INTERVIEW WITH EDWARD H. JENNINGS

MAY 10, 2002

Q. Today is May 10, 2002. I’m Marvin Zahnisrer and I’m sitting together with Dr. Edward H. Jennings at the Ohio State University Archives Building on Kenny Road. We’re here to ask Dr. Jennings about his nine years as President of the Ohio State University, from 1981 to 1990. Well those nine years are regarded as a time of dynamic progress for the University. Dr. Jennings served as the tenth President of the University. Well, Dr. Jennings, you were a successful and popular President at the University of Wyoming. What attracted you to this University and we’d be interested also in having your response to the search process as well that brought you here.

A. I think the first thing is that I’ve been around the Big Ten off and on, Big Ten universities, all my life. My dad was on the faculty at the University of Minnesota, actually on the faculty of the University of Iowa temporarily. And of course I was ten years on the faculty at the University of Iowa, got my Ph.D. from the University of Michigan. In my family I’ve got faculty or student relationship with eight of the Big Ten universities. And I consider the Big Ten universities the finest collection of universities in the world. And also, all my life I’ve been attracted to public universities. And of course my family has been attracted to public universities contrasted to the private sector. And so Ohio State would automatically be attractive to me. As you know, I went to Wyoming and my regret about Ohio State was it was kind of bad timing. I had only been two years
at the University of Wyoming and of course that was not long enough. And that was a disappointment to me that I could only stay there two years. But Ohio State called and obviously I would be interested. Interestingly, at the same time, the University of Iowa was looking for a president, but the chances of me becoming President at the University of Iowa at that time were probably pretty low, primarily because we in the academic community don’t typically want to hire presidents from inside the universities. I think it’s a weakness of our university systems, is that we don’t give the top job typically to an insider unless he’s been gone for several years. The search process then was done very well. Typically at a big university, when you’re looking for a president, the candidates that are most likely to be appointed never apply. Kind of the code of the west is you don’t apply for these jobs. And I’ll kind of never forget, I was home, it was in the afternoon and I was home and not feeling well for some reason. But Madison Scott.

Madison Scott was then the Secretary of the Board of Trustees and my wife took the call. And she of course knew what it was about and she liked Wyoming and didn’t want to give the phone to me. But she did. And Madison in his own unique way basically said, “Why the hell aren’t you a candidate for Ohio State University.” I said, “Well, Scotty, nobody’s asked.” And then we had a series of quiet interviews basically in Chicago. The typical search process is you kind of dodge the press and have your interviews off campus at a neutral airport. The reason being that, to be a finalist candidate for Ohio State is a great honor and it’s really no dishonor to be a finalist and then not make the presidency. But if you’re a sitting President, you can’t be a public finalist because you destroy yourself at
your home institution. And so it’s enormously important to keep these things quiet, particularly in the context that at Ohio State, typically should attract a sitting President. This should not be a training ground for new Presidents. And so as a consequence, they kept it very quiet. Searches are going on now that are being kept very quiet. And it must be if they’re going to really attract top leadership.

Q. Alright. We always like to know about the relationship between the past President and the new President. And so I just wanted to ask, did former President Enarson give you any advice as you took office? Or did you seek his advice after you became President?

A. I knew Harold very well, mostly from his days at Cleveland State. But also a little bit when he was President of Ohio State and I was president of Wyoming. But Marvin, the code of the west is, when the new guy comes, the old guy leaves. And you don’t seek advice. I of course sought advice from people like Sandy Boyd, who was the former President of the University of Iowa. Also talked to Nov Fawcett a lot, because Nov had been separated from Ohio State for ten years or something like that. But the things we typically do is that when the new guy comes in, it’s on his watch and the old one steps aside.

Q. He picks up the ball and runs.

A. That’s right.

Q. Now a little more complicated question is, how would you describe the situation at the University when you assumed the presidency? And here I’m thinking about
the fiscal situation, the moral on campus, the relationships of the University with its communities, faculty involvement with governance, those kinds of issues.

A. It is a complicated question because it was a fairly unique period. Where do you start? I came September 1 and there was no budget. The state had not appropriated any money for the fiscal year ending in June of 1982. The General Assembly and the University was working off a continuation of the previous year’s state appropriation. And obviously that, and incidentally it wasn’t because the state was not supporting higher education at the time or any less so than they had been. It was, we were in a recession, a fairly deep recession. We didn’t think it was all that deep then, but by today’s standard it was a very serious recession. And as a consequence moral was low. There was great uncertainty on the campus. And things needed to be picked up. Probably the most surprising thing to me when I arrived was the community’s opinion of the University, not just the Columbus/Central Ohio community, but all of Ohio. And it’s probably still the case today, where the outside of Ohio, Ohio State is much better thought of as an academic institution than in Central Ohio and in Ohio. And that’s not all that unusual, but it is unusual the degree to which people in Central Ohio are critical of Ohio State, not recognizing its national importance, international importance, that the rest of the world is much more respectful of. And as a consequence, I immediately tried to go on the offensive of telling Ohio what I considered the real story of Ohio State. And I did an awful lot of digging in terms of who our top faculty were, where our to faculty where, what sort of research they were doing,
and so forth. Remember I found a senator who gave an award for a silly research grant that NSF had granted for, this was the Proxmeyer Awards, wasn’t it?

Q. I’ve forgotten who that was but I can recall the time.

A. And one of our faculty had gotten it for some sort of robotic. Faculty in engineering had gotten the Proxmeyer Award and almost within six months of getting that, it had been adapted by General Motors as a manufacturing technique, and became enormously valuable. And I forget the faculty member’s name. But began to really preach that. Also, I then did an awful lot of work with the General Assembly. And the Governor. Governor Rhodes at the time, Vern Riffe in the House, did an awful lot of work down there. Bill Napier was very helpful to me, that knew the politics of the state and learned the politics of the state. But then in November, September to November, early November, a budget was passed and a pretty generous budget. A budget where we were able to increase faculty salaries, I think on the order of 9%. We were actually, in the previous summer, tuition had been increased on a temporary basis. And we reduced tuition. The budget was real. We made some major allocations to the library. Things looked pretty dirn good. We were out of our budget crisis. Then, month and a half later, I was in my office and my secretary says, “Governor Rhodes is on the phone.” I’ll never forget this. Governor Rhodes in his own way said, “Son, we’ve got a bit of a problem in the state.” I said, “Governor, what’s that?” He said, “Well we’ve got a $500 million deficit. We kind of overestimated our revenue on this budget and your share at Ohio State is $55 million. When can I expect a check?” Of course it’s January now. And a University, financially you have to characterize a
University as once we start a year, virtually all of our costs are fixed costs. There is very little we can do. And that percentage wise was a 27% budget cut in the state appropriations, not in the total budget, but in the state appropriations. So it was gigantic. I mean it was huge. So for the next few days we worked on how to tell the community, the faculty community, staff community, and student community as to what was going on. And that became my first major address to the family, probably the 20th of January, 1982, somewhere around there. And understanding that morale had been low to begin with, it had come up, and we stood the possibility of driving morale even lower. Because you’ve got expectations up and then you could drive it down even lower. And so we worked very hard in solving this without laying off people, without increasing tuition, without reducing salaries. Incidentally, salaries at Ohio State at that time, by Big Ten standards, were towards the bottom, on average. Not necessarily any given department but on average. And so as a consequence, financially we froze everything. You couldn’t buy a pencil at this place without the President’s approval. And I learned a bit of that lesson at Iowa, when I was Financial Vice President. We not only froze staff appointments but we froze purchasing. And I’ll never forget when we announced this, after that speech, I came back to my office and here was a bunch of microphones and every member of the press. Somebody, I forget who, wormed their way to the front and said, “Dr. Jennings, you’ve frozen everything. We have a basketball game at Indiana this coming Saturday. Are you going to forfeit that game?” And probably that’s when I started the deterioration of my relationship with sports writers because I pointed a
finger at him and said, “I’m going to answer your question but you get to the back of the line.” That’s the last question I’m going to answer and off we went. Of course, we didn’t forfeit the game or anything like that. But the lesson was, in terms of inventory, if you look around this campus, every department, hundreds of departments, every secretary, every faculty member has stacks of paper, they’ve got stacks of pencils, they’ve got this, that and the other thing. And to make a long story short, in about three weeks time, we picked up about $30 million by stopping purchasing, that became permanent. Because when we released purchasing about three months later, four months later, people went back to their old buying habits but didn’t replace inventory that they had used. And this was anywhere from pencils to papers to pharmaceuticals to snow shovels to automobiles and so forth. And it turns out that probably was the biggest salvation of simply stopping normal purchasing, which people got back to three months, four months later. And picked that up. And of course, incidentally, people forget this, but then in the next budget year, now June of 1982, we had another 13 million dollar cut. So we had to keep up a good deal of this. And in the meantime we did an awful lot of lobbying and trying to get the General Assembly to look at our plight. And eventually they did of course. But that was a difficult time. We worked very hard on that speech to the faculty. It was over in the Mershon Auditorium. The other thing, “You’re not laying off anybody.” “No, we’re not.” But we sure as hell weren’t hiring anybody either. You probably remember that.
Q. In terms of the faculty morale, did you think that the morale was low, particularly centered around financial issues, or did you find that they had been a bit discouraged because they didn’t feel they had been taken into the governance of the institution to the degree that they wished?

A. Remember my experience as a Dean at the University of Iowa, my adult experiences at the University of Iowa, my administrative experience at the University of Iowa. And Iowa, the University of Iowa, has an enormously strong tradition of good faculty governance and to get on the senate at the University of Iowa, is a great honor for even the most skeptical faculty member. You work your way up the University senate at the University of Iowa. Here at Ohio State, I found a much different tradition, where the senate was fairly weak. While there was several good people on the senate, by and large this was considered a chore that one would rather not do. And the University had not typically paid much attention to the senate. Yes, the President of the University was the President of the Senate. I think that’s the title. But I took it upon myself then to try and, not only strengthen the senate, but to get better people on the senate. And I think we did. I think we got an awful lot of good people on the senate. I don’t think everybody would argue with that. But one of the guys that I single out is Bill Prothrow. And Bill Prothrow sometimes be a great pain in the ass. But Bill was usually right in his thinking. He wasn’t trying to take over the function of the President or the Trustees. And Bill was thinking in terms of academic freedom. Jerry Reagan and people like that, marvelous people. And we did try to strengthen the senate. At the same time, the other surprise that I thought was
tradition, is we had no staff equivalent. And the excuse was that the senate was not really a faculty senate; it was a University senate. And there were administrators that were Vice Presidents. There were Deans on the senate. I thought that very strange too. I think that continues today. I was not able to … I would much prefer a faculty senate and a staff council. And we created a staff council a couple years later. And that was another characteristic of Ohio State that is characteristic I think of most universities. But I think the degree was higher here, is that the staff were expected to do what they were told and that was it. And had no function in governance. And Ohio State often forgot that it’s the staff who runs the place. It’s the faculty who make the reputation, but the lights stay on and the streets get cleaned and the letters go out, not by you and I, but by some awfully bright and good and dedicated people. And they didn’t have the recognition that I felt they deserved. We also had a very weak student council. And not only a weak student council, but the student body in general didn’t think much of it. I think that’s improved somewhat but not a heck of a lot. That’s still what we get 2,000 people voting for the student body president. Not a significant number. And I think if we look back we did strengthen governance. And that’s why governance doesn’t mean that you take authority from the Trustees. The Trustees are owners. They can do any damn thing they want. The real point is that this is a monster University. There’s no possible way Trustees, University Presidents or Provosts can have enough expertise and enough knowledge in the multiple fields that we deal with, to possibly be making centralized decisions on these things. You absolutely need the advice and the serious advice from every
unit on campus. Because on any given day, a President will deal with Freshmen English to research on diabetes to animal rights issues to everything, to running essentially an apartment complex that houses 12,000 people, dormitories. So, without good governance, both faculty and staff, you don’t get good advice as to what to do. And by and large, sometimes the advice is frivolous, sure. But most of the time, if the President, the Vice Presidents, take the advice seriously, over time it will become less frivolous. If we don’t take it seriously, it will become more frivolous. And so you’ve got to take it seriously. And occasionally you have to go against the best advice from the best people. Most of the time, good people will give you good advice.

Q. I think people thought you were on track in your attitude and what happened in these areas. Well, let’s talk about something that not every President likes to discuss. And that is Trustees. Boards of Trustees. But it would be useful to know how, say the various Boards of Trustees that you worked with, the areas they were most helpful to you and those that were less helpful in your work.

A. A little background. To say to some extent this is controversial today in the corporate community. More than once, a corporate executive has said to me, “Ed, your biggest disadvantage is you don’t pick your Board.” In a corporate world, the CEO has a much greater influence as to who the Board members are. And as a consequence there’s more of a natural teamwork. That can backfire. The Enron case is an absolute classic example of where that backfired where the Board were just yes men to the President. But that’s the President’s fault; that’s not the system’s fault. But in the University you don’t pick your own Board. In a
university, you are given Board members who typically are either well connected politically or large political contributors to the governor or senators or whoever it might be.

Q. So let me just make this point. You were never consulted in advance about Trustees to be appointed.

A. Never. Never. And the typical public university president that is the case. And there are of course some public universities where Boards of Trustees are elected by the community at large. So I’m not consulted and typically not given … and University presidents know that coming in. And that’s of course one of the things you evaluate when you are offered a job, is can you work with the Trustees? When I came, I was blessed with a very good Board of Trustees. I was blessed with a Board that understood that, from a managerial point of view, Ohio State wasn’t a lot different than General Motors or Ford. That it was a big, diverse institution that had to have, we at Ohio State have an awful lot in common with General Motors because they do so many varieties of things, particularly on the business side. One of the things that used to amuse me is that people would say, “Why don’t you run that place like a business?” Well, the business aspect of the University is run like a business. People talk about our bureaucracy and we’ve got it. But have you ever tried to deal with General Motors? They’ve got a big bureaucracy too and you have to have it. You absolutely have to have it. But when I came I was blessed with a very good Board; a Board that understood that this was a large corporation and a Board that was more than willing to let me run the institution and then react to my policy and issues. And incidentally, we had
worked that out mostly before I ever took the job. This was there. What trustees have a very hard time understanding is the academic community. They don’t have a, they will eventually understand the business side of the University; they’ll understand the hospital side; the dormitories, and so forth. But the academic community is a different culture to them, a very different culture. And some Boards will begin to understand it and some won’t. We have an example of a person that I would have never thought would have understood the academic community but clearly does in the Board Chair that just retired in Dave Brennan, who came to us as a real estate developer with very little knowledge about a University and leaves us very much understanding the academic community. And that’s to some extent very foreign to the business world for a variety of reasons. First of all, results in an academic community almost by definition are long run. Research is long run. Even teaching is long run. Because if you think about it when somebody says, “We need more doctors at Ohio State and what are you going to do about it?” What we’re gong to do about it is increase our medical school and our residency programs and that’s going to take eight years to accomplish. Or we need more engineers and so forth. So everything is long run. And while the business community has to look to the long run, they are much more short run oriented. The second thing, and I worked very hard to get them to understand this, and many did. The second thing is that they have such a tough time with tenure. But if you again, taking the General Motors analogy, if you look at General Motors and General Motors organization, and you look immediately below the Vice President. Not the Vice President but immediately
below the Vice President, about 15% of the people at General Motors have every bit as much tenure as a faculty member does at Ohio State. These are the very valuable people that essentially run General Motors on a day to day basis. And they are enormously secure in their jobs. Yes, technically they can be fired and occasionally they are. Occasionally a tenured faculty member is fired. But it’s a rare event. And if you look at Ohio State, who are our top 15% of people? Well they are the tenured faculty. Of all other employees, the tenured faculty are about 15% of the family population. And in that analogy, and that analogy isn’t perfect, but they began to understand. We in the academic community also, and I would do this, we have to admit that sometimes we tenure people that we shouldn’t.

And do we have tenured faculty on our campus that aren’t producing? Of course. Does General Motors have their 15%, some people who aren’t producing? Of course. But we’ve got to understand that that, in most cases, is a fairly rare event. I don’t know how many tenured faculty aren’t really producing, but it’s a relatively small number. The other thing that gets very hard for somebody from the business community to understand is that a faculty member, depending on their field of study, may go through several phases in their career. They may go through a research phase, typically as they’re young, although a historian goes through his research phase maybe later in their career. They may go through a service phase, where they’re doing an awful lot of outside work in the community, which is part of the mission of the University. They may go through a phase where they’re spending all their time developing new courses in a teaching phase. They may go into an administrative phase. And they may go
back to what they did originally. And so when we talk about a faculty member producing, what I always liked to do was look at what a department was producing. Because an individual faculty might at one time have been a great researcher but is now pretty lousy. In the math and physical sciences, a guy 40 years old typically is over the hill. In your field, you’re just beginning your research activity in history. And so, while the corporate community looks at departments, they also are more inclined to say, “Well an individual is an expert in chemistry. That’s what we’re going to judge him on.” And with a faculty member, we’ve got to recognize these phases of a career. Their career is not just research or just teaching or just service or just administration. And service can include faculty senate work. And so that becomes very hard for the business community to understand. I’m getting way off on the subject.

Q. I understand this. I’m curious. How did you try to educate faculty members to understand these things?

A. I’m giving you much the same speech that I would often give to Trustees. That very thing. To talk to them and to talk to faculty. That a faculty member is not necessarily a terrible faculty member if he hasn’t published 85 times in referee journals. I think we hurt ourselves, I’m a believer that great research and great teaching go together. That typically a great teacher is also a great researcher and vice versa. But I’ve also recognized that we’ve got to, as a faculty community and not just Ohio State, we’ve got to stop looking down our nose at teaching freshmen. We’ve got to stop looking down our nose at doing some of these things that are normal parts of academic life. And you know we do it. And I know we do
it. We have a tendency to get a brand new assistant professor and we assign him the big section of a beginning course, when that ought to be taught by the most senior guy.

Q. So you’re really describing here, in a way, your chief interaction with the Trustees. One of your chief interactions is you’re serving as an educator to them.

A. To some extent.

Q. About the nature of the University.

A. To some extent.

Q. What are they communicating back to you then?

A. Well, in the early stages, they were cheering me on. We were fixing the finances. We were, I think to some extent, fixing morale. We were developing very good relationships with the General Assembly. I’m kind of tickled right now in the early 21st century, K-12, primary and secondary education has got the upper hand but by gosh in the 80’s one of the reasons they’re short of money right now is that we beat them up pretty bad in the 1980’s, cause that’s the two big competing organizations or legislative money. And so very supportive now. Now at the same time, then, yes the state support was going to get better, but it was pretty clear to me that the beginning of the trend in the mid-1970’s, where the percent of state appropriations for the big state universities, the Ohio State, the Minnesotas, the Michigans and so forth, the percent of state appropriations as the percent of budget was going to decline. And was declining. And that prediction of course has been true. In 1975, Ohio State got 50% of its support from State of Ohio. Today, it gets 18% and so forth from the State of Ohio. That’s not just Ohio;
that’s virtually every state in the union. The numbers may be a little different but
the trend is absolutely still there. For the big major research universities. And so,
radical of all radicals, we began investigating the possibility of private funding,
which virtually no other public university in the country had ever done in any
significant way.

Q. The Trustees were in support of this?
A. Enormously skeptical.

Q. Oh, they were skeptical.
A. Enormously skeptical as frankly was I. But because of legislative support and
because there was no way that I could bring in top students, bring in top chair
professorships, equip the top chemists to do whatever they do, to finance Bill
Studer’s project of automating the library, which was a pretty radical thing at the
time, with legislative support. That just wasn’t going to happen, so if we could do
that as private support, then we could make progress. We could have chair
professors and so forth. But never having myself done any private fundraising at
public universities, only a little bit, our Alumni Association here, if you paid
$1.00, you were counted as a donor. We had about a four million dollar
endowment at the institution and so forth. Enormously skeptical as was I, but then
we hired an outside consultant firm to come in. And the toughest sell was to
understand that fundraising, private fundraising, is not a slap on the back, play of
the hand, it’s a management problem. It’s knowing what people are interested, it’s
knowing how much money they have to give away. It’s knowing where their
sentimentality is, what they remember about Ohio State. It’s a management issue.
And as a consequence, you had to gear up a fundraising operation before you had any money. And that was a budget on an annual basis, about eight million dollars. And eight million dollars in 1983 was an awful lot of money because we simply didn’t have it. But we brought in the outside firm and I’ll never forget, they did some work around the state for three months and said, “Yea, we might be able to raise $150 million.” Well that sounds like a lot of money but it wasn’t. They did a little more work and got the number up to $200 and me telling the Trustees, “They can’t raise ten.” And I’m saying “You can’t raise ten.” And so what we did then, is that any fundraising drive, the rule of thumb is that you should have 50% of the money raised before you announce your goal. And so we began raising money. And I’ll never forget, we got a million dollar donation from Bank One and that was headlines on the Dispatch. Now a million dollar donation is nothing. But we were frankly enormously surprised at the generosity and we ended up announcing a $350 million goal and raised $450 million.

Q. Back up here on the Trustees. Did they help provide contacts?

A. Oh yea. They were enormously helpful. And to some extent, all the things that you and I have been talking about right now, was a selling of the University, the quality of the place. That this is something you can be proud of. You don’t have to put your money in Harvard; you put your money in this place and by gosh you will be proud of us. And it was a selling of the quality of the faculty. And I have to say I was also trying to sell the faculty; that they were better than they thought they were. If you go to Michigan for example, and I think it’s still the case today, you go to Michigan, by and large they’ve got the same faculty complaints that
Ohio State faculty has. The administration is trying to do bad things to them, there’s not enough money, etc., etc. The Michigan faculty, when they leave Ann Arbor, it’s the greatest place in the world. Our culture here at Ohio State has a tendency to take our complaints off campus as well. When we leave, we still complain the administration is doing bad things and so forth. The administration might be doing bad things but the best advice to faculty member when they leave campus is keep that stuff at home. Now I’m generalizing of course. But that’s a cultural problem in terms of reputation for Ohio State.

Q. Did you find that the Trustees reflected this sort of negative attitude toward the University?

A. That’s right. They sure did. And that’s one of the reasons I did some little things, like John Brohm, bless his heart, from Toledo, he constantly complained that we were the university of central Ohio, not of Ohio. And so I did little thing. I changed the seal. I took Columbus off the seal and put the date on there. We’re the University of the State of Ohio. And that stuff, tiny little things by themselves, but they become very important. Culture of Ohio. One of the things that happened, as time went on of course, Jim Rhodes, Dick Celeste became Governor, a Democrat. And of course, as a result his appointees were Democrats. Never did the Democrat–Republican mix present a problem. And that I think is not only typical of Ohio State, but typical around the country. I’m sure occasionally it happens but usually the party doesn’t make much difference. If Dick Celeste were sitting in the room here, he would say that the biggest disservice he made to Ohio State was his Trustee appointment. That and while
they weren’t bad people, several of them simply just didn’t have the world experience to become Trustees of a $2 billion operation. My last Board, not bad people, but my Board did not like selective admissions. They didn’t like our attention to top scholars. Didn’t like our attention to selective investment.

Q. They thought you were going down an elitist road.

A. Right. Thought I was going to make it hard. And much as I tried, yes, I was going down an elitist road but I wasn’t going down a Harvard Road. I was going down an elitist road for a land grant institution. And that’s what I’m gratified about this building, is that this current Board recognizes that. This current Board is enormously supportive of Britt Kirwin’s initiatives in improving quality and so forth. I had forgotten that term, elitist. I got accused of that.

Q. Oh yes, I remember that quite well.

A. And of course I tried three times to fix intercollegiate athletics and never got it done. And they didn’t like that either. And on my last attempt to fix it resulted in a lot of controversy. “Why didn’t you handle that better?” Well, maybe I could have.

Q. Now you can add some information on something that our archivist, Rai Goerler, he said, “Ask President Jennings, can he explain to us why the administration building was named Bricker Hall?”

A. Well, I sure can. When I came I had a Board almost 100% appointed by Jim Rhodes. And of course Bricker was kind of the godfather of the Republicans in the great State of Ohio. And Bricker was getting close to death. So I go into a Trustees meeting, and incidentally when I say going into a Trustees meeting, this
was a meeting the night before. We always met the night before. That’s where
the business got done. The press knew that and they hated it. But there was not a
damn thing they could do about it. Cause you can’t talk about these things in
public and so forth. But Bricker’s getting old; it’s a Republican Board. And the
night before the Trustees meeting, I got a surprise. The Trustees came and said,
“You know Senator Bricker?” I said, “Yes, I know Senator Bricker.” “What we
want to do is name the law school the Bricker Law School.” And while I didn’t
say it, I thought, “Oh shit.” Cause I knew that that would create a firestorm
because of Bricker’s politics. Whatever your politics were, I can guarantee you
the law school was not there. They would not have agreed and they would have
just raised hell. And so I said, “Well, let’s think how we’re going to do this and
I’ll get back to you.” Cause I didn’t want to start my arguments then. But the
second thing is, and again my traditions, when I came here, I did not like the fact
that we had an administration building. I think that separated the administration
from the campus family. I wanted a name for the administration building. I
didn’t like, “That’s the administration building.” So I went to work on Dan
Galbreath and Jack Haurus and Len Immke and said, “Look, wouldn’t a greater
honor to Senator Bricker be naming the heart of the campus?” You could never
say that to the faculty. But this is where the President’s office is. This is where
the action is. I put very much on my corporate hat in that context. We were
President of the University is running this place. And the rest of these people are
employees. And Bricker Hall would be a much more fitting remembrance to
Senator Bricker than a law school. And they eventually bought that. But I

20
wouldn’t have named Bricker Hall after Bricker but I sure as hell wasn’t going to name the law school for Bricker. That would have been an absolute firestorm.

Q. I hope Rai is gratified when he hears the answer.
A. He didn’t like the administration building either.
Q. Oh, I think the arts and sciences faculty were not pleased. There was too much going right to raise a question.
A. Something was going to be named for Bricker.
Q. Right.
A. That’s interesting, in the arts and sciences, you guys didn’t complain. Nobody bitched about that.
Q. Well not to you.
A. Yea, maybe so.
Q. The historians, they were not pleased.
A. But we’ve got Rhodes Hall …
Q. It’s very fitting. He’s been a great man of Ohio politics, Governor, Senator, Vice Residential candidate. He was Chairman of the Board of Trustees here I believe of the University for a time. He earned it. You already talked a little bit about your capital funds campaign and now of course we’re way down the road from what you began. What would you say to University Presidents who are contemplating a sizable capital funds campaign?
A. We are way down the road. The standard rule of thumb in fundraising is you get 80% of your money from 20% of your people. 80-20 rule virtually all the way down the line. And you get it from your more senior, and incidentally it’s not just
alumni, it’s friends, it’s grateful patients. It is alumni but it a lot of people. The Ohio States of the world, the Minnesotas of the world and Indianas and so forth, we are still in terms of endowment size and annual fundraising, still well behind the Stanfords and the Harvards and so forth. We’ve got a long way to go. They’ve been doing this for 300 years. And so it’s there. But what I find fascinating, and we knew this in the 80’s, I’ll give you a statistic to put this in context. When I left Ohio State in 1990, I had graduated as President one-third of all the graduates in the history of the University. What that means is that the bulk of our graduates, the bulk of our alumni, are just now coming into their mature years and their wealthy years and their donation years. Which means that we have, we, this is all the big focus, have really just begun to tap the real resources that we can command. When we talk about an endowment today at Ohio State of a billion two, it’s probably not that much now with the market, but the last time I looked, it’s an awful lot of money but considering this institution has an annual budget of $2.2 billion, it’s not very much money. The income that would go to the colleges and various units out of that billion dollars would be about $50 million. Out of an annual budget of $2 billion, which is not really a lot of money. And so as a consequence, I think today fundraising is going to simply become more and more important and much more lucrative for these big state universities. Because our alumni are now just, they’re the baby boomers.

Q. Did the argument come in, as you were thinking about this, that you better be careful about how much money you might raise because it will undermine your request of the legislature for added subsidies?
A. Always. Not only that argument came up but the potential donors would say, “Look, I’ve already donated to Ohio State in terms of my taxes.” We would explain to them, though, and that’s where you heard me say state assisted, not state supported, all the time. We’d explain to them what percent of the budget the state support was. And we’d explain to them that if you want a chaired professor in mathematics, you’re not going to get that out of the state. You’ve got to have $1.5 million or $2 million to support that chaired professor in history or literature or wherever it might be. Or if you want the latest computer technology in the chemical lab, you’re going to have to support that. Or if you want a major set of buildings for the College of Business. You can get a new College of Business but you’re not going to get the kind of complex that we’ve got here. And that argument took a long time. I think we’ve overcome that argument now. I think that argument has pretty well gone away, primarily because virtually all of the big state universities now are doing it. We were one of the first. These other universities, there’s about four or five public universities, that are ahead of us. But they’re ahead of us for special reasons. Texas A&M are ahead of us in endowment. But theirs is really not fundraising because they count, there’s a tax on minerals coming out of Texas, that goes to education. And they count that as part of their, it’s a separate tax, they count. Minnesota counts their research grants and contracts in their fundraising, in their private fundraising, and we don’t. I don’t think we should. But we as a public, we’re one of the top five now in endowment and in fundraising and so forth. We’re about 20th in terms of all universities. But that’s the Harvards and the Northwesterns that have been doing
this for 200 years. I think that’s a major long term source of money for Ohio State and all the public universities.

Q. As you began then, you didn’t have that great confidence, but your appetite grew with the eating. Did you get personally involved in going to Pete Hall?

A. And we got an awful lot of good advice from ________. And this what I say management.

Q. That was the advisory firm?

A. Yea. And the best management is when the President goes to the large donor, typically that’s where the President goes is to the large donor. The large donor has already been asked, has for practical purposes already agreed to an amount, and the President is just finishing the deal. Now, that doesn’t mean that those donors don’t get invited to small dinners where the President gives a speech or take a trip to Florida and have a dinner at Betty Schumbaum’s place for maybe 15 people, all of whom are capable of giving a million plus dollars. And then giving them a speech of some sort. Actually, not a lot different, Marvin, than what we do with members of the General Assembly. ‘Cause that’s the way we raise money with the General Assembly. We go to small groups and do almost exactly the same thing. Give them a nice dinner and tell them about the University. That’s another thing where I had a huge advantage. And some of the people in Washington disagree with that, Ralph Nader particularly. But for most of my time dealing with the General Assembly, I could go to Vern Rife and if the answer is no, then I knew to forget it. If the answer is yes, yes I might help a lot of the other people but he would work with me. I think today things are more splintered. I think it’s
much harder to lobby the General Assembly. But if I got the agreement from the Governor and Vern Rife and President of the Senate, he’s a Congressman now from northwest Ohio, how quickly I forget. Doesn’t matter. If I could get their agreement, it’s pretty well done. But typically when a President comes in on a final deal is not making the ask, the final deal is you’re just wrapping up the documents.

Q. That’s a very interesting comparison though of working with the legislature and working with prospective donors. You ask what you want. You perhaps spend some personal time with them. I think probably they’d all like to be asked. Even Vern. People like to be asked to do things for important people.

A. And we did a lot of things for Vern too. That’s another thing I worry about, is that we took them all to bowl games and things like that. And the press says you can’t do that now. That hurts us because we would take these guys to a bowl game, they’re appreciative.

Q. Well let me switch over here and ask you a little bit about the research complex or research park you envisioned early in your Presidency. I suppose even today when I say the concept has not been fully realized.

A. Right.

Q. Would you tell us what major problems came as you worked toward this goal?

A. To some extent it was, and I think still today, to some extent it was me that was slowing down the progress. What I envisioned was a Bell Labs type of operation. Where it was basic research directed toward and applied activity. Bell Labs always was, and Jack Hollender always used to put it very well, an awful lot of
basic research done at Bell Labs was directed directly at making phone service better. But it might have been basic research. What I got into was these small high tech firms that already had developed an idea and now wanted to go into manufacturing. And they wanted to do that manufacturing at our research park, but essentially only that manufacturing at our research park. And I pretty well rejected those applications because I didn’t see how it helped the University. And I frankly didn’t see why the State of Ohio, through Ohio state, should subsidize a manufacturing operation. It would have been an indirect subsidy. But by and large it really would not have helped Ohio State very much. Unlike Battelle, for example, while there has never been great relationships with Battelle at any one time, Battelle has maybe 100 of our faculty working for them on either a consulting basis or research grant or something. There’s always been a good internal relationship with Battelle. And that’s the kind of thing I was envisioning. And that was a lot harder to find that I had originally thought. The Trustees were very much with us on that. To some extent, it was Havens’ idea to let’s get a research park going. Havens and Dan Galbreath. And still today, it’s very hard to attract that kind of activity to a university. Now bear in mind, I think if you look around, while that research hasn’t developed in a way we envisioned, what has developed is the City of Columbus and Central Ohio is much more of a high tech city than it was 20-25 years ago. And there’s an awful lot of research park equivalent, relationship with Ohio State. And we can’t take a lot of credit for it. But what we can take credit for is bringing in faculty that these companies wanted to research project. And we’ve got an awful lot of very good faculty who do very
pragmatic, damn-good research. To some extent, we all turn our nose up at that stuff. They do it at MIT and they do it at Iowa and Yale. We’ve got a huge, I don’t know whether they’ve still got it, but we had this huge project with this computer design of automobiles over in Engineering. It’s a pure commercial, practical thing. But the science of it is absolutely unbelievable. Where your wind tunnels without ever going through wind tunnels. You do a gas mileage test without ever driving the things, and things like that. Very practical applications but still very basic research. As long as you hold out that it’s got to be mostly research, it’s going to continue to be very hard for that to get going.

Q. Alright. Well, your need to leave, you need to leave no later than 10:30.

A. ‘Cause I’ve got to go across town.

Q. Dr. Jennings, I wonder if you’d like to make a few comments about some of the 18 Trustees that you worked with during your years. Those perhaps who were particularly helpful to you and maybe indicate why.

A. Well, of course Chet Devono was Chairman when I was hired. And Chet was very helpful of the early part of that period. But probably the most helpful Trustee was Jack Havens, John Havens. If you’re around Columbus you know the name of Jack Havens and Jack truly was a very supportive Board member. Was supportive in many of the controversial aspects of what I did. We had a South Africa issue and we worked out a compromise with the Black caucus in the General Assembly. Not what the youngsters were wanting us to do was to sell all our holdings in companies doing business in South Africa. And that was in direct conflict with the fiduciary responsibilities of the Trustees. But the compromise
we worked out is, over a five year period of time, we would reduce our holdings of companies doing business in South Africa, I think 1% a year, and also from a list from Reverend Sullivan of those companies that were doing business in South Africa which was “the official list.” Whether a company was doing business in South Africa or not was always very difficult to define. For example, Wendys was not on that list but Wendys had stores in Johannesburg. And of course from my Trustees that was a very difficult decision for them. And Jack was Chairman then. And Jack then was the final vote and when it came to Jack it was 4-4, and Jack voted in favor of the compromise. But Jack was one of these people that understood that what you had to do was what was best for the institution. Not to say that the other Trustees didn’t, but Jack understood in a corporate sense that you had to look out for the institution as a whole. Dan Galbreath became a good friend, both while on the Trustees and after the Trustees. Dan and I had a good close personal relationship and he was also very helpful. Ed Redman and Len Immke, Ed Redman, he’s still alive I think, in his 90’s, and crusty old guy. And I would almost every Board meeting, maybe I’ve told you this story, but almost every Board meeting an issue would come up and Ed would say, “You never told me about that. Why don’t I know about these things ahead of time.” I would say, “Well Ed, it’s all in the docket book.” And he said, “Well, you don’t expect me to read that stuff, do you?” And he of course was the only one that would admit that he hadn’t done that. And of course, Len Immke became a fairly close personal friend. Len was kind of a person that showed me around the community if you will, early on. John Byroun from Toledo was very helpful. John was
really behind the creation of the class that I ended up teaching after I got out of the Presidency. Where youngsters were investing real money. And John was very helpful. Alex Shumate came late but Alex was and still is a pretty good friend and very helpful. So by and large, I had a very good board. Jim Hilliker was a good friend. Jim Hilliker was a young man at the time and became a good friend. And while not experienced in large organizations, Jim began to understand large organizations quite well, quite well. So by and large, an awfully good group.

Q. Well as long as we’re on personnel, let’s think a little bit about the persons that you brought to your immediate aide as well as the Deans of the Colleges. You had five Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs and many Deans during these years. And I wonder if you would just like to comment on those that you found particularly insightful, particularly helpful, moved the program along and really proficient in skillful ways.

A. Well, Dieter of course was really my first Provost. Dieter Heinike was my first Provost and Reynolds left within a year of when I became President. Ann’s leaving was mutual. That was not, she was not getting along with Ohio State very well. Dieter brought in, again, Dieter was a very well respected Dean of Humanities. And I also was very anxious to make a statement that the Provosts should, first of all, be an outstanding scholar and while Dieter could have been a better scholar had he stayed in scholarship, up until that time he was a well respected scholar, and did a marvelous job for us. And he was, I think, one of my real good appointments. I think, sure he had some controversy with him, but I think, well he was your Dean I guess, wasn’t he? Francille probably, even though
it was a very short period of time, was our best Provost. She was Acting Provost and I could not sell the family on a Home Economics Dean becoming Provost of Ohio State. But Francille had all the right attitudes and a very fine administrator. Francille, I think, probably if she had had a longer time, would have been considered one of the better Provosts at Ohio State. And supportive of the scholarship even though she did not come from a tradition of scholarship. That’s not to say they didn’t do scholarship in Home Economics, but it wasn’t part. Francille, very good. And of course, Fred Hutchinson, I was able to sell Fred Hutchinson. And Fred from Ag., and of course Fred became President of the University of Maine shortly after. Miles Brand did a very good job for us. Miles was not all that popular with the faculty, with the community at large. Part of the reason though was some of the things I had ask him to do. It was in the late 80’s there. The planning was becoming a hot topic in not only universities but corporations and so forth. And I had asked Miles to develop an academic plan. And that was something Ohio State had really never done before and Miles got an awful lot of resistance to that. And I have to admit that I was not a planner in the modern sense. I was certainly a planner. But I did not typically believe in writing things down. An example of that, one of my good friends was Kent Keller, President of the University of Minnesota. And University of Minnesota in the early 80’s was about in the same spot Ohio State was. Long land grant tradition, open admissions, etc., etc. And he developed a written document about we’re going to go to selective admissions, we’re going to start fundraising, we’re going to bring in top faculty. We’re going to put an emphasis on research. And of
course as soon as that document hit the public fairways, Ken was doomed, and they got him, not for that academic plan, well that was the reason, they got him because he remodeled his house that was falling down and spent too much money on it and so forth.

Q. You think Miles took some heat because he was out front with you on the affirmative action?

A. Yea, Miles was very helpful on affirmative action. He administratively put together the Young Scholars Program, which was not well accepted, because it was expensive. It was expensive. He was doing some of the President’s dirty work, which a Provost is supposed to do. That’s one of the functions of a Provost, is to do the President’s dirty work. But Miles was a good Provost and ended up being a good President of Oregon and I hope he’s doing well at Indiana. He had a similar athletic problem I did. He got beat up pretty badly on that. I think Miles was better than the Ohio State family thought he was. And I think the reason he’s become a good President is because some of Miles’ almost natural abrasiveness he’s moderated a bit. And when he came to Ohio State, he still had some of that natural abrasiveness that I don’t think he has anymore.

Q. Well, it’s always hard to tell too if a man has real courage when he’s acting at the behest of someone else.

A. That’s right. And the trouble, that’s one of the major troubles with these major universities, is that sports will interfere with the activity. There’s no President around that thinks we ought to eliminate sports. The fundamental trouble is that the big sports have a culture that is just totally different than the academic culture.
And by and large they are supported by people, the most vocal supporters in sports are people that really have no association with the University other than the sports. And every President around gets some sort of problem with intercollegiate athletics.

Q. Did you get any help in particular from the Trustees when you were going through the Bay Bruce period or did they more reflect the values of the larger community concerned about athletics?

A. The Trustees were very supportive of me on that. Ed Redman was Chairman then. And Ed Redman was very supportive. The reality is, I probably should have taken the advice of the Trustees three years ago. The Trustees had been wanting to fire the coach for at least three years. And people as me, “Was that a mistake?” The mistake I made in that incident I made three years before when I hired Rick Bay as Athletic Director. Rick Bay took an attitude that intercollegiate athletics was just separate from the University and Presidents didn’t have the right to screw around in there. And that mistake was a legitimate mistake in the sense that I had changed the Athletic Director because there were a lot of things in athletics that needed changing. And I wanted to bring somebody in from the outside to a take a new fresh look at this. And Rick Bay fooled me. He came in as this great supporter of academics and on and on and on, and it turns out he wasn’t at all. He simply wasn’t. And the reality is that we fired them both at the same time. And that’s why all the bitching came.

Q. Yes, I remember this well.
A. And of course I was having personal problems at the same time. And don’t do divorce at the same time.

Q. Well when it rains it pours.

A. I was getting accused of screwing every woman in Columbus and of course none of that was true. But Miles was, yea. I also have to mention Weldon Ihrig, who was my Financial Vice President. As we’ve talked about, when I first came here, we had a huge financial issue. And Harold’s Financial Vice President, I forget his name, had left a couple months before I arrived. And so when I got there I had no Financial Vice President. And a mistake a President can make is becoming his or her own Financial Vice President. And of course from the campus’ point of view that was tempting in my case since I had been a Financial Vice President. But I had nobody internally at a high level. And Welden was there as somebody in the finance office and a woman by the name of Judy Washburn was also there. I don’t know if you remember. So I basically put them jointly in charge of the finance. Judy was just extremely good. And unfortunately, about six months later Judy died from cervical cancer. It’s a terrible thing to say but Judy’s death saved me a problem because I had to eventually make one of them the Financial Vice President. And Weldon became an outstanding Financial Vice President and that has been verified. He’s now the Executive Vice President at the University of Washington. And really awfully good. Dick Jackson on the physical plant side. Dick was very helpful and as you may know, Dick was well connected to the political structure downtown. And I’d been at Ohio State a week and Dick came into my office and this action put us pretty close together. Dick was in charge
basically of both maintenance and buildings and so forth at the institution. Well he came in with architectural drawings. I mean by the dozen. “What is this, Dick?” What it was, was architectural drawings to put a D deck on the stadium. And I said, “Jesus Christ, Dick, we can’t do that now.” And he said, “I figured we couldn’t, but if we put this D deck and the stuff down the side can all be academic stuff and so forth.” And I went to Jack Havens and explained to Jack Havens that you can’t ask any President to come in if he wants to really change the academic culture. The first thing he does is put a D deck on the stadium. Of course Jack said, “You didn’t do it. It would be fine.” But Jack understood and we put an immediate stop to that. And incidentally, that probably was the first step in pretty serious tension between the President and intercollegiate athletics, because I really put a stop to what’s being done now. We at least postponed it for ten years. And Dick was very helpful. And Dick was also helpful to me in the sense that I did not realize, I had been at Iowa, little tiny town of 50,000. Then I had been in Laramie, Wyoming, a tiny town of 30,000. And I did not realize that when you came to a University President in a large city, you had to accept police protection pretty much all the time. And that’s something, I was totally naïve on that. But I quickly learned that you better have the guys around. And Dick kind of educated me in what bad things can happen to a President if they don’t rely on the police. And then one has to mention Madison Scott. Madison Scott was Secretary of the Board of Trustees and that put us very close. And he was also Vice President of Personnel. What do we call it now? Human Relations. But Scotty was extremely helpful. Scotty, as everybody knows, could be enormously
frustrating because Scotty, “By God we’ve been doing it this way for twenty years, and you young squirts aren’t going to come in and change it.” But he adapted and changed and was not only helpful with the Trustees but also helpful with showing me around the University. Scotty, more than anybody, not so much on the faculty side but on the staff side and we always have to remember from a University President, especially at Ohio State, that there are 20,000 staff members who keep the lights on and run the place. And you’ve got to have their support too. At least I believe that. And I believe that because most of the staff developed the same cultural attitude that the faculty does. Most of the staff believe in joint governance. Most of the staff roughly understand joint governance, expect that. Most of the staff have every bit as much tenure as a full professor. And in fact they do. And many of the staff are highly skilled people that have chosen a university career for the advantages of a university career and get paid less than if they were out at Bank One or something like that. Most of us don’t see how many of these greatly skilled people that support this place. It’s not a criticism of Ohio State faculty. Every faculty in the country typically doesn’t appreciate what the staff does. And at Ohio State with a 1,000 bed hospital with 12,000 bed dormitory system, you’ve just got an awful lot of staff. And Scotty was very helpful in that regard. One of the things that very few people realize is that within about three or four years, with Scotty’s help, we were able to get our civil service people out of the state civil service system. And they remain outside the state civil service system today. Still a lot of the bureaucratic things are left over from that but it gives a great deal more flexibility. Deans. There are some really
marvelous, marvelous people. The Dean probably that made the greatest changes in his college during my time was Bill Wallace in Dentistry. Dentistry had fallen on very hard times in 1980. And Bill Wallace was a controversial appointment about six months before I got there. The Provost and the President had not recommended him. They had recommended somebody else and the Trustees came in and put in Bill Wallace at the urging of the Ohio Dental Association. Bill turned out to be not only a marvelous Dean, but one that changed that College. That College is now one of the top five or six Colleges of Dentistry in the country contrasted to really down at the bottom when he came. And when I say top five or six, I mean not just in practice, but on the research as well. They have done a tremendous job and Bill Wallace has to be given a great deal of credit. Bill also was very helpful in teaching other Deans the financial concepts that I was trying to educate the Deans in. Bill immediately understood that the conventional wisdom on finance at Ohio State was simply wrong. The conventional wisdom was, that the General Assembly appropriated money on a line item basis and that you couldn’t move salary money to expenses, etc., etc. That had changed in the early 1960’s. Where a Dean can move money around in any way he or she sees fit. And incidentally, that flexibility saved us in the early days and Bill Wallace understood that right now. ‘Cause time and time again was trying to educate the Deans that we had the financial flexibility. Just to give you an example, in those early days when we were cutting budgets enormously and we gave Andy Brokernz, who was Dean of the Arts and a marvelous Dean, a Dean that I became friends with. But Andy was a singer and didn’t have a lot of patience with finance
shall we say. I forget the numbers but in any case I think when we had this $55 million budget cut, Andy’s share was a million dollars or something like that. And when we presented Andy with that, Andy said, “Well, it can’t be a million dollars, by budget is only $35,000.” I said, “Andy, no, your budget is more than that.” And he said, “No, it’s only $35,000. You don’t understand.” I said, “Andy, what’s your salary? I bet it’s more than $35,000.” He said, “Oh, well, salary money doesn’t count.” I said, “It sure as hell does count.” And he was looking at simply the flexible money. And was one of many Deans who were saying the legislature appropriated money in these boxes and you couldn’t move it. And that wasn’t the case. But Andy was a good guy. Have to single out Manual Tzagournis. And testimony of course is that he was Dean for probably close to 25 years. A long time. And Manny took very much, as you may remember, a couple of years before, maybe three years before I came, there was a huge fight in the College of Medicine over the practice plan. And it ended up with a separate hospital Board, a Board that reported to the Trustees. And a very weak practice plan. Weak from an academic sense, in the sense that it did not encourage research activities, did not encourage supporting young faculty members to get their research going and so forth. Manny knew that and Manny also knew that I came from the University of Iowa, which probably has the best medical practice plan in the country. And we essentially put in, with some controversy but not a lot, a model very similar to the University of Iowa’s practice plan. With the help of Manual and with the help of a man named Grant Morrow, who was the Medical Director at Childrens Hospital, which is Ohio State’s Pediatric Department. And we put in a
departmental practice plan that now, I was talking to a physician just the other
day, and the new Dean wants to change some things with the faculty plan. And
there’s things that need changing. But this doctor said, “We’ve got the perfect
practice plan right now.” And of course it wasn’t though of. But Manny’s
leadership there was enormously helpful. Also was enormously helpful in the
development of the James Cancer facility. That was enormously controversial
before I got there. Continued to be controversial in the sense that we shouldn’t
spend this money on this. We’ve already got a hospital and so forth and so on.
And what the world wasn’t recognizing is that in that period of time, and it still
hasn’t really happened yet, but science was discovering an awful lot about cancer
at that stage. Basic research that we really needed across the country, a strong
emphasis where that experimentation can take place. And we got the cancer
hospital. And of course it was not only controversial to build it but then we had all
kinds of problems building the thing. And Manny and Dick Jackson were very
helpful there. We broke a water main.

Q. Yes, I was going to ask you what your first thoughts were when you heard about
the water main break, with water pouring out the windows?

A. Yea, yea.

Q. It was mid-winter.

A. Yea, it was mid-winter and we broke a water main. It not only set the place back
but had to cost us $10 million. It had all been drywalled up to that point. And a
cancer hospital has to be sterile or has to be places that are sterile. Well, you
could dry out the drywall but not on the inside of it. And somebody had to rip out
all the drywall. It was a mess. But it got up and going. Manual and Dick Jackson were very helpful in that regard. Got to single out Bill Studer. I didn’t have very much, and I know he’s doing this project with you, but never had a lot of activity with Bill. But Bill kind of led the charge of computerizing the library, as you know. Eliminating the card catalog. If we weren’t the first we were pretty damn close to the first. And that went off as smoothly as one could possibly imagine. When that was brought to me I said, “Yea, we’re going to have to do it, but that’s going to be hugely controversial.” But Bill shepherded that through very, very well. He kept the old card catalog alive for a while and so forth. But I was expecting an awful lot of controversy with that and didn’t get it. And Bill went through that. Jim Meeks in the College of Law, wasn’t a good friend but Jim Meeks was at the Law School at the University of Iowa when I was there. And so we knew each other there. And Jim led a charge, we’re on a quarter system at Ohio State. And virtually every law school in the country is on a semester system. And all the bar exams, everything is tied to that calendar. And Jim comes sheepishly into me one day and says, “We need to go to a semester system.” And I said, “Well would you do that if it was just the College of Law.” And he said, “Well sure. Think you can accommodate that?” I said, “Sure, I can accommodate that. That’s fine. Let’s don’t bring up going to the semester system at this stage for the whole campus ‘cause that’s going to be a huge deal if we ever did that.” And Jim put in that, he not only, the only thing he did was to improve our law school enormously. But little things. Came in and said, “We need a writing class in law school.” I said, “A writing class? I thought lawyers knew
how to write to begin with.” It turns out they don’t. But little things like that that
either put in. Also was extremely helpful in some of the legislative activities. ‘Cause
of course there was an awful lot of legislative pressure to improve the law school,
build a big building, because many of them were graduates of the College of Law.
And Jim was very helpful there. Joan Huber in the College of Social and
Behavioral Sciences. Joan Huber came to us from the University of Illinois and
just had what I thought were all the absolute right attitudes about general liberal
arts education and research and was marvelously helpful in a lot of things. And of
course, when Fred left, Fred Hutchinson left, I was still President but I
recommended her to the Trustees as the Acting. I can’t remember what I
appointed her, permanent Provost. I think it was Acting Provost. Because Joan
had all the right attitude. Mike Riley. Everybody likes Mile Riley but he could be
a huge pain in the ass. I remember a conversation, this is maybe in my last year
with Miles Brand or maybe next to last year, but Mike had a deficit of about $7
million. You probably know.

Q. I know. I was his Associate Dean. I’ve heard about this.

A. And we had to come down hard on Mike. And should we fire Mike? And Miles
said, ”Well, you know, in Mike’s tenure that College has improved enormously.
The academic quality of that College in almost every area has gone up
considerably.” I think it has. And I said, “Well there’s your answer. That’s the
most important thing. Let’s get some financial management in there because he
has got all the right instincts.” What Mike did that got him in trouble, what I said
on the finance side is, “Guys, in your colleges you’ve always got empty lines.
You’ve always got empty salary lines. You can use that money.” What Mike did though, is he used that money for permanent appointments instead of temporary. But the simple fact is, that in terms of what a Dean is supposed to do other than finance, he did. He got the quality there and understood the quality. Mike was a good scholar but certainly not a great scholar by any stretch of the imagination. Came to us from Milwaukee I think.

Q. University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee.
A. But brought in some wonderful people, preached quality right down the line.

Mike probably was dumb like a fox in the sense that he knew the hell what he was doing and he just knew he wasn’t supposed to do it. But he used temporary cash, money for permanent staff. He was there. Don Glower in Engineering. Don was the first Dean to embrace fundraising, private fundraising. Don had, independent of me, set up his own fundraising operation and was very helpful early on in advising us as to how to fundraise. Don was really the only one on campus who knew much about fundraising and was of course very helpful. I’m looking down here, down the line. TomTobin, in terms of, Tom I knew at Iowa and Tom was not my first choice for that position. Tom did a wonderful job in setting up the structure and setting up the organization. Tom left here not being very well thought of, primarily because once he got in set up he wasn’t very good at running it. And those are very different skills. And I probably should have moved on him a couple of years before, but I was so grateful in what he had done to set the place up. I was probably being too kind in his shortcomings of running the place. That’s this guy right now, Jerry May, Jerry May probably would have had a hard
time setting it up but he can run it extremely well. Al Kuhn kind of was a back
room advisor. I knew Al Kuhn when he was Provost here in the 70’s and knew he
had great respect among the faculty and had been an awfully good Provost. I
think he had also been Dean of Humanities.

Q. He’s a very fine person.

A. Sue Blanchen. Sue Blanchen helped me a great deal with the gay community.
And Rhonda Rivera, a faculty member over in the law school, helped me.
Rhonda eventually got mad at me when I couldn’t quite go as far with the gay
community as she thought I should go. But nevertheless, those two were very
helpful with the gay community. And in the end I think we, Rhonda got mad at
me when I couldn’t make the fringe benefits available to their gay partner, to their
partner, that I think is either done now or about to be done. But again, it was an
idea that was a little too radical for the Trustees and for central Ohio too. And the
definitions were a little fuzzy too. It couldn’t be just anybody. But nevertheless,
very helpful. Nick Nelson I knew early on and Nick was helpful but Frank Hale
and Madison Scott and Rus Spillman were the ones that were most helpful to me
in dealing with the minority community, with the Black, with the Afro-American
community. And each in a different context. Rus in the context of students;
Scotty in the context of the downtown minority community; Frank in the context
of a minority faculty. Each had his or her own particular activity. Even though, I
have to say, that each one of those and all of my staff, were opposed to the Young
Scholars Program. The Young Scholars Program was a program which was too
expensive, didn’t have a proven record, etc., etc. And it was expensive. And I
think I’ve been proven right since then, that’s it’s expensive but it has generated some youngsters that have been very helpful to us.

Q. Right now I’m trying to get a young man into it who I met while I was rehabbing a house. And he’s a very clever, a very smart fellow. And if I can get him in, I’m going to be thrilled.

A. The thing I was disappointed with my staff people was, it was directed at kids that were in grade schools that statistically had no chance of even finishing high school. Some of them would have. But statistically they had no chance. And of course, what I was running into was not so much a prejudice against African Americans; what I was running into was a class prejudice. ’Cause these kids were the poorest of the poor that we were running into. I think one of the university’s, not just Ohio State, but still with the African American community, is we are probably, we’ve probably eliminated most of our prejudice against Blacks, but we still have an awful lot of class prejudice as a society. We will discriminate by class and not so much consciously, but unconsciously.

Q. Would you like to talk a little bit about the affirmative action initiatives now that were such a prominent part of your years? Some think it’s one of the crowning glories of the administration. What were the most difficult times in dealing with it and what kind of a price did you have to pay as a President in trying to get some of these things through with a community that’s essentially conservative in nature?
A. The interesting thing for me personally is that my economics, in the end I’m a University of Chicago economist, which is a free market, meritorious, off you go. You earn your stripes. I’m oversimplifying.

Q. Sounds from Freedmanisk.

A. Very Freedman. I’m very much Milton Freedman. And so philosophically, affirmative action is not something that I resonate to. That you can earn your stripes and that as long as the laws are there, we should live in a meritorious society. But from a practical point of view, there were so many, there are so many social impediments to minorities, that we had to do something in the affirmative action area. And we did it in a major way. I never got openly criticized that I know of, on some of my affirmative action initiatives. I certainly got criticized internally. You know, when we were on selective admission, we forced what, had to have 1,500 African Americans, something like that, which probably in those days was against the law. And we forced search committees. And while I wasn’t openly criticized, I know every search committee was saying, “God-damn Jennings is trying to make us hire Blacks” and this, that and the other thing. And I was. But I was also trying to do it in the context.

Q. Women as well?

A. Women as well. And I wasn’t really concerned about Hispanics because we didn’t have many Hispanics and Ohio doesn’t have many Hispanics. And incidentally, and you reminded me of this, I’m sure you know there is always a tension between the women and the African Americans. Because the African American culture, especially at the lower income levels, is very conservative in
terms of rights to women. It was all of those things and we might list them off cause I’m forgetting.

Q. Sure. John Gabel in his history has sections on the affirmative action grants program, with 270 proposals during the years you were president. The Distinguished Affirmative Action Awards Program, many actions to bring more women to the faculty, the President’s Committee on Career Development, the Office of Human Relations was created in November, 1985. Then you appointed a President’s Staff Advisory Committee to help you along. And then the whole Black recruitment area which was …

A. Well again, it was a believer that, and we were a little early for that. Now everybody believes that diversity is an advantage on a campus. It wasn’t necessarily the case 20 years ago. I’ve always believed that. And I’ve always believed that education is the root to an ethnic group improving themselves. And I’ve also believed that the American system of higher education, one of its functions historically has been to bring an ethnic group out of minority status and into the mainstream of American society. That whether we’re talking about Irish or Italians or whoever it might be, the second generation has broken away from their disadvantages because of their ethnic group through education. And that the land grant universities have been a major part in that. And I’m absolutely confident that it would have been just as controversial in 1900 to bring Irish in as it was to bring African Americans in. But the history of Ohio State and all of the great land grant universities has been to bring ethnic groups into the mainstream. And in that context, despite my free market attitudes, I felt Ohio State had a
responsibility to do what we could to bring ethnic groups, and in my time, that was African American and women into the mainstream of Ohio State. We had some successes. And incidentally, that was also one of the reasons we went to the selective admissions, is that we had an enrollment limit and we were closing enrollment a year before freshmen matriculated. And what that meant was that high school students who weren’t getting good counseling in their junior year, had no chance of coming to Ohio State, and of course that was minorities. And particularly minorities from the inner city core. And with our admissions policy, which was not an open admission policy, it was a selective admission policy, but it was selective on the basis of when you applied. We were closing out African Americans by the gross. And so statistically we did improve. I’m still confidence we haven’t improved enough today. But it’s part of a changing culture, that there’s some different cultural impediments to bringing the Black community along.

Q. The Maury Jones Committee Report on bringing more women into the faculty was quite critical about the University and the Departments and the Deans Offices. Did you feel there was silent resistance on the part of the male faculty to bring in additional women?

A. There was. And I’m not sure it was conscious. I’m trying to be charitable. The academic community has a tradition, strong tradition, of hiring from where they know. You want to hire a Ph.D. in eighteenth century English literature, you seek out the people, the faculty members, who are specializing in eighteenth century English literature. And you hire their Ph.D. students. And we’ve been doing that
ever since the academic community began. You know that as well as I do. And as a consequence, we were looking at the places we knew. We were looking at the Big Ten universities or perhaps the Pack Ten universities. Might have been looking at the Ivy League universities. And you were typically looking at senior faculty Ph.D. students and of course senior faculty in 1985 were all male. And it was a sign of resistance but it was a sign of resistance based on the tradition of the way we hired people. And that, I think, was the biggest obstacle to overcome of hiring women or minorities, is that our traditional places of looking for young faculty members simply weren’t where the minorities were or the women were. Now certainly some exceptions to that. But by and large, we essentially hired from the Ph.D. students of our long time colleagues across the country. And that was the thing we had to overcome and I think we probably still have to overcome that. Now, what’s changed is that there are more women and minorities in Ph.D. programs at those schools. But in those days, there just weren’t many and we had to look to places, the Howard Universities and places like that.

Q. I guess it was far easier for some fields to make this adjustment because they had a lot more women in the Ph.D. pipelines.

A. One of my proudest hires is when I was a Department Chairman of Business Administration at the University of Iowa. And University of Iowa is a Big Ten school. We hired always from the Big Ten or Ivy League or Pack Ten. And I hired a woman, Susie Phillips, as Department Chairman in Business. You didn’t always have to have the recommendation of the faculty. We were a little more autocratic then, then the large college. And she was from LSU. Well, I got all
kinds of static for hiring Susan Phillips from LSU. That just wasn’t the proper thing. Well, I tell that story because Susan Phillips just left the governorship of the U.S. Federal Reserve on the open market committee, and one of the most influential monetarists in the world. And has done pretty damn well for a little girl from New Orleans. But we simply, nobody looked at Susan’s credentials. She was from LSU. That wasn’t the proper university. I’m exaggerating of course. LSU is a fine university. But the University of Iowa doesn’t hire from LSU.

Q. In this area, you had many things that people are going to point to for years as great achievements. Anything that kind of jumps to your mind that you are most happy about as you think?

A. A lot of things. One of the things and the politicians will criticize me for this, but the public perception is that Ohio’s Selective Excellence Program was all Dick Celeste. Dick Celeste was very supportive but it wasn’t his idea. It was our idea. Herb Asher and I went down to Vern Riffe and talked about this. And the Selective Excellence Program was MS scholars. It was a percentage of federal dollars that we brought in and a variety of other things. And basically we put together that with the General Assembly, with the Governor’s support, but not the Governor’s active support, and the other University Presidents. And I think that was not only a lot of money, but symbolically it said an awful lot to not only the Ohio State family but the State of Ohio. And it’s called to Selective Investment, not Selective Excellence. I always got kidded about using the word excellence too much. I guess I’m proud of that because I don’t think I’ve been given enough credit for it.
Q. Okay. That’s good to know.

A. But that’s neither here or there. It doesn’t matter really who gets credit but now it’s 20 years later.

Q. As a historian I’ll have to disagree with that. I think you like to know the origins of the ideas.

A. But that was where we got that started. Obviously, the selective admissions is working out, really actually believe it or not, faster than I thought it would. We’ve got to be ten years ahead of where I thought we’d be right now on selective admissions. I think that’s working out extremely well. We’ve still got a ways to go. We’ve got a ways to go with the students we have. We’ve got a ways to go with the faculty understanding that, if you really are admitting on the basis of scholastic ability, then what you’re saying when you admit a kid is that the kid can not only graduate but instead of taking an attitude that, youngster, you’re on your own, we’ve got to take on responsibility and considers ourselves failing if that kid doesn’t graduate. And all of our faculty today do not yet have that attitude. Many of them do of course. We’ve still got a ways to go on that.

Q. Let me ask you about the regional campuses that we have now at Lima, Marion, Mansfield, and Newark. Did you have a set of ideas as you moved along as to what direction they ought to take?

A. Regional campuses first of all, extremely small in the great picture of things. And so a University President doesn’t pay a lot of attention to them. I didn’t. Paid some attention to them but not much. I frankly think the regional campuses were hurt by being part of Ohio State. They of course will never be separated
from Ohio State ‘cause those communities want to be part of Ohio State. And most of the faculty want to be part of Ohio State. The issues involved that came up with the regional campuses over and over again was, where does the faculty member’s tenure lie? As you know, the tenure lies with the regional campus and yet, their promotion lies with the Department in Columbus. And of course, time and time again, we said well if our promotion lies with the Department in Columbus, we ought to have tenure in that Department and so forth. And I don’t blame them for having that attitude. What I blame them for is they didn’t understand that if we moved there, chances are they’d never get tenure by a vote of the faculty. Because the faculty pretty much understood that theirs was much more of a teaching issue and less of a research mission than what they would demand out of Columbus. And I agreed with that. I also agreed that we had to make amends for it. I did like the attitude that the Columbus faculty had a say in their tenure because that was an outsider looking in and could take a look at that. And be more realistic in looking at. But also, and mostly liberal arts departments, understood completely that you ought to measure them on their teaching capabilities and that research was not as primary as it would be at Columbus. I also thought that they ought to confine themselves to a two year degree, which they didn’t particularly like. They wanted to move to a four year degree. Moving to a four year degree wasn’t just resources but they simply weren’t big enough individually to move to a four year degree. ‘Cause they didn’t have quite the economy to scale to offer a four year degree. Now occasionally there were a few four year degrees in an elementary education degree and a couple of them and so
forth. But I never thought that we ought to eliminate them. But I think could you start over a full fledged community college in those areas would have served not only the community but their faculty better than being part of Ohio State. To some extent those cultures have a problem. By and large we had good Deans there. We had good people there. They were never much of a problem. They probably got insulted when we eliminated John Mount’s position as Vice President of Regional Campus and put an Associate Provost in there. But I think they got over that. That never bothered me much.

Q. You mentioned the problem of dealing with tenure at the regional campuses. What was your experience in working with the University Library faculty and the expectations that rose with regard to their publication?

A. Well, first of all, and we add another group that was part of the faculty that was unusual and that was the Extension people in terms of agriculture. And personally, my bias was librarians should not be members of the faculty and Extension people should not be members of the faculty. Their function was not a faculty function even though it had elements of a faculty function. In terms of the library tenure and promotion, Bill Studer kept all those issues basically away from me. And I wasn’t about to take that issue on. And the same thing happened with Max Lennon and Francille Firebaugh in the College of Agriculture. And so I never, the Provost may have had some problems with that, but I never paid much attention to that, frankly because I didn’t think it was hurting anything. And Bill will know, not only was my mother a librarian, she taught Library Science at Rutgers, and her husband, my stepfather when I was completely grown, was also
a Library Science professor at Rutgers. It wasn’t that I was biased against librarians; it was that I didn’t think their function was generally a faculty function. And while it had elements of faculty activity, it was more of an administrative function.

Q. Alright. Let me ask you a little bit about politics here. I’m curious about your approach to dealing with legislators and the Governor’s office. What were your lines to them? Were they direct or were they mainly worked out with Herb Asher or other representatives?

A. Well they were both. They were direct and they were with Herb. Herb was of course the first contact. And Bill Napier before him. Herb was of course the first contact. But I insisted with Herb that I see the leadership and be seen by the politicians downtown on a frequent basis. And typically my philosophy was, is I wanted to see them most frequently without asking for anything. Having coffee with them, having a drink with them, chatting about the Cleveland Indians or the football team or what not. Because I’m a believer that you get friends with them and I think that worked. And three days a week I would have some dealing with the politicians someplace. Then as you know, I think that paid off because we got very good support from the politicians. And I still believe today, even though the amount of appropriations is still such a minor part, they are still our owners. In the end they are our owners and they can do any damn thing they want to with us. And so I believe in keeping in touch with the stockholders and that’s the General Assembly. And I think I surprised Bill Napier who was Herb’s position when I first got here, of wanting to see these people as much as I did. And Jim Rhodes,
Dick Celeste would always take my phone calls direct. Vern Riffe would certainly take my phone calls direct. Who’s the President of the Senate? Stan Aronoff would. And also, I wanted to be just seen around the state houses, so that the legislators who weren’t the leadership there could come and ask me things. Yes, I went to all the hearings and so forth. But that’s not where the business got done. The press knew that. They didn’t like it. I wanted to be able to, and many of the legislatures got to where they would call me direct and so forth. Also made it clear early on that, and every new President has to go through this, that when a member of the General Assembly calls you up and says, “Johnny has to go to Ohio State. He’s been turned down.” Even before selective admissions. Also made it clear that we’re not going to give Johnny any special treatment. And you have to do that early on. If you don’t, then you’ll get inundated with calls. And they eventually understood that. They understood that because they knew damn well that if it ever came out that Johnny got special treatment because of them, then they’re dead. And I got that from a lot of business people too. And alumni and so forth. Early on, a man who was my first wife’s uncle, who lived in Ohio, and his son had been a foreign service diplomat. And now his grandson wanted to come to veterinary medicine. And why can’t his grandson get in-state tuition? ‘Cause his father hasn’t been well. His father’s been serving, etc. Sorry, he hasn’t been in Ohio. He’s not an Ohioan. And you absolutely have to do that. But while I’m not a politician and don’t particularly like politics, most politicians are pretty good people. Most politicians want to do the right thing. I am a little worried that we’ve got more professional politicians today than we have, not so
much in my day but 50 years ago. But most of them want to do the right thing. They understand higher education. And a lot of their complaining is for their constituency. They still support us. But I wanted to be available so if they had a complaint, they could come to me and tell me.

Q. Your comments about getting phone calls about Johnny not getting to OSU reminds me that President Enarson mentioned when he left office, that he had resisted pressures upon him. Where these the kinds of things you think he was mentioning?

A. Yea, sure. There’s pressures on graduate schools. Occasionally pressures to change a grade. There’s still a lot of people in the world that … “Glad to hear, glad to talk to you, Dr. Jennings up in Cleveland. You said when we left if there’s anything I can do to help, just let me know. Well let me tell you.” If you’re going to be a University President you’ve just got to expect that. You just have to expect that. And you try and deflect that as much as you possibly can. And my staff, one of the things I would do, particularly in the selective admissions era, would be if somebody asked me about why Johnny couldn’t get I, I’d try and find out. And I’d say to the person, “Well, let’s find out what happened.” Whether it was a mistake or not. Typically it wasn’t. But let’s try and find out what happened.

Q. There’s another area I wanted to ask you about and that is you did quite a bit of traveling overseas, extending in a sense, the arm of the University to a whole variety of nations where you established agreements of various kinds. Are these relationships becoming more important to the welfare of Ohio State?
A. I think so. I frankly think it's interesting you say that. I frankly don't think I traveled enough. The typical undergraduate student at Ohio State is deep in their bones a midwestern isolationist. And that isn’t the world anymore. We are not fortress United States anymore. We might be fortress United States in terms of events but we are not fortress United States. Trade barriers are coming down despite the steel tariffs that Bush put on. Trade barriers are coming down. The world is open to us and economically, we’ve got to trade because our domestic market is pretty well saturated. And a youngster needs to get exposed. We still, I don’t think, expose them enough. Different people, different cultures, different attitudes. And plus the fact is that the more we can graduate kids, the greater advantages we’re going to have at Ohio State fifty years from now, when those kids are in leadership positions. And we did. Agriculture had a huge grant from Japan in about 1985. This was five or six million dollars, on making ice cream. This was from a Japanese graduate of the College of Agriculture in 1918, somewhere around there, and was grateful. And this wasn’t fundraising. This was a research grant and he had been in Japanese agriculture for years and made a fortune doing that. And great example of where a foreign student paid off long term to Ohio State. But also, the less tangible payoffs of a kid from Bellefontaine, Ohio meeting a student from China, who was raised under or certainly his family raised under a Communist dictatorship, and to meet and get to know that person. Or just even be exposed to that person is enormously helpful.

Q. So were you trying in part to raise the visibility of Ohio State abroad, to attract the best students?
A. Not only attract the best students, but attract the best research grants, and attract the reputation of Ohio State. Because Ohio State already had a major reputation around the world, but primarily in agriculture. In Afghanistan, we did a huge Afghan project in the 1950’s. We’ve still got several faculty in agriculture, many of whom are retired or close to retired, who spent one, two, three, four years in Afghanistan on projects like that. We had a huge project in Indonesia and one in Malaysia. The China thing was really Jim Rhodes had opened that up initially. And then we’ve got this relationship with Wuhon University in turn with high pay. We had about 1,000 Chinese students in my day, half of which from the Mainland and half of which from Taiwan. There were occasionally faculty but it was good exposure for them. But it was raising, and when I say international, I don’t mean international in the sense of University of Maryland. The University of Maryland has probably got the most international activity of any university in the country. But it’s primarily all the military bases. So it’s not really international; it’s educating U.S. military people. Ours, I was trying to make it an intellectual attitude that we ought to know about the world. And I think especially in the midwest. By and large our youngsters, not graduate students, are isolationists at heart. And the state. I think that’s changing. Maybe I had some influence to change that and I’ve always, I was in Tanzania in the early days of mine, so I personally liked the international attitude.

A. This is useful to know. Everyone’s going to want to know here, given your experience now, what you think are the most essential qualities and expertise’s I
might say in an incoming University president. Do they all have to be budgetarily sophisticated as you were? Is this a kind of primary? Spell it out for us.

A. You’ve got to know something about finance. They don’t have to be a former financial officer I don’t think. But they better damn sure have a good financial officer, if they’re not sophisticated in financial. I don’t know. Let me back up and give you a little history about University Presidents. And to some extent it might answer the question. Harold Enarson became President of Ohio State in 1971. And Harold, if you look at his background, Harold was very oriented towards students. If you look at the University Presidents who became Presidents in Harold’s time, many of them were student oriented Presidents. All around the country. Harold was not unique by any stretch of the imagination. It was student oriented Presidents. You come then to my generation of Presidents and we were finance experienced. Might not have been Financial Vice President, but lawyers or business schools.. By and large professional people because what were the problems in those days? Finance. You go to Gordon’s time and what were the problems there? All around the country what did you have? You had Presidents who were very good at the public relations activity and the press activity. You may find that right now you’re going to have to go back to the finance lawyers, business school type of expertise. And that happens in the corporate world. But that becomes basically only the minimum qualification. In other words, Presidents are made to some extent on the basis of their particular expertise and the needs of the institution at the time. But not every finance guy can become a President of a University and not every student services person can become a President of a
University. There has to be I think others. In terms of Ohio State, absolutely think you have to have an understanding that the President of Ohio State cannot run the place. The President has to be a policy maker. If a President tries to run the place, I think that President will fail miserably. This place is too diverse, too big, too complex for a President to actually run the place. The President has to make policy. The President also has to set a tone. Has to set a tone as to what becomes important in the institution. In other words, he’s got to lead instead of administrate the place. Whatever that tone might be, that becomes a major responsibility of setting the tone. And how do you set a tone? You set a tone with the speeches. You set a tone by who you hire. You set a tone, one of the big controversies I made was actually having the temerity of selecting a faculty member to do the commencement speech. And now that’s pretty normal. You set a tone, whether it’s commencement speech, whether it’s in your speeches, whether it’s in how you allocate money. When I say policy making, that includes allocating money. And if you’re systematically saying that you believe in the liberal arts and you’re allocating all the money to business administration, people are going to see through that kind of thing in a big hurry. You’ve got to be consistent with what you do. That was the tone I was trying to set, is academic quality, the arts and science. It sounds strange coming from a professor of Business Administration, not so strange because in my day business administration, the great business school was close to a liberal arts curriculum, not any more specialized than a history major. Yea, you took some accounting and economics, but you also were required to take languages. My upbringing was a
liberal arts upbringing. But I also believe that a liberal arts upbringing is the best training for the long run. Not for tomorrow or the next day, but for the long run. But you know that. But you set a tone. How do you set that tone? Again, you have to expose yourself to the family. And I often called it management by walking around. And when I say expose yourself, what that means is that you’re at the Faculty Club or you’re at a department meeting or you’re just chatting with a English professor. He may tell you things you don’t want to hear. And then when you get told something you don’t want to hear, you better damn sure follow up on it. My Vice Presidents and I still carry my little black notebook, used to just get mad when I pulled out my little black notebook. Because some faculty or some staff member had complained to me about this, that and the other thing, wrote it down and said do something about it. Do something about it doesn’t necessarily mean you fix it. It may not be a legitimate complaint. But you’ve got to tell the person who made the complaint that you’ve looked at it, you’ve considered it, the answer is no. That’s alright. But it’s not alright to ignore it. You simply can’t ignore it. A lot of times it’s tiny stuff. I mean it’s absolute tiny stuff. And that takes a lot of time. Time and time again, a person would come up to me and say, “I want to go to this meeting in Honolulu and my Dean wouldn’t provide the money. And my Dean said that he’d love to send me but the expense budget has been used up for the year.” Well what did I do? I said, “I’ll look into it.” So I call the Dean or probably had somebody call the Dean and of course the answer was not that the expense budget had been used, but the Dean didn’t want to send him. “God-damn it, tell him that.”
Q. Do you think maybe you had kind of a unique advantage in that you came out of an academic family culture and then you went to a very unique university at Iowa and this just reinforced that family culture? Thus gave you the inside into faculty.

A. I think it was the University of Iowa, my father died when I was eight. And my mother really didn’t get back, she had a Masters in English, he had a Masters in History, also a law professor. And yea, what I think my family gave me was an enormous respect for higher education. But my mother didn’t get back into the academic community until after I had graduated from high school. But part of that was there, but University of Iowa, absolutely no question, taught me an awful lot about the university. And you’re right, University of Iowa has many of the characteristics that most of think of as an ideal university. Now is it perfect? It’s a long shot from being perfect. And in a business school, the business school at the University of Iowa was a very liberal arts business school. We had psychologists on the faculty. We had mathematicians on the faculty. We had philosophers on our faculty in business administration. And we all felt that was pretty normal. It wasn’t all that normal. And also my Ph.D. from Michigan helped enormously there too. ‘Cause Michigan has an awful lot of the characteristics of what we would think of as an ideal university environment. Not as much as University of Iowa. University of Iowa is a wonderful training program for what a university ought to be. And incidentally, Wyoming, while in this rough and tough land of Wyoming State, structurally Wyoming is closer to Ohio State than Iowa. But culturally, Wyoming is closer to the University of Iowa than it is to Ohio State. And that’s primarily because the western
movement, most of the Wyoming family settlers were not east coast people. They were from Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota and so forth. Because the westward movement went in generations by and large. And so it more adapted the liberal arts attitude. So Iowa is lucky in the sense of going to Wyoming from Iowa, the transition to Wyoming wasn’t all that hard. ‘Cause the Wyoming culture was a hell of a lot closer to Iowa than it was to Ohio State.

Q. One final question now that you did mention. You have to have good judgment in making appointments. And that comes out of something that’s hard to define I guess.

A. Very hard to define. And you’re absolutely right. Those are probably your most important decisions. Yea, you can develop policy; you can do leadership, but if you don’t have the folks that can carry out, you’re dead.

Q. And going along with that, you have to be able to inspire their loyalty to you and to the program. And I don’t know quite how that’s done either. That’s another quality that goes along with accomplished leadership I suppose.

A. Well, I think the way you hire people, and incidentally, this probably doesn’t apply to small organizations but it does apply to big organizations. If you take somebody and you say to them, “Look, this is what I want you to do and I’m going to turn you loose and you go do it. And I’m not going to day by day mess around with how you’re doing it.” If people believe that, then they like coming to work for you. And of course you’ve got to perform in that regard. Got to let them make mistakes. You absolutely have to let them. If they make a mistake, you can’t just every time they make a mistake, fine. You have to show that in the
end you’re in charge. But if you let them do their job, you’ll not only inspire
loyalty but you will bring people in. In terms of hiring at the top level, basically
what you’re testing is do they have the leadership skills, not so much the
administrative skills, and what those are depends on the situation, depends on the
culture. And I don’t mean the Ohio State culture, I mean the local culture,
whether it’s medicine or whatever it is. And do they fundamentally agree with
what you want out of the institution? Marvin, you’re exactly right. I don’t know
that you can write this down because everyone of us in leadership positions have
made major mistakes in hiring. We just have. I mentioned one, the athletic
director that we brought in. We’ve all done that and we’ll continue. A lot of
times where a leader fails is circumstances change. Is that they were hired into
one set of circumstances, circumstances changes and off we go. Here in 2002,
we’ve got a President of the United States who has got 80% approval rating, that
before 9/11 was a compromise President essentially that had real no mandate for
and he became a “better President” because circumstances changed. And that
happens an awful lot. It’s also paying attention if they have personal problems.
And that means anywhere from a birthday card to, I would have an awful lot of
fairly small get-togethers at the house for Vice Presidents, for a group of Deans,
and so forth. No agenda. This is just drinks and hor ‘dearves and paying
attention them. That we appreciated what they’re doing. It’s backing them up
when they’ve got a problem. Even if you think what they did was a mistake.
Certainly backing them up in public now. If you think they made a mistake, then
getting after them in private, and let's figure out how to correct what you did. But never, ever, if you’re going to chew somebody out, do it in private.

Q. That inspires great loyalty.

A. Yea. We’ve all been chewed out but by God you better do it in private.

Q. You haven’t said anything that really surprised me after having watched you for nine years. What did you think about the roles and functions of the Board of Regents? Did you find them to be an asset to higher education in Ohio or did you find them to be kind of a bureaucratic hindrance?

A. With a couple of exceptions, Marvin, neither. With a couple of exceptions, by and large the Board of Regents were irrelevant to Ohio State. I don’t think necessarily irrelevant to the State of Ohio but irrelevant to Ohio State. The exceptions, I got tested a couple of times. When I first came here, remember we had this enrollment ceiling? And the legislative rule was, if you exceeded your enrollment ceiling, you didn’t get subsidy for those students. The Board of Regents, the Chancellor of which I knew from my Financial Vice President days, Ed Wolton, said, “In addition you are going to get fined the equivalent.” That is to say, if you would have gotten a million dollars for these extra students, we’re going to take that million dollars away and fine you another million dollars. And that was clearly going to be a test of wills between Ohio State and the Board of Regents. And I simply went directly to the General Assembly and basically told the Board of Regents to go to hell. That they weren’t going to fine us; that this is not in the law, and off you go. Also, one of the things in terms of the capital budget that we worked very hard on at Ohio State that hadn’t been done before, is
when we submitted our capital budget, we put them in priority order. And what I 
would say to the General Assembly, “Here’s a priority order. You draw the line.” 
And I’d say to the campus, “Where the line is drawn, if the line is drawn above 
you and you’re the next in line, then next year you’re first.” And by and large we 
followed that. Maybe in 1983 or 1984, the Board of Regents tried to re-arrange 
those priorities. And keep trying to ______ graduate student when I came in 
the President’s office helping to write speeches. He said, “I never saw you chew 
anybody out like you chewed the Chancellor out for that.” I just said, “Fuck you, 
you can do this but you’re going to be embarrassed because this is the Ohio State 
University and you don’t screw with our priorities.” But outside of incidents like 
that, by and large we would cooperate with them but no, from a community 
college point of view, they can combine purchasing activities, they can get some 
real economies there, but from Ohio State’s point of view, we went directly to the 
General Assembly. I don’t think, frankly Marvin, had they not existed, it would 
not have changed anything at all for Ohio State. I think they were probably 
helpful to the State of Ohio and could support the community colleges and the 
four year colleges.

Q. Alright. Good. Well you have practice now in evaluating Presidents. And I’ve 
been prompted to ask whether you have any observations that you are willing to 
make about your immediate successor and what he contributed or perhaps failed 
to contribute to the University.

A. I’d rather not say anything.
Q. Okay. You joined a remarkable number of Boards of philanthropic organizations, business organizations during your tenure. Did you feel that these were useful contacts for the University?

A. Very indirectly. And incidentally, and I learned this in Iowa City too, there’s always inevitably a tension between town and gown, especially with the monster University. Where Ohio State wiggles its toe and the business community is affected. I felt we ought to very much be also members of a community. And I really didn’t need these for contacts because I knew I would get to know these people anyway. But I did need these to show the community at large that we could work together on community issues that related to the community, not just the community of Ohio State. And if there was an interference that Ohio State was doing something, then we could work together on some things. It wasn’t so much what Boards I was on, what community volunteer Boards I was on, it was the fact that I was on some. And be willing to take on some community issues just to show the community that Ohio State was a member of the community, was a member of the family. That typically wasn’t nearly as much work as you might think. Because a lot of these Boards really wanted me for the name only and some of them I would tell them, “Look, don’t expect me to do anything for you. I’ll make some phone calls for you, but I know what you’re doing. You’re putting me on there for name.” And that’s fine. But again, also part of my belief as a faculty member, we have a service obligation as well, as a research and teaching obligation. But this is, let’s avoid town gown problems wherever we can. For example, everybody says these riots of students is something new. It’s nothing
new. We had destruction of property after football games and so forth. And while those are never easy situations, they can be made a hell of a lot harder if you’re not cooperating between the community. Particularly in issues like that because the city police typically don’t like students. And so there’s typically a tension between the police force of a university town and the university at the law enforcement level. We’re too easy on them, etc. But you’ve heard all that before. The corporate Boards I was on was really continuing my professional activity. And I have to say it was to make some extra money. And business school. That’s standard stuff. But it was really continuing my professional activity and I continue that today. But the volunteer, whether it’s I-670 or whatever it might be. And I tried to take on the stuff that was potentially controversial. I-670 was probably the most controversial one because I-670 was dividing the Black community right down the middle. And we had to get through that.

Q. Alright. I think you’ve given a very good answer there. As you indicated frustration of having to spend 90% of your time on 1% of the problems I guess in reference to the athletic concerns that you faced. And I just wanted to pose kind of a general question. What did you learn in this episode with Rick Bay and Earl Bruce and working with alumni and other friends who believed that the University should be centered on the fulfillment of athletic objectives. Give us your reflections on this tape.

A. I think there’s an awful lot of things here that go on. I’m always reminded that every time there’s an intercollegiate athletic program the national sports writers will say, “The Presidents need to get involved and fix these issues.” But of course
whenever a President does get involved, he catches all kinds of hell from those sports writers that are giving him a bad time. Now, one of the functions of a University is to provide an environment where a kid gets educated. And where the youngster is also allowed to develop a particular talent as far as it will take him. Develop their talent as a violin player or a statistician or as a computer expert, or as an athlete. And I think in that context intercollegiate athletics fits very well into the mission of a university. ‘Cause here we have a bunch of youngsters that have a particular talent and we’ve got to allow them to develop that. But we also have to educate them at the same time. And we owe that to them. And to some extent, while intercollegiate athletic people talk about that mission and that important mission, I have my doubts that they really believe that, particularly in the major sports. I’m not talking about individuals necessarily but as coaches, I think they succumb to the pressures of winning and losing a hell of a lot quicker than they succumb to the pressures of being part of the academic enterprise. One of the things at Ohio State that very few people outside the family understand, is that Woody Hayes was one of the last of the college coaches, major college coaches in America, who was truly part of the academic family. Woody by far and away was no great scholar. But Woody respected scholarship. He was a pretty damn good military historian. I don’t know whether it got him tenure or not but Woody was part of the academic family. And when you ask people outside, “Oh wasn’t Woody such a terrible coach?” No, Woody was part of the academic family. I fear that we don’t have those coaches anymore. On any given day you could go to the Faculty Club and Woody would be over there holding
court and not necessarily holding court about football. It might be football once in a while but it might be World War II or something else. Or it might be what kind of fertilizer are you putting on your grass these days. Because somebody else had brought up the topic and Woody would say something about that. His players understood that their job was to get an education and Woody was very tough on his players and tough on them in the contest. And I fear that we’ve gotten away from that. Woody also, Woody would have a television program. Would he take any money for it? Never. I don’t know what the maximum Woody ever earned. Maybe it was $30,000 a year or something like that. Maybe $40,000 or $50,000 but certainly no more. And incidentally, coaches around the country would always be annoyed with Woody because Woody wouldn’t take those salaries. And was Woody perfect? No, certainly wasn’t perfect by a long shot. But he was part of the academic family. The trouble with intercollegiate athletics today, I think, is that they do not work at being part of the academic family. They have to work on it. Because they are separated. They do have different pressures than a typical college professor or University President. But if you really want to be part of the academic family, they’re going to have to work on that. But I don’t see them doing that. I simply don’t see them doing that. I don’t see them, and it’s not just at Ohio State, it’s every University in the country. And every coach in the country has gotten away from that. They absolutely believe, so many of them believe that they are contributing financially to these institutions, when the facts simply belie that. Maybe there’s ten universities in the country that break even on intercollegiate athletics. The rest are being subsidized
out of the general fund budget. The press doesn’t believe that. The press says, “Oh, well, these University Presidents don’t touch it because of money.” It doesn’t have anything to do with money. Yes, at Ohio State intercollegiate athletics has a long tradition of supporting itself. But not the History Department or the English Department. It has been a break even proposition. And I think that the first thing to begin to solve, and some of these things are being solved, but the first thing that needs to be solved is be part of the academic family. And if you’re part of the academic family, then the academic family is going to be much more inclined to be supportive when you have a problem. And Woody is a good example. Woody had huge problems down the line. And the academic family was by and large pretty supportive of Woody. Because he was part of it. I don’t see for example how financially Ohio State can ever justify what we spend on physical facilities at Ohio State in the last ten years. On the order of $500 million. I see no possible way to justify it financially. Now the big supporters of intercollegiate athletics are saying, “Well, it’s going to bring you winning teams.” Well, winning teams are nice but there’s no business in the country that would invest $500 million with no economic return. And off you go. I don’t think an Athletic Director ought to report to a President. Could be Student Services Vice President. In my case at Iowa, it was to the Financial Vice President. It could be a variety of things. But if the public at large wants to get University Presidents involved in intercollegiate athletics, they better be willing to take the consequences. One of the consequences is going to be by God, you’ve got to graduate kids. You’ve got to behave yourselves. You’ve got to be part of the
academic family. You can’t cheat and because you’re a public figure, you’ve got to be an outstanding citizen. You can’t gamble. You can’t do any of these things, even if it’s innocent. But I think what’s going on today is everybody says let’s get the Presidents involved as long as the President does what he’s told. And when a President doesn’t do what he’s told, then the President is screwing around with something that he shouldn’t. And I think that’s what happened to me. Because I wasn’t doing what I was told and as a consequence, I got pretty severely criticized for that.

Q. And yet you had almost unanimous faculty support and apparently you had some Trustee covering. So all those pressure was basically coming from non-University related.

A. The most interesting thing about that that I find and Miles Brand helped me out on this. Miles Brand, while he didn’t do it, he got some of the Faculty Senate leadership to put through a Senate resolution supporting me. And when that happened, basically the issue was over. The interesting thing is that the press said, “Oh shit. The faculty is supporting him on this.” And once that happened the issue was gone. Because the press realized that they weren’t going to fire me over that. Now, did it take a toll? It took a toll. Of course it took a toll. And was that behind me leaving? Not directly but indirectly ‘cause I was up to here with the kind of trivial crap that they generate. Pardon my language. And incidentally where I got all the static on that is that I wouldn’t talk about why. And I simply, to this day, even without a court order, I won’t talk about why ‘cause I don’t believe in criticizing the individuals in public. I’ll fire them but I don’t believe in
criticizing in public. And the press of course hates that. And in most firings in a university, you can do it subtly. Everybody talks about I did it the wrong way. Well, in athletics, there’s only one way to do it – get out of here. Because athletic people hang on and hang on and hang on. Look over at Penn State. Paterno is what, 75?

Q. Not quite but he’s in his 70’s.

A. Yea. How does the hell does he think he can continue to be a football coach in his 70’s? I mean that’s crazy to me. And you know I had a controversy at the issue at Iowa. And Sandy Boyd let me do the dirty work in firing a football coach at the University of Iowa. And incidentally, I believe in contracts for football coaches. Gave Earl Bruce a contract against the advice of my Trustees. And I’ll also believe if you’re going to fire them, fire them with one year left on their contract, which is what I did. So they’ve got a chance to financially recover. And get themselves personally squared away.

Q. Well, there’s really no way to prepare for this kind of experience. Maybe you had one at Iowa.

A. Not so much. Because the coach we fired at Iowa was not a winning coach.

Here was a winning coach and one side was saying we hadn’t won enough is why I fired him. And that was looking at putting football ahead of everything else at Ohio State. And the other side was yea, he should have been fired but the way you did it. Well the way I did it, I didn’t do it. Rick Bay did it.

Q. A most extraordinary episode.
A. Oh yea. And of course the reason Rick Bay did that was purposely to embarrass me because he had said that Saturday before or Friday before, that if I insisted on terminating Bruce, he was going to leave too. And I said, “Well, that’s great. I’ll get rid of both of you.” And I said, “We’re going to wait until the season is over.” Well of course we didn’t.

Q. These were known at the time.

A. And you were right, Marvin. His athletic community, it wasn’t just that incident. I had not supported the D deck. I had fired Hugh Hineman. I had not been sympathetic to athletics. And I had been expected to be sympathetic to athletics because athletics reported to me at Iowa and I was sympathetic to them at Iowa because Sandy wasn’t and he needed some help. But they expected me to come in and be the savior of athletics and I wouldn’t have any part of it. And you’re right, my reputation as a faculty President, faculty are suspicious, no faculty like athletics. Which of course isn’t true.

Q. Also a faculty member who seemed to be anchored in the arts and sciences more than any other place. You made that clear when you first came in. There were all kinds of signals.

A. Oh yea.

Q. I well remember when your resignation was announced, being historians we were all conspiracy minded, that somebody had been out to get you. Is this how you would describe your resignation or was it mainly you were exhausted?

A. I think it was all of the above. I was tired of it. No question that the Trustees were delighted that I was going to leave.
Q. How could that be?

A. We talked about this. I was turning the place into a Harvard.

Q. Yes, alright.

A. It was more than anything else. And also I had Trustees who, at that time, wanted to be engaged in the day to day activities much more, and I wouldn’t let them. But it was really that “You’re making this place into an elitist Harvard institution and we don’t like that.” Which incidentally if that’s what the Trustees wanted, then it was my obligation to step aside. ‘Cause they’re in charge. And if I should try and persuade and that wasn’t the right thing to do. But the Trustees wanted us to be the old fashioned Ohio State University, then that’s what it will become. I think fortunately the current Trustees understand. That’s one of the reasons I was so pleased at this building naming, is that they understand that this place should become a lot better and being an elitist is not being a Harvard university, but being an elitist is high quality undergraduate, graduate education, research, teaching, a truly flagship university for the State of Ohio. It doesn’t have to be an east coast …

Q. Too many building blocks put in place toward upper momentum and you might have a temporary Board that might resist but the long term momentum was there.

A. This Board, they’ll higher a new President, and this Board is committed to continuing to improve quality. Now, they’re not a perfect Board either but they sure as hell have continued. It was also advice from an awful lot of people, not so much at Ohio State, but past Presidents of not only universities but businesses, “Get out while you can make a good deal.” I also felt, as you might imagine, had
literally dozens of inquiries to be President someplace else. But first of all I was
tired of being a University President because in the end it's pretty damn easy for
me to go back to the faculty. And secondly, that’s what I intended all the way
long, when I got into administration, is that I wasn’t going to be a President the
rest of my life. And finally, I really meant it, I’m not going to become the
President of a Harvard or a Stanford, that’s a private school thing. So Ohio State
is probably the top of the line for me. I would never go to, I would have never
even considered going to a Brown. That would be a big step down.

Q. Alright. Let me ask you a question about the present financial circumstances at
the University. You have been heard to state publicly that it might be, perhaps
you might want to rephrase this, it might be more advantageous to the University
to cut loose from the state subsidy and in return have the power to determine
tuition as a good trade-off. It would be an advantageous trade-off for the
University in this arrangement. Is this something that is in your thinking at the
moment?

A. Yea. For the last thirty years, and this is a generalization across the United States,
is that state support for the research state universities, the Ohio States, the
Indianas, the UCLAs, so forth, as a percent of their total budget has been
declining steadily, from 50-60% now to 15 or 20%. I think we’re at 18% right
now current budget at Ohio State. And probably next year that will decline
further. In the current financial situation, while it’s partially the result of the
recession, it’s really the result of long term of too many demands on state
government for other services. K-12, welfare, prisons are taking so many of the
state resources and politically the General Assembly is almost powerless to raise
taxes at this stage, that I think long term these big state universities, the state
appropriation will continue to decline, not in absolute dollars but as a percent of
the budget. Also, particularly in Ohio, the land grant mission, that is the land
grant mission that I believe in, is providing higher education opportunity to all
citizens. That land grant mission, all citizens independent of their income. That
land grant mission really now has become a mission of the state system of higher
education. Anymore everybody looking for an education can’t come to Ohio
State. Ohio State simply isn’t big enough or could never become big enough to
provide the educational opportunity for everybody in this state like they did in
1910 or 1920. But today, we have some marvelous four year institutions in the
State of Ohio and we have some marvelous community colleges in the State of
Ohio, to the extent that everybody in this state can get a higher education. If they
want to go to Ohio State, they can go to community colleges or regional campuses
and then transfer in their junior year and get it. We also have a graduate mission.
We also have a medical school mission. We have a research mission. We have a
dental school and a veterinary medicine school and so forth, that nobody ever
questions if you have selective admissions in those institutions, those
organizations. Nobody even questions that we have selective admission into the
junior year of engineering college or business college. But the simple fact is, we
can no longer serve the traditional land grant mission by ourselves. We have to
rely on community colleges and other four year institutions and the state should
do that. Now, given the finances that we’re not going to get state support in the
manner to which we, not what we’ve become accustomed to and need. And keep in
mind we’re a long way from perfect and we need to do some budget cutting
ourselves. But I think a long term strategy for Ohio State would be to say to the
State of Ohio, eliminate overtime. I don’t know how long it will take. State
subsidy, give us political cover. By that I mean support us politically when we
raise tuition. Keep in mind we’re talking $400 million, 40,000 students, that’s
$10,000 a student, when we raise tuition to either match that or close to match it.
Understand that you, the State of Ohio, are still our owners, still appoint the
Trustees. You’re our stockholders. We’re going to do what you tell us to do.
And also keep in mind, if we’re charging $18,000-20,000 our faculty and our staff
have to be doing what the private school faculty and staff do with undergraduate
students. Namely saying to them, “Damn it, we’re going to make sure. If you’re
having trouble, we’re not going to wait until you say something. If you’re having
trouble we’re going to come and see you.” And some of our faculty do now. But
we have to change the culture of Ohio State in order to do that. You might say the
State of Ohio would give us an appropriation of $50-100 million for scholarships.
I’m not sure of that because remember that federal scholarship money comes as a
percent of costs. And this would simply, instead of a Pell Grant student at Ohio
State getting $6,000, Pell Grant student at Ohio State would get $15,000, or
something like that. So I’m not sure that that scholarship money would be there.
In other words, admit, have the State of Ohio admit that what they want is a major
world class University that attracts the very best students in Ohio that they can
look to for economic development in terms of innovation and research and service
for our faculty. But that it costs somebody money to go to that place. And if the
state’s not willing to pay for it, somebody has to pay for it. Otherwise, I think you
face going back to mediocrity. And the economic situation in this state is
particularly critical right now because we’re in a transition economically. From
essentially a manufacturing state to something else. Everybody says high tech or
information. Well maybe But it still is a transition as to what it’s heading to,
high tech maybe. And certainly the trend suggests that. But clearly the trend is
away from manufacturing and keep in mind if that’s the case, which I know it is,
the State of Ohio has to send more kids to college as a percent of the population.
More going to community colleges, more going to Akron, Cleveland State,
Youngstown State, and so forth. But the facts are Ohio State can’t take anymore.
Ohio State, even without an enrollment cap, Ohio State is as big as it can get.
You want to go to 100,000 students like we planned in the 60’s. You’d have to
spend a couple of billion dollars building buildings just to accommodate that.
Ohio State can’t expand. And if you can’t expand what’s it got to move to? It’s
got to continue to grow. It’s got to move. Now, obviously there’d have to a
whole hell of a lot of discussion about this. Keep in mind the state took a first
step in that this year, where Ohio State was singled as a separate tuition increase
and a higher tuition increase than everybody else. With the support of the
Governor, with the support of the General Assembly. Now could you propose
that right now? Not a chance. It’s an election year. Could you pose it November
15? Perhaps. But there again, the first people that would have to agree to that
would be the Trustees. And that wold have to be done quietly. You’d have to get
agreement from the Governor, from leadership in the house and Senate, all quietly, before you could start talking about it.

Q. Maybe a ten year transitional period.

A. You know, I’d ask the politicians about that. Whether it would be a ten year transition period of whether you would do it all right now. Certain advantages to doing it all right now. Essentially double tuition.

Q. It would be a huge and daring move really. Sometimes these things can happen more quickly.

A. And maybe an Acting President can do that. I don’t know. I doubt it.

Q. Well, I think we’re coming to an end here. Dr. Jennings, are there any other topics that you would like to have brought up.

A. You’ve reminded me of so many things, Marvin. But I’ve always, even though my father was a History professor, in these administrative positions I’ve always looked to the future and so I kind of have a tendency to forget some of the things we did. I suppose if I remember something I’ll give you a holler. But I can’t think of anything now.

Q. Alright. Well it’s been a wonderful experience for me to hear you recollect. There are going to be some interesting stories coming out of these tapes all in due time. I have no doubt. So thank you very much for all your assistance.

A. Sure.