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## **Interview with Peter Thompson**

**11 June 2002**

Present: Peter Thompson, Dr. Robert V. Remini, and Dr. Fred W. Beuttler  
Location: UIC Historian's Office, 628 UH, 601 South Morgan, Chicago, IL.

Dr. Fred W. Beuttler: Could you write your name and spell it? One is to write your name and one is to separate it. I'll just sign that one. That one is your copy, so you can contact us. I'll give you my card.

Dr. Robert V. Remini: Very good. So why don't we begin by identifying the fact that this is June 11, 2002. We're here in the office of the UIC Historian. We're interviewing Peter Thompson, who is the grandson of Mayor Richard J. Daley. I'm Robert Remini, and Fred Beuttler is here with me. To begin, thank you very much for doing this, giving us the time, and your knowledge. I'd like to begin by trying to sort out all of the members of your family, if I could (PT laughs), starting with Richard J. Daley and Eleanor Guilfoyle Daley. They had seven children. The first is your mother, Patricia. And then it's Richard. No?

Peter Thompson: No. They had seven children, three girls and four boys. And they were born in that order. So, my mother is the oldest. Mary Carol is the second. Eleanor was third. And then the boys started.

RVR: And that's Richard?

PT: There's Richard, Michael, John, and Bill.

RVR: Bill is the youngest?

PT: Billy is the baby, yes.

RVR: I thought John was!

PT: No. Bill lost his hair first, too (PT, RVR, and FWB laugh).

RVR: Put that down (PT and RVR laugh)! Great, that is very helpful. Now, your mother had three children. Mary Carol has?

PT: She has four children.

RVR: They're all Vanecko?

PT: They're all Vaneckos. There's Robert, Mark, R. J. Richard Joseph, and Mary Claire.

RVR: Robert is the only one who volunteered to come and see us.

PT: Robert is the oldest of all the grandchildren as well.

RVR: Yes, he told me that. That's right. Does Michael have children? Yes, he told me he has a daughter.

PT: Yes. So the way the family shakes out, my mom had three. There's Courtney, Patrick, and I. Mary Carol had four, whom I just mentioned to you. Ellie was never married. Then Rich had four children. Kevin passed away. So he has Nora, Patrick, and Lallie still living. Michael has four girls. There's Beth, Ann, Katie, and Carolyn.

RVR: Right. Carolyn is the one who is graduating from Georgetown, I understand.

PT: Correct. All four of them graduated from Georgetown.

RVR: Oh yes? My granddaughter is at Georgetown.

PT: Oh great!

RVR: She's going to be a junior.

PT: John has three children. They are John, Michael, and Christine. Then Bill has four children. One of them passed away, which was Richard J. Daley II. He has Billy, Lauren, and Maura.

RVR: Wow. And you know them all, and in the order?

PT: The reason that I was late is because I was with Billy. We're wonderfully close cousins. That's a tribute to my grandparents.

RVR: You're a wonderfully close family.

PT: We're very lucky that way.

RVR: You all get together for big events like, well, even for Memorial Day.

PT: Yes, every June.

RVR: You go out to Michigan?

PT: We go to Michigan, which was an important thing to my grandfather. My mom always repeats what he said. He used to say about having a summer home, "If you want to keep your family close as they grow up in age, have a summer home. It's a destination for everyone to come and spend time."

RVR: You know, he was an extremely wise man.

PT: Stunningly (laughs).

RVR: And he's never been given credit for it, I don't think.

PT: You right.

RVR: And this is why we want to have this in our library, for scholars to really begin to evaluate the great contribution that he made. But I don't have to go into all of that. Well, what's your earliest recollection of your grandfather? I think it might be well to tell again how you....

PT: We were very fortunate. My sister, brother, and myself were very lucky in the amount of time we got to spend with my grandmother and grandfather. Specifically, that was due in some degree to the fact that my parents divorced when we were very young. I was four. My sister was five. My brother was three. Prior to them being divorced, we lived on the north side with my mother and father. Post divorce, we moved back to our neighborhood, to Bridgeport. We lived directly across the street from my grandparents. Then, we lived with my grandparents for a period of time. Then, we spent the bulk of our lives until post-college years immediately next door to my grandmother and grandfather. My Aunt Ellie lived there at the time. My Uncle John, who was a bachelor, lived there at the time as well (RVR laughs). We lived next door to them. We were extremely close that way. And as I mentioned to you a while ago, we were lucky enough to literally spend every day of the week at breakfast time with them. This was because my mother was a public school teacher. She would have to go off to school early. We went to school down the street. And there was that little bit of a time gap. So we'd all leave the house at the same time and walk ten feet next door (RVR laughs). We'd sit in my grandparents' house and have breakfast with my grandmother and grandfather. We'd walk my grandfather out to the car when he went to work. Then we'd come back in and finish breakfast with my grandmother, where she'd quiz us on school items. She'd have us practice penmanship over and over and over again! My grandmother was a wonderful educator herself.

RVR: I gather so. Your mother said in her speech that your grandfather was very anxious for them to use the Readers Digest Vocabulary List for them to....

PM: To quiz them over and over again. They all sat around the dinner table together. They still talk about it with great memories. That was the fact that my grandfather was able to come home on an incredibly regular basis, almost every night, dinner with his family. So he'd come home after work, eat dinner with his family, then go off to a speech or whatever it was he had to do. But he always kind of had that time in the middle. Then, as the children got older, he'd take one or two of them with him to whatever kind of an event he had to go to. It could be an interesting speaker or something of significance. So he really was able to develop this stunningly incredible life of family man and politician, governmental official at the same time, which was unique.

RVR: Was there a down side for you, personally, in being the grandson of the Mayor of Chicago that you were aware of (laughs)?

PT: Certainly not that I was aware of (laughs)! We have very strong and fond memories of my grandfather. One of the wonderful things about my grandfather was the fact that he lived in this neighborhood and spent his entire life here. So he had many friends. And many of their grandchildren were our friends. They were lifelong family friends that treated him no different than anybody else on the block.

RVR: You know, he said at one time that he owed everything he had to his family, his community in Bridgeport, and to Chicago. And he really meant that. Now I'd think the kids at school would be....

PT: No, absolutely not.

RVR: They'd give you a hard time.

PT: No. I think maybe there was a....

RVR: Jealousy?

PT: No, I would not say jealousy at all, frankly. I would say that there was maybe a general expectation of you, the thought of the expectation that you would elevate to something of great significance as well as a result of your heritage. I don't think that was a negative. It was a motivator in a lot of ways.

RVR: No, it was a very positive thing, unless it put too much pressure on you.

PT: It did.

RVR: It did. Well then, getting back to your grandfather and your memories of him, are there any particular incidences?

PT: There are some very specific fond memories. I have a great fond memory of my grandfather taking me to the fights, to boxing matches, as a young child. We were living with my grandparents at the time. I was deemed old enough to go (RVR laughs). My brother, who was a year younger, was not. My sister, who was a year older, had no interest (RVR laughs). I can remember my grandpa sneaking me out of the house, kind of telling my brother that we were going off to the store. We walked out the front door. The next thing I knew, I was in a little sport coat in his car on the way to the fights. I remember seeing live boxing for the first time with him. I was either at my grandmother's house or at somebody else's house about ten years ago. Somebody gave me a picture of that exact night of that fight. I went with my Uncle John, who was still living at home and not married yet, my grandfather, and some of my grandfather's friends. I have a great photograph of me going to the fights. It was wonderful.

I think one of the most fun memories of my grandpa was again during that period when we were sort of staying with them. It was Christmas time. So we had Christmas in my grandparents' house. My brother and I were sleeping in sleeping bags in one of the bedrooms. My sister was nearby. Clearly, my grandfather was very excited to have little kids in house. Once again, this would have been about, I'd say maybe 1973 or 1974. It must have been between midnight to two o'clock in the morning. He had just finished working and putting things together in the basement. He just couldn't contain himself. So

he came and woke us up (PT, RVR, and FWB laugh)! He had to tell us that Santa Clause had come into the basement. We went downstairs, literally in our pajamas, at two o'clock in the morning (RVR laughs). It was the most wonderful Christmas. We had bicycles and wonderful fun things. We were able to ride our bicycles up and down the length of his basement. I can remember him beaming. He was so happy. Clearly, to some degree, he might have perceived it to be a harder time for us because of this change in our lives.

RVR: Did he buy the presents too, or some of them?

PT: Oh sure, he and my mom kind of worked together.

RVR: And your grandmother, too.

PT: And my grandma, of course. It wasn't elaborate. But it was just the fact that he was so excited.

RVR: He was like a kid himself.

PT: I can remember him being so happy. There are other great memories of him. There was taking us to meet President Ford. That's a very distinct memory. We came home from Michigan one summer and had the chance to meet and speak with President Ford. There was another time. I think it must've been in the fall before he passed away. Jimmy Carter was the presidential nominee. Again, this is another picture I have in my office. My grandfather had him come to town in October and called a Columbus Day Parade. "We're going to have a Columbus Day Parade because our candidate is here (RVR laughs)." And it was huge! I mean, if you look at this picture, there were tens of thousands of people honoring the Italian Americans in Chicago. And most importantly, we had the presidential candidate and his wife. They brought their daughter Amy. My sister, my brother, and myself were with my grandpa. We spent the day, the entire weekend basically, with Amy Carter, as her kind of playmate. "You bring your daughter and I'll bring my grandchildren." Again it was very family like. I could see my

grandfather saying, "Yes, you've got to get out of town. It's a weekend. It's a hard thing. Bring your wife. Bring your daughter. We'll have a fun time with my grandchildren," just as you'd say to anyone of your friends. So that was a real distinct memory. And there was that day-to-day, away from that public life stuff.

RVR: Yes. He had a real family life. He was devoted to them.

PT: Well, when we all go up to Michigan, all of our homes are kind of across the street from each other. We're all kind of within a stone's throw.

RVR: Is that Benton Harbor?

PT: That's Grand Beach. He was a very early riser.

RVR: Oh, we have something in common (laughs).

PT: Yes. Well, I can remember living with them and also spending many nights there. We loved to sleep over at my grandparents, even if it was, again, ten feet away. It seemed like you were going across country. He'd be hitting the speed bag every morning. You could hear him doing it downstairs and really working out. In Michigan, he was a particularly early riser. He loved to go to the bakeries. There were great bakers and Swedish bakeries around. He'd get bags of donuts and go to every one of his children's houses. He sang the same song and rang the doorbell at seven o'clock in the morning. He'd sing to us, "Lazy bones, sleeping in the sun. You've got to get up and get your day's work done." He'd leave the donuts inside the door (RVR laughs). We'd come down and have donut holes. That was his thing, these little donut holes. These are just wonderful family memories. He'd take us fishing almost every other weekend. He'd take us fishing for bass. There was a little stock pond nearby. We'd catch twenty fish. Then he'd bring us back to his home and teach us how to clean fish. I distinctly remember my grandpa teaching us how to cut, clean, and scale. He was very fond of fishing and very much loved taking his grandchildren fishing for hours.

RVR: Was he a good fisherman?

PT: He was a wonderful fisherman. He loved his time in Michigan. He loved to go to Florida and bone fish.

RVR: Was that one of his great recreational hobbies?

PT: I would say yes. It was a hobby that he enjoyed. But it was also of great interest to him that other people enjoyed it. He had big fishing derbies. There were big competitions around Chicago, Mayor Daley's Fishing Derby. They had them in all of the lagoons in the different park districts. Then they started doing it at McCormick Place, where they just made a big tank. They threw a bunch of fish in there and every child had a chance to catch a fish. It was a fun thing.

RVR: Yes, that's great. You don't hear these things about him.

PT: No.

RVR: We knew that he was attached to his family. But these are the details that give it substance.

PT: Yes.

RVR: I wanted to ask you if you were at a dinner with him, normally, in his home in Bridgeport. Did you say grace before meals?

PT: Oh, of course, always.

RVR: And he did go to mass every day?

PT: Every day.

RVR: Every day. Did he receive communion every day?

PT: Yes.

RVR: And did his wife, Eleanor, go too?

PT: My grandmother went very frequently. Often he would go to mass downtown though, at St. Peter's, on his way to work.

RVR: Then after grace, would he conduct a kind of inquiry? You know, "What have you learned today?" Or, "What have you been doing in school?" Just what did he do?

PT: I can remember his kind of interactions with us at those ages. Again, we were very young. I was eight years old when my grandfather passed away. He was very playful and very silly. My grandmother was the one who was probably more likely to be having us test our penmanship, spelling, and things like that. But my grandfather was very interested in our lives and what we were doing and learning.

RVR: It wasn't like the Joe Kennedy discussion of politics.

PT: Oh, politics was never a subject at all. Politics wasn't, by any means.

RVR: He wasn't trying to raise you to become politicians?

PT: Absolutely not.

RVR: Or raised you to become president of the United States the way Joe Kennedy did?

PT: Oh no.

RVR: He was a different kind of Irish Catholic.

PT: Yes. My grandfather was much more interested in us just excelling at whatever we wanted to do. Just pick our own field and be the best.

RVR: Did he take you to his office?

PT: Yes.

RVR: Did he take you to the council chambers to watch a council meeting?

PT: Yes. It wasn't kind of a regular thing. We were not hanging around city hall, by any stretch. It was more of when there was something of significance going on or an award. Certainly, there were inaugurations that took place during our lifetime. Those were big things for our family to go to. There often were grand celebrations of birthdays of Chicago, the Sears Tower, and things like that. The way the grandchildren were born was like this. Bobby and Mark Vanecko are the two oldest. Then there's the three of us, my sister Courtney, myself, and Patrick. We're all very close in age. Then there's a gap between Patrick and the next grandchild, Billy. That gap was about four years. So they were very young. If you think of my brother Patrick being six or seven when my grandfather passed away, the others were kind of two or three. My grandfather's favorite thing was to take the five of us to the tree lighting ceremony every year downtown. It was a big deal, which my Uncle Rich has made it a big deal again in recent years. We all got switches, thumb buttons. It was one, two, three, go! We got to press them and turn the light on. We learned in later years that there were certain ones that were connected (RVR laughs). There was a guy with a lever somewhere out of sight. But we thought we lit the tree every year (RVR laughs). We have wonderful pictures again, of him being so overjoyed that we were doing that. So these were the type of public events that we would go to. Again, they were more family oriented. This was interesting to the children. They could learn something from this, enjoy it, and have fun. He was a very playful guy.

RVR: Right. Did you ever feel inspired by his life to want to imitate it in any way?

PT: Yes. I remain so. I don't mean imitate it in the literal sense. But I mean imitate it in the sense of recognizing the aspects of public service, public commitments, and civic responsibility. No matter what field you're in, it's still kind of a great calling and noble endeavor. Every day I really do think of him and what he did for the city. I don't think of it in a negative kind of pressure way but in an obligatory way. It's to kind of continue to advance in any way I can. Those were some of the things he loved to do and some things that would've been important to him.

RVR: And in that sense you're really carrying on his tradition, and I'm sure your brothers and your cousins are, too.

PT: It's very important. All of us are in the private sector right now.

RVR: Not anyone is showing signs of being interested in...?

PT: Oh, there's lots of us that are interested in things. But as my Uncle Rich would say today, "You don't have to be elected to something to make a big difference." In many ways the landscape has changed. You might be able to be more effective and make a more significant impact. But there are scores of us that are interested in things. So we've got our private sector and day-to-day lives. But we're all involved in various civic boards, from cultural institutions to social welfare groups to all kinds of things.

RVR: In addition to fishing, let's say, did your grandfather have other hobbies that he pursued?

PT: You mean hobbies and interests? Well, one of the great loves of his life was the Chicago White Sox. He was a diehard White Sox fan. And again, coming back to my

memories (laughs), I remember grandpa sneaking us out of school every year for opening day (RVR laughs).

RVR: So you went to the opener?

PT: Oh, we went every year! Every year we'd go to opening day. We'd have the chance to meet the manager. They'd come over and say hello to Mayor Daley. But he was a very staunch White Sox fan. My grandmother, to this day, is an incredibly strong White Sox fan. And she's an incredibly strong baseball fan. They loved it. They loved the strategy of baseball (RVR laughs). My grandmother often talked and said, "Now don't pay attention to the batter. Pay attention to the other guys moving around and the manager." She watches the World Series every year religiously.

RVR: (Laughs) She does?

PT: Oh, of course. She loves it. But my grandfather loved the White Sox. He loved fishing. He loved the White Sox. He basically loved Chicago and Chicago neighborhoods.

RVR: That was his life.

PT: He loved experiencing the wonderful people. The park system was very dear to him, of course.

RVR: Did he read a great deal?

PT: He read a lot. My grandfather read all the time.

RVR: What did he read, history, biography, novels?

PT: You know, that's probably a better question for my mom. She was probably more attuned to what he was reading.

RVR: If we ever interview her, I'll ask her.

PT: But he did read. They always had the great books at their home. They had the great books collection. There were the wonderful philosophers and the writers of years gone by. They were very attuned to that. He was very much interested in history, I would say.

RVR: Did he seem to have an extensive library in the house?

PT: Oh, my grandparents had books everywhere. It was very important to my grandparents. You can see that the oldest three daughters were all teachers. Mary Carol was a teacher as well.

RVR: Oh was she?

PT: Yes, all three of them were. It was just critically important that we read. As I explained to you, we had the experience with my grandmother and grandfather before school. And we had follow up experience with that after school because we'd go to my grandmother's house next door for an hour or so until my mom was able to get home from her public school. At that point, it was kind of homework time where we were reading, reading, reading, and again, penmanship, which she really stressed at a young age. Reading was there. They had books everywhere in their home.

RVR: And encyclopedias, too?

PT: Yes, right.

RVR: It is interesting that all of their children and grandchildren have been so productive. They've led productive and meaningful lives that reflect on their concern about civic,

national, and international affairs. Did you ever experience any political situations, other than meeting the president and a candidate? Were you aware of any political situation that might have developed?

PT: I was probably too young to be aware of any kind of that stuff.

RVR: Did you ever see your grandfather explode in anger?

PT: No, never.

RVR: Did you ever see him show anything but the best side of his personality?

PT: Boy, I can never remember my grandfather being angry at all. I mean he, well I'm sure he was angry many times.

RVR: Oh, we've heard (laughs)!

PT: Yes, we've been there. I've seen clips of it on t.v. and in the press. It sounds a little idealistic.

RVR: He was protecting you. He didn't want you to see that.

PT: In front of his family and his children, I would say, it was very unlikely that he exploded.

RVR: Your Uncle Mike said he never chastised them. That's not the word he used.

PT: He never raised his voice to his children.

RVR: It was the mother that had to. She was the disciplinarian.

PT: (Laughs) It was very much my grandmother! My grandmother doesn't raise her voice and yell. She's not that kind of a woman. But she was definitely the disciplinarian. She ran a tight ship.

RVR: (Laughs) She had to.

PT and RVR: She had seven children.

PT: She's very quick to remind me when I talk about my four. I've got four children. They're six, four and a half, almost two, and two weeks.

RVR: Oh, you're the one!

PT: I'm the one!

RVR: Your mother told me and I wasn't sure if it was you or Patrick.

PT: It was me. So, my grandmother is quick to remind me that when she had all of her little babies, not only did they not have disposable diapers, but they didn't have washing machines (laughs). So, before I can start complaining to her, she just wanted to frame her past experiences.

RVR: And this last child is a girl?

PT: It's a girl, Adeline.

RVR: Adeline!

PT: So I have Charles, Richard, Amelia, and Adeline.

RVR: You have two girls and two boys.

PT: They're in that order.

RVR: And that's wonderful, congratulations (laughs).

PT: Our house is full (laughs).

RVR: Is your grandmother well?

PT: My grandma is well.

RVR: She is?

PT: Yes.

RVR: Do you think it's likely that we could interview her? We have to wait of course on....

PT: Yes, that's not my call. That's....

RVR: No, right. You can guide me in what I should do. I contacted your Uncle Mike because he told me to. Then he said, "I'll get back to you." That's been two weeks now. Do you think I should call him back or just wait?

PT: No, I'd call him back. I might see him this weekend. We'll wait for the weekend to go by. I'll see him. If I get any news, I'll give you a buzz.

RVR: I don't wish to make you, but rather for you to help me.

PT: I understand. Mike has kind of become the point person on this endeavor.

RVR: Even the gift that your grandmother will have to sign, all of that will have to go through Michael. Tell me, have you seen the papers and the documents?

PT: I've seen much of the stuff that my grandmother has.

RVR: Is it in the basement?

PT: Yes. A lot of it is in the basement. A lot of it is in the attic.

RVR: Oh, it's not in a warehouse? I thought some of it might be in a warehouse.

FWB: Some of it is. How big is the house?

PT: It's not big. The house was smaller than it is now. They put an addition on after many of the kids were grown. It was tight quarters. My grandpa's parents lived with them as well. His mother died early on, Lil. But Mike, whom they referred to as Big Mike, who was a very small and slight man, he's older than Uncle Michael. Big Mike lived with them for many years.

PT and RVR: He was quite an influence on them.

PT: To this day, all of my aunts, uncles, and my mother get a twinkle and a tear in their eye when they talk about Big Mike. They speak of how important he was to them and their family on a day-to-day basis.

RVR: But you didn't know him at all.

PT: No.

RVR: Getting back to the papers, do you know if the granddaughters are sorting through it?

PT: That's a process that's going to be happening very soon.

RVR: And that's appropriate. It should be done.

PT: Mike is running it very well. It's a hard thing. We have twenty first cousins. So, there has to be some coordination as to who does what and who does where. Certain people can do it. Certain people are out of town.

RVR: Do you know who they are?

PT: We haven't determined that yet. It's kind of the oldest one of each one of the families.

RVR: Would you want to do it?

PT: Oh, I'd love to do it! I'm fascinated every day by grandfather, his life, what he was able to do, and what he was able to accomplish (laughs). He was not born into a political situation. His family was very normal.

RVR: So he really kept quite a collection that will document his....

PT: Yes.

RVR: Have you seen the diary?

PT: I've kind of seen little bits of things. But I don't know that I've gone through it at all.

RVR: You can't judge it as to whether it's an extensive thing?

PT: Yes, right.

RVR: It's going to take months and months then, before it'll be turned over to us. As I say, that's fair enough. I would be willing to help in any way I can, without trying to intrude. You can tell them. So, if you can convey that....

PT: Sure, absolutely.

RVR: I want to be helpful to the family. What you people have done for us, starting with your grandfather, it's just....

PT: It's amazing. This university is such a tribute to him. Rich talked about it in his speech. He was a very young legislator. Talk about an act of perseverance. This was in the 1930's.

RVR: That's right!

PT: This was his thing. He kept it with him. He kept with it and he kept with it. He finally got to the chance where he could do it. They passed legislation where he could actually act on it. It's just a wonderful lesson to all of us, no matter what we were going to do. In this day and age, people get impatient, sticking with something for a year or two. Here's a guy that stuck with something for thirty years. And then, he had the chance to get something and not take his eye off what he thought was the most important thing he could do. Look at all of the wonderful things he did. The highways being built, the sky scrapers, the parks, the governmental things, and the public building commission. There were all of these wonderfully brilliant things that he'd done.

RVR: As far as the university, it was in my talk, but because I didn't read it, I forgot to say it. He gave Chicago twenty-one years of political and economic stability, while every other major city was going down the tubes. They were going bankrupt.

PT: There was Detroit, Cleveland, New York....

RVR: Right. Chicago? There was stability.

PT: And think about it. Chicago, during many of those years, so much of the economy here was dominated by the steel mills, on the southeast side.

PT and FWB: And there were the stock yards.

PT: When they all closed down, we were able to replace that economic stock.

RVR: Do you know what's so unfair? In all of the books that have been written about him, that is not emphasized as much as it should have been. They're always trying to show the other side, the 1968....

PT: Right, 1968, the riots....

RVR: They make it sound as though that were Richard J. Daley, or any number of other things. Is there any book about him that you think is a good one, is fair, and does him justice?

PT: Well, I don't know that....

RVR: Have you read all of them?

PT: I've read most of them. There was a book that came out on his involvement in presidential politics a couple of years ago. It was called I think, "Daley Power and Presidential Politics." It was a pretty interesting book. Clearly, "The American Pharaoh" book had some pretty good historical stuff. It's in-depth, let's just say that. But it's got an overtone, a kind of Wizard of Oz, racial overtone thing that is completely unjust and unfair. But there's pieces of other books....

RVR: See, that's why having his papers here and for scholars to get at them and evaluate them is going to make a difference.

PT: I think the book that has not been written that would be a shame is the book that is clearly not been written in textbook format that articulates his governing successes. It should include his creation of agencies. I mean, people forget what a fiscal marvel he was.

RVR: He was a genius, yes!

PT: He was the director of revenue for the state. He had this wonderful budgetary ability and all of these things. How did you keep Chicago? And how did it become the city that works? Why was it? There was governing, legislating, and resolution after resolution of things that would be such a wonderful lesson to aspiring public servants around the county. People lose sight in the kind of romantic, riotous, exciting things that people like to write about.

RVR: Do you think that you or your relatives would be doing a book like that?

PT: I don't know.

RVR: They don't feel that they're up to the challenge, or haven't the time. It'll take time to....

PT: It's a hard thing to go at.

RVR: You're not interested? You wouldn't do it, would you?

PT: My life is in a point where I don't know if I'd be able to do it. I don't have enough governmental experience. Clearly with research, you can figure these things out. The other thing my grandfather was, and all of us are as you know, was private. So, the idea

of one of us doing a book that kind of mixes those two worlds of his privacy and his separate life with his family would not be a good thing. Clearly, this subject matter that I'm referring to is far from private. This is very, literally almost textbook kind of stuff.

RVR: I hope you would inform your aunts, uncles, and everybody else that it is not our intention ever to invade their privacy or to give them any cause for being unhappy with trusting us. This is a major trust that we will be responsible in handling this material, because we're dying to see it (PT and RVR laugh). We can hardly wait. And with your grandmother being advanced age, we're chaffing at the bit just to be able to talk to her. But I can't force her in any way. So, at your suggestion, do you mind if I call your Uncle Mike next week and say...?

PT: No, you should call and say "Is there anything else?" You want to get him in here, right, and talk to him?

RVR: Yes.

PT: Again, Mike is the point person on this.

RVR: Right. And your mother told me, "My brothers, you really have to prod them." They say, "Yes, yes, yes." And then they don't do anything (PT and RVR laugh).

PT: That's the big sister telling you that, too.

RVR: I'm dying to get them!

PT: You get my mom in here and she'll get everybody in line!

RVR: She was supposed to come Thursday and I had to change it because somebody else had already been confirmed. She moved it back a week. Then the guy who was confirmed had to pull out.

PT: Oh!

RVR: But I didn't want to call your mother and say, "Could you move it up?" She'd think, "What kind of people are they?"

PT: My mother is wonderful.

RVR: She is.

PT: My mother has had an incredible, unique life of her own. She has very unique memories of my grandfather.

RVR: She does. Well, I don't know. But she did tell me. We sat at the table together at the luncheon.

PT: I think of how incredibly supportive, kind, and what a great backbone he was to my mom and us during kind of an interesting time in her life, and that generation. Under that much public eye, you're the mayor's oldest child who's life has taken a unique turn. He was incredible.

RVR: As brief as it was, I thought her speech was right on the mark.

PT: She's brilliant.

RVR: And now I understand that she was a high school teacher, and it shows.

PT: My mom was a nun, originally, as you'll learn.

RVR: (Laughs) I didn't know that! I'm not surprised. Which order?

PT: It was the Sisters of Mercy. She left the order. She was an educator. Then she taught. She was in a parish on the north side. She then got out of the order and remained a teacher. She taught in the Chicago Public School System for years. She was at Mather High School, Kennedy High School, and Tilden High School. These are not posh experiences. My mother is a very tough woman and a strong woman. She was an English teacher. Then, after leaving the public school system, she re-dedicated her life to the Sisters of Mercy by taking up the Director of Development job at St. Xavier University, which is a Sister of Mercy College. She retired from that a few years ago. But she's still very active. Even while being a public school teacher, she was active at St. Xavier. She still has many lifelong friends who are in the order of Sisters of Mercy. She spends lots of time with us.

RVR: Is Mercy Hospital connected with the Sisters of Mercy?

PT: Yes. It's run and owned by the Sisters of Mercy.

RVR: Is your mother involved with them?

PT: She is. I'm on the board of Mercy Hospital Foundation. I stay pretty active there. My mother is incredibly brilliant and one of the most well-read people you'll ever meet. My mom would read a book a night, the whole thing.

RVR: She tosses it right off.

PT: My sister Courtney reads like that, too (laughs). It's unbelievable the way that they can just plow through books. I, of course, read. But I can't keep up with them. I can't do it. They love novels. I'm more of a non-fiction guy (RVR laughs).

RVR: You're a lucky man. Well, you've had your knocks, too. Your father and mother were divorced.

PT: Yes, but if that's the worst, I've had a pretty good life. My father is a wonderful guy as well. It was just a difficult situation between the two of them. But we remained....

RVR: Well, that's none of our business.

PT: Yes, I'm very lucky, in particular in what we started talking about the relationship I have with my family and my extended family. I can truly look you both in the eye and tell you that my best friends in the world are my brother, sister, and my cousins. It doesn't matter if it's any issue, problem, professional advice, or personal advice. Or even if it's, "Let's go and have a good time. Let's go to a ball game." The first calls are always to our first cousins.

RVR: That's wonderful.

PT: It's great.

RVR: It's unbelievable! That doesn't happen! It's not normal!

PT: It's not normal. It's so special. And the nice thing is, I mentioned to you that after my brother there was this gap of four years. Through our youth, it seemed much bigger. But now, all of the younger ones are adults as well. Everyone is in this great big pot of great cousins. It's really unique and special.

RVR: Do you all live in Chicago?

PT: We all do, except for those that are students. There's one. Mike has a daughter, Katie, that lives in London. Mary Claire Vanecko was in the Peace Corps in Guyana. She just returned home. She had been living out of the country. Katie still lives out of the country. There's two that are just coming home from college. One of them was John's Johnny, who was in Ohio.

RVR: I haven't been in touch with your Aunt Mary Claire.

PT: Mary Carol.

RVR: Mary Carol?

PT: Right. Her daughter is Mary Claire.

RVR: I'd like to interview her. But I thought I'd start with you mother (laughs).

PT: That's a good place to start. Start with the oldest (laughs).

RVR: I couldn't think of a better place to start, even before your brothers. I think I'm going to need your mother (laughs).

PT: You're a wise man, if you've figured that one out (RVR laughs). Get my mom. She's just a special person.

RVR: Yes. And we just have to take our time. See, we're so anxious. But we have to learn to live with developments as they happen, and not push. See, I'm from New York (laughs).

PT: You're pushy by nature (PT and RVR laugh).

RVR: I'm a pusher, aggressive.

PT: I'm glad you're helping. I really do think that this is such an important thing. I think that it's an important thing that all of us from my generation and our family to make sure there is a destination of depository of all the wonderful things my grandfather did. Clearly, things dilute over time. Names dilute over time. Our family's name is clearly always going to be very significant in Chicago. And that's by the virtue of what all of my

uncles and my entire family has accomplished here. But my grandfather's administration was so unique and so loaded with accomplishments. It's almost embarrassing to look at the wonderful accomplishments year after year after year, and the significant things that have been replicated in other cities. Rich is largely doing a lot of the same things.

RVR: You see, without my knowing it, I suspect that the legacy is so enormous. We should have a special building for the Richard J. Daley Archives. My colleague here has suggested it. We know his desk is available. Is there a lot of other stuff that you know of? The display we have is a nice display. But it's small. It's not what he deserves. That should be a major display of the artifacts. Then of course, not only his papers, but your Uncle Richard's papers have been committed. Your Uncle Bill, I think, is trying to send some, if not all, of his papers over.

PT: My Uncle John is in government now, and also had a very significant career in Springfield.

RVR: Your Uncle John has asked me to wait until after the legislature and finishes all of his business. Then he's going to try and help us, especially to find that earliest resolution of your grandfather, about this university.

PT: My Uncle John served as both state representative and a state senator.

RVR: Then, all of the people that were there that worked for your grandfather and have papers, we've already started to interview them.

PT: Yes, there's a wonderful list of men that are dear to my mom's heart. These were men and women that worked in my grandfather's administration. As I speak of them, again, there's the unique bond and relationship that you can have with a person. For example, there's the memories that my aunts, uncles, and mother have when they think of their grandfather, Big Mike. There are these folks around town, when they talk about their time working with my grandfather, it's extraordinary. This is from secretaries to his

leaders in his administration. This is twenty-five years after. I mean, you think about twenty-five years. People that have gone on to wonderful things, still have that twinkle in their eye about, "Boy that was the kind of time my life. I really feel that was the most special."

RVR: It's a devotion they still have for him. We're going to be sending out letters.

\*\*\*\*\*END OF SIDE ONE\*\*\*\*\*

RVR: Before you go, and it's lost! You see, that's the tragedy. If the stuff was lost, it can't add to our knowledge of what it was like during those twenty-one years.

PT: That would be a shame.

RVR: Do you know, I recently heard a campaign song, when your grandfather ran unsuccessfully for sheriff. It's to the tune of, "When Irish Eyes are Smiling." You know, vote for Richard J. Daley (laughs). Have you ever heard of that one?

PT: I think I've heard that one. There's lots of neat things. I can remember going to rallies for my grandfather. I can remember can remember the Big Band music always playing, "Happy Days are Here Again," over and over. My grandfather would always be up there. It was such a captivating thing, even for a young child. His rallies were kind of memorable. Every year, the circus would always come to Chicago. It would spend half the nights at the Chicago Stadium and half the nights at the Amphitheater, which was in our neighborhood. That's where the 1968 Convention was. There was always an Eleventh Ward night for all citizens of the community. Talk about my grandfather's dedication, where the circus was for the community. I don't know if there was discounted tickets or how it worked. But it was full of people from the ward. My grandfather would always give a speech there. I can remember it being so captivating, unique, and old fashioned.

RVR: Did you ever see him work the community, go around knocking at the door and saying, "Hello. Can I do anything for you?"

PT: Yes. He did that all the time. My grandfather had a wonderful relationship with his neighbors. He was also very much out there at events in the community. He spent a lot of time in the parks. You talk about these fishing derbies and building dedications. My grandfather was very much like my Uncle Rich is today, always talking to residents of the community. "What do you need? What does your community need? What are you missing? What would you like?" He was always very responsive. I can remember tagging along with him as he'd shake hand to hand to hand. Of course, if you'd go anywhere with my grandfather in that day and age, the line was....

RVR: Everybody wanted to touch him.

PT: Right, exactly. There was a circus one year at Soldier Field. Emmett Kelly was the famous clown back then. We got to spend time with Emmett Kelly. He came over to meet us. My grandfather was there, kind of campaigning in a way, or at least greeting people. Despite that nationally he was this bigger than life guy, he was so approachable to the average Chicagoan. They kind of looked at him as, "This is our man. I can go up to him and talk to him every time." Again, he had such lifelong friends from all walks of life who went on to all kinds of different careers. There were judges, other elected officials, and other wonderful day to day jobs. Everyone was treated equally. That's the unique thing about our neighborhood, too. I can honestly say about Bridgeport, which I recently moved from.

RVR: Oh you, too?

PT: Yes, I moved.

RVR: Your Uncle Rich did, too.

PT: Yes. We're still there all the time. My brother Patrick is still there. But the wonderful thing about Bridgeport is that there's no kind of economic hierarchy at all in the

community. There are people in Bridgeport that are incredibly wealthy. There are people in Bridgeport who are not incredibly wealthy. There's lots of folks in between. Everyone's friends and nobody talks about it. It's not important. Your financial status is not important to who you are or your relationship to your friends. I really treasure that. I really pray that I can instill those same values from that community in my children. We live in Hyde Park, which is a little bit of a different change. But it has kind of the same. Economics aren't necessarily the driving force. It's more of an academic thing.

RVR: Your brother is still there?

PT: My brother is still there. My brother is there forever.

RVR: Oh is he (laughs)? That's quite a community.

PT: It's wonderful. It's a great neighborhood. We moved. We had our third child and our house wasn't big enough. Our two oldest children go to school in Hyde Park. So we wanted to, in some ways, replicate as best we could the experience I had where you went to school in your community. That's unique these days. People are always driving their kids all over the place to schools. Then they come home from school and they have a different set of friends. It's just this whole thing. It's just different. We wanted to live in a community where our children went to school, so that after school they'd have this nice consistent thing.

RVR: Is your wife also from Bridgeport?

PT: No. My wife is from Providence, Rhode Island.

RVR: You met her in college?

PT: I met her in undergrad, in Providence College.

RVR: Oh, I have a student of mine that taught there.

PT: Oh really?

RVR: He was a Dominican priest, by the name of, oh God, it was so long ago. He's probably long since retired.

PT: If he was a history professor, he would have been a Dominican then. History, right?

RVR: Yes. I never went to Providence.

PT: It's a great college. It's a wonderful place. We have a great family friend, Father Graham, whom I think you met. He did the invocation.

RVR: Yes, he came over and spoke to me.

PT: He was a very dear friend of my grandfather's. He's a Dominican priest. So, that relationship was started there, through Father Graham. There's a parish right over here on Ashland Avenue, Saint Pious. It's at Eighteenth and Ashland in Pilsen. It's run by the Dominican fathers. My grandfather was often friends with those folks. Then, when my Uncle Rich went to college, he went to Providence for two years. Then he transferred home to DePaul. My Uncle Bill actually went there for one year, then transferred home to Loyola.

RVR: Are all of the Daley's Catholic educated?

PT: As far as the universities?

RVR: Or grade school and high school.

PT: Everybody went to Catholic high schools. There were a mixture of grade schools, but a majority of Catholic grade schools. Some went to Magnet or private. Then for colleges, the overwhelming number went to Catholic colleges. There are very few exceptions. Bobby Vanecko, who you're going to meet with, went to Yale. Then many of us went on to graduate school at a non-Catholic college or university.

RVR: Do you have an advanced degree?

PT: I do.

RVR: You're a lawyer?

PT: No.

RVR: MBA?

PT: I have an MBA from the University of Chicago.

RVR: Oh! That's a very substantial degree (PT and RVR laugh).

PT: It looks fancier than it actually is (RVR laughs). It's a great union card in the investment business.

RVR: Of course, that's why I had to have a Ph.D. It's your union card. I'm trying to think of anything else I can ask you. I would say that if you do think of anything, you know....

PT: Of course.

RVR: If you could be an advisor of sorts....

PT: I'd be happy to.

RVR: Especially in telling me to back off, or "This is private. Get out of the way." Or, "This might be a good time to approach my uncle this or that," or whatever. As I say, we're trying to do the best that we can in accommodating the family, in view of the fact that they've provided us with this extraordinary treasure.

PT: That'd be a wonderful thing. We just have to make sure that we make it what it should be.

RVR: Right, and make sure that we do our part at this end.

FWB: I've got a question. What would the family envision this in say, five years or six years?

PT: I can't answer that question. I think we're all getting together in two weeks to talk specifically about this.

RVR: Oh really?

PT: Yes.

RVR: Will that be in Michigan?

PT: I don't know where it is. I think it's here. We have to say, "Okay," really kind of assign things, and have kind of a brainstorming session. Clearly, the tone is set by my grandfather's children and my grandmother.

FWB: Right, the first generation.

PT: It's kind of up to us to do the work (laughs). We get the chores! I'll tell you. It's an incredibly unique thing for me. Hopefully, you can tell that. Then, there are other cousins

that are younger, numbers of whom were never alive. They never knew my grandfather. It would be such an educational and enriching experience for them to be engaged and involved in this whole process. I think the meaningfulness of this particular endeavor should, and I believe will, increase exponentially within our family.

RVR: Well then, do you think I should wait two weeks before I contact your Uncle Mike?

PT: I would just wait until next week.

RVR: Just wait until next week? Okay. See, Fred and I have our view. We'd like to see more. If there's a ton of stuff, it's going to go into the warehouse. I'd like them to raise the money to raise an extension to that library, which we need anyway. With every new book that goes into that library, another book has to go into the warehouse. Is it a third of what it was supposed to be?

FWB: Two thirds.

RVR: And they really need to extend it.

PT: It could be housed in that building and be in a separate section.

FWB: That's one of the things that I was thinking. If you go up to Minnesota, there's a section that has Hubert Humphrey's desk and office in the library area. I remember going out to the Rockefeller Family Park. The first thing that John D. Rockefeller had written was Ledger of One. It shows him as a kid. The family goes there to see the legacy at this point.

RVR: Yes, it's for the grandchildren and great grandchildren. It's a kind of oval office.

PT: Clearly for me, I do have some selfish motives here. I've got four children now. My oldest is six. I've got one named Richard Joseph. I want to take my children to a place that explains to them why this is such a great city and what a significant part that their great grandfather had in this place. So, that's not competing, but it's a parallel motivation to my own warm feelings.

RVR: Sure. And we could help you, you see, if we know what you and the family feel would be the appropriate thing to do. Then, I could go to the chancellor, the trustees, and the president and say, "Here's where we can really accomplish something that the family would appreciate and recognize as doing the man the justice that he deserves." Well, we've taken a lot of your time.

PT: That's okay. It's quite all right. Thank you.

RVR: It's been great. If we think of anything else, I'll give you a ring. You have my card?

PT: I do.

RVR: You can call me anytime. We'll type up this transcript and send it to you and give you an opportunity to look it over.

PT: Okay, thank you. Well, this is exciting, lots of personal stuff.

RVR: It's a lot of fun. And I'm learning things that I never knew about your grandfather. For my talk, I had to do some research. I was amazed myself. Many of the things that I knew wasn't the man.

PT: That's right. I remember you specifically said in your speech that you referred to him as the fiscal genius.

RVR: I didn't know that.

PT: It's nowhere to be found, unfortunately.

RVR: He was right on top of it, directing.

PT: It's incredible. I should fax this to you. There was a very good editorial piece in the Tribune, if you don't already have it. It was by John McCarron. The t.v. special came out. Have you heard about this? It was the American biography show.

FWB: It was three hours.

PT: It was a three-hour show on him. It was just awful. The title of it was "Richard J. Daley: The Right Man at the Wrong Time." It was something like, "The world passed him by. He wasn't able to keep up with the changing Sixties." There was a wonderful editorial response to that by John McCarron. He said, "You people have got it all wrong. This city was working. The other ones were kowtowing...."

RVR: They were collapsing (laughs).

PT: Right. He also pointed to a couple of major significant things. I have it in my office. It's one of my prize things. I'll fax it over to you. It would set a nice theme that you're trying to create within this.

RVR: We had his picture there but we took it down for the exhibit. We haven't gotten it back.

FWB: It's for a special exhibit.

RVR: It's the one that shows him standing at the forum, which is a great picture. Then there was another one I had standing there with the students.

PT: Oh yes. That's a wonderful one. This is such a great university.

RVR: See, at one time in my impression, my impression was "What an outgoing man. He wanted to know what we were doing and who we were." (looking at a picture) Yes, that's the one.

PT: That just says it all. Just look at how unique and special it is. Boy oh boy, Circle Campus. I can remember, this was after he passed away, but they used to have a great hockey team here. It was an exciting thing! I'd come to the games.

RVR: Do you know what somebody told us just yesterday about him? He'd worked in his administration. You grandfather had a unique instinct for what motivated other people and why they were behaving the way they were. He sort of understood and knew then how to respond. I had never heard that before.

PT: I'd say that's kind of being a brilliant psychological personality, kind of ability to assess people. Look at these men and women you're going to interview and what they've become in their lives years after he's gone. He had really smart people working in government.

RVR: And he could pick them!

PT: Right! And you guys know, that's not a field you're going into to get rich. He was able to convince some people, who obviously became financially more successful in many cases, to make some sacrifices and work for this cause. One of my business school professors, Marvin Zonis, is kind of a known guy around Chicago. He talks about charismatic leadership a lot. There was this unique, charismatic leadership about him that just drew people to him and made them want to win with him.

RVR: And work with him. So we're learning a lot as we go along.

PT: There's a lot to learn.

RVR: And we're building a library of oral interviews that will be quite extensive by the time we're done.

PT: That's great.

RVR: By the way, did you show your grandmother the tape of the celebration?

PT: I think my mother did.

RVR: Oh she did?

PT: I believe my mother had brought it over. It's wonderful. I keep that tape in my office. I've popped it in about ten times. I know that there's longer stuff.

RVR: Well, we're refining it, Fred is. The Chancellor will present it to the family. There'll be a number of copies, maybe ten or more.

PT: He had this thing in the second speech. I think that warmth and connection to Chicagoans came out. "We have a world class university that your child can go to." This is not some lark of a thing that exists.

RVR: Well, there's even more to it.

FWB: Here's the long version. This is the entire speech, if you're interested.

PT: Oh gosh. Can I borrow it and give it back to you?

FWB: No, you can have that.

RVR: There's some heckling.

PT: Oh, of course. I'm telling you all of these wonderful things. I know the other side! I've seen it! It never threw him off course. That's another thing. You talk about great leaders. Do you know how many people wouldn't be able to continue after that kind of heckling?

RVR: And it's amazing how he handled it, with wit!

PT: Courage is not being unafraid. Courage is having fear and doing it anyway. I'm sure that, like my grandfather, everyone tries to look at both sides. They believe, "Well, I'm going into this. There's lots of landmines here. There's lots of people against it. But in spite of that, I'm going forward." To me, that's courage. I've seen the heckling (laughs).

RVR: And it goes on.

PT: And we've experienced with my uncle and working on his campaign. I've seen how mean some of my Uncle Rich's campaigns were.

RVR: And in that film, he talks about his father briefly, your great-grandfather. So you'd be interested in that.

PT: I'd be very interested in that. It's great. I'm really thrilled that you are doing this. I'm really thrilled to be a part of this.

RVR: And we want to do more, as much as we can.

PT: You've talked about these other places and talked about a bigger designated area. There's a vision that I'm at least starting to develop that hopefully I can communicate to the other folks.

RVR: You're very much like your mother.

PT: Well thank you!

RVR: Well, we may be after you (laughs).

PT: That's okay. I love it. Trust me. Of all the things I'm involved in, nothing would be more important than this, to me personally (laughs). I'd be happy to have a reason as good as this to shake some other hands that I have to (RVR laughs). There's some other noble causes, but certainly not as noble as this.

RVR: That's great! Wonderful!

PT: Thank you!

RVR: I look forward to meeting with your brother, your uncles, and your aunts.

PT: That would be a treat!

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