got another call from Committeeman Hartigan. He said, "Are you going to go to the Senate?" I said, "No. And I haven't heard from the Mayor." The pressure is building. My colleagues here in the House want to know what I'm doing. I've got bills pending on the calendar and hearings pending. I've got to give an answer. Two days from now is Friday, which will be the last day of our legislative session this week. If I don't hear from the Mayor by noon on Friday, I'm going to stand up and publicly declare that I'm staying in the House, so we'll bring all of this to an end. Wednesday came and went. Thursday came and went. Friday came and went.

At noon time, I hadn't heard from the Mayor. I stood up and made a public announcement on the floor of the house that I was offered the opportunity to go to the Senate. But I loved the House and I had a lot of things I wanted to accomplish. So I was going to stay in the House. I went home to Chicago Friday afternoon. The session was over. As usual, I was at my law office on Saturday and Sunday. On Sunday while I was in my law office, I got a call from my wife. She said "Honey, I just hung up with the Mayor. He called you at home. But I told him to call you at the office. Good bye." I hung up and two seconds later, the phone rang. It was Mayor Richard J. Daley.

Now, it was always interesting, especially with all of what's going on here in our discussion. Whether you were a member of the House of Representatives or the Senate, Mayor Daley always used to call you Senator. So I picked up the phone and said, "Hello?" He said, "Senator [laughs]?" I said, "Mr. Mayor, how are you?" He said, "Fine. You've had a couple of hot weeks, haven't you?" I said, "I certainly have. And I'm very honored that you would call me. Let me tell you why I did not move to the Senate." I explained to him why. When I was done, I said "I think I can be of greater help to you and my constituents staying in the House than becoming low man on the totem pole in the Senate. I said, "I hope that's okay with you." He said to me that was ok with him. That ended our conversation and we moved forward.

Now, the role of Mayor Daley vis-à-vis Art Berman, what I just explained to you about moving to the Senate was in the Spring of 1975. One day in October of 1975, I was

walking down the street to or from my law office downtown. Somebody yelled, "Art." I turned around and it was a reporter. And he said to me, "Did you see this press release?" And I said, "What press release?" He showed it to me and it was an announcement to the press. Now, let me back up. I mentioned to you that we had multi- member house districts at that time, and for the previous seven years, we had two Democrats and one Republican. At the time, in 1975, I more or less represented the Chicago part of my district. But in the re-districting of 1970, my district was extended northward and included Evanston. So the two state Democratic state representatives from my district in 1975 since 1972 were a gentleman from Evanston by the name of Joe Lundy and myself from Chicago. We were part of the same district.

So the reporter, going back to my walking down the street, showed me a press announcement that Joe Lundy was going to have a press conference the following Sunday to announce that he was going to be running for the Senate seat in the 1976 regular election. Now after I turned down taking that seat, Neil Hartigan the committeeman appointed somebody else to take that spot. So I thanked the reporter for advising me of this. I went to my office and I called Joe Lundy. I said, "I hear that you're going to run against Senator Mike Brady to run for the Senate seat in next year's 1976 election." Because it was a Democratic election, it would be decided in the March 1976 election, not the November, 1976 election. So he said to me "Yes, I'm going to announce that on Sunday." I said, "I think you're making a mistake." He said, "Why do you say that?" I said "Well, as you know, there was even an editorial in the Tribune following my decision to stay in the house. I think the headline on the editorial was something like, 'Berman Bucks the Organization.'"

Joe Lundy was very familiar with all of these facts. I said to him, "I think that because of the importance of this seat to the Democratic Organization, if you're going to announce that you're going to run against the present incumbent, I think that I may get a call from the Mayor again that I should run for it. And I think that because of the circumstances, I'm not going to say no to that opportunity because it will be the end of a session. It will be a new spot. I think you're making a mistake because I don't know if I can beat you or if you can beat me. Cancel the press conference. We can both stay in the House of Representatives for a hundred years." He said, "No. I can't do that." I'm going to

go ahead with my press conference." I said, "Ok." Sunday came and went. Joe Lundy said that he was going to run for the Illinois Senate seat.

On Monday, I got a call from the Mayor's office. I walked in to see the Mayor. I had done a little bit of homework and showed him some figures as to what had happened in previous elections in the various wards in the city. I knew that Evanston would go for Joe Lundy. But I was concerned about the Forty-Ninth Ward, the Fiftieth Ward, and what would happen with that. I showed him numbers, and the Mayor was great at numbers in elections. I showed him why I wasn't ready to make a commitment yet because I needed him, the Mayor, to intervene with the Democratic committeemen of these wards to make sure that I had as strong support as possible behind me in my race against Lundy. That's because Lundy was a very fine candidate and would do a very good job in that campaign.

He looked at the numbers and he listened to what I had said. He said, "I will get back to you." About two weeks passed and I got a call from the Mayor's office. I went in and he said to me that there were commitments from the committeemen in Fifty, in Forty Nine, and a little bit of Forty Eight, I think there was. And I made an announcement that I would be running against Joe Lundy for that seat that was Saperstein's and then Brady's. It was interesting because this was the primary election of 1976. About two weeks before the election, this would be in late February or March of 1976, I got a phone call from the Mayor's office again. It was a hot and heavy campaign. They said, "The Mayor would like to see you tomorrow."

I went in to see him. The Mayor said, "How's it going?" I said, "Mr. Mayor, it's a hot and heavy campaign. I can't tell you, as I stand here today, whether I'm going to win or whether my opponent is going to win. But it's hot and heavy and we're only working twenty-four hours a day on it." He said, "I'm glad to hear you're working hard. I'm sure you'll do a great job. And I'm confident that you will win." Two weeks passed. The election came. It wasn't until about one or two a.m. on that election night that the final results came in. I won fifty five per cent to forty-five per cent.

One of the things that we didn't realize at that time but in retrospect was that it was the highest expenditure campaign of any contest in the whole State of Illinois in that primary election [laughs]. I spent seventy-five thousand dollars and my opponent spent fifty-five thousand dollars. It adds up to a hundred thirty thousand dollars, which today is

peanuts [laughs]. But in that day it was the most expensive campaign in the whole State of Illinois. But I know that the reason I won was because of the effort that Richard J. Daley put behind me in delivering the Democratic votes in Chicago. My opponent carried Evanston. I carried Chicago strong enough to get that fifty five per cent.

FWB: Going back, did the Mayor say anything about your change of mind to run for the senate seat? You were offered the appointed seat, right?

AB: That's correct.

FWB: It was to be appointed. He had to put someone else in. Did he talk about it? "Why did you change your mind? Why did you decide to run now? What's the story? Why didn't you take my first offer?"

AB: Well, as a matter of fact, this wasn't a *quid pro quo*. But he knew of my commitment to education issues. I think he valued what I could do in the Senate. And, after I won the election in the primary, I won the election in the following November of 1976. I was sworn in in January of 1977. And, as a freshman member of the Illinois Senate, I became the chairman of the Senate Education Committee. The president of the Senate, which took weeks and weeks of voting, was Senator Tom Hynes, who is the father of our present comptroller and the committeeman of the Nineteenth Ward and former assessor. At that time, he was a senator in the Illinois Senate and became senate president after a lengthy voting process in the early days of 1977.

So it started an opportunity to lead on behalf of education issues. I think that the Mayor appreciated that and valued that. I know my constituents valued that. That was why I didn't leave to become the bottom guy in the Senate because of all of the bills that I was sponsoring in the house. And for the next twenty three years in the Illinois Senate, as chairman or minority spokesman I'm sorry to say when we didn't always have the majority, I was more or less the leader on education issues in the Illinois Senate. I got some wonderful accolades when I retired of January of 2000 as the "Education Senator."

I still concentrate on the area of education. I serve on three statewide education commissions. I am a consultant to the Chicago Board of Education. I keep saying that they want to send me back to kindergarten. It's very important because I look in the mirror every morning. And I say that my success is attributable to wonderful parents and to wonderful teachers. They're the ones that set my path.

FWB: Let's go into your record in the Illinois House. Let's focus there. What was your relationship with the Mayor? You were sitting on the education committee. You were one of the more powerful members there. Describe all of that because you went from 1969, coming in, until 1976 in the House. How were your dealings with the Mayor in education?

AB: Well, very candidly, there was very little communication. Now, when I say communication, Art Berman didn't call Richard J. Daley on any type of continuous basis. I would see him at events. We'd say hello and that was about the extent of it. There were people that represented the city of Chicago from the Mayor's office that were lobbyists that I was always in touch with.

[Dr. Robert V. Remini joins the interview]

Dr. Robert V. Remini: I'm sorry I'm so late. Sir, it's a pleasure to meet you.

AB: Professor, how are you? It's nice to meet you. Thank you very much! How's your wife doing?

RVR: Well, she got her tooth attended to. She'll have to go back.

AB: Our prayers are with her.

RVR: Thank you very much.

FWB: We're talking about the House Education Committee, during his period there.

AB: Fred has put me through some tough questions [AB, FWB, and RVR laugh]. So let me go back. The Mayor's office has lobbyists whose job it is to communicate the agenda of the city of Chicago/Mayor's office to legislators. It happened that way. It's always been that way. So, I would know and hear from those people all the way back to when I was in the House and when I was in the Senate. The fascinating part of education issues is that education is a national as well as a statewide issue.

And the politics of education are fascinating, because many times education issues are determined based upon geographic locations. And in Illinois, we have three communities in the education community, Chicago, suburbs, and downstate. The agendas for each of those communities, depending on the issue, can be very different. So it was always important and very challenging, and most times very satisfying, that I was able to coalesce and bring together downstate legislators, suburban legislators, and Chicago legislators to work on behalf of our children throughout the State of Illinois.

FWB: The late 1960s were a difficult time for Chicago education. Superintendent Benjamin Willis was gone. But you did have significant problems with the teachers, the teachers' unions, and also with educational standards. The race issue was a big one. How did you deal with that in the late 1960s through 1976 when you were going into the Senate?

AB: Well, the issue of teacher relationships has always been important in education issues because the politics in Illinois, we have two teachers' unions. What we call the downstate teachers are represented by the I.E.A., the Illinois Education Association. The Chicago teachers are represented by the Chicago Teacher's Union, which is an affiliate of the Illinois Federation of Teachers and the American Federation of Teachers. Even now as we speak, there was even a proposed new contract, which has been rejected. The negotiators, which includes Debra Lynch, the president of the Chicago Teacher's Union, and Arne Duncan the CEO of the Chicago Public Schools, they reached a tentative agreement on a new contract for five years. And the delegates rejected it just the other

day. It hasn't gone to the members for their vote yet. But it's going to be in just a few days.

We have enjoyed in Chicago, Illinois virtually fourteen or fifteen years of no strikes. It was in the late 1980s that there was the last strike we had. I hope that that doesn't occur again. I lived through the years when it was almost every other year that we had teacher's strikes. Now I'm not talking about the merits of a shorter day, a pay raise, or a longer year. That's not what I'm talking about. The reason I committed myself for all of these years in the legislature and to education is because of our children. I was the beneficiary of a good Chicago public school education. My children were. My grandchildren go to public grammar school and now public middle school. And they're very smart. They're smarter on many issues than their grandpa [laughs].

That's what sets the tone for the rest of your life. And that's why education is so important. We have to keep the children as our first priority. Back in the days of the 1960s and the 1970s, yes, there were good days and not so good days. One of the leaders for many years was the president of the teachers union, Bob Healy, who had moved on and has passed on. But again, depending upon the circumstances, every new contract was a challenge.

RVR: You may have answered this. But how do you account for this great success?

AB: Well, I think it takes both sides. And I was surprised, for example, by the vote last week of the delegates. We are in very tough economic times. Eighty per cent, eight oh per cent of the school districts in Illinois, we have nine hundred plus school districts in Illinois. Eighty per cent of those school districts are operating at a deficit. Now I'm not talking about some poor farm district with little property value.

FWB: You mean downstate.

AB: Yes. Eighty per cent, whether you are Chicago, suburban, or downstate, there are financial challenges. When you get an offer of four per cent per year for five years, in these economic times I think that's a pretty good deal. I'm not a teacher. So it's easier for

me to say yes or no [laughs]. But that's what disturbed me about the vote. I hope that the members will appreciate it.

RVR: But going back to the successful years, why were they successful?

AB: I think that the key was two things. After the last strike, which was in the late 1980s, one thing took place. I think it was in 1988. I was the sponsor of it. That was the passage of the School Reform Legislation that brought more control to local schools. It's what we call Local School Councils, L.S.C. They were created by that 1988 legislation. It brought around the tables ten or eleven members of a body which included the principal and two teachers. It included community people. And it included parents of children in that school. It was to set policy and to make decisions regarding that school building. This was long past due because you would have more children in a Chicago public school than you had in some of the downstate school districts that had elected school boards. So the creation of local school councils was a very important, small "d," democratic process to give teachers, the principal, the administrators, the parents, and the community a voice in seeing where those kids were going. I think that was one positive element that caused teachers to see that they played a role that they didn't have before in setting local school policy.

The second item was the 1995 revisions. That gave the power of the selection of the school board to Mayor Richard M. Daley for the first time. You'll notice that there's other cities, like New York, for example, that have followed Chicago's example of giving this power to their Mayor. And I think again, you had relationships with the Mayor and the leadership of the teachers' unions that worked things out to their satisfaction. Now, I say that to their satisfaction. But Tom Reece was challenged by Debra Lynch in an election a couple of years ago where Debra Lynch beat Tom Reece. And her approach was, "He's not representing us strong enough." So much for my getting along philosophy. The members of the teachers' union kicked out Tom Reece and put in Debra Lynch. Now Debra Lynch sits around the table with Arne Duncan, reaches a new contract, and their delegates turn it down. I hope that their members don't. But at the moment that we're taping this, we don't know what's going to happen. But what we're talking about, and this

is also fascinating to me, unlike other areas of governmental involvement, whether we're talking about automobile manufacturing or telemarketing, they're on the front pages of today's papers, etc. When we deal with education, we're talking about the public, their children, their future, and public dollars. That's why when people say, "Well don't mix education with politics," I say you have to because it's public dollars and the public's children that are involved and the public has a voice. And that's politics.

RVR: What's your best guess on what the members will do with this contract?

AB: I hope I'm wrong. But I think they'll follow the delegates and reject it.

RVR: They may not accept it?

AB: No, not necessarily. And again, we're in tough economic times. I'm not sure how much leeway Arne Duncan has to go back and increase that four per cent to five per cent or the seven days to the lessor days of the school year, or twenty minutes to make it ten minutes. I don't know what the issues really are.

RVR: It's been said that with education, Richard J. Daley always gave in to the teachers to avoid a strike. That's the way to handle it, because it is such a public issue.

AB: The last year of Richard J. Daley's term was 1976. So what you had following his passing away was a lot of strikes between 1976 and 1988.

RVR: But you came in after Daley died, into the Senate.

AB: No. From 1969 to 1976, I was in the House of Representatives.

RVR: Were you involved in education in those years?

AB: Yes. But I wasn't the chairman. I was a strong Chicago spokesperson.

RVR: Well, do you think that's unfair, that statement about Richard J. Daley, that he always gave in to avoid a strike?

AB: Well, let's put it this way. If that kept the schools open and the kids in class, God bless them.

RVR: That's true.

AB: Ok. That's the bottom line. If I'm a taxpayer, I might complain because my taxes went up. But he handled that very well.

RVR: Was there possible another reason why he acted the way he did?

AB: I don't know. I wasn't party to the negotiations. I remember it. I knew the leaders of the teachers' union. I knew the leaders of the school system because we worked very closely vis-à-vis Springfield. But I didn't know what the negotiation status was. And again, my bottom line is, we now have a suburban school that's been closed for seven days already. Shame on them!

RVR: I know. It's a problem.

AB: The kids have to be in school. They've got to be taught. That's the challenge. And that's part of what I'm concerned about. And again, it's not an Arne Duncan decision that they do or do not deserve something. The economy is dictating more than anything what a school district can do.

RVR: Have you discussed UIC on this occasion? If you have, I can read the transcript.

AB: I was a product of Navy Pier on summer school [laughs].

RVR: So you are an alumnus.

AB: I am an alumnus. I'm still, fortunately, an avid tennis player. I still play singles tennis against guys half my age. Last night I played tennis and I had my University of Illinois t-shirt on [RVR laughs]. So yes, I'm an alumnus [laughs].

RVR: Did you win?

AB: Yes, as a matter of fact I did [laughs]. Thank you! But tennis is like politics. The goal is to win [laughs].

FWB: I want to stay on Mayor Daley and education, the first Mayor Daley. One of the things that's an enormous success with the current Mayor Daley is his relationships with the schools. Part of that is the local school council. And I want to get into that because it's an extremely important part of Chicago history. Tell me a little bit more about the Mayor, Mayor Daley Senior. One of the things that he was never able to do was take over the public schools in Chicago.

AB: Well, keep this in mind, that before 1995 in Chicago, the Board of Education wasn't elected. It was approved by the city council, by nominees from the Mayor, or the nominating committee appointed by the Mayor. But it really wasn't solely mayoral appointments. And one of the things that disturbed many people was that in those days, we had over a thousand, or over eleven hundred school districts in Illinois. There were only two school districts that didn't elect their school board members. One was Chicago and one was in the north suburbs. What happened was part of the fascination of politics. You would think that Democratic legislators would have looked at giving the Democratic Mayor, regardless of who it was, the power to appoint a school system.

[End of Video Tape One]

FWB: Okay, start again.

AB: You would think that a Democratic controlled legislature would have given the Democratic Mayor of the city of Chicago the authority to appoint his or her own board of education. That never happened. And I think, looking backward, the reason that it didn't happen was because the Democrats felt that the system of electing school board members, which we did for virtually for every other school district outside of Chicago, was the small "d" democratic process that was a good one. And that's where the irony of it is, that the legislature that gave Richard M. Daley the power to appoint, without any confirmation by the city council and no other input, to appoint his own school board to run the Chicago public schools, came from a Republican controlled legislature and a Republican governor. In 1995, the Senate was controlled by the Republicans. The House was controlled by the Republicans. And they passed the bill that gave the power that he presently has.

RVR: It sounds like politics.

AB: Oh yes. That's the fascination and the irony of some of these things because you would have thought that (a) if it was good it would have been done under a Democrat controlled legislature. And (b) how come the Republicans gave it to the Mayor? Well, there's two issues, or two strategies. Number one, they felt that Chicago public schools weren't moving forward enough and they had to change the system. That's a very good sounding rationale. The other rationale is more political, that the Chicago public schools like many other urban school districts couldn't improve much. And by giving the Democratic Mayor of the city of Chicago the power over those schools, it would sink him. So that's why the Republicans did it. Now, these are all theories.

RVR: As they say in California, democracy has its intentions.

AB: Oh yes. It can be scary [AB and RVR laugh]! But that's the uniqueness of the process. They questioned it and I was involved. One of the reasons again, was the political process. The bill that gave the Mayor, in 1995, the power over the Chicago

public school system had virtually no Democratic input. It was handled in a very unique way by a very tightly controlled Illinois Senate. I don't know about the House process, but I do know the Senate process. It was where we, the Democratic members of the Illinois Senate didn't, see the final bill until about two hours before it was heard in committee. So we had virtually no input as to whether the Mayor should or should not appoint Board members, the extent of the powers, or other kinds of provisions in that bill. It was locked up by the Republicans and moved forward in strong lock step. Many times I say, "I'm not a member of an organized political party, I'm a Democrat."[RVR laughs]. The Republicans in those days were very organized.

FWB: You haven't talked too much about the Mayor, Richard J. Daley, as to what his relationship to the schools was from your perspective in Springfield.

AB: Again, I think here was a Mayor that understood the values of labor support politically. I'm sure and I know that he valued quality education. If he could keep the teachers happy, it made sense politically and socially from the point of view of keeping schools open. I think that was his criteria and his standards. And it worked.

FWB: Talk about the period after Richard J. Daley. You had a period of what, four Mayors or so? Tell me how education fared during that period, at least from your perspective down in Springfield.

AB: Every year, education has new challenges. As I mentioned before, I served and still serve on three statewide education commissions. I'm debating around a table today the same issues [laughs] that I was debating twenty to thirty years ago [RVR laughs]. There's an improper funding structure in the State of Illinois, where we rely too heavily on property taxes. There are communities that have rich property values. Niles Township has Old Orchard Shopping Center. They can spend seventeen thousand dollars per child on their high school. I go from the north end of Chicago in Niles to the south end of Chicago in Calumet City, which has very little property tax base. They're spending less than five thousand dollars per child in their grammar schools.

Is that fair that a child's education is determined by their address? No! And everyone agrees with me until it comes time to vote. When it comes time to vote, you have to increase somebody's taxes to provide the additional dollars for the children in Calumet City that don't have the resources available to them. And I use Calumet City. But today, it applies to perhaps eighty per cent of our school districts in Illinois. So it's a constant challenge. For example, we have now got coalitions that have been put together to push for education finance reform. But we have a governor that ran on the basis that he will not increase income taxes or sales taxes.

Now, how do we get funding reform without doing something along those lines? And that's the challenge of the day. Here is one of my favorite stories. Back in 1994, I sponsored a constitutional amendment. As a practicing lawyer, I find this also fascinating. The Illinois Constitution says that the state "has the primary responsibility" for the funding of education. But under our current system, which has existed forever, there is not equity. Again, I'm using that term. Depending on the property wealth, that determines how good a school and an education you get.

The Illinois Supreme Court, in the early 1990s, ruled on a case on this subject. A lawsuit was brought by a child that goes to what I'll call a property poor school district, saying that "The state should fund my education, especially because the Illinois Constitution says the primary responsibility for providing an education lies with the State of Illinois." The Illinois Supreme Court researched this issue. It looked at constitutional debates in the Illinois Constitutional Conventions and ruled that the "primary responsibility" provision is advisory only. There is no constitutional right of any child to a quality education to be funded primarily by the State of Illinois.

All right, so that said, you can't go to court, really. You've got to go back to the legislature and the governor. In 1992, I sponsored a constitutional amendment to change that language to give, hopefully, the Supreme Court or the legislature the incentive that if they don't change this, a court decision will say, "This is what the new constitutional language means-that a child is entitled to a quality education in Illinois."

RVR: How do you provide that?

AB: Just a minute.

RVR: Okay.

AB: Let me finish. This was on the ballot, a constitutional amendment, and had to be approved by sixty per cent of the voters. That's our requirement. So I sponsored this amendment. I got three-fifths of the votes in both the House and the Senate to put it on the ballet for November. I campaigned throughout the state on behalf of this amendment. The governor, at that time, was a gentleman by the name of Jim Edgar. A week before the November 1992 election, he held a press conference in which he urged everyone in Illinois to vote no on the Berman Amendment. Election day came. I needed sixty per cent of the vote. I got fifty eight per cent of the vote. So, the language in the constitution and a Supreme Court decision two years before, again, affirmed that it was only advisory. The legislature and the governors have done nothing. A few years after that 1992 election, Governor Jim Edgar proposed a revision to school funding that was defeated by his own party, the Republicans, in the Illinois Senate. And I said to the governor, "If you hadn't held that press conference, you wouldn't have had this defeat."

RVR: Why did he do that?

AB: I don't know.

RVR: You don't know?

AB: No. Welcome to the politics of education [laughs].

RVR: How did you do it, to get the schools funded?

AB: Here's what you can do. First of all, we have one of the lowest, I think we're either forty-fifth or forty-sixth out of fifty states, in our income tax approach. We have a flat income tax. If I make a million dollars a year in income, I pay three per cent of that for

my state tax. If I make thirty thousand dollars a year income, I pay three per cent of that as my state tax. That doesn't make sense. That's not fair. A guy that makes a million dollars can afford it a lot better than the person who makes thirty thousand. So, we should change the Illinois income tax to increase the tax rate for the richest and not give additional burden to the poorest. There should be some way for either exemptions or something.

RVR: The Republicans would never approve of it.

AB: But again, today we have a Democratic controlled legislature and a Democratic governor which, from a progressive point of view as I've just said, makes sense. When you increase state revenue by doing that, among other things, for example, we also have a sales tax in Illinois that doesn't touch services. When I go to buy a car, I pay a sales tax on my car. When I go to get services from my lawyer, I don't pay a sales tax. We don't have a sales tax on services in Illinois.

RVR: Don't we have one on doctors, dentists, and....?

AB: Again, it ought to be looked at from the point of view of a more progressive tax system. And, when you get those additional state income taxes and sales taxes, you take that money to flow to school districts to help those Calumet Cities raise their level from the five thousand upward. Studies have been made to show that the minimum that we ought to be spending today is around six thousand dollars. Every kid ought to have that available to them.

RVR: Because of this, do you think that Illinois has one of the worst educational systems in the country?

AB: Well, we have one of the worst educationally funded systems in Illinois. And studies come out periodically. I can cite them for you in the last couple of months again, on how bad we are structured. That hurts our children.

RVR: But doesn't that affect the whole system?

AB: Yes.

RVR: So the level of education that the children in Illinois are getting is not what it could be or should be?

AB: Definitely. But let me give you an example. Dawn Clark Netsch proposed increasing income taxes, decreasing property taxes, and improving school funding. She got beat two to one in her race against Jim Edgar. Jim Edgar held a press conference to defeat my constitutional amendment. Two years later, his party defeats his school reform. Welcome to the process. In Seattle, Washington, a referendum was on the ballot to increase by ten cents your Starbucks morning coffee. Ten cents! And all of that money was going to go to early education and child care needs. The referendum was defeated. They don't want to pay ten cents more for their coffee for the benefit of children.

RVR: Do you think we have poor educational policies?

AB: Yes, and that's why it's tough politically to get that changed. That's why you have a governor that ran on the pledge of no new taxes and he's standing by it. There are a lot of educators that criticized that. But he knows that politically it's smart. Welcome to Illinois.

FWB: You're talking about allocation of funding. One of the more controversial issues while you were there was the set aside for the lottery funding, which was supposed to go one hundred per cent for education. And I guess it does.

AB: Now it does.

FWB: Tell me about that story. The lottery passed, for allocation for education. How that was supposed to work?

AB: Well, here's what happened. And I think that California is an example of sometimes you pass laws and you haven't thought out what the law can mean [laughs]. I'll use that as an example for California as to their process for recalls. But in Illinois, we passed the lottery. And we said that the proceeds from the lottery were to go to the funding of education. The trouble was that the language to guarantee that phrase, that sentence, wasn't incorporated. So what happened was that if the lottery last year, hypothetically had a million dollar profit, that million dollars went into the education fund. But in the process of appropriating the rest of the money to the education fund, the legislature decided not to keep the appropriation the same as it was the previous year so that you'd have a million dollar net increase. But they appropriated a million dollars less. Yes, the proceeds of the lottery went to education. But it didn't improve the balance in education. In the 1980s we changed that to provide that any profits and proceeds from the lottery must add to, not substitute for, the education funding compared to the previous year. And that's what it is. But every politician in Illinois at every meeting still gets that question asked about, "You lied to us about the proceeds going for education." Well, we corrected that lie. And for the past probably ten to fifteen years, it's been going to where it should be going. But it's still inadequate because we spend billions of dollars on education in Illinois, both locally and statewide. And the proceeds from the lottery are hundreds of millions. It's a lot of money. But it's not enough to make a major difference. That's why you have to look at income taxes, sales taxes, and property tax relief in order to do it.

RVR: Tell me, was it easier if you wanted to build a school, in other words with capital funds, to get that money over trying to get some money to improve a system or new what's already in existence? In other words, is it easier in the legislature with capital funds?

AB: Well, the difference is that they're two different types of funding. Since Mayor Richard M. Daley took over in 1995, you had a dramatic improvement, even going back to before the Mayor. But since the Mayor, you've had dramatic improvements in the physical structures of Chicago. You've had new schools. You've had additions to schools

and these kinds of things. It's because the way Chicago has operated under Paul Vallas and under Richard M. Daley, our fiscal health has been very, very good. So the bonding companies that pay for capital construction have been willing to buy our bonds at a very low rate, which gives us the capital funds necessary to do these things. But to provide a quality education is a whole different ballgame. That has to be done on current revenues. And you don't go to the bonding houses to pay teachers' salaries. You've got to go to the taxpayers to pay teachers' salaries.

RVR: The reason I ask is because the state archivist would like the University of Illinois at Chicago to become the archival center for the city of Chicago. And we would like that, not only to provide space for documents but also for the Daley papers at a museum and also to show the history of Chicago at the University.

AB: Well, I'm sure you've already thought of this. You've got to put together a package that you've got to take to....

RVR: Oh, you bet, but that's not up to me [laughs].

AB: But I think you've got an easy sell to Richard M. Daley [laughs].

RVR: I hope so. That's so true. They're so different and special.

AB: It's two different sources of money.

FWB: How are the bonds paid off then? Doesn't that have to come from general revenue?

AB: Yes. But you pay them off over ten, twenty, thirty years. That's what the governor did for the state with the pension system. He went out and sold thirty billion dollars of bonds at a very, very low rate to continue to have the money to pay retired state officials and state employees.

RVR: But they were constitutionally required, the legislature that is, to get funds for the retirees.

AB: Correct.

RVR: Which they didn't, in fact, they couldn't.

AB: Well no. There is a constitutional safeguard for the retirees, to make sure that their money is there. But what took place was that instead of relying on current revenue, because of the downturn in the economy, the governor went out and sold bonds to make sure that the pension had a source of revenue to comply with the constitutional requirement.

RVR: It's nice to know that our retirement fund is still safe.

AB: Well, with us young guys, we don't care. Do we [laughs]?

RVR: I don't know about you [AB laughs].

FWB: Let's go back to education. Especially in the city, you have Bilandic and Mayor Byrne. How was it with Mayor Byrne? How did you see it from Springfield, how education worked in the city and the surrounding area during the Byrne Administration?

AB: Well, I think Chicago has been very fortunate because whether it was Richard J. Daley, Mike Bilandic, Jane Byrne, Harold Washington, or Richard M. Daley, all of them recognized the importance of education. So none of them, to my recollection, was anti-teacher, anti-schools, anti-kids, or anti-education. None of them were. Each one of them, day-to-day, had the challenges that we're talking about of funding education. If you do some research, you'll refresh my memory and I'll be glad to comment on it. But to my recollection, there really weren't any hot issues that any of those Mayors brought to the fore. And that's the irony of all of this. Again, things were quiet.

With the local school council revisions we, the Chicago Democrats, were the ones that brought it as a result of community pressure and support. Where we brought it and passed it, the rest of the state didn't care. It didn't apply to their schools. And all we were doing was to argue that we were making our schools small "d" democratic in the process, just like your schools are in electing the school boards. Now we've got L.S.C.'s that we elect. And our schools are as big as your school districts.

Then, the fact that the Republican party gave Richard M. Daley the power that he presently has was done quietly, secretly, behind closed doors. So there was no democratic, both capital "d" and small "d" input. People didn't even know what to come and testify to, as to what they liked or didn't like. That's because I can tell you there were a lot of people out there that would have been very upset with a concept that gave Richard M. Daley or any other Mayor of Chicago total control over the board of education. But the Republican legislature and the Republican governor passed it.

FWB: One of the things with Harold Washington, one of his provisions for his four and a half years, was to shift power away from the center of the city and redistribute out to the neighborhoods. How that would work in the schools, I'm not quite sure. But it strikes me that money would be taken out of your district, which did have significant close power and connections from the city and redistribute it to other sections of the city that were not as well funded. Is that an accurate portrayal? Or did Washington try to keep as far away from the schools?

AB: I have no recollection of that. Again, during Harold's relatively short term, let's see. What were the years of his terms?

FWB: They were from 1983 to 1987.

AB: Okay. Again, I think you might be able to say that the 1988 reforms were an outgrowth of broader dispensation of the power throughout the city, than existed before the 1988 reforms, which would be the product of a Harold Washington initiative. Yes, the city hall with Mayor Washington did support those reforms, which created the local

school councils and gave more local power to local people for their local schools. So that was a change. Did it hurt the north side versus the west side or the south side? No. Again, with community, and this applies today as well as it did in the 1980s, if the communities would participate in their local schools, that improves the education of their children. They should be involved with the teaching, the after school, and the before school programs. It's important.

FWB: Let's see. During Washington's administration there was some movement towards setting up these local school councils. You would see that as contributing to the small area under the Mayor's control. What was UIC's role in putting together the local school councils? And how did you work with the university in reforming Chicago schools and then in implementing that legislation?

AB: My recollection, and I stand ready to be corrected, was that there was very little input from the University of Illinois into Chicago school reform legislation. I think that it was totally disconnected.

RVR: It sounds like they made no effort to offer assistance.

AB: Well, I don't recall anything involving the University of Illinois. We had local community groups. And one of those groups may have been from this community where UIC was. But nothing in my memory set it apart from any other community group. The beauty of that 1988 legislation was that it was a grassroots movement. It was the communities that brought this to Springfield. It wasn't any big shot. It was the little guys that brought it to Springfield, passed it, and made substantial changes.

FWB: You were the sponsor of that legislation.

AB: That's right.

FWB: Who came up with that idea?

AB: It came from the community.

FWB: Which community groups, do you remember?

AB: It was citywide. It was not the community groups that were citywide. It was dozens of local community groups and some consortiums that were put together citywide. And again, they wanted a greater voice in what was happening in their children's schools. The teachers wanted a greater voice in the schools where they were teaching. The principals were the same, so that there could be communication. You now have L.S.C.'s that now hold public meetings. If my kid is at school x and I'm unhappy with something, I can go there and let the local school council including the principal and the two teachers hear why I'm upset. And that's a democratic process. That's a good process. I think it's been working.

FWB: It's significantly changed.

AB: But I think also, going back to Richard J. Daley, I think that what you find here is a Mayor with Richard J. Daley and the tone that he set in his family for the value of education. Richard M. Daley is following in his father's footsteps.

RVR: Did you ever meet Richard J. Daley?

AB: Oh yes [holding up a picture]. I brought with me this picture of Richard J. Daley and State Representative Arthur Berman with a lot of hair [laughs] back in the early seventies in the House of Representatives where I sponsored a bill dealing with education funding. And the Mayor was there to testify on behalf of my bill.

RVR: Would you say it was a close relationship?

AB: I had great respect for him. And we went over some things. But close? I don't think I

would call it close. I had great respect for him. I think he had great respect for what I was doing.

RVR: What was the reason for your respect?

AB: I thought he ran our city very well.

RVR: Is there a reason?

AB: I'm a life long Chicagoan.

AB and RVR: And a Democrat.

AB: When he delivered for a Kennedy election as president, who could ask for anything more?

RVR: What do you think were his major achievements as Mayor of Chicago?

AB: Well, he made Chicago a world class city, which has been followed by Richard M. Daley.

RVR: In what ways? How did he do that?

AB: There's our transportation and our structure. Any day at sunset, go to Navy Pier or go to the Field Museum and look north along the lake. You'll see the most beautiful shoreline that you'll ever see with the beautiful skyline of the loop, as well as the north side. Look at what Richard M. Daley is doing with the south lakeshore to re-establish the beaches and the lakeshore.

RVR: Do you think he's been unfairly characterized by writers, that he was a boss, a machine politician?

AB: Well, that may make somebody excited, one way or another. You need to be a leader to accomplish your agenda. Being a leader will upset some people.

RVR: And he was a leader.

AB: That's right. And I shared some of the history that I had politically with Richard J. Daley where my election for the Senate was very close against a very tough opponent. Richard J. Daley supported me and Richard J. Daley delivered. And I told him that it was going to be a tough election. I won fifty five per cent to forty five per cent. I think that if he didn't cause the committeemen and the organization, in those days back in 1976, to work hard for Candidate Berman for the Illinois Senate, Candidate Berman would have lost. That's the way elections are won and lost.

RVR: Do you think he made any mistakes as Mayor that you know of?

AB: I'm sure he did. But I don't recall [laughs]. And I will tell you that every leader has to make tough decisions to whom somebody will be upset. But that's the process. The only time I got one hundred per cent of the vote was when I had no opponent [laughs]. It wasn't that everybody agreed with me, either [laughs].

RVR: I was trying to ask of your recollection of the man in ways that nobody else would know and give further insight into his character.

AB: Well, keep in mind this: If I walk out of this office now and catch the first person I see on the street, Van Buren Street near Halsted ok, and the person is dressed nicely. So I think that they're intelligent. They're not a down and outer, etc. And I said to them, "What's the name of your state senator [RVR laughs]?" Do you think they'd be able to give me an answer?

RVR: No.

AB: Ok.

RVR: You'd get an answer....

AB: But would I get the right answer [RVR laughs]? The reason I give you that example, and I agree with you, is that when I was running for a senate seat on the north side of Chicago, Richard J. Daley took enough interest in that to call me into his office to find out how the campaign was running and how it was moving along. He wanted me to win. And he played a role. Who did he call? What did he say? What did he do? I don't know. But I do know that he called me in. He wanted to know what was happening and how the campaign was going. He was supportive of my candidacy. And that's a good leader. My opponent wouldn't agree with that [laughs]. Would you like me to make a copy of this for you [hold up the picture]?

FWB: Yes. That would be very helpful.

RVR: Do you have anything else you can lend us?

AB: I gave you a one pager and a thirteen pager [resume]. It's more than you want to know [laughs].

RVR: Now Mr. Michael Daley is getting married in June.

AB: Well, I served with Ritchie in the state senate, Richard M. Daley. I've seen John move up in the county board because there was where my first boss served. We talked about it. Are we still on tape?

FWB: Yes.

AB: Mr. Huppert was my first committeeman. He was a member of the Cook County Board. I've always had strong identification with him for many years. So I think it's very admirable the way the children of Richard J. Daley have committed themselves to public service. It ain't easy.

RVR: It's a remarkable thing.

AB: Oh yes.

RVR: Think about Richard J. Daley and the system.

AB: Exactly. I give his family credit. I salute them.

RVR: Daley?

AB: This is another one. I'm just giving you an example of a political story. Friends of mine, Michael and Barbara and my wife Barbara and I went to dinner one night in Evanston. This was a few years ago. Now, my friend Michael was a successful businessman but he loved politics. He was a guy that just loved to talk about politics whenever we were together, he would follow it, etc. He didn't want to run for any office. But he just loved the game of politics. So we went to dinner one night and we went in Evanston. At that time, I was an incumbent state senator. I represented Evanston for fifteen to twenty years in the legislature. And we were sitting and talking. I said "You know, look at the people here in this room where we're having dinner." There must've been fifty plus people sitting at different tables. I said, "Many of these people, I'm sure, are my constituents. I'm sure they don't know who I am." Mike said, "Oh come on, Art. You know how to publicize. You get good publicity. You're out there."

RVR: I know who you are!

AB: [Laughs] Ok. Thank you. He said, "They know who you are." I said, "I tell you what. You get up, walk around, and ask people at the tables. (A) Do you live in Evanston? (B) What's the name of your senator?" Now they could give two answers because Evanston was divided between me and a senator by the name of Kathy Parker. I said, "If they give either one of our names, mark it down. You've got fifty people plus in this room. If five give you the right answer, Parker or Berman, I'll buy you and your wife dinner tonight." He said, "Whoa! That's a good deal!" He stood up and went around and went table to table to table. He came back and I didn't have to buy him dinner [laughs].

RVR: Did anybody in that room at the tables know you?

AB: Yes. There were a few.

RVR: A couple?

AB: Literally, there were a couple [laughs].

RVR: Thank you, Senator.

AB: Okay. It's nice to see you. Good luck with your tour, your project.

RVR: We get to meet important people like yourself.

AB: [Laughs] I wake up every morning. I've been out of the legislature for three and a half years. So every morning when we wake up, my wife says to me "Honey, what are we doing tonight?" I say, "Well, we have this fundraiser and several other events to go to." She says "Honey, I thought you were retired!" I said, "In this city and in this state, you're never retired. Politics is a narcotic and I'm hooked for life." [AB and RVR laugh]. Thank you very much.

FWB: Thank you.

********END OF INTERVIEW********