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Interview with Richard Pavia
20 June 2002

Present: Richard Pavia and Dr. Fred W. Beuttler
Location: UIC Historian's Office, 628 UH, 601 South Morgan, Chicago, IL.

[Tape begins in the midst of their conversation, regarding the use of Navy Pier as a training facility during World War II.]

Richard Pavia: I think it was four landings and four take offs. The next step was to land a plane on a carrier in Lake Michigan. So they'd take off. They fly to Evanston. They'd fly over the lake. Then, if they had trouble, their orders were, "Don't go back over a populated area. Go down to the drink." They had picket boats on the lake. A while back, there was something on television. This was five to ten years or more ago. This was when that movie came out called, "Top Gun." Well, this was "Top Gun 1943." And it was the actual films of navy guys flying carrier planes off of the Wolverine and the Sable. If something went wrong, well, they had no facilities to fix anything. You see, these weren't real carriers. They just had a flight deck. If you're flying ahead of me, come down too hard, smash your landing gear, and it can't be fixed on that boat, push it overboard. There's about thirty or forty airplanes on the bottom of Lake Michigan in thirty-two feet of water. They're prizes because these planes are said to be in terrific shape. They don't rust. The Navy will not relinquish control of them. One guy salvaged one. He's still in court. I don't know what the disposition of the case is [laughs]. I was the Commissioner of Water and Sewer in Chicago for a number of years. There's planes near some of the water cribs.

FWB: Yes, there's planes all over the place down there by the cribs.

DP: I think it's kind of humorous. They're part of history. They make great stories. Even when they had this exhibit of the Titanic at the Museum of Science and Industry, there was a little add-on information to the Eastland.

FWB: That's why it was so compact was because of the lifeboats.

DP: Well, that goes back to another little story that ties into this. You might want to be an author someday because I'm not going to do any writing. But I'd like to see somebody share some of these things because I think they'd be good reading. In 1895, there was a cruise ship in New York. It was the General something or other. It was going around on an all day boat cruise, around Manhattan Island. The ship left the dock. It no sooner took off and some teenage boys saw smoke coming out of a locker. They told the captain and he didn't believe them. By the time he reacted to their warning, the ship was aflame. Then, he turned the ship around and headed back. He beached it. At the time, the Maritime Law was that you had to have life preservers. But they had no specifications on what a life preserver was. So half of them were like anchors instead of floats. People were dropping overboard. It was a calamity, almost of the magnitude of the Eastland. The Maritime Administration took note of this and set standards for floatation devices. They also set a standard from that point on, all ships passenger or otherwise, would carry enough lifeboats and/or rafts to take care of fifty per cent of the crew. That's what the maritime regulation was in 1912 when the Titanic went down. That's one of the reasons they had so much of a problem. Well, after the calamity of the Titanic, they changed the regulations to require one hundred per cent including crew. Eastland was impacted by that. Here was a ship that was already poorly designed and top heavy. It never capsized before. It was hard to keep it from, what's the word?

FWB: Swaying?

RP: Yes. It's a seagoing word. Anyway, on that basis the problem of course occurred on the Titanic. Eight hundred to one thousand people died. In any event, they were responding to the order to improve things and outfitting it with lifeboats. But the thing wasn't designed for lifeboats. The only place you could put them was way up high. The center of gravity was being raised some more. Then there was some other skulduggery that went on with some guys that were promoting this picnic. This was Western Electric

Co. It cost seventy five cents to go on this tour. A lot of the employees thought they were being coerced into doing this. So it was not a happy thing, then to have all of this calamity to go with it was very sad. Then, I just found out not too long ago that with all of the twenty years in the courts, nobody got a penny from the litigation.

FWB: Nobody got any compensation.

RP: Anyway, there's another episode to this thing. It ties in. You may know this story. I think it's more widely known. It's about O'Hare Airport. I think that most people have recognized that the airport was named after a pilot in the U.S. Navy. But not too many people realize some of the rest of the story. A friend of mine in California sent me a copy of *Aviation Magazine* from the November 1995 issue about two months ago. There was a major article on this. What it said was kind of interesting. I think he was born in 1920. This was Butch O'Hare. He was born in St. Louis. A short time after he was born, his mother and father divorced. His father went to Chicago. He later became president of the Sportsman's Racetrack. But he also had some kind of contact or affiliation with the Chicago Police Department. It was some gang unit or something like that. The father and son, even though they didn't spend much time together, shared a lot of experiences. It was kind of a camaraderie. So even though the son Butch grew up in St. Louis, his dad was in Chicago.

Anyway, the kid decides he wants to go in the Navy. The father wants him to go to Annapolis. So, as the story points out, and it'd be hard to find out if it was completely true or not. The father supposedly was involved in some fashion with the conviction of Al Capone. The only thing they could ever get Capone on was not paying his income tax. Supposedly, Butch O'Hare's father gave the testimony which lead to the conviction. So now, his thinking was, by doing this, the government was going to owe him something. Right? Maybe they'll send his son to Annapolis [laughs].

He did. He got into Annapolis. He was a good student. Everybody liked him and he wasn't a braggart. He was just good at everything he did, sports and so on. The war came. Just before the war, he wanted to become a pilot. He was told that by Navy regulations, he had to be in the fleet for two years before he could go into flight training.

So he served with the fleet. Then he went to flight training and got his wings. He was assigned to the USS Lexington. The Lexington history, with your age, you probably know these things because you're a historian. But you weren't living through it, I don't think.

FWB: No.

RP: The Lexington and the Saratoga were sister ships. They were the first real aircraft carriers built anywhere. Right after Pearl Harbor, there was a concern about the Japanese invading Australia. That was one of their targets. MacArthur was ordered out of the Philippines. Presumably they wanted him to lead the army back to recapture the Philippines. He went to Australia thinking that there was an army being put together there and he finds out there's nothing. Anyway, the Coral Sea is the waterway between Australia and New Zealand. The Lexington is in that area on a task force. While they were there, they got hit by nine Japanese bombers, which were land-based. They were in the Guadalcanal area. Some of the planes that were flying cover for the Lexington were chasing the Japanese out of there.

While this was going on, there were two other planes above protecting the Lexington. One of the pilots was Butch O'Hare. The other one was his wingman. The wingman found out his guns were jammed. He got out of the way entirely. So here was Butch O'Hare up there with nine enemy aircraft. The guy must've been pretty good. He knocked down five of them right away in the first three or four minutes. He damaged the sixth one, which later crashed. He chased the other three away. Now that's an instant ace, an instant hero [laughs]. You know, it's February of 1942, and he's already an ace [laughs]. This was his first encounter.

So, President Roosevelt heard of this. And Roosevelt never missed an opportunity to get some PR. So he conveyed the Medal of Honor to Butch O'Hare and then invited him to Washington to receive it. So Butch O'Hare went to Washington. And while he's there, he's selling war bonds, too [laughs]. What did he miss? He missed the Battle of Coral Sea. His ship, the Lexington, went down in the battle of the Coral Sea. But he's in Washington, selling bonds. He was still there when Midway took place a month later.

That was the turning point of the war. So he missed one of the biggest opportunities [laughs]. But he became a hero and everybody liked the guy. He was good at everything he did. Well, he was such a good airman, about a year later he was asked to develop night flying activities. During one of these episodes, he was shot down and it was friendly fire. So here was a guy, in 1943, the first ace of the war. They named O'Hare Field after him. Of course, Midway was named after the other battle. The average Chicagoan knew about both of those things, in many cases. But they didn't know the rest of the story. Incidentally, did you ever hear that program? It's the guy that's on everyday, Paul Harvey.

FWB: Yes, I know him.

RP: I think it's a great show.

FWB: Yes. It's a great program. Well, why don't we get started?

RP: Okay. I didn't mean to ...

FWB: No, that's fine. I didn't know all of that stuff about the Eastland, because as you know, UIC began in many ways at Navy Pier. My colleague, our assistant out there, Jason, is a big Navy buff. If you go out, you'll see paintings of the Lexington and the Yorktown in that outer office.

RP: Oh really?

FWB: But I don't know if he knows the story of the Sable. We're actually going to go up to Great Lakes and do a little bit of the history of Navy Pier. George Bush, Sr., trained at Navy Pier.

RP: Yes, that's the other thing I was going to mention. He went through the training program, one of twenty-five thousand pilots.

FWB: I think it was eighteen thousand, something like that. But it was just a huge number of pilots.

RP: He flew a TBF.

FWB: Yes, it was a trainer.

RP: No, the TBF was a torpedo bomber. It was the biggest plane that the Navy had at that time.

FWB: Oh yes, you're right.

RP: He was shot down, I think. I don't know if he was shot down. But anyway, he crashed, and he was saved, obviously [laughs].

FWB: Well, why don't we start?

RP: Okay, whatever you want to do. I just wanted to get acquainted..

FWB: Oh yes, that's a really good way to do it. I'm anxious to see. I didn't know about the Sable. We can put that in the book. We're describing how Navy Pier is. What happened right after the war, Navy Pier began as a campus in October of 1946. The head of Naval Training there became the dean at the Navy Pier Campus. He just took off his uniform and keeps the same ...

RP: What was his name? Do you remember?

FWB: It was Charles Caveny. Well actually, he was second in command. The senior in command, Warren Brown, became the dean of men at Navy Pier. A lot of the equipment, like the metal lathes, the metallurgy equipment, and the stuff in the applied physics

classes, was used for Navy training. It was used by radiomen and radar types of things. That was transferred over to the university as war surplus. That became the lab equipment for physics, metallurgy, etc. So, there was some very close connections. And it was also a GI Bill school, too. So, some of the same veterans who were training there on the Pier could finish their degrees or at least start their degrees.

RP: I'm going to give you the name before the day is over with, of the chief architect in Chicago.

FWB: Maybe we can start there.

RP: In fact, he was supposed to call Bob. I don't know if he ever did or not. I talked to the chancellor. She told Bob that Dick had another person. And he's in a position to give you a lot of information, because he went to the pier. He was a student there. He graduated from the University of Illinois in Champaign. His name is, you might have heard it.

FWB: Yes, I may as well write this down.

RP: His name is Jerome Butler. He was a city architect for many, many years. At one point, he was Commissioner of Public Works, Commissioner of Aviation, and Chief Architect. His father was a career man with the bridges in the city. He was a good structural engineer. I mean, here's a man that's a gem. And he's the world's nicest person, too.

FWB: Do you know how to contact him?

RP: Oh sure. He's a friend of mine. He lives down the block. Oh anytime, I'll give you what you need.

FWB: Yes, just give it to me towards the end.

RP: This guy was in charge of the change at Navy Pier. In fact, his dream was to restore Navy Pier to what it had been. He had his eye on some streetcars. They were going to run out there because that's the way it used to be. Incidentally, when did you join the university?

FWB: I came here about four years ago. I've been on this job for four years.

RP: I only raise the point because I want to know. I asked Bob the same thing and he said that he came to Chicago in 1965. That sets a pattern as to what a person is likely to know about some things.

FWB: I went to Urbana. I grew up in Chicago. I was in Park Ridge when I was a kid.

RP: I live in Edgebrook, which is right next to Park Ridge.

FWB: Oh yes, we used to go there all the time. We even played golf at that course. It's not a big one.

RP: Well, Butler will be very helpful to you about Navy Pier.

FWB: Yes, I'd like to talk with Butler. The chancellor mentioned that there was somebody else and she forgot the name.

RP: She's a real sweet heart, isn't she?

FWB: Oh yes, she is.

RP: She's just as nice as they come.

FWB: Well, let's get started. Why don't you give me some background?

RP: Okay.

FWB: That's close enough. That's all you need with the mike. Why don't you just tell me about yourself? Tell me where you went to school, where you grew up, the neighborhood, and then how you came to work for the city.

RP: Okay. My name is Richard A. Pavia. I was born on July 18, 1930, a day of infamy!! I went to Morton High School in Cicero. Then I went to Illinois Institute of Technology, class of 1952. Graduated with a degree in civil engineering. I received a masters degree in sanitary engineering from I.I.T. in 1960, on a public health service scholarship. I got the equivalent of an MBA from the University of Chicago. I was the first person with a public background, to go through their program at the University of Chicago. So much for education. As for jobs, I was at McDonald Aircraft in St. Louis for a brief time until Uncle Sam decided I needed a vacation.

During the service, I had two years in the army in which I was in a special unit of eleven men. We had five officers and six enlisted men. Our mission was to provide the ground control necessary for long range guided missiles. If you want to fire a missile from New York to Moscow, you'd better know where the hell Moscow is at, where New York is at, and what the distance is in between [laughs]. So we were involved in the measurements and computations to accomplish this. They didn't want to let me out of the service when my enlistment was up. This was because I was one of just a few people with the MOS that I had. But I outfoxed them. I found out that there are six branches of the military service. There's army, navy, marines, air force, coast guard, and public health service. The public health service is attached to the navy in wartime and provides doctoral service to the merchant marines. The public health service was looking for a niche. When the cold war started, they wanted to be involved in civil defense. So, they decided to have a commissioned corps.

So I wrote a letter to the public health service, asking for a commission. They said they'd be happy to give me one since I had all of these qualifications [laughs], but I'd have to get a discharge from the army. So I sent a letter to the fifth army headquarters

with this attachment. A captain signed my discharge and I was in the Public Health Service. The other guy, that had the MOS with me, got called up for another year [laughs]. After I got out of military service, I came back to Chicago. I worked as an engineer with Greeley and Hanson, Ford Motor Company, and McHugh Construction. Then I returned to school for a masters in sanitary engineering. After that I went to work for the City of Chicago Planning Department.

FWB: When was that?

RP: I started there in November of 1958. That's significant as to what we were talking about and I was lucky. There was the commissioner and deputy commissioner. There were only two engineers in the department, myself and Bob Christiansen. They knew that when they gave us a job, we finished it [laughs]. So we were popular with the bosses. That got me involved with the University of Illinois and things we'll touch on later. I was in planning four and a half years when they had a scandal at the Metropolitan Sanitary District. A commission was created to seek out, find, and recommend the three most qualified men in the U.S. for the job of general superintendent. That's the biggest job in the country for a sanitary engineer. Well, this guy here really wanted that job bad [laughs and points to himself]. But I figured, "I'm not going to be in the running." But they wouldn't go out of town like they did for a police commissioner. They went to California to hire one back in 1960.

FWB: Yes, they went because of the Summerdale scandal.

RP: I felt they would take a local. I knew all the men that were local. John Duba, an engineer, was the deputy mayor and Jim Jardine was the commissioner of water and sewers. I knew all these men were qualified and I respected them. If one of these guys gets the job, I'm going to ask to go along. They didn't get the job. It *was* a guy from California, Vinton W. Bacon [laughs]. So he and I met and we hit it off. This guy was brilliant, a tremendous PR man, and a good engineer. He turned out to be a three-dollar bill, a phony if I ever saw one. But I didn't see that at the time. It took me nine months to

see that he was a phony. I was his acting deputy superintendent. We took on unions, the syndicate, the works. We were on page one almost every day. There were four newspapers at that time. All the reporters that were covering the stuff made niches for themselves out of this. Anyway, he and I finally had a separation. I just couldn't stomach some of the stuff he was doing. We were doing some of the things we were brought in to correct, phony civil service exams, etc. So, I left. I was emotionally spent because I don't think I ever believed in anything as much as what we did then. We were on the right side of everything.

I did consulting work for about four or five months with the University of Chicago, PAS, the Public Administration Service. It's a non-for-profit thing that's housed there. That gave me an opportunity to go all over the country to check on all the records of Mr. Bacon and all the other stuff. I wish the committee had done as thorough a job as I did. I then left U. of Chicago and went with the Illinois Building Authority. That led to one of my early contacts with the university. We were the financing agent for the State of Illinois. It's now called the Capital Development Board. But in its infancy, it was called the Illinois Building Authority. I was the chief engineer. Our job was to coordinate the planning of all of these projects for the state prior to financing requests. There was the University of Illinois, all the other state universities, all the prisons, and all the mental hospitals. It was terrific and I enjoyed it very much. I met a lot of people at the University of Illinois at that time.

Then Jim Jardine, for reason or another, didn't want me to leave to go to the sanitary district. He recommended against it. He said, "Come with me instead." I was too shortsighted to see the wisdom of his recommendation and I went [laughs]. Even though I was happy with the Illinois Building Authority, he said, "I want to retire by 1968 and there's nobody here to replace me." I said, "Come on, Jim. You've got four thousand employees. Don't tell me this bullshit about nobody here." I better watch my language. Anyway, he talked me into it and I went to the Department of Water and Sewers. I was the assistant commissioner, the deputy commissioner, and later on the commissioner. I think those were probably the happiest years of my working career. I really felt like I was doing the right things and accomplishing things.

But one of the things that was interesting was my dream. Here we have one of the best water systems in the world. We've got five miles of Great Lakes and we've got water shortages. It doesn't make any sense. These are political problems, not engineering problems. I had meetings with Mayors Daley and Bilandic to discuss various options. I sort of knew they weren't going to do anything. It wasn't a hot enough topic yet. But they should've been thinking about possible solutions and how to handle these things. What I would have like to have seen done would have been to create a regional water authority. A means to ensure professional management, not political like so much in Illinois. But, it would have been controversial and might not have ever succeeded. While I was there at the Water Dept., I wanted to expand the system. We're sitting on this surplus water, the wells are dropping in DuPage County and elsewhere at a high rate.

Anyway, there was an administrative change in Chicago. Jane Byrne came in as mayor. Jane Byrne and I knew each other and I liked her and I felt she was a pretty competent person. After she became mayor, she seemed to be a flake if I ever saw one. I felt she was short on administrative abilities. It's too bad because she really had an unusual opportunity. In any event, they wanted me to do certain things that I wasn't going to do, so I left.

FWB: Can you give me some background? What was it about Jane Byrne that made it difficult for you to work in the position you had?

RP: See, you have to understand. This may be something worth while to put into the Daley papers, the style. When I got to Chicago in 1958, virtually all of the department heads were men who usually had the right education. They had good experience and they were career people. That was the key. They were career people. They were going to be there for twenty, thirty, or forty years, whatever it was. That stopped. It didn't stop with Bilandic. Bilandic more or less did the same thing that Daley did for the two years he was mayor. When Byrne came in, she just shook it up. Now, you can say that to shake up the bureaucracy is good and maybe it is at times. A lot of good people left. I think she tried to do the right thing. She just didn't know any better. She had no philosophy to guide her. If you have no philosophy, then you're going to be erratic. If each thing that you do and

each decision is independent of everything else, it's going to be a quagmire. There will be no consistency and she didn't have any.

Richard is the mayor and he's quite different than his father. But their styles are quite different. The old man had power, but he was seldom seen anywhere. In fact, when people would go to other parts of the country, they couldn't understand how the hell a mayor of a city could have so much power ... [laughs] I said, "Well, it's easy, if you just think about it." Here, Cook County is approximately fifty one per cent of Illinois. Then, it's a pyramid. It's a house of cards in a sense, by control. It's almost what they had in the depression years, when they passed legislation to prevent this from occurring, the house of cards. You and I take ten million dollars. We buy control of one hundred million dollars, then a billion dollars. And in a sense, that's what was happening. But in the case of Rich, he doesn't have the charisma that his father had. I think he tries hard. He's certainly not a speaker and neither was his dad.

But his father, if you ever met with him one on one and didn't know him before, you'd get a completely different picture of him. He was very bright, had a high I.Q., and had a photographic memory. In fact, he never forgot anything. He could meet someone and would spend two minutes talking to them. If he saw that person again, there was a fifty-fifty chance he'd know their name. Rich doesn't have that same charisma. Rich has given more emphasis to the aesthetics of the city. I think that that's a plus. The career people is a thing of the past. There's virtually nobody anymore that are career people in the city. Things are changing. People don't stay with corporations a long time anymore, either. Rich gets people and they're usually young lawyers, they don't stay long. They're there for a while, they leave, and they go somewhere else. So you're losing, and it's not just the City of Chicago, I think it's elsewhere in the country, too. You're losing that career person that gives the continuity that covers a thirty to forty year period at a time. But it's been kind of interesting.

There's no question that the Daley's are very interested in government and really participate in it to the fullest. The old man was a character if there ever was a character. He had a lightning temper. And you could be as innocent as could be [laughs], if you walked in there at the wrong time. I walked out on him more than once. But he was unique in the sense that if you made a mistake, and he made mistakes, he didn't know

how to say “I’m sorry.” It wasn’t in his vocabulary. But what he would do is call you in for no good reason. He’d say, “How’s the wife? How’s the family?” That was his way of saying “I’m sorry.” It was touchy, you know. Well, these are subjects that are kind of an overview right now. Daley was a good mayor. He could have been better if he had some of the interests that Rich has. With his power, he probably would have been a little bit better mayor. But the times change. Chicago’s kind of having a rebirth. It went through a decline. It topped out in the 1950 census, it was 3.65 million. It dropped down to about two and three quarter million. Now we’re closing in on three million again. But it’s a different city.

I finished up my career doing something that was kind of important to me. I went with a financing outfit. I was half owner, president, and CEO of Spear Financial. We only worked with public bodies. Again, I reiterated all my things with the university because I sold the bonds for the university and so on. What was interesting about it was that I made my dreams come true. All of the water expansion that I couldn’t deliver as commissioner of water and sewer, I delivered as a civilian, so to speak.

FWB: So this is recent?

RP: Oh yes. The Du Page Water Commission is my creation. It’s a three hundred and seventy-five million dollar project to take care of all of Du Page.

FWB: This was in the last seven years, right? It was seven years ago?

RP: Well, I left there seven years ago. I retired seven years ago.

FWB: I live in Oak Park.

RP: They were one of my best clients.

FWB: Oh yes. I remember when they were pulling up Jackson Boulevard to stick the pipes in to pump it all the way out west.

RP: Oak Park was every cooperative. That's a ninety-six inch main, which is a pretty good size main [RP and FWB laugh].

FWB: I wondered where it was going [laughs].

RP: But Oak Park, I sold all of the Oak Park issues. By sold I mean we never bought and sold, we weren't brokers. We prepared the documents and laid out the financing plan. But we never bought or sold bonds. So I did the Du Page Water Commission, which is about twenty-eight communities and three hundred and seventy-five million. I also did the Northwest Water Commission. Evanston sold water and the receivers were Arlington Heights, Buffalo Grove, Palatine, and the other one was ...

FWB: Barrington?

RP: No. It was Palatine. Those four, that's the commission. Then I did the one up in Lake County, Central Lake. There's about a dozen communities receiving Lake Michigan water from the plant at Lake Bluff, which we financed. I also did some work on the other one, which is northwest. That one is Rolling Meadows, Schaumburg, and all of the rest of those. It was interesting. One of the unique things about Chicago is that we are thought to have an unlimited supply of water, which is not really true. We do have restrictions. There is a lot of water out there, but it was a situation where it really needed people to work together. Take the case of Du Page, for example. Du Page is more Republican than Cook County is Democratic, so it is a political thing. In Du Page, I used to have a lot of their county's accounts, and so we were bi-partisan. And I really wanted the Du Page water commission to fly, because that was the right way to go for the whole county. I think it's been a big success. But at one point in time, they were so fearful of Chicago that they did some really crazy things [laughs]. Way back, they created a commission. It was the Elmhurst Villa Park Lombard Water Commission. They got a permit from the Corps of Engineers and everything else to draw water out of Glencoe and go all the way up to Glencoe to get water, rather than deal with Chicago. Then, at one time, negotiations

got a little bit tense. They wanted to consider buying the crib, the four mile crib out there, and using that as their source [laughs].

FWB: Just buying one crib [laughs]?

RP: [Laughs] That was not smart! But it's been a lot of fun. I never dreaded going to work. I always felt like going to work was an adventure. I think I've been doing enough talking [laughs] Why don't you ask more questions?

FWB: You have a good overview of the whole career. Let's go back to 1958.

RP: Okay.

FWB: Describe when you got on at the city planning commission, who you worked with, and let's go from there. Go from 1958 on.

RP: When I was hired in November of 1958, my title was administrative assistant to the Chicago Planning Commission. The Planning Commission is the body that goes back to 1909, the plan of Chicago. It had different shapes and faces over the years. But it had just been structurally changed. In 1957, the city council changed and made the department of planning a formal department instead of just a commission and the Planning Commission was kept as a separate body.

FWB: Now, the Planning Commission is not a city department.

RP: No.

FWB: It's voluntary, isn't it?

RP: It's voluntary. The staff is supplied by the department. But the people that are on there, some are ex officio, the aldermen and the mayor is ex officio. A majority of the people are appointees of the mayor. They're usually civic minded citizens.

FWB: Before the city department was created, there was the planning commission. They had their own staff?

RP: Yes, they had their own staff.

FWB: How was that staff funded before this transition?

RP: The city council would have put it in the budget. But it was much stronger after the change in 1957, they were a city department. Ira Bach was the commissioner. Ira was a good man. He wasn't a good manager, but he was intelligent and well educated. He was a University of Illinois product. At the time that he was there, the city structure was a lot different than it is now. There was one commissioner for the department. If you had more than one bureau, you might have a deputy commissioner for each bureau. But you didn't have this proliferation that they have now. There's so many assistant commissioners and deputy commissioners that you can't even keep track. So the titles meant more at that time. In order for them to hire me, I think John Duba had something to do with it. John Duba was the deputy mayor and had taught at IIT when I went through, also he was non-political. He grew up in Rhode Island. His dad was a career man from the Navy. John majored in civil engineering and taught at Rolla before he went to IIT. Then he took a summer job at Chicago and he loved it so he stayed on.

Then Daley came in. The papers made Daley seem like he was an ogre. One of the first things he did was to appoint John Duba deputy mayor. The story line was that he had a meeting right after he came into office. He had a meeting with senior people and asked them for their recommendations and what he should be doing. Duba supposedly raised his hand and said, "You've got to bring professionalism, professionals won't work for the city unless they feel it's a professional environment. So Daley made him deputy mayor. Duba was never happier, it was the job for him. At the time there was a hot

potato, it was urban renewal, he put him in urban renewal. Duba didn't want that [laughs]. It was a no-win situation. But he was a good soldier, he took it on. Then, he became commissioner of planning and development. He made a super department out of planning at that time and they got a plan out. They didn't fool around with a new plan for the 1909 plan for a long time [laughs]. When Duba's plan came out, whether it was a good one or bad one depends on the person's point of view. Duba is deceased now.

But we would have lunch together usually once every month. The last time we had lunch together I said, "John, do you see yourself retired from the city?" He said, "No. I see myself going back to teaching. But right now I like what I'm doing." There was no reason for me to think that he was leaving. A month later, he announced that he was leaving Chicago and he was going to Brooklyn Poly Tech. And as close as we were, I asked if there was more to the story. He said just that it was economic because his kids would go to school free there. Duba was very, very good and he was very good for Chicago. He was good for every place that he worked. He went there and he was in the administration of Lindsay for about a year or two as GSA.

Then, he left and went to the Air Transport Association. He was vice president in charge of physical facilities for ten to twelve years. Then one day he called me. I had left the city and I was with Spear Financial. He said, "Dick, I'm going to need your help." I said, "What do you need?" This was like, January, in whatever year it was. He said, "I'll be out of a job in May. Look around for me." Well, for a guy that was your hero, it was something. This was when the city was going through so many changes. I forget who was actually mayor at the time.

FWB: Was it Washington, maybe?

RP: It might have been Washington. Or it might have been that two-year gap when they had Sawyer. In any event, I called him back. I said, "John, there's nothing open at the city. Assistant commissioner is the highest position open. You can't go from deputy mayor to assistant commissioner [laughs]. The best thing for you is to go with the O'Hare Associates." It was a consortium put together, a couple of engineering firms, so on and so forth. I said, "You know all of the people. Everybody still remembers you. You haven't

been gone that long. It's perfect." However, somebody didn't want Duba. To this day, I don't know who it was. It had to be one of two or three people. It sounds like deep throat business [laughs]. Tom Kapsalis was the commissioner of aviation at the time. Tom and I were close friends, he used to work for me. Tom was all for Duba and he was a Duba fan. So I don't think it could have been him. There was a man with one of the major engineering firms at the O'Hare Associates by the name of Ben Sosowitz. It was said Ben said no. Everybody disclaimed it and to this day, I don't know the answer. Duba didn't come back, but he went to Kansas City. He was an airport administrator for Kansas City and he spent twelve years there. Then he started losing his sight. He retired and came back to Chicago. He and his wife lived in Evanston. He passed away about a year and a half ago. He was an unsung hero who left a good track record.

FWB: So, one of his contributions was to professionalize and to push towards professionalism?

RP: Yes. I was born and raised in the suburbs. And my view of Chicago was terrible. Then when Duba left IIT, someone that I knew personally and respected, gave up teaching to go with the city. So I cornered him one day and said "John?" He said, "Dick, there's politics everywhere. There's small 'p' politics and capitol 'P' politics. But there's always politics. It doesn't necessarily mean that it's bad. It's just something you have to be mindful of. The opportunity with the city is really great and I like it very much." So, it was on his behalf that I decided to try it, because I gave up a pretty good job to go over there. I think I was very happy with the four and a half years of planning. I got lucky because Bob Christiansen and I were about the same age. We were kind of the golden boys, the commissioner and deputy commissioner. Here's one of the things that lead into this. This might be a good time to tell you about it.

FWB: Hold on. Just a second [changes audio cassette tape].

RP: As a backdrop, it may be a little bit off on some of the times. In 1954, Kennelly was the mayor of Chicago. I believe he contracted with the Real Estate Research Corporation

to do a study on sites for the University of Illinois. They came out with a report. The report, as I recall, I wasn't there at that time. They had recommended a site called Miller Meadows. It was on First Avenue between Roosevelt Road and Cermak Road. It was forest preserve property that wasn't being used for anything. It wasn't a baseball diamond and it didn't have roadways in it. And of course, the forest preserve district, as soon as there was some talk about using the property, they went in there and put in roadways and kind of dressed it up [laughs]. Well, nothing happened and it died.

Then Daley came in 1955. Sometime thereafter, Daley contracted with the Real Estate Research Corporation again. They were clearly a very good firm, I think. Jim Downs, who was the head of it, was as good as they come, in terms of brilliance, personality, and the works. The corporation came up with four sites. You're probably aware of all these. What I'm going to tell you might be something that you add to or subtract from. Wayne Johnston was the chairman of the board for the Illinois Central Railroad. He was also a trustee at the University of Illinois. For reasons I don't understand, he and Daley couldn't agree on what time it was if they were looking at a digital clock. They just didn't like each other. Whether this was the reason for it or not, I don't know.

Wayne Johnston's committee recommended the selection of Riverside Golf Course, which was one of the four sites. Daley was furious. Part of it he felt was because of this relationship. Part of it was because, "You're going to put this thing out in the suburbs? No way!" So, there was a lot of stuff in the papers. Everybody was debating it. Each of the four sites had strengths and weaknesses. They weren't bad things. Bach called me in the office one day. He said, "Dick, Dr. Henry is sending his number one aide to Chicago. His name is Chuck Havens." You've probably met him. Chuck may still be around or is he deceased?

FWB: Yes, he passed away.

RP: He was a good man. Jim Costello, have you ever met him? He was the attorney for the university. He was another career person. And there was also Dr. Henry. Anyway, he said, "Chuck Havens is coming. He's representing Dr. Henry and I want you take him

around and show him the sites. Find out where he stands. Find out what the administration wants. All we know is from the Site Selection Committee." So I went out there. Havens was the kind of person that you just had to like. He was a credit to his career and institution. So as we looked around, I said, "Chuck, do you want the Riverside Golf Course? You know, it doesn't meet the criteria. The criteria, generalized, is that anybody who lives in the six county area of Chicago should have an opportunity to go to this university. So the public transportation has to be one of the primary things. With Riverside Golf Course, you've some pretty good transportation. You've got the Burlington RR going through. You've got the CTA stopping right about there, but the rest of the roadway isn't particularly good and the people don't want it. The people in Riverside figured this was something they didn't want and the private ownership doesn't want to lose it." So it was a strange one. Now, whether or not the Wayne Johnston story had anything to do with it, I don't know. But it certainly didn't fly. So I said, "What do you and the president want?" He said, "Well, we'd like to have Northerly Island, Meigs Field."

FWB: He said the president wanted Northerly Island?

RP: Yes.

FWB: That's what Havens said?

RP: Well, that's my recollection. He was there for Henry. So, my guess was that he was speaking for Henry and himself, and they were close. I said, "Chuck, it doesn't figure. I can see why you want it, it's spectacular. But there're things wrong with it, there's no public transportation. Everything would have to go by bus with the park system, Grant Park, Burnham Park, and Lake Shore Drive. We could just put three million bucks into an internal there. I don't think it will fly. Why do you want it?"

FWB: It was still Meigs Field, right?

RP: Yes. Well, it was eighty-three acres, as I recall. You see, he was looking at it from the standpoint of if he had the parks on the west side, you'll never have slums next to the university. That was important, but now, this was old time reasoning. He was thinking that you could expand it as needed. There was a major difference of opinion. The university wanted one hundred and sixty acres. A hundred and sixty acres would require a site further out or somewhere else in the state. But you don't do this with downtown Chicago.

FWB: That's a lot of land.

RP: We were thinking in terms of forty acres. So he said, "If we need more space, we can always get it." Well, you know what happened afterwards. Northwestern stole the dunes in Evanston. And I don't think anybody will ever get away with that again.

FWB: That was the campus up there, that expansion?

RP: Yes. That was the last time anybody got a permit to do anything by increasing landfill. Anyway, I think I helped talk Havens out of the idea of ...

FWB: Northerly Island.

RP: I didn't think that Northerly Island fit the criteria. Speaking professionally, I would have voted against it.

FWB: Just because it didn't meet the criteria, it was hard to ...

RP: Yes, I would have loved it and it would've looked nice to have it there. It wasn't right. The one that clearly belonged was south of the Loop. And it's funny how you secured this route to get there, but that's what you got now [laughs]. But leading up to that was Garfield Park, which was a one hundred sixty-acre park. Blacks were starting to

move into that area. So they thought that if this was going to be for the university, it would be an urban renewal project to get rid of them. So politically, it was ...

FWB: Garfield Park was?

RP: Yes.

FWB: It was too difficult because ...?

RP: You'd be giving up public land, even though you could make an argument that you'd make an exchange, acre for acre. But these other factors were more difficult.

FWB: Which other factors?

RP: There was the fact that there were blacks living on the perimeter of the park. If the university would've taken that, that would be ended. People would view this as a method or a means of getting rid of blacks in that area. Just like Cabrini Green, what's going on now. So, Garfield Park didn't last long. Riverside Golf Course didn't last long. The city's official position was south of the Loop. But the forty million dollar price tag, those empty sheds and tracks no longer used didn't bear any reality. It just wasn't real. But the analogy was, the best way to get rid of a slum was to put something in its place. And everybody was for that, at least in principle. In any event, the forty million dollars was there. But we weren't getting anywhere. And clearly, I think Daley believed in that university strongly. Anyway, along the way, one day I got a phone call. The commissioner wanted to see me. So I went in there. Campbell was the highest ranking black in Illinois Public Service. He was the deputy commissioner. He was a very good man and a very able administrator. Bach, as I told you, not a particularly good manager. But he knew all the right people, traveled in the right circles, and he had a good head on his shoulders. And they complimented each other beautifully. In the case of Bach, he knew the right people, he was accepted, and so on. Campbell was resented by a lot of people.

FWB: Because he was black?

RP: Yes, it was because of his color. There's kind of an interesting little story, as a sideline. He was one of thirteen children from Washington, D.C. His father was a red cap.

FWB: What is that?

RP: Those are the fellows that carry the baggage at train stations. Campbell's ambition was to be an architect. He came to Chicago, but he made a mistake. He registered to become an architect at Chicago Tech, which is a non-accredited school. So here, he's black in a white city. He's Catholic, and only ten per cent of the blacks are Catholic, and he goes to a non-accredited school. He had about as many handicaps as you could carry [laughs]. But he was a good administrator. He became the principal at Dunbar High School. It was a whole new facility, they did good job of putting it all together. He revered the land and the guy that was superintendent of schools for all those years.

FWB: Willis?

RP: Yes, it was Ben Willis. Willis was a pompous guy. He was an able administrator. But he played games with zoning and everything else. Anyway, he and Campbell had differences of opinion. But Campbell was loyal to him always. Every time we had a planning commission meeting, once a year he'd show up. What's the name again?

FWB: Benjamin Willis.

RP: Yes, it was Benjamin Willis. He would treat his number two man like dirt. I thought, anybody who treats his top people like that is no good. Anyway, Bach and Campbell call me into their office [laughs].

Oh, I know what. I jumped the gun on something. Out of this chaos and not being able to deliver on any of the foresights came the idea of a compromise. The compromise

was Harrison - Halsted, which was not a bad site. And the dream, of course, was that you'd have protection on the north and the east with the expressways. You had expansion room to the south. The objective was that the Medical Center Commission and the university would someday tie together and it would all be public area. It was pretty good. Now comes the bad part. That was the fact that there was a lot of politics here. At that time, urban renewal was kind of in its infancy. There were two agencies involved in urban renewal. One was the Chicago Land Clearance Commission, whose job was to take a small area, bulldoze it, and raze it, taking out the whole building, or whatever was the case. They were very successful. It was a definitive job. The politics were minimal. If you tear down a structure and that is no longer used, you have the land, and someone else can use it. The other one was a little bit different, it was urban renewal. What that was was taking large areas and making it an urban renewal area like Lincoln Park, Hyde Park, and these major neighborhoods of the city. The objective was to remove the cancers and save the area. And it worked. Hyde Park is an example. Lincoln Park is an example, as well as others. But there was another one called Harrison Halsted. It got into the status of an urban renewal conservancy district. There was a predominantly ethnic Italian group there. They had the strength that the city had designated this as an urban renewal area. They went out and spent four hundred thousand dollars for a new church or school, whichever. So, it became a hot topic. The alderman and committeeman at that time was John D'Arco. John D'Arco lived in the First Ward, and according to many of the books, so did the Italians and some of Chicago's other side. So anyway, Bach and Campbell called me into the office because I handled the planning commission, set up the meetings, the agendas, and so forth. They said, "We want you to set up a meeting for the planning commission, we want to deal with Harrison - Halsted." I said, "This is going to be big. Where do you want to have it?" Normally, a planning commission meeting would have fifteen people. We could fill up city hall. He said, "Well, you just call the alderman and tell him we're going to do this. We're inviting him to come." Here's the commissioner and deputy commissioner of the department. And I'm the third or fourth ranking person of the department. How did I get that assignment? I was a good soldier. I picked up the phone. I got the alderman. I said, "I want a Chicago Planning Commission meeting on such and such a date. One of the subjects will be the Harrison - Halsted site. You know

that this is a very volatile. We know that you want to be heard. So, we're personally inviting you to come to the meeting." He said, "When is it? I can't make it. Change the date." I said, "I don't have the authority to change the date. The planning commission only meets on Thursdays. This thing is on the agenda. I don't have the power to change it." He said, "I told you I can't make it." [laughs] I said, "Is your problem the time or the date?" He mulled for a little bit. Then he said, "I can't be there at 1:30." I said, "What time can you be there?" He said, "3:00." I said, "Why don't we do this? We'll have the meeting at 1:30 because that's the way it's supposed to be. But we won't do anything on Harrison - Halsted until you get there. Is that fair?" He said, "Okay." [laughs] You've got to use diplomacy. I went back and told my bosses, "Yes, I've got him signed up, but these are the conditions." Now comes the big day. What was her name? It was a woman. Her restaurant just closed last year.

FWB: Florence Scala.

RP: [Nods] Florence Scala. She was for real. She believed in what she was doing. Well, it comes the big day. Ira Bach was the commissioner of planning. But he was also officially the secretary of the Chicago Planning Commission. I was the assistant secretary. So I was the guy that did the work. But he had the title. So anyway, the big day came. There was an overflow crowd. The chairman of the planning commission's name escapes me. I think it was Frank. He was the chairman of the board of International Harvester. He was a very nice man, about sixty five years old. He was a tall, lanky guy. So they were dealing with Bach. The chairman said they were going to withhold until the alderman got there. They disposed of everything else that was on the agenda. They were sitting there. It was 3:00 and no alderman yet. And there was nothing else to do. So Bach said, "Why don't we at least discuss some of the issues here? We won't take any vote until D'Arco gets here." So we started talking. While they were talking, D'Arco came in. He walked in and heard the conversation [laughs]. He walked up to the head table and he started giving Bach a hard time. And it was really unfair. But you've got to look at these things a little differently. The chairman stood up and said, "Mr. Alderman, you sit down and behave yourself or I'll have you removed from the office." And I don't think D'Arco was really a

bad person. This was just the way he was brought up. He sat down. I had had some minor dealings, but I stayed away from those people. Years later, I was at a retirement party for someone in the department. The drinking part is the first part. This guy came up and said, "Commissioner, I want you to meet somebody." He took me over to meet John D'Arco. I knew the guy, but we weren't close. So I shook hands with him, said a few words, and broke the engagement. Then, after the dinner was over, another guy came up. He said, "Commissioner, I want you to meet somebody." He took me to D'Arco again [laughs]. I said, "John, I guess somebody wants us to talk. Let's have a beer together." So he and I sat down. He's a charming guy. It's not to say that the things about him aren't true [laughs]. It was a new ball game. He said, "You know, Dick and I used to do the legislature together." He and Daley did this in the 1930's. There's always been a close relationship between the Eleventh Ward and the First Ward. He was saying, "At one time, we controlled nine wards. But things are different now." It was like a guy looking back on the twilight of his career and how things have changed, some for the better and some for the worst. It was one of those moments. I don't think I ever even saw him again. It was kind of one of those recollections. We must have talked for fifteen to twenty minutes there, just the two of us. It was kind of interesting to talk to a guy that has been written up in all of these books. I'm a nobody and here was a somebody. So anyway, the meeting took place.

FWB: Let's pause for just a second. I've got to change the tape.

*****END OF VIDEO TAPE ONE*****

RP: Annie Dolman comes in here. She can't get anyplace else. One day we had these little remembrances. Ira Bach wasn't always commissioner of planning. He was in the chain of administration or something. He left and he ended up being the executive director of a bi-state commission of some sort. We were out on Lake Michigan one day shooting the breeze. We were talking about this period, Harrison - Halsted. He said, "Well, I'm going to tell you something that you don't know." I said, "Okay, shoot." He said, "You know, things are dragging. The mayor is getting upset. You know, he wanted

to show some progress. So he called me in one day. He said, 'Ira, what's the hold up?' " Ira gave him the obvious. The mayor said, "You set up a meeting for tomorrow at 5:00 in my office. You tell John D'Arco that he, you, and I are going to stay there. We're not going home until it's resolved, so be prepared." Apparently, Ira made the contact and set up the meeting. The three of them got together and they resolved it. Well, you would have never been in that particular office. But it might be the same one with Rich. There was the office where most of the business was conducted. Then there was the back office. The back office was kind of where he had his little bar [laughs].

FWB: Oh, Daley did?

RP: Yes. You didn't see him drink very much in public. I saw him drink two drinks once. He had two cocktails when we were at the Museum of Science and Industry. It was the plumbing exhibit there. That's the only time I ever saw him drink. He'd have coffee when he'd go to meetings and all. But anyway, Ira and D'Arco obviously knew each other very well. They knew each other for years. He told them right away to resolve this thing [laughs]. Daley said, "There's nothing to drink. There's no white wine." These guys are drinking scotch and whiskey [laughs]. Ira said, "After a while, the room was beginning to spin for me." Whatever it was, he didn't go into the details of the discussion. But the point of the matter was that they finally reached an agreement.

FWB: Daley and D'Arco?

RP: D'Arco spoke against it. I guess the only two speeches he ever gave were given on behalf of it [laughs]. And it was cruel in some ways. I suppose some of these ethnic people were unable to duplicate their homes. They had something that was home and now, all of a sudden, it's gone. And even though the money might've been fair from an assessor's standpoint, it probably created hardships. And it did break up the community to some extent. But looking at the bigger picture, you'd have to be narrow-minded not to recognize that it was a good solution to a very difficult problem. It worked out well. The

planners or anybody else that had anything to do with it didn't have to apologize to anybody, in my opinion.

FWB: You just couldn't get the railroad site quick enough?

RP: Yes. It was one of those things. Dealing with the railroad is not easy. I thought the ICR was my baby. So I had to deal with the railroads on Outer Drive East. That was the first building to go up. That's another subject [laughs].

FWB: Yes, it's part of how the city is in dealing with the railroad.

RP: Yes. But the next part that deals with my personal involvement in the university would have been when I went with the Illinois Building Authority. Our job was to provide the money for all of the state agencies that had capital improvements. It was a good idea. It had a good board with some good people on it. The man that was the executive director was an honest, able person. He had been a purchasing agent at the state for a while. I was brought in as the chief engineer. We didn't do any engineering, per se. But my role was on all of these projects.

FWB: You were there to supervise and to kind of make sure ...?

RP: Yes. Some of the stuff went through the state. The state had what was known as the Department of Buildings. It was like a Department of Public Works. It had all kinds of functions. It had Fire Control and the State Fire Marshall. The state police was in there. There were a whole bunch of things. It was a catchall. Well, I've got to back up one step before that. Under the Illinois Constitution, if you wanted to borrow money, it was a referendum type thing if it was above a certain amount. I think it was two hundred fifty thousand dollars, which is a pretty small amount. There were regular solicitations for bonds. But you had to have a successful referendum. I think it was in 1962 or 1963. All of Daley's bond failed.

FWB: It was in 1962.

RP: Well, they've got a problem now. Capital Programs are dead in the water. So, there had been some talk about other ways of doing things. One of them, of course, was this concept. At the local level, or county level, was the Public Building Commission. At the state level, it was the Illinois Building Authority. They were both almost identical, only they had different jurisdictions. They languished in the courts. The Illinois Supreme Court at first rejected it and then made some modifications. Anyway, somewhere along the line, the Public Building Commission was born. Bob Christiansen and I had worked on that together. This is another thing you might appreciate. This was a big project. This was like eighty-five million dollars. That's maybe one-tenth of what it would be today. All of the big architects and architectural engineering firms wanted to get this work. So Bach called Christiansen and me. He said, "I want you to interview all of these people, all of these architecture and engineering firms that have been coming in here." Give us your views on them. Bob and I were flattered, but we knew that we weren't going to be part of the decision [laughs]. We were just the front. So we had all of these characters, Skidmore, Owens and Merrill and all of the rest of them coming through. After we finished hearing all of the presentations, Bob and I went out for a drink one night. We figured, "Okay, let's see if we can predict what's going to happen. We're supposed to be smart guys. Politics really wanted this." It wasn't going to go to one firm. If I give it to one, I've got ten people who want something. If I give it to one, ninety per cent of the people are very unhappy. And there's only ten per cent for me. So, it's better politics to have a broader base. So we figured, "It's going to be two or three people. Now, who are they? Well, let's figure it out." They can't keep that firm. I can't think of the name of it. The chairman of the board of that company were close friends. So we knew that they were in. SOM, Skidmore, Owens, and Merrill was one of the biggest ones in Chicago at that time. And you can't keep them out. So we had SOM to take care of the WASP end of things [laughs]. We've got to make sure we do that. The other one was the Irish power. So now we've got the situation. Those are the two. Will there be a third one or not? Yes, there will be a third one. Jewish people have to have their entry, too [laughs]. The one we had been working with was a guy that had a restaurant for a while. It was John Cordwell.

He, at one time, had been the executive director of the Chicago Planning Commission. He's a well-known architect. He's a real character. He had this restaurant in the twilight of his career. He would hold court in his restaurant. He was such a glib guy. One time I was there with my wife and another couple. I said, "The Red Lion is a place, I've been there. It's not bad. Why don't you girls go in and see if you want to go there before we go in?" So they went in and they said, "Yes, it's okay with us." So we walk in and there's John. He's holding court. He said, "Dick, why don't you go upstairs? I'll be up there in a few minutes." So we were getting ready to order. John came up to me and said, "It sure was nice of you to come here tonight and help me celebrate." I said, "What are we celebrating, John?" He said, Oh, didn't I tell you? This is my fortieth anniversary of being shot down over Germany." He'd been a pilot in the RAF in World War II [laughs]. I said, "Why do you celebrate something like that?" He said, "If I hadn't been shot down, I never would have survived the war." That was interesting. Anyway, he died within the last few years. But he was a real character. So we figured that firm would get it. Well, we were wrong [laughs]. We were two-thirds right and one-third wrong. It was a different firm that had the same kind of connections. Anyway ...

FWB: Was that Harry Weese?

RP: No. It was not that one, John, whose last name escapes me [laughs]. I won't lose it. I just can't retrieve it.

FWB: Yes, you'll get it.

RP: Anyway, they took the project on. And, like a lot of things that are done by a committee, for example, people say things about the Daley Center. In a lot of ways, it's been a good thing. They used a special steel. It was rusted and then stopped.

FWB: You mean the Daley Center Plaza?

RP: The building. And then, of course, there was taking the whole block. There was something like thirteen restaurants on that block, including the Original Henrici and so

on. Daley had to cash in some political points on that one. Christiansen and I argued about some different ways that it could have been handled. We thought it would have been smarter to leave that alone and take a different block to the east or to the west. Anyway, Bob Christiansen became the executive director of the building commission. I was drafted. I was director of administration for the department of planning. The PR was under me, along with the graphic section, the planning commission, and all that [laughs]. By that time, I was probably number three man in the department. So Bob took the public building commission. Bach and Campbell called me in and told me they wanted me to take over capital improvements, which was a lateral move. I had things running the way I wanted.

Bob was not a particularly good manager. He was a brilliant guy, but not necessarily a good manager. Campbell was like a father to me. Campbell made it clear that I was going to handle it. There were no ifs, ands, or buts. I was going to have to keep the secretary that Bob had, who was useless. In other words, I lost everything [laughs]. I haven't forgotten that. But anyway, Christiansen took over the public building commission. It was a good job, I think. I took over the capital improvements. They gave me more entrée. A capital improvement program had not been produced on a regular basis until I got there. Then, it involved all of the governments in the Chicago area. It wasn't just the city department. It gave you entrée to the sanitary district. I made connections over there, along with the county, the park district, and the works. Anyway, the public building commission's first project was the Daley Center. Afterwards, it went on to other things. Christiansen later became deputy mayor too, in addition to being executive director.

I left the planning department to go to the sanitary district, which I told you about. After I left the city and the sanitary district, Christian was telling me about this public building commission, which is still alive now. Now that they succeeded with the public building commission, the Illinois Building Authority was being pushed. He said, "Why don't you go over there?" So I went over there and I got hired. I must say it was a fun job. I never would have believed that the State of Illinois had so many activities and functions. There were the nicest people every place I went. If it was a university, it was the head of the university. The guy with the money is always a popular guy [laughs]. I

was so impressed with the University of Illinois, from Dr. Henry on down. I never saw people more dedicated to their jobs, and good at it. They were sometimes too good [laughs]. They didn't care about anyone else. But they were people you had to be proud of. Costello was excellent as a lawyer, Chuck Havens, and all the ones I had the pleasure of dealing with. There was Eastern Illinois. I took care of them, and also Western. Southern was a different experience all together. That was a political arena if I ever saw one.

FWB: This was under Delyte Morris right?

RP: Yes. He was like a separate government.

FWB: Yes. You had some dealings with him?

RP: Yes.

FWB: Like a separate government? How so?

RP: Well, they had a power structure in the state, which was out of Delyte Morris. Then there was the top man in the legislature for him.

FWB: That was Powell.

RP: Well, Powell was the one with the nine hundred thousand-dollar shoe box [laughs]. But there was another guy in the legislature. He was secretary of state too, Powell.

FWB: Right, at that point.

RP: But there was somebody that was a war hero, from Southern Illinois. I don't remember his name. It started with a "c," as I recall. He was a power broker for the south. He put a prison down there in Vienna [laughs]. But it was an experience, because for me,

it meant that I was doing a little travelling. I was out of the office, perhaps, fifty per cent of the time. I was driving to exotic places that I didn't even know existed before. I was in every mental institution, not as an inmate but as a visitor [RP and FWB laugh]. I've been to all of the prisons. That was really exciting, going to the prisons. I found the head of the Department of Public Works and Buildings was a man that wanted to be governor.

Which department had the prisons in it? It had the state police and the prisons. The director was the former warden at Stateville. He was a career person and was top notch. He had his own plane. His department had all of these frills. That other guy had five airplanes down there [laughs]. In the case of the Director of Public Safety for State of Illinois and the former warden at Stateville, he was a very nice person. He believed philosophically that discipline is what you need. You don't give prisoners latitude. In other words, when the courts order the incarceration of somebody, the public has the right to know that this person is being interned for whatever the period of time is.

So I was in all of the prisons. It was an experience because when we'd make an inspection, they'd send the plane for me, it would land at Meigs Field. I'd fly out of there. Then, I'd meet them at Capital Airport in Springfield. All of the prisons had a runway nearby so that you could land there. The director was old enough to be my father, but I respected him because he was good at his job. We'd walk through prisons. Not everybody is in cages all of the time. Most of the time they're not. And they'd stand at attention when we'd walk by. They'd take their hats off. It was a form of discipline. He said to me one day, "Dick, I love this job and I love the prisons. But I have no use for the fire marshall or state police. I'm not interested in those." And there was a whole bunch of other things [laughs]. He said, "I'm going to go to the governor."

Kerner was the governor. And there was another interesting personality. Kerner was just a handsome man and a fine speaker. I felt so bad when he was found guilty. I still think to this day that it was a frame up, or partly anyway. He would come around to all of the departments at Christmas time. He was all of the things that you thought a governor should be. He was a great speaker. I mean, he had it all. He had class. He just personified everything positive. Anyway, he went to the governor and told Kerner that he didn't want to be director anymore. He wanted the governor to create a new title just for prisons and he wanted charge of it [laughs]. I guess the governor was listening to him.

There was this guy who was the director of the prison on the river on the west side of the state. It's an old prison. It's not Stateville or Joliet. But it's the other one that's in that area. There's a lot of gang stuff there. Well, they had a riot in that prison. The man that was brought in was a very fine person. His philosophy on criminology and all of that kind of thing was different than the director. But they were both what you'd call class people. At the prison I can't think of the name, he had been a former FBI agent. He and I had a good relationship. Anyway, the director said to the governor, "I don't want so and so to take my place. I want only the prisons." You don't make demands like that. So the governor accepted his resignation of public safety and he put the other guy in as director. He didn't stay much longer. It's funny because I was friendly with both of them.

The man that took over continued to live at the prison he was at, even though he was now the director. I said, "Why don't you go to Springfield?" He said, "Dick, I've got a fourteen room apartment here, with all of the labor you could want. There's no way I could do this in Springfield!" [laughs] I don't know whatever happened to him. He later came to Chicago. He was with Cook County. He was the deputy sheriff or something for a while. But he was a professional and a very nice person. I'm sure he's deceased now. But, I'm trying to think of the next linkage. Everything was going fine with the public building commission.

They balanced the budget for whatever year it was, by putting all of these junk projects into the building commission. Most of it should not have been there. They were not the kind of things that should have been financed that way. You don't pay for groceries with long term bonds. But we proved ourselves. The next time around, we got the authority to review everything before the budget was passed by legislature. So we felt good that we were making progress. The guy that I mentioned before, the executive director Bill Ford, who is now deceased, was a pro. He was good. He lacked education, but he didn't lack intelligence and he didn't lack honesty. He was a good man.

Now comes the next battle with the University of Illinois. Under the code of the state statues, the University of Illinois was to go to the Public Building Commission. They also had some kind of quota on fees or a ceiling on fees. There was some kind of a table in the statues for which you were to use as a guideline to use for paying the fees. The contract for Skidmore, Owens, and Merrill was a very good contract, deviated. I had

no problem with SOM. I think they were one of the best outfits around [laughs]. I had a job to do too, you know. Anyway, Phase One for the University of Illinois ...

FWB: Here at UIC?

RP: Yes. Anyway, Phase One, I forgot who the successful bidder was. You probably have all of that. I think there were two contractors that got it. They both claimed they lost all kinds of money. But contractors always lose money. You wonder how they stay in business [laughs]! I never heard one say, "I made money!" So, they claimed they lost all kinds of money. Then came Phase Two. Under Phase One, the Building Authority wasn't really involved. They were too busy setting up a new operation. The university didn't want any intrusion anyway.

FWB: And they had already financed it through the 1960 bonds.

RP: I think so.

FWB: The first phase was.

RP: Yes. So Phase One ...
FWB: You didn't have anything to do with it, right?

RP: No. Then came Phase Two. I was there. I was the chief engineer. I knew these people. I figured I had a job to do. So we started talking about it. It was really obvious that the university liked the way it was. It didn't want any interference... [laughs] So I didn't even get invited to the bid opening. But I went anyway. My buddy Havens, I really considered him a friend. I had a great deal of respect for him. Without having the benefit of any of the numbers, I knew that they were going down the drain. I could read it in the faces of the people that did know. So, it was getting around lunchtime. Chuck came up. He said, "Dick, let's have lunch together." I said, "Okay. How bad is it?" He said, "What do you mean?" I said, "It's written on all the faces of the people that I know, if you take a

look in there." What it was was that the contractors felt that they lost money on Phase One. Any maybe they did, who knows? So they wanted to get it all repaid, Phase Two. Well, money was tight. And it's all done in the public. Everyone knows exactly how much money that you've got to work with. So Chuck said, "You and I have talked about this before. Do you still think that the Illinois Building Authority is exempt from the State Purchasing Act?" I said, "Yes." It's a legal question. I'm not a lawyer. But that was my opinion. I said, "Why do you say that?" He said, "Well, the only chance we've got of bringing this thing on budget is to redo the plans and come out with a single contract." There was a plan that they had in the state. This was at a time when the various plumbing and electrical unions all got together. They pushed something through the legislature requiring five prime contractors. There was heating and ventilating, general contracting, and so on. There was nobody in charge. There were five guys that were equal, but nobody was in charge. Well, you can't run an organization like that. So what happens is that you'll have to pay somebody else to be the general manager. So we went to lunch and we talked about it. I said, "Well, what will it take?" He said, "Well, we're up against time." The kids were in the pipeline. We couldn't fool around too long. It would probably be contested in the courts. We worked on the assumption that the State Purchasing Act didn't cover the Illinois Building authority. It would get challenged. It would have to go through the court system. The best that we could do was maybe ask the Supreme Court to take it and bypass the Appellate Court." He said, "Well, SOM will redo the plans so that they're set up in a fashion for a general contractor. The others will all be subs." We did it and got SOM. Now I figured the moment of truth would come. We were winning the battle. We got the Supreme Court to approve it. Now the real test would come. What are those guys going to bid? So I called the twelve largest contractors in the United States [laughs]. I'm a nobody but I'm not afraid to try. So I went to each of these guys on the telephone. I said that we were inviting them to Chicago to bid on the University of Illinois and all of this prestigious stuff.

FWB: This was for the second phase?

RP: Yes, it was for Phase Two.

FWB: In some ways, this was trying to get that first couple of contractors to reduce their bids.

RP: Yes. We wanted them to bid again.

FWB: Yes, they would bid again, but also to reduce it.

RP: So anyway, I'm inviting all of these big names from all over the country [laughs]. McHugh was going to go. There was a big one out in California. I forgot the name of it. McHugh was a joint venture, so they would be with a local contact, and they were in. I called some of the others. Most of them told me, "There's no way we'll go into Chicago. You don't go into big cities without local connections." That was a straightforward answer. Anyway, when the moment of truth came, we won the battle and lost the war. The Supreme Court held for us. I tried as best as I could. I figured that the only way we were going to win was if I got a half a dozen or more bidders. I didn't. I think there were only two bidders. It took every penny we had, minus seven million dollars for the building that we won [laughs]. What do you do? You do the best that you can. That was my last contact, I think.

FWB: So you weren't there on Phase Three building or the Phase Four that never really got built?

RP: No.

FWB: That's one of the things I notice and I see some of these old plans. For example, I see that building out there, the library. It was never finished. It's two-thirds completed. It was a design that everybody's been complaining about. And then there's the Art and Architecture building. It was built by ...

RP: Then they took down that other thing. What's that thing called they walk on?

FWB: The walkways.

RP: Yes.

FWB: Yes, they took that down, too.

RP: I'm not an architect. I don't even claim to have any skills that way. I know what I like and what I don't like. I don't think it's a bad thing. Who was the top guy for S.O.M at that time?

FWB: Netsch?

RP: Yes, it was Netsch. He was a nice guy. Personally, I dealt with him when he took over the park district.

FWB: Oh, the park. He was with Friends of the Parks?

RP: No, he was the president of the Chicago Park District. And his wife had an elected office in Illinois. She ran for governor, too. I think it was. Yes, when you go back over forty to fifty years it's amazing how many people fall into it. I think the university has done a good job. I think they've done a remarkably good job of improving their reputation in a short amount of time. Usually it takes it takes a long time for an institution. Their accounting, as far back as ten years ago, was thought to be one of the better programs. I think their architecture is pretty good. I'm personally proud that I had some minor association with the university during that period. I never had the same warm feelings at IIT that I had here. IIT is a strange organization.

FWB: Why is that? I don't know too much about IIT.

RP: Well, IIT goes back to 1896. It was Armour Technical and Lewis Institute. In 1940, they merged to form IIT. They grew up with the same kind of decision. What do you do

when you've got a slum around you? Do you run away or do you fight the battle? They fought the battle. I went there for four years from 1948 to 1952. So I was there during the height of the slums. As far as the faculty, it's a very conservative school. They won't deviate at all. In fact, they're so inflexible some times that it's a real pain in the neck. I taught three semesters of night school there. I really enjoyed it, it was fun. The first semester I had seven students. These kids were different than the ones I went to school with. These kids would tell you to go fly a kite. There was no respect. You had to earn respect. You didn't get it just because you had a title. Environmental Engineering was my subject. I had graduate students and undergraduate students. I really enjoyed it. But for six hundred dollars a semester, it just wasn't worth it, blowing up two nights a week. Even though I enjoyed it, it just wasn't worth it.

I kind of goofed up on one of the things I wanted to do. I wanted to get out of where I was at, after I finished my job, financing all of those water projects. Then I was with Speer Financial. I thought it was a noble cause. What I wanted to do was as an engineer, to teach finance to the engineers. They don't know what the hell is going on. They know how to design things but they don't know how to get the money. And financial people don't know what the other guy does. So what I thought would be nice was that I could be a bridge because I had been active in both roles. I thought, "You know, I could teach at U of I and IIT, but probably not at the University of Chicago because they don't have an engineering school, or Northwestern." I figured that I'd probably go to Northwestern because I knew the people there better. And Northwestern is convenient because I live in Edgebrook. Evanston is not too far away. Where do you live right now?

FWB: I live in Oak Park.

RP: That's right. Oak Park is a nice place. But I goofed on something, about the time I was pulling out. Tom Kapsalis had left and he was busy on something. He had been a commissioner of aviation and had been ousted when Washington came in. He and another guy had started a business. He asked if I'd give him a hand. So I worked with him a little bit. And in the process, I didn't do what I was going to do, or thought what I

was planning to do. Then I look back and thought that maybe it was too late, because you can get rusty in a hurry. But what I enjoyed so much when I was teaching was the fact that I never had a teaching course. I told them from day one, "These are the rules of the game, guys. You're here because you want to be here, not because you have to be here. I'm not a professional teacher. But I'm going to teach you things that you're not going to get from these characters that have Ph. D.'s that have never had a practical day in their life. I'm going to tell you about the real world. The textbook is prescribed by the department, not by me. You're responsible cover to cover on the textbook. The lectures will not have anything to do with it. Your homework will key into that. I'm going to do what I think is the most valuable thing I can do for you. I'm going to tell you about the real world out there. So, when you get out there, you'll be better prepared. If you don't like my rules, then you don't stay here." Seven to forty-seven would indicate that I was right at least on part of it. As I look back on it, I think it would have been fun to stay involved with the university. I think we finished the U of I thing as best as I could do it, unless you have questions on any of this.

FWB: I think we covered most of the U of I material. I see you've brought some notes.

RP: Yes. I'm wondering if there's anything I left out of here [he looks over his notes]. Okay, we've covered the Real Estate Corporation's two reports. We did Phase One, Phase Two, Henry, Havens, and Costello. General Harvester still hasn't come to me. Oh, the Underground Railroad, have you ever heard someone talk about that? That would take considerable time. Well, there's the railroad, for example. This won't take long. In 1959, I was on the planning department. The paper said that the Chicago Underground Railroad had gone bankrupt and had ceased operation already.

FWB: This was the Underground Railroad from ...

RP: No, this is not the ones from when the slaves came.

FWB: No, at Kinzie Street, they punched a hole through it and flooded half of downtown.

RP: Yes. So Bach called me. He said, “Have you ever been down in the tunnels?” I said, “No.” He said, “You’ve read the papers, haven’t you?” I said, “Yes.” He said, “Go down and look at the tunnels and tell me what you think.” That was flattering. I was lucky with the things that I’ve told you. I was a nobody. But by knowing these people, I became a somebody. So it gives you power. I guess we all want power [laughs].

RP and FWB: Recognition.

RP: So I went down there. It was really something to see. It was fifty-seven miles of tunnel. It was about forty feet down below the surface. It was five foot ten inches wide with an arch ceiling. It was about seven foot two inches [laughs]. There were little signs at the intersections because they were usually underneath the centerlines of the streets.

FWB: So they were right underneath the streets?

RP: They were forty feet down.
FWB: Okay, so they were forty feet down below. They weren’t under the buildings. They weren’t under the blocks. They were under the streets.

RP: No. They had connections to the buildings but they were in the public way. Under the terms of the bankruptcy, the city was taking over jurisdiction and ownership of the tunnels.

FWB: What do you do with them?

RP: So, after I got through looking at them, I talked to Bach. I said, “Well, they’re in great shape. It’s not reinforced concrete. It’s regular concrete, twelve inches. But it’s cured the best possible way. It’s really good. But the dimensions are such that I don’t know what you could use it for. The only thing I can think of is for utilities. I mean telephone, electric, and other things to go in there, utility corridors. It will save you from

cutting up streets." And that's essentially what happened. It hasn't been used for anything else. It's funny because I knew about the tunnels. I thought I knew a lot about it. Years after I left the city, I was shaving one morning. I think it was the beginning of 1992 or something like that. They said, "The city reports that they sent out a crew. They're getting water in Marshall Fields basement and water in city hall [laughs] And they think it's a water main leak." Who are these idiots? [FWB laughs] There's no water main that connects these things. It wasn't raining outside. There's only one place the water could come from. That's the tunnel system. But I didn't think about the fact that there are eight crossings.

FWB: Rivers.

RP: Yes rivers, and every one of them were vulnerable as it turned out. It was a debacle. The city didn't handle it very well. It came at a time when they were restructuring. They abolished the Department of Public Works. The acting commissioner of the new department didn't know anything about sewers. He was a good man, but a traffic man. That was an emergency thing. Public works should have gone in there with their own crews and fixed that thing. If you think about it, if that seal blew, they were lucky that they got as much time. They must've gotten two or three months. If that thing blew, you'd fill everything up. You'd drain the Chicago River.

The other thing that I've been lucky with and I've been proud of is getting involved with the court actions. We divert thirty two hundred cubic feet of water per second out of that lake. This was the first challenge. It really goes back to Father Marquette and Louis Joliet in 1673, the Great Portage, and the dream. There was the diary that said, "Someday there will be a canal here to eliminate the portage." They had all these things come to fruition. That was one of the things that I was very proud of that I think was worth while. There's eight Great Lake States. Six of them had been involved in the actions against Illinois Sanitary District in the City of Chicago. While I was with the city in planning, we had a situation come up. They were challenging the right of the City of Chicago and the State of Illinois to take water out of the lake. To take water from one watershed and put it in another is contrary to common law. This issue had been in the

courts more than it had been out of the courts. From 1900 on, it had been a court issue. One year, I was on the Illinois State Water Resources Commission. We wanted the states to be good neighbors and help us solve a problem that would impact them, too. So, we went to the Attorney General of Illinois. The guy later went to prison [laughs]. I can't remember his name. You know who I'm talking about? He was a powerhouse. He was very independent. He was also Republican. But he spoke on behalf on the man that was Democrat who was running for governor. The one that lost made it possible for ...

Let's see. Dan Walker was lucky. He ran against a good man. The circumstances were right. His campaign issues were that he was going to finger Daley and all that. And he did. He fought when Daley was wrong. They blew the whole cross-town because of this. It was two and a half million dollars and nothing to show for it. Then Thompson got in it. Daley wanted, what was his name? He was secretary of state and was democrat. He was a nice guy.

FWB: He was after Powell?

RP: Yes, he was after Powell. It was in July and I had an appointment to see Mayor Daley at noon. A week or so before that I got a phone call from Lee Phillips. She was the woman that had a television program. She called me and said, "Dick, I'd like to have my show at different locations. I'd like to have one at a crib. Could we do that?" I said, "Sure." She said, "Well, what do I have to do? It'll be such and such a date. We'll take the tug. You know that way of transportation?" I said, "Yes." She said, "Could you be there?" I said, "Well, in what regard?" She said, "Well, just to be there." I said, "Well, who's your guest?" She said who it was, the guy who was going to be running." The mayor was trying to persuade him to run for governor.

FWB: Oh, you mean Howlett.

RP: Yes, it was Mike Howlett. So I said, "Well you know, that's his show." She said, "Well, be here just in case I need you." I said, "Okay." So I went down there. Mike is the nicest guy in the world. We took off. The first segment, we took pictures of the Chicago

shot. Lee Phillips and Mike are looking at it. After the first two or three she said, “Dick can you come in on the next?” I said, “Sure, whatever you want.” She made the fatal mistake of talking about the water system. She said, “Tell us about this.” Now I had a problem. I was monopolizing the whole damn thing and I didn’t want to do this [laughs]. What could I do? So we got out there. I said, “Mike, I’m awfully sorry. This is not my doing.” He said, “I know that.” So I made it a point. She asked about something else [laughs]. I said, “Wait a minute. This man is running for office. He’s also the Secretary of State. He’s got some portraits, too. He’s got this competition with all of the kids for the license plates. Mike, why don’t you tell us about it?” So we get to the crib and look around. Then I had to get back for my twelve o’clock with Daley. I didn’t know what it was about. I wasn’t going to get back on the tug. So I called for a fireboat, because they’re fast. Mike said, “Dick, can I go back with you?” I said, “Sure.” Lee said that she was in no big hurry and said she’d come back. He said to run the police boat back.

We were talking about his running for governor now. He said, “Well, the mayor is really pushing me. But I don’t want to. I don’t look like a governor. I look like a secretary of state.” [laughs] He said, “But he’s really pushing me hard.” He started asking about my situation. I said, “Well, I'm still acting commissioner.” For almost two years, he had almost all of the cabinet heads were acting. To this day, I can’t understand why he did that.

So I got back. I went up to see Daley. He told me that he was appointing me commissioner. He told me that the picture taking and the ceremony would be on such and such a date. I had a mother, father, wife, and three sons. You should have your family there, right? My dad is an extremely outspoken guy. I was debating whether to have him there or not. He and Daley were the same age. So, I took the chance and went down there. Daley was just as nice as he could be. He was really nice to my mother and the kids, taking the pictures and all. Then, after all of the ceremonial stuff is over with, he went up to my dad. He said, “Mr. Pavia, what do you do for a living?” My dad said, “Well, I’m retired now.” He said, “Well, what were you?” He said, “Well, I was an engineer for Commonwealth Edison.” So, Daley put his arm around my dad and the two of them walk off. Talk about how lousy it is to get old [laughs]!

So afterwards, we took the family out to lunch. I said, "Well mom, what did you think of the mayor?" She said, "Oh, he's charming, his dancing blue eyes. He's so friendly," and so on. I thought, "Well, he's not always that friendly [RP and FWB laugh]. I turned to my dad and said, "Well dad, what did you think of him?" He said, "Well, I still don't agree with his politics. But he sure is a good family man [RP and FWB laugh]. My dad took the picture. He made, God there must've been fifty of them. They're all over the country [laughs].

But it was a fun period. Daley was just an interesting person. I think I told you before. A couple of times, without good reason, he just tore into me. He was mad at somebody else. I just happen to be next in line to walk in [laughs]. And I walked out on him. I figured, "I don't need this kind of crap." Then you'd go through this thing where he'd call you in. He'd not say he was sorry. But it was his own way. You had to learn about it. With Daley, every relationship he had was a little bit different. He saw different things in different people. He was loyal to a fault. There were people that did things that were not smart. I mean dumb things. In many cases, he sacrificed some of his own points to be supportive and loyal. To this day, the one guy that could write a book that would be worth reading is the one that is the press secretary.

FWB: You mean Earl Bush?

RP: [Nods] Earl Bush. Earl said he would never write a book, and he's been good to his word. Earl was close enough on some of these things to know the whole story and was pretty close to him. And there weren't too many people that close. Daley didn't want it. He had the ability to see you for what you were and use you. I don't mean misuse you.

When you're in the department, you're supposed to be politically conscious, right? One time I went in there. I think I had four million dollars on Accounts Receivable on sewers. It was this. In 1947, the city passed a code saying that it couldn't allow connections to city sewers by the suburbs. The most important thing you have for annexation is water and sewer. That's your bread and butter. Then, I think they changed it later. I think it was thirty dollars a year for sewer connection. Well, here's what was

happening in all of these areas like Niles and places like that. What are some of the other ones there?

FWB: There was Morton Grove, up in the north suburbs.

RP: [Nods] There were quite a few areas that were adjacent to the city. They needed city service in a sense.

FWB: The sewers.

RP: The city would build it under the act. But then, as they became incorporated, they were told by their mayors, "Don't pay those bills. They have no right to tax you." And that's true. So I was the poor guy who was the Commissioner of Water and Sewer that's worried about four million bucks [laughs]. So I figured, What I'd do is if there was a service fee rendered, the contract was between the City of Chicago and Niles. You don't go to the individual. So I talked to Daley one day. I said, "Mayor, nobody has raised the point yet. But we'd better do it, because one day it will come back to haunt us. I'm going to work with the Law Department. We'll avoid outstanding debts. But we'll have contracts and everything." He wasn't particularly interested in what I was telling him [laughs].

Every emergency I had during that period, I always reported it right away. I always waited for him to show up, and he never showed up [laughs]. To this day, I don't know if he didn't care, which I don't think was the case, or if he figured I knew what I was doing. And that's kind of flattering. One day I had a problem with the water tower. At the city council meeting, Tate came in and is looking for him. He said, "Two men are having coffee at Walgreen's Drug Store." There was a forty-mile an hour wind out of the west. The module at the top of the water tower was moving. I had just taken the kids up there a week earlier. I had the plans out. It was a hundred and eighty five feet to the top. I knew all of the particulars. There was nothing in it. It was closed. I was looking at the plans. It looked to me like the iron bar is going to go through the thing, the lightning rod. Then the copper is going to go over that. If that's the way it is, it can't all come down.

But how can I be sure? If that thing comes down, it's going to hit a bus on Michigan and kill people.

So I got on the phone and called Quinn, the Fire Commissioner. I said, "Bob, how high is the highest snorkel?" He said, "One hundred and eighty feet." I said, "How high is the highest hook and ladder?" He said, "One hundred and forty feet." He said, "Why are you asking me these questions?" I said, "It's because I've got a problem." He said, "What's your problem?" I told him. He said, "I'll take care of it." I said, "No, it's not the fire wall. You're going through that god damned roof!" [laughs] It was a cherished landmark in Chicago, no way. So I said, "I need your helicopter." He said, "What are you going to do with a helicopter?" I said, "I'm going to have the helicopter come in low and see if he can snag that. If he can drop a grappling hook or something, snag the top, cinch it down, at least it won't come down. He said, "You're nuts. We'll go on over there, you bring a chopper in close. We've got the Hancock Building." [RP and FWB laugh] They brought the thing and couldn't get close enough. There was too much turbulence.

So I figured, "What am I going to do?" I really didn't think that thing was going to come down. But could you take a chance, if you're a public official? I don't think you can. So I brought in a private outfit. We closed Michigan Avenue at three o'clock on a Friday. I notified the mayor's office. He wasn't there. I told the secretary, "Tell the mayor I'm doing this [laughs]. I feel that I have to do it. I'll take responsibility." That night at nine fifteen the ironworkers got up there. It was like I suspected. It wouldn't come down. But, we took care of it and fixed it up.

There was another time. My wife and I were at a wake on the south side. We stopped off at a friend's who worked at the department. He was out hunting. We knew his wife real well. So we were having coffee. We were getting ready to leave. The Leak Desk called. There was water all over the place at sixty-eighth, sixty-ninth, and South Shore Drive. This was Hyde Park. Three pumping stations blew. What do I do? I've got my own car and not a city car. I'm on the wrong side of everything [laughs]. So I took my wife and I said, "Come on, you're going with me, honey." So we cut across the city and got there. All of that water, it was like the lake continued. So, we shut the thing down and we were up all night. It was funny. It was the humor in all of this stuff. I evacuated three buildings and had people out on the street. I notified the mayor's office. I told him, "I got

the Building Commissioner coming out. I've got the Commissioner of Streets and Sanitation. We're moving the vehicles that are in the way. It looks like a bombing. If you want to know anything, you can call me here." I never saw him. It was on television all of that weekend. And I've got to believe that Daley just figured in some respects I was a professional and I wasn't there because of a political connection. So I knew what I was supposed to do. That was fun. But I think those were the happiest years of my life.

FWB: So how did that political versus professional work, as you perceive it, in Daley's mind, the differences between them?

RP: Richard J. or Richard M?

FWB: Yes, Richard J.

RP: Well, what I think it was, is that Daley had a philosophy that perhaps some people couldn't understand. Kennelly was a do gooder. Kennelly was an honest man. They wanted a puppet. So they put him in there. He used himself for doing that. But he brought into civil servants. Some were good and some were not. There were mistakes made. His cabinet, by and large, was good.

FWB: You mean Kennelly's?

RP: Yes. Now at the time of the election, the Democratic Party had problems. Daley was literally running against the administration. Some of the department heads, Gardena was one of them, felt that the proper thing to do was to put in a letter of resignation. In other words, they were appointed by Kennelly. They recognized that you served at the pleasure of the chief executive. Therefore, they were resigning. He could've accepted it, if he wanted, or not accept it. Gardena sent them a letter after Daley came in. The Commissioner of Public Works, George Dement, said, "To heck with it. If they want my resignation, they can ask for it. I'm not going to give them a letter." Out of the whole cabinet, which were all people that came in under Kennelly, only two people were

changed. One was Bob Quinn. He was a personal Daley friend and was appointed Fire Commissioner. He had a great war record and he was a character [laughs]. But he was not a bad fireman. He was good for the department, in some respects. But he was a terrible manager. The other one was James Please.

All the others, Ira Bach and the others, were all holdovers. Daley's thinking, well, I don't know if he really did this. But I guess that Daley looked at it this way. "These guys belong to the Democratic Party. They were loyal to Kennelly. They'll be loyal to me." And that's exactly what he did, and they were.

I think that's partly why he was so successful. Plus there was the fact that he didn't do a lot of talking [laughs]. It was always a secret at first. You never knew what the heck was up. And I think that there's some advantages to that. Bush, for example, does too much talking. Daley was a mystery man. Anybody said that they knew Richard J. Daley really well was lying, at least to themselves. He had confidants. But it was probably Sis, and probably very few others. He looked at everybody else as a specialist. "You can be my advisor in this specialty area, but not across the board."

He had humor, too. I got an invitation from the Governor of Tokyo. The Japanese were having an international forum in Tokyo on environment. I got this letter, and I was flattered [laughs]. They were paying all your way to go to there. They were inviting two from New York, two from Chicago, and two from London. So, I had a little help from my friend, Milt Pikarski. Milt was the Commissioner of Public Works. Milt didn't want to go. He said, "You should go." So I went to see the mayor. He said, "Tell me about it." So I told him about it. He said, "What's this going to cost?" I said, "Nothing. They're paying the way." He said, "Well, you can go. What's in it for Chicago?" I said, "It'll be good for publicity and we'll learn things, too." He said, "Okay, you go, but you take your wife, too." Of course, the letter said you couldn't bring your wife. There was no program for them [laughs]. My wife still hasn't forgiven me [laughs]. But, I got to meet the Governor of Tokyo, and all of these dignitaries in Japan. They couldn't have treated us nicer. There's no way we could treat anybody as graciously as they treated us. We have different cultures.

I got another one, too. The World Health Organization had a meeting in London. They were inviting fourteen cities of the world to participate. I went to see the mayor. He

used the same ammunition. “You take your wife!” I said, “Okay mayor.” I did, I took her. I bought him some of those jewelry on your sleeves.

FWB: You mean buttons?

RP: No, the ones that you have on your shirtsleeves.

FWB: Oh, you mean cuff links.

RP: Yes, cuff links. I brought him a set of cuff links back from Japan. He graciously accepted it and then returned it to me [laughs]. He’s just one of those guys. He was a very interesting person. I mean that. The Governor of Tokyo, who couldn’t speak a word of English, said through his translator, “Tell Mayor Daley we’d like him to come here some time,” and all that stuff. He was one of the best known Americans.

FWB: He hardly ever left Chicago.

RP: It was kind of an interesting thing about him. If there ever was an opportunity to do something that might’ve been very useful, it would’ve been the consolidation of city and county. I think the city has generally been better run than the county. I think it would have been difficult. You have DuPage County, which is virtually all Republican. At one time, they had twenty-six members of the county board, without a single Democrat. Chicago has never been that bad. We've been down to one alderman [RP and FWB laugh]. But I always thought that a lot of things could happen and everything would be escalated up to county level. We could improve a lot of things because the borders wouldn't be as meaningful. Well, look at Oak Park, for example. In Oak Park, when the expressway went through, they fought it every step of the way. That’s why it’s so snugged in there.

FWB: It’s so narrow, right.

RP: It only has three exits. It would have been better had they done it a little differently. Now admittedly, it's a political thing to get rid of property like that. So you have to be careful. But it could have been handled better. Now, when it came time to open the Eisenhower, the mayor of Oak Park was there to take the bows [laughs], even though they fought it all the way. They're fighting the expansion of O'Hare, and they're wrong. O'Hare was there before most of the people. In a democracy, you've got to look at things for the common good, the larger group. I think they'd be well advised to see if they couldn't improve that situation they're in and do the job right. Well, it's 12:23.

FWB: Oh, it's 12:23 already. Yes, we've been talking for over two hours.

RP: You're a very good listener [laughs]. I have to congratulate you.

END OF INTERVIEW