

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH LAWRENCE P. ENGLISH

FOR THE

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INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Lawrence P. English in New York City, New York State, on January 4, 2012, with Shaun Illingworth. Mr. English, thank you very much for having me here today.

Lawrence P. English: You're welcome.

SI: To begin, could you tell me when and where you were born?

LE: Yes, I was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on July 11, 1940.

SI: For the record, what were your parents' names?

LE: My father was also Lawrence P. English. My mother was Margaret; her maiden name was (Weeks?), Margaret (Weeks?) English.

SI: Were you junior and senior?

LE: Actually, ... the family is Roman Catholic and Catholics take their middle initial at Confirmation. So, my birth certificate and my father's birth certificate say Lawrence English; there's no junior and there's no "P." At Confirmation, I took the middle initial. I took my father's middle name, Paul. So, I became Lawrence Paul English. I used junior for a brief period of time. When I got my driver's license in New Jersey, my father insisted that I put a "Junior" on the end of it, so that my driving record and his wouldn't get confused. [laughter] ... My legal name, I had a lot of fun with the Social Security people, when I applied for Social Security, because they thought I was Lawrence P. English, Jr., my birth certificate says, "Lawrence English," and I've always, throughout my life, used Lawrence P. English. We finally got it straightened out.

SI: Starting with your father's side of the family, can you tell me a little bit about the background there? Do you know where the family came from, how they came to settle in Philadelphia?

LE: Yes. I've done some genealogical research, actually. The English Family came from Ireland, we think from County Tipperary, and we only think that because the surname English is quite common in County Tipperary, but we've had a hard time connecting the records back to Ireland. My ancestor arrived as a sixteen-year-old during the Irish famine, the Potato Famine in 1850. [Editor's Note: Starting in 1845 and continuing through the 1850s, crop shortages in Ireland, commonly known as the Potato Famine, resulted in mass starvation and an exodus of Irish to the United States and other lands.] His family came in to the Port of Baltimore. They migrated up into Western Maryland. They were coalminers, and then, eventually, migrated into Southwestern Pennsylvania, Fayette County. My great grandfather married a local person whose background was actually German. That family went back to the time before the [American] Revolution, actually. Their name was originally Weiss, but, when he married her, it was White. So, James English married Sarah White sometime in the 1860s. My grandfather, Hugh Edward English, was born in 1869, worked in the coal mines. I think he went maybe to eighth or ninth grade, and then, worked in the coal mines, eventually, went to work in steel mills in Pittsburgh,

as the family sort of migrated to the north from Southwestern Pennsylvania, and then, in 1911, he moved the family to Philadelphia. My father was born in Philadelphia in 1914. My grandmother's family also came from Ireland. They came more recently, like in the 1880s, and my grandfather and grandmother were married, I think, in 1898, somewhere along the line there. ... My father was the last in a family of six and he, as I said, was born in Philadelphia in 1914.

SI: What about your mother's family?

LE: Also Irish. My mother's father came from Ireland around 1900. Her mother's family came from Ireland around 1880, also coalminers, but they were in the northeastern part of Pennsylvania, around Shenandoah, up in that northeastern corner. There, they migrated to Philadelphia and my grandmother and grandfather on that side were married, I think, around 1910. My mother was the second in a family of six and she was born in August of 1913.

SI: Beginning with your father, can you tell me a little bit about what you may know about what his life was like before you came along?

LE: Yes, he lived in a neighborhood very close to the neighborhood where I lived until I was twelve. It was an Irish Catholic neighborhood in Northeast Philadelphia. He went to a Catholic grammar school, he went to a Catholic high school. His father was a foreman at a steel company in Philadelphia and the family--considering the fact [that] my father came of age during the Depression--the family did all right. My grandfather never lost his job, he had a car, they owned a house. So, I would say my father, as the youngest in the family, had a fairly decent childhood. I mean, there were six kids in a small house--it wasn't the way we live today, but, compared to the way other people were living during the Depression, it certainly wasn't bad. He graduated from a Catholic school in that neighborhood, and then, he graduated from North [formally Northeast Catholic] Catholic High School in Philadelphia. He was not able to go to college. That was [a case where] no one in the family had gone to college and most of them hadn't gone to high school, but he began working in the steel mills, and then, started taking courses at night, ... I believe at Drexel. ... Then, during the war, ... he was not drafted during the war, ... he worked in the defense industry, in the Frankford Arsenal in Philadelphia, and that kept him out of military service. ... Also, by 1940, I was born, and then, they had three other children behind me. So, he wasn't in the service, and he eventually became a self-taught engineer and did reasonably well in life. In fact, he has five patents to his name, even though he has no college degree. I can remember, as a young child, coming down in the morning and seeing him studying electronic books and math books, and so forth, at the kitchen table, before he went to work. So, he had a fairly good upbringing. My mother, on the other hand, did not. Her father, the Irish immigrant, was a very intelligent man. He came without education, opened a small restaurant or a diner in Philadelphia, did well, but, then, "the curse of the Irish" took him. He became an alcoholic, spouse abuser, child abuser and deserted the family. So, my mother's upbringing was much more difficult, given the circumstances with her father and the lack of money. She was the second in the family. She was pulled out of high school after tenth grade to go to work to support the family.

SI: What did she do?

LE: She worked for the telephone company. I think she was an operator in the old days, plugging the things in. She's a very intelligent woman, could have done more if she'd had an educational opportunity, but she worked for the telephone company, I think until I was born.

SI: I guess she was able to maintain her employment during the Depression then.

LE: Yes. Well, my dad graduated from high school in 1932, she was probably pulled out of high school around 1929, 1930, and, yes, they both worked, they both had steady work, during the Depression, yes.

SI: Do you know how they met?

LE: Yes, there was a dance. They both lived in the same little corner of Northeast Philadelphia and there was a dance and my father recalls meeting her there. ... He told us the story of the fact that ... he was able to use his father's car, so, I guess that was an important thing. So, they met in, probably, around 1935 or '36 and they were actually married secretly in 1936. I don't know why they wanted to keep it secret. She obviously wasn't pregnant--I wasn't born until 1940--but they were married in 1936, in the Church, but they kept it a secret from their family. I think they had no place to live and they couldn't be together, but ... I guess they wanted to have sex and they had to get married to do it. [laughter]

SI: You said that the neighborhood you grew up in was very close to where your father had been raised.

LE: Yes.

SI: Did it have a particular name?

LE: Yes, it was called Mayfair, was the section of Philadelphia. It's a section in Northeast Philadelphia, which, in those days, was almost exclusively Irish Catholic. ... To this day, if I meet somebody from Northeast Philadelphia, the typical question is, "What parish are you from?" That was the dividing line, "Were you in St. Matthew's or St. Bart's or St. Timothy's?" or whatever. I've had that happen to me as recently as ten years ago, where we've gotten into the conversation, "Oh, you're from Northeast Philadelphia--what parish?"

SI: What was your parish?

LE: St. Timothy's.

SI: What kind of role did the Church play in your life growing up?

LE: Well, the dominant role. In Northeast Philadelphia, where we lived until I was twelve, the Church was everything. We have film of my first Holy Communion, which must have been 1946, and it was sort of like the whole neighborhood turned out for this event. There was the May procession [special devotions to the Virgin Mary within Roman Catholic tradition] and all the kids in their little white suits, and so forth. ... I can remember, my mother would go to an

early Mass, then, the children had to go to the nine o'clock Mass--that was the children's Mass--then, my father would go to the ten o'clock Mass. The children would go to confession on Saturday afternoon. We went to the Catholic school. The pastor was a very powerful man in [the neighborhood]--I still remember his name, Father Brady. It was a very central part of life and all of my relatives and most of our neighbors were Irish Catholics. So, it was quite dominant. Then, we moved to--when I was twelve--we moved to South Jersey. ... South Jersey became kind of a melting pot. After World War II, as people began to have more affluence, they started moving into what had been very rural areas of South Jersey. Our family moved in 1952, ... when I was twelve, and, there, it was more of a melting pot. I mean, there, it wasn't an Irish Catholic neighborhood. We were almost a minority in our neighborhood. Most people were Protestants, but we still [followed the Church]. I went to the new Catholic school in South Jersey, and then, went to Catholic high school after the Catholic school in New Jersey. ... South Jersey, in the 1950s, was a real melting pot, because all these ethnicities from Philadelphia--I mean, when I was a kid, I didn't know any Italian Catholics. They were all in South Philadelphia, the Irish were in Northeast Philadelphia, the Jews were in some other section, the Polish were in some other section. That's just the way it was, but, now, all these people kind of melded together into South Jersey. The high school I went to was half Italian and half Irish Catholic.

SI: Which town did you move to?

LE: We moved to Haddon Heights. It's one of those little New Jersey towns. It's very close to Philadelphia.

SI: To go back to when you were very young, you were about five when the war ended. Are there any early memories of that period?

LE: Yes, I remember the parades around V-J Day. I remember war bond drives. ... There was a local park and people went out and there were people up on a stage selling war bonds. I remember my uncles, on my mother's side, coming home from the war. So, yes, I had those scattered memories of the end of World War II.

SI: You mentioned that you had uncles in the service. You would not be writing to them, but were you aware that they were away and that they were in danger?

LE: No, no. I was aware they were away. I had one uncle who had a car and he'd left it in my father's care. ... I can remember stories about Uncle Jim's car and [how] he's going to be coming back, but I wasn't aware they were in danger. I think only one of them truly was. My Uncle Bill was in the Pacific and he saw some of the *kamikaze* [Japanese suicide aircraft] attacks, but I didn't know that at the time. My recollection of him is, and I told him--he's still alive, by the way. ... I guess he's getting on to be ninety, but I told him I remember this day, waking up in our small row house in Northeast Philadelphia and smelling bacon and eggs being cooked and coming down. ... My mother was preparing breakfast for my uncle and one of his Navy buddies, who had just come back from the war. ... He had a present for me. I was the first grandchild on that side and he sort of adopted [me]. He was the favorite uncle. He gave me this,

one of these tin guns that you pulled and the lights went around. It was called an atomic gun. This was right after the atomic bomb went off, and I remember that event.

SI: Growing up in Mayfair, you mentioned it was a very Irish Catholic neighborhood. Did that come through in other ways? Were there Irish Catholic traditions carried on in your home or things that happened in the neighborhood, such as celebrations?

LE: No, no, the Irish aren't really that way. Jews and Italians have more cultural traditions than [the Irish]. I mean, St. Patrick's Day was a big deal, but the Church was sort of a discipline thing. It was always present, but, no, I don't really remember any particular meals that were [Irish]. I think we had family dinners on Sunday. We'd go to my grandparents' house for Thanksgiving and Christmas, that sort of thing, but nothing uniquely related to the Irish culture. I do remember asking my grandfather once, "If we were Irish, why is our name English?" and he said that as people were beginning to take surnames, a long, long time ago, we had an ancestor who was a very evil man. So, they gave him the worst name they could think of--you know, the Irish hating English, and so forth. [laughter] I'm sure it was apocryphal, but I remember him telling me that story.

SI: Were you exposed to any other parts of the city or were you mostly centered in Mayfair?

LE: At Christmastime, my mother would take me ... downtown to see the department store windows and Santa Claus. So, I would get to ride the trolley car to the Frankford EL [elevated train] and the Frankford EL to downtown and we would walk up and down Market Street and look at all the windows that were decorated and see Santa Claus, and she'd do her shopping, and so forth.

SI: You said your father was working in the arsenal during World War II.

LE: Yes.

SI: Did he get a different job after the war?

LE: Yes. Somewhere in the late '40s, he was recruited to be a salesman for a company in New Jersey that did stud welding. They had welding technology [that] they sold to shipbuilders and aircraft builders, and so forth, and he was recruited to be a salesman for this company. ... This tied in to the fact that he was technologically oriented, electronically oriented, and he traveled a great deal. He would frequently leave on Sunday night or Monday morning and not come back until Friday. He had to travel into New York State, all over Pennsylvania. He was gone quite a bit and I'd say that went on from 1947 or '48 until 1951 or '52.

SI: Was it his job that brought you to New Jersey?

LE: Yes. They eventually asked him to head up their engineering department. This is around 1950 or '51. He segued from a sales role in this company. [The] company was growing and was doing well and he had developed a lot of technical knowledge about it and they asked him to [switch]. ... My mother hated his traveling and he didn't like to travel. So, they asked him to

take over the job in [South Jersey] as the head engineer, which was the job he kept until he retired, and the company was located in New Jersey. ... I guess he started to make enough money that we could move to a bigger house in Haddon Heights, New Jersey, and we did that in 1952.

SI: Did your mother ever work outside of the home again?

LE: No. She did have the duty, and this was true in a lot of families in those days, of caring for her mother. So, we all lived on this one street in Northeast Philadelphia--we all, my cousins and our family, the cousins from my mother's side. My cousins from my father's side were in a different parish, a few blocks away, but my grandmother on my mother's side, who had had this abusive husband, later in life, developed--I don't know whether it was cerebral palsy or something. She was an invalid. She sat in a chair. I never heard her voice. I just remember her hands shaking all the time. ... She lived with my uncle and his wife and their six kids, again, in one of these little three-bedroom row houses, and my mother and her other sisters each had a day to go there and help take care of her. So, even when we moved to New Jersey, my father would get up early on Tuesday morning, put all of us in the car, take us over to the old neighborhood in Philadelphia. The kids would go out and play with their friends, if it was summertime--in the wintertime, we were in school--and my mother would have her day of caring for her mother, and that went on until 1959, when her mother died.

SI: Growing up in Mayfair, what kind of things would you do as a child for fun? Did you have to work at all, a little afterschool job?

LE: Not at that age, because I was still awfully young. I had chores to do in the house, but the activities would be stickball or hose ball in the back alley, step ball in the streets, roller-skating on the streets. There was no Little League or any organized sports of that nature. Hose ball was played with a little slice of a hose and a broomstick. ... A guy would pitch it and [one would] try to hit it and run the bases, and so forth, but, no, no organized sports, pretty much in the neighborhood with the neighborhood kids, and there were plenty of those. Catholics had a lot of kids.

SI: Were there any organized activities, like Boy Scouts?

LE: I started to get interested in Boy Scouts about the time we moved to New Jersey, but never really got involved in Boy Scouts in Philadelphia. When we moved to New Jersey, I did.

SI: At that time, were you in the Boy Scouts or Cub Scouts?

LE: Boy Scouts. I was too old for Cub Scouts. ... I think I was between eleven and twelve when we moved there. So, I was just at the age when you go into Boy Scouts.

SI: What kind of a change was it for you to go from the city to Haddon Heights?

LE: Well, it was a big change. There were parks, there was Little League. ... It was a house that was not attached to other houses. We had a backyard and side yards. It was quite a change.

It was very different. The school was different--still a Catholic school, but it wasn't right in the neighborhood. I had to ride my bicycle or take a bus to get to it, whereas in Philadelphia, it was just down the block, across the street. So, it was quite a cultural change--for the better, I thought--for our family. I was now living in a nicer house than we had lived in and there were more things to do. I got a bicycle for the first time and, as I say, there were parks that you could play in and go sledding in, in the wintertime; quite a difference. I mean, when people think of South Jersey today, they think of it as this really big, built-up area, which it is, but, in 1952, it was quite rural. ... Even though it was maybe fifteen miles away, it was like light years away. [laughter]

SI: When you say rural, how far away would your nearest neighbor be?

LE: Oh, no, it wasn't rural in that sense. There were houses fifty yards on either side of us and up and down the street. It was more what you would call today suburban, but, to me, it was rural, because not far away, Cherry Hill, was then Delaware Township, was still peach orchards and, to the south of us and to the east of us, there were still a lot of farms, and so forth, but Haddon Heights then looked pretty much like Haddon Heights does today. I mean, that hasn't changed very much. It's just a nice, little New Jersey suburban community.

SI: It has a picturesque downtown.

LE: Yes, sort of picturesque, yes. It was nice, Station Avenue, and the train went through from Philadelphia, and so forth, yes, exactly.

SI: Tell me a little bit about your early education. What was the name of the school in Philadelphia?

LE: The name of the school in Philadelphia was St. Timothy's. ... Early on, I guess ... I did well, always did well, on those standardized tests. Towards fifth or sixth grade, I was more of a little bit of a behavioral problem. I didn't like the discipline. I was a bit of a smart aleck. I think my parents were pleased ... that I was going to change schools. For some other reasons, ... I started doing what in those days would have been heretical things--you know, making fun of certain religious deals. That kind of horrified my mother. ... Then, so, I was in sixth grade, I think, when we moved to New Jersey, and then, I had even more behavioral problems. I was beginning to be sort of a wild kid and had a lot of trouble in school, discipline problems, not doing any work, and so forth. ... They agreed that they'd hold me back a year, that that would be the smart thing to do--really wasn't, but what they wanted to do. ... Somehow, in those days, being held back a year was a real mark against you. I mean, it was really terrible, and that sort of lit a fire under me and ... I didn't have any trouble from that stage forward. So, in fact, in eighth grade, I was president of the class and I got into Bishop Eustace, which is a private Catholic boys' school, and so forth, but I had that period from age ten to thirteen or fourteen when I was a problem for my parents. [laughter] The other thing that happened in that period that kind of changed my life was the Boy Scouts. ... In the Scouts, I remember reading this story in *Boys' Life Magazine* about these kids who were at a private school and they had a clandestine ham radio. You know what ham radio is, amateur radio? and that just sounded to me to be so exotic and so neat that I got interested in ham radio. ... My father, of course, encouraged this, because

he thought engineering was the thing to be in. He was technically oriented, and so, I began, at age thirteen, studying ... to get licensed to be a ham radio operator, and I passed it. I had to learn the Morse code and you had to learn a certain amount of technology. So, from age thirteen to about age sixteen, that was kind of the central part of my life. I went through the different tests, got different licenses and, for me, it was a real thrill. I mean, today, you're texting to people in Europe--you know, it's no big deal--but, in those days, with a little headset on and typing away in Morse code, to contact a station in California, "Wow," or to contact somebody in England was really exciting for me. It was sort of like traveling. So, that became a very central part of my life from age thirteen to probably age sixteen, when I got interested in other things, and I think got me away from the hell-raising, getting in trouble, breaking windows, doing stuff that infuriated my parents and on to a better path.

SI: That is very interesting. A number of the people we have interviewed have been ham radio operators. I forget what it is called, where you contact all the states.

LE: Yes, WAS, "Worked All States," yes.

SI: Did you do that?

LE: I did that, yes. There were only forty-eight when I did it. [laughter] I never got "Worked All Continents." ... I don't think I got that, but I did get the "Worked All States," and I still have the little cards. They're tucked in a closet somewhere.

SI: Were you involved with any of the organizations for ham radio operators?

LE: Yes, I was a member of the American Radio Relay League and there was a local chapter. I would go to the meetings and, early on, I was--you know, I wouldn't say a prodigy, but I was one of the younger ones who had passed the tests, and so forth. That was exciting for me and I got my merit badge. ... The American Radio Relay League would have, maybe they still do, an annual field day. Hams pride themselves on being the communications device in the event of disasters. So, once a year, there would be this sort of a contest where you'd have to go out in the woods someplace--and I liked camping, it tied into the Boy Scouts--bring a generator along, set up a station in a remote area, and then, contact as many other stations in different areas as you could, sort of a contest, a fun outing, that sort of thing, but, also, training for preparation for a hurricane or an event that would take out other forms of communications. ... Even today, I mean, when Haiti occurred, I think I heard that ... ham radio operators were one of the sources of communications when that earthquake took place. [Editor's Note: Mr. English is referring to the January 12, 2012 earthquake that devastated Haiti. Ham radio operators were among the first responders, aiding in rescue operation communications and reporting news from the affected areas.] ... So, yes, I did that. That was exciting stuff, and I went to Boy Scout camps and that sort of thing.

SI: How far along did you go with the Boy Scouts?

LE: Not very far. [laughter] My grandson is now going along the path and I'm encouraging him to go for Eagle, but I never got beyond First Class. I think, when I got to high school, I was

playing basketball, the ham radio--I just had other interests. ... I think there's a segue, at age fourteen or so, where you go into Explorer Scouts and I never made that transition.

SI: What other sports were you interested in?

LE: I always liked baseball, but I never had a chance to play in the Little League. I mean, when we moved there, I was not part of the community and, when they had the tryouts, I didn't know anything about it. Then, when I turned thirteen, I was too old. I played a lot of sandlot baseball and a bunch of us used to go down to the Little League [fields], ... when they weren't playing, and have "choose-up" games. ... Then, in grammar school, I started playing basketball and I kind of grew to the height I am now when I was thirteen, so, I was pretty good in grammar school, and then, I played the first three years of my high school career.

SI: Did you have any other extracurricular involvement in high school? You covered sports, but what about clubs and other things that you were interested in?

LE: Yes, I did a lot of extracurricular stuff. I wound up being editor of the yearbook at the high school. A group of us used to put on shows, thespian kind of things, would be basically of the horror genre. ... I played Dracula in a couple of plays that we put on. It was just sort of fun. It was an all-boys high school and we had a lot of fun doing that kind of stuff. It's funny how my life changed, that when I graduated from ... grammar school and I went to high school, now, the high school was, like, ten or twelve miles away. It was all-boys, Catholic high school, run by an order of Italian priests. ... So, the other kids in my eighth grade class either went to the diocesan Catholic [school]--we all went in different directions. I got a new set of friends at high school and some of them are still my friends today. I still stay in touch with some of them, but basketball, I started out with the student newspaper, but I didn't stay with that--I didn't like the kids who were involved in it--I put on these shows and I was editor of the yearbook in my senior year.

SI: You mentioned that the discipline was something you chafed under. We usually think of nuns, but were the priests just as strict?

LE: Yes, there was corporal punishment, I mean in both. Grammar school, I had my knuckles rapped many times, and I had my face slapped and been thrown up against the wall and all kinds of stuff in high school, for mouthing off. The priests were ... tough. We still laugh about it when we get together, [laughter] but I told one of my classmates, I still have this picture of him with one of the priests--we had to wear jackets--having him by both lapels and banging him against the wall. ... Of course, you didn't dare tell your parents that that had happened, because they'd say, "Well, what did you do to get Father so upset?" It was a very strong, disciplined environment. You got in trouble, the detention could be three hours sitting there staring into a wall. I did a few of those stretches. Now, I was a pretty good kid by the time I got to high school, but it was hard to stay out of trouble with the discipline. ... We all had our run-ins with them.

SI: What were your favorite subjects in high school?

LE: I've always been a reader, so, I would have to say social studies, history, Church history, English were the things I did best in. ... My College Board scores were higher on the reading kind of side than they were on the math side. I thought I wanted to be an engineer, because I had this technical background with the radio. I understood how [it worked], at a very early age, the fundamentals of electronics, and so forth, and so, I kept pushing myself in the direction of engineering, but I never really liked it. I didn't like physics. I remember taking it and I didn't like [it]. Algebra, I liked, because it was kind of logical. Geometry, I did not like, ... but I always liked to read. I've been a reader since I learned to read, and I still am.

SI: At this time, you were going through high school in the mid to late 1950s.

LE: Yes, right, '55-'59, right.

SI: The Cold War is obviously growing and deepening and the Red Scare took hold here in the United States. Growing up in an Irish Catholic environment, there was a lot of anti-Communism built in. How did that affect your life, if it did at all?

LE: I was brought up to be, and was, very patriotic. I remember the Army-McCarthy Hearings on television. I remember my parents [were] very much in favor of Eisenhower over Stevenson. [Editor's Note: The Army-McCarthy Hearings, which ran from March to June of 1954, were televised nationally. The witch-hunt tactics Senator Joseph McCarthy displayed in pursuing alleged Communists in the US Army led to the demise of his political career. In the 1956 Presidential campaign, Republican incumbent President Dwight D. Eisenhower defeated Adlai Stevenson, II, the Democratic Party's nominee.] ... There was--you know all the jokes of today--but we really did the duck-and-cover drills in school to prepare for an atomic attack. I don't remember losing sleep over it, though. I don't remember getting up every day and worrying that there was going to be an atomic war or something. To the contrary, I kind of had this yearning to be in the military. I wanted to be a Marine, a paratrooper. I had this vision, when I was a teenager, that I would someday serve in the military and fight a war. It's crazy, but that's fight against the enemies of our country, fight against the Communists. That was part of my upbringing and I had pretty strong feelings about that, for a long time.

SI: Tell me a little bit more about that, where that sense comes from. Was it just in the background or were there specific things that shaped your thinking?

LE: Yes. I don't know, the America I grew up in, I learned, at a very early age, I came to appreciate ... what our founders created, the freedom, the fact that my grandfather started as a coalminer, but my father was now in the professions, that I could aspire to do whatever I wanted to do, that we had this freedom that the Nazis didn't have, that the Communists didn't have, that we didn't have the class system of the European countries that prevented people from moving [up in life]. I kind of realized that at a pretty early age and I really had a strong, patriotic sense that we were right--and, of course, after World War II, we were. I mean, that's the way everybody felt. America had prevailed. We were the good guys, and so, the whole culture, it seemed to me, kind of led in that direction, that we were very patriotic. I was a very patriotic person and expressed that in my desire to be in the military someday. ... So, rather than fearing a war, I was

kind of--I don't want to say I was hoping--but I thought, if there was one, I'd go and be a hero and all that kind of stuff.

SI: You said you have three younger siblings.

LE: I do.

SI: Can you tell me their names and how old they are?

LE: Yes. So, my brother Richard, or Rick, is three-and-a-half years younger than me, is also a Rutgers grad, my sister (Lynn?) is a year younger than him and my sister Judy a year younger than her. So, they were born, like, in '44, '45 and '46.

SI: What year did you graduate from high school?

LE: '59.

SI: At that point, what did you see for yourself in the future? You definitely wanted to go to college.

LE: Oh, absolutely, absolutely. I mean, from as long as I can remember, my father drilled into me that I had to go to college. I would have been thrown out of the family if I'd had other ideas. There was no doubt that, one way or the other, I had to go to college, I think, and my feeling was--in fact, says this in my high school yearbook--that I wanted to be an engineer. ... That stemmed from my father, from the ham radio, and then, in 19--, I think it was '57, when the Russians sent up their *Sputnik*, the whole country said, "Well, we're behind in engineering. We have to have more engineers." [Editor's Note: On October 4, 1957, the USSR launched the world's first artificial satellite, *Sputnik I*.] So, like, everybody in my high school wanted to be an engineer. It didn't turn out that way, but that was kind of what my orientation was, definitely go to college, definitely become an engineer.

SI: Coming from an all-Catholic educational background, were you encouraged to look at Catholic schools? What were your thoughts as you were looking at schools?

LE: No. Certainly, by the priests, I was, but, what happened was, ... after my junior year, New Jersey had a program called Boys State. It was sponsored by the American Legion and they would pick kids who were perceived to have leadership ability or whatever, two from each high school, to go to Rutgers, go to New Brunswick, and "run the state" for a week. We'd put on mock elections and do that sort of thing, and I was selected to do that. So, the first time, other than Boy Scout camp, I went away from home was in the Summer of 1958, when I went ... what seemed to me then the incredible distance from Exit 3 to Exit 9 [on the New Jersey Turnpike] [laughter] and spent two weeks on the campus at Rutgers and I fell in love with the place. ... My father was thrilled with that, because of the tuition. He had three more kids coming behind me and there was a marked difference. ... I wanted to go away. I guess I could have gone to La Salle or St. Joe's in Philadelphia, as some of my high school classmates did, but I wanted to go away and he just couldn't swing the cost of a Villanova or Seton Hall or Notre Dame, or any of

the other Catholic schools, in terms of what the tuition was. It was, like, I think four hundred dollars to go to Rutgers and it was, like, fifteen hundred to go to Villanova and there was just no way. That's just the tuition. I don't know how those ratios are today, but it was the only place I applied.

SI: Was your father still with the same company?

LE: Yes. He stayed with that company until he retired in the late '60s, early '70s.

SI: Before we leave the high school period, did you have any afterschool jobs or summer jobs?

LE: Yes. ... Well, I worked from the time we got to New Jersey. I had a job delivering newspapers. I had a job, in the summertime, cutting people's lawns, and then, I got a job caddying at the local golf club and I did a lot of that, worked very hard at that. ... I made, like, three dollars a bag, [laughter] but it was cash and it was good. So, I did that, and then, in my junior and senior year, I worked as a stock boy for a small chain of women's stores and, after my senior year, I think I drove their truck for them. ... They had a store somewhere in South Jersey, had one in Haddonfield and they had one in suburban Philadelphia, and I carried stuff back and forth for them. So, yes, I have worked; from, I would say, age twelve on, I've had a job.

SI: You said that going to Rutgers was a big trip for you and your life was centered on either Philadelphia or Haddon Heights. Were there any family trips, or would you go around New Jersey?

LE: No, one vacation to the Jersey Shore, but my mother, because of her upbringing, was always very frugal and she wouldn't let my father spend money on vacations or anything like that. In fact, ... all the way through grammar school, all the clothes I wore, she made. She was a great seamstress. It was always a little embarrassing to me, but you had to wear a white shirt and a blue tie and blue slacks and she made all the shirts herself, and she just wouldn't spend money. ... I can still hear her saying, "We can't afford that. We have four kids, we can't afford that," or, "Don't expect a lot at Christmastime. ... We have four kids, we can't do it." That was her upbringing. I mean, that's the way she was, that and, "Never be a burden on people." When I hear, today, about these people who are victims of predatory lending, I guarantee you, my mother would not, with her tenth grade education, ... have been a victim of predatory lending. [laughter] ... I say, for every ... victim of predatory lending, there is a greedy or stupid borrower on the other end, but she was that way. So, no, no family trips; I never left the area. As far south as I'd been was Wilmington, Delaware, I'd been to Ocean City on the east, I'd been to Philadelphia on the west and Exit 9 in the north, when I went to college. I'd never left that area, never been on a train or a boat or an airplane or done any of that stuff. ... I went to Rutgers and a big trip was, a couple of us went into New York one Saturday night--a big deal. Now, I got as far as 42nd Street. [laughter]

SI: Were you aware, in this period of the Civil Rights movement, of what was happening across the country, the marches in the South? Also, were things happening in South Jersey?

LE: Not in my high school. ... It hadn't started. It wasn't happening anywhere in the 1950s. I mean, in Ralph Ellison's ... *Invisible Man*, there was a town near us in South Jersey that was all-black, black mayor. [Editor's Note: Published in 1952, Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* chronicled a young African-American man's journey from the South to the North, confronting issues of race relations, Black Nationalism and Marxism along the way. The protagonist eventually comes to see himself as invisible to the rest of society.] ... It's an interesting question, because, later in my career, when I became a corporate executive and we were trying to mentor African-Americans in our company, we'd have a lot of sessions where I would go and meet with a group of them and talk about this very subject, "What was it like when you were growing up?" ... They would say, "Well, what did you think? What did you think about that?" and I said, "I thought they liked it that way. I mean, I just thought it was the nature of things, that they're separate." "Separate but equal" was the law of the land until, when? 1954, with *Brown*, ... and it took a long time before it changed after *Brown*. [Editor's Note: *Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka*, decided by the US Supreme Court in May 1954, legally desegregated public schools in the United States.] So, even in my high school, there were no blacks in my high school. I think there was only one black in my class when I got to Rutgers. ... There was another event, later; the Civil Rights thing didn't really hit me until, like, my junior and senior year at Rutgers. Another story I told these people at my company, that I was trying to mentor them--we're trying to communicate and understand our differences--that I worked in the Pocono Mountains one summer, while I was at Rutgers. ... It was a resort that hired college guys to wait tables and to do stuff. ... Because they'd brought in a lot of young secretaries from New York or Philadelphia, and so forth, ... the routine was, on Friday night, they'd send this station wagon, which really was a station wagon, into Stroudsburg or Scranton, where it was to pick up the new guests who were coming in. ... Those of us who were waiters would sit around, wanting to check out the girls who were coming in, and this one Saturday night, a group of four black girls showed up. ... The owner came out. It was a small resort, dude ranch kind of resort. The owner came out--he wouldn't let them in. He wouldn't accept them. He said, "You can't come here. This is a white resort and we'll take you to the colored resort. It's just a few miles from here," and these girls were furious. They were going to call the NAACP, "You can't do this to us. We made our reservations," and so forth, and we're all sitting there watching this and I'm, like, twenty or something. ... So, these kids I'm telling this story to now, thirty years later, say, "Well, what did you think?" and I said, "The honest answer is, I wondered why they wanted to come to a white resort when there was a colored resort down the road." So, the "great awakening" really came, like, the next year. I mean, that might have been part of it, just seeing that, but, then, in '63 and '64 is when college kids, really, kind of the light bulb went off and [we said], "Jeez, this is awful, these Jim Crow laws. This is terrible," and that we read Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*. ... The "great awakening" didn't really occur for me until, like, my senior year. ... In fact, in my senior year, at my fraternity, we pledged the first black, in what had always been an all-white fraternity, and I was proud of the fact that we pledged a black. I can remember the night of the election, and everybody cheered. I mean, so, it was kind of like--for me, anyhow--not a gradual but a sudden awakening to what Jim Crow was all about and what had to change and what needed to change in America. ... Then, of course, as the '60s wore on, it changed pretty dramatically, and, in the Army, of course, [I] was exposed to black people as well, but imagine that, Rutgers, the State University, I think there was only one black in my freshman class.

SI: You came to Rutgers in the Fall of 1959.

LE: That's right.

SI: Tell me about coming to campus, your first few days and weeks on campus. What was that like?

LE: Well, for me, it was very exciting. As I said, I really felt going from Exit 3 to Exit 9 was a big deal and I was away. ... The first classes, and so forth, were very exciting, and then, I remember, I didn't want to go home on the weekends, but everybody did. [laughter] All my freshman roommates did, so, I went home, like, the second weekend. ... I had a girlfriend then and I'd see some of my old high school buddies and I felt a little that I missed them, but, then, the football season started and I went to the Rutgers-Princeton game. ... I started doing that, and then, in that year, they pledged the fraternities in the first semester of freshman year, which ... they later changed that to second semester. So, I don't know, like, the pledge season started, like, in October and I pledged the Delta Upsilon fraternity and, now, I didn't go home on weekends. Now, there were parties and football games and all kinds of stuff to do as a pledge, and so forth, and I loved it. I mean, I absolutely thought I had died and gone to heaven. I mean, after all those years of strict Catholic upbringing, ... here I was in an environment where people were drinking beer and nobody cared whether I went to bed at night or where I was or even if I went to class, and so forth. [laughter] I mean the freedom was just intoxicating and the fraternity, I loved, the social life, I loved. I kind of felt, "I've arrived. I'm in college. I'm going to be a college graduate someday and the world'll be mine," and so forth. Then, I almost flunked out. [laughter] I didn't bother studying, I didn't do any work.

SI: Did you go right into the men's college or did you still have the idea that you wanted to be an engineer?

LE: That's all there was. That's all there was, was the men's college, at New Brunswick. I mean, yes, my roommates were engineering students or biology students, ... but, no, I was not accepted as an engineering student. My College Boards math scores weren't high enough to get me into the engineering school. So, they accepted me into the College of Arts and Sciences with the idea [that] if I got "As" in my freshman calculus courses, then, I could transfer into the engineering school--and I hated the freshman science courses. [laughter] I flunked one of them, and so, by the end of my first semester, the idea of being an engineer was gone. I just didn't want to do that work. I mean, I am not a lazy person, but I'd see those guys with their slide rules and their nose in a book and all that. I said, "I don't want to do that. I don't want to do that for a living. [laughter] It's not what I want to do. I don't want to do that in college," and so, I quickly segued into liberal arts, but that first semester was a trauma, because I'd never had [bad marks]. Since the sixth grade, I'd always been at the top of everything and, now, all of a sudden, I'd go into these exams and I hadn't prepared, I didn't write the papers. I'd been screwing around at the fraternity, playing intramural basketball, going to football games, doing all this stuff, and taking the train into New York. ... All of a sudden, finals came around and I said, "Jeez, I'm not doing well," and ... I was put on probation. My father was beside himself, "I'm paying all this money. I don't know what you're doing," and so forth. ... I've told my children and grandchildren this story many times--it was a trauma for me, that I could be thrown out, I could flunk out, and they flunked a lot out in those days. They really did. I mean, it was pretty brutal and I was right on

the border. So, now begins the second semester and I made this rule--after dinner, I go directly to the library and I don't come back until eleven o'clock. I just went up into the library, in one of those little carrels that they had, and I did my work, and I never had any academic problems after that. I did fine after that.

SI: Where did you live as a freshman?

LE: Pell, Pell Hall, and then, I lived in the fraternity house the other years.

SI: After you decided you did not want to be an engineer, what major did you settle on?

LE: History; I thought then [of studying] the law. I had this interest in politics, I still had this bit of a patriotic fervor and I thought maybe I could find a way to go to law school and become a lawyer. ... So, I would take history, American civilization, courses of that ilk, and I liked that. I still do. I still read history books. After my sophomore year, ... I took economics and I liked that a lot. I would have been an economics major if I had taken that early on. I think I took that as an elective somewhere in my junior year, maybe second semester freshman year, but I really liked it. It was logical to me--I got it. [laughter] Like the engineers get stuff, I got economics, and so, now, I began segueing into more business courses. I took some finance courses and that sort of thing and began to have the thought that maybe business would be my career, maybe that's where I would go, but, of course, there was the military. ... ROTC was mandatory the first two years and I elected that, since I had to go, wanted to go, I would go on into my junior year. So, I stayed with the ROTC. So, now, I knew I was going to have military service, but ... I was pretty sure I didn't want to make a career out of it, but I wanted to do it. ... Then, I thought, "Well, maybe I can go to business school or do something else," but, then, something else changed in my life, because I fell in love and, in those days, you didn't live together, and so forth. So, in my junior year, my wife and I got married. In fact, we will have our fiftieth wedding anniversary in March.

SI: Wow, congratulations.

LE: Yes, right, 1962. So, now, of course, as good Catholics, we didn't believe in birth control, so, we had a baby pretty soon, before I graduated. ... My parents were unhappy with my decision to get married. We did it. I was twenty-one, so, I didn't need their permission. She was only nineteen; I don't know whether we got her parents' permission. I don't know how that worked, but, anyhow, they were quite unhappy and ... they said, "We're not going to pay. You can pay your own way from now on," which I did. I worked as a bartender at Edison Lanes, which is where my wife's father was the head bartender, and I worked on the assembly line at Ford Motor Company in Metuchen and I made enough money to [go back to Rutgers], and I took a National Student Defense Loan. [Editor's Note: The National Defense Education Act of 1958, a result of post-*Sputnik* fears that the United States was falling behind the USSR in the sciences, mathematics and other fields of study, included provisions for the National Defense Student Loan program, which provided low-interest loans to lower-income students. ] ... Obviously, now, in my junior and senior year, ... I wasn't so much into the fraternity life, for whatever [reason], I was working, and so forth, but I was happier. I'd had enough of the "college boy"

stuff and wanted to get on with my life and my wife and I were in love and those early years of marriage were very happy. ... So, my life changed again at age twenty-one.

SI: How did you and your wife meet?

LE: At "the Ledge." So, true to what I was saying before, it was before finals my sophomore year and there was a "last blast" party going on at my fraternity house. It was a Saturday night, but I was in the library, doing my work, and I took a coffee break, I don't know, somewhere around nine o'clock, I guess, and went over to the Ledge for coffee. Is the Ledge still there?

SI: It is. It is not quite the same. It is the Student Activity Center.

LE: Yes. Well, so, the coffee shop was on the upper level, and then, there was a dance going on on the lower level and there were two young pledges from my fraternity, who weren't in the fraternity yet, but they were trying to pledge it. I knew them and I went over. ... I looked down at--you know, it was this mixer kind of thing--and I said, "Anything interesting down there? I mean, are there any good-looking chicks down there?" and he said, "Yes, there's this one blonde who was with your fraternity brother Frank's girlfriend, but they went back to the house, but I think she's in the ladies room." So, I went down and stood outside the ladies room. This blonde came out and I said, "Aren't you Eleanor's friend?" and she said, "Yes." I mean, I'd just got this information. I said, "I think they went back to the house. You want to go back with me?" and so, my books sat on the carrel for the rest of that evening in the library [laughter] and we went back to the fraternity house. ... Then, when finals were over, I asked her [out]. I took her to New York for our first date, and then, we dated for a year and got married. Oh, we got pinned, I gave her my fraternity pin, which she still has, and so forth.

SI: What is her name?

LE: Carol. You can see her picture up here.

SI: Great.

LE: That's our family. She's the blonde.

SI: She was from the area.

LE: Edison, yes.

SI: Going back to your fraternity, what attracted you to DU?

LE: Well, I liked the house, I liked the guys. I mean, ... I could have gotten into several, I guess. I probably could not have gotten into, like, Zeta Psi and Chi Psi, [which] were more upper class, and I was more of a lower class kid, and DU was ethnically mixed, whereas Zeta Psi and Chi Psi were probably all WASP-y, Anglo kind of guys. ... I could get by with that, because my name sounds very WASP-ish, but I wasn't. [laughter] I was an Irish Catholic kid and it was mixed, a lot of Italians. ... By now, I knew a lot of Italians, because of my high school, and a

handful of Jews. I mean, it was an ethnically mixed group. It wasn't all jocks. It was kind of a diverse group, very nice house, had a lot of fun at the parties. I mean, it just seemed like the right place for me. I never really thought about [other fraternities], seriously. I went to some parties, some recruiting parties at some of the other houses, but I very quickly gravitated to them and they did to me. So, I pledged there in, I don't know, October of my freshman year.

SI: What was life in the fraternity house like in the early 1960s?

LE: It was--[laughter] when I explain this to my kids, they think I'm talking about medieval France. I mean, ... first of all, we had the dining and living facilities and kitchen on the first floor. We had the chapter room downstairs, we had a bar room and a TV room downstairs. On the second level, we had our study rooms and, on the third level, we had these big, open dormitories. One was the cold dorm and one was the warm dorm and, in the cold dorm, they kept the windows open all the time and, in the warm dorm, they kept them closed all the time. ... The typical day would be breakfast, come back for lunch, everybody sat down for lunch. The pledges did little tricks. Dinner was jacket and tie, four nights a week. Friday night was not. Friday night, typically, was beer and spaghetti night, could get a little raucous, but, four nights a week, we would have to wear jacket and tie, candlelit dinner, brothers who had jobs would serve and, at least once, one night a week, a speaker would come in. ... A professor, an alumnus, somebody would come in to make a little speech. I mean, we were very formal in that regard, ... and then, there were the weekends, the big weekends. There would be football weekends, when people would bring their girls up. Then, there would be the big fall weekends, the Soph Hop, the Junior Prom and Mili Ball [Military Ball], when the guys would move out of the fraternity house, their dates would move in and the weekend would include a cocktail party at the fraternity house. Drinking was [allowed]. You weren't allowed to have hard liquor, but that was not strictly enforced. You were allowed to have beer in the fraternity house and we always did. ... So, there'd be a party, and then, there'd be a football game or some other activity. ... I thought I'd died and gone to heaven. I mean, all of a sudden, from the strict Catholic family that wouldn't spend any money, and so forth, I was living what I thought was a very elegant life as part of the fraternity, and I liked all the guys and ... made a lot of friends. It was a good life. ... It was the end--I often think my class, '63, was the end of the 1950s, because it changed so radically. After the Army, I came back for a Rutgers-Princeton game, probably in '67, and I couldn't believe it. I couldn't believe how it had changed, how they were sleeping with their girlfriends and they dressed like slobs, the language and the drugs. In my day, I mean, we were a pretty wild group, but drugs were a ghetto thing or [for] musicians. I never knew anybody that smoked marijuana or took drugs and I come back and that's all they're doing, and they're antiwar and they're antigovernment. ... There was just a seismic shift in the sociology of college life from 1963 to 1967. It was hard to recognize that world and to think back at how we had been in the early '60s--quite a change.

SI: One thing that always surprises me is, a lot of these social rules were kept by the members themselves. For example, if somebody tried to sneak a woman upstairs, it would result in a social stigma.

LE: Yes.

SI: You were not just breaking abstract rules, you were actually making yourself a pariah.

LE: Right, and we had a housemother who also kind of policed the hallways. We had the joke that if you had a girl in your room, which was illegal, you tied the tie around your doorknob. Did you ever hear that story?

SI: Yes.

LE: Yes, that was there, but nobody ever did it. I mean, it just didn't happen. ... Well, if it did, nobody knew about it. [laughter]

SI: Later on, when this African-American student was being pledged, did that cause any controversy within the fraternity?

LE: No. There was an earlier event when they tried to bring one in and it never went anywhere. "Well, we'll be kicked out of national. We can't do this," but I think ... it was my senior year, maybe in my junior year, but, by then, the "great awakening" had occurred. ... There was just no question that we wanted to do this and, as I said, when the vote was taken and there was no blackball, everybody cheered in our chapter room. I can remember that, and I remember being very proud of that, that we had [elected him]. We were the first previously all-white fraternity to pledge a black.

SI: The first at Rutgers?

LE: Yes, yes. I don't know about other schools, and I don't think our national had anything to say about it or cared, ... because nothing happened.

SI: How was the reaction on the wider campus?

LE: Well, among the fraternity boys, I can remember one guy from Chi Psi saying, "I can't believe you guys did that," like, "What were you thinking?" [laughter] I remember that comment, but he would say the same thing about pledging a Jew. I mean, they were all WASP-y and the Jews were barred from many of the fraternities there. They had their own, the Zeta Beta Tau and Phi Ep [Phi Epsilon Pi], and so forth, but there were only a handful of "mixed" fraternities and mixed--we were predominantly Italians and Irish and WASP-y, but we had four or five Jews in every pledge class. So, the Chi Psis and Phi Gams, and so forth, would be skeptical of [it]. "What are you guys doing?" was the reaction to the pledging of blacks, and so forth. They hadn't quite had the awakening yet, I guess.

SI: How important was being in a fraternity at that time? Were you a social outcast if you were not in a fraternity?

LE: Yes, I think so, yes, for me, I mean, because I'm a very social person, I want to be in the mainstream. ... So, if you're very studious, and so forth, they called themselves GDIs, "God Damn Independents." I suppose, looking back on it, I sort of admired them for their

independence, but, to have a social life, you had to be in the fraternity, it seemed to me. ... I couldn't imagine not being in a fraternity. [laughter] It would just not be me.

SI: How was the fraternity's relationship with the administration at that time?

LE: Okay. I mean, a lot of the administrators had been fraternity guys themselves, but there was a growing [divide]. Well, we had some problem with alcohol once. There was an incident where some Douglass girl got really drunk and it became known and we got in [trouble]. We couldn't have parties for a semester or something. We got in trouble that way, and I can remember one professor or something--I don't remember what the circumstance, why I was talking to him about this--but he said, "Why do you guys do this? Isn't this silly and anti-intellectual, to go through this hazing stuff, and so forth?" and I said, "Well, it's our common bond. We all have that in common." Now, I look back and he's right, but ... there wasn't a real aggressive anti-Greek attitude on the part of the administration, in those days. I can remember, somebody'd say, "Oh, Professor So-and-So, he was a DU," and we'd have him come to the house and make a speech after dinner or something. ... That shift came later, I think.

SI: Tell me about some of your professors that stand out in your memory, if any of them stand out.

LE: Yes, only two or three, really. There was a guy, I think his name was--I'd have to check the spelling--Chararis or Caracas, or something like that.

SI: Peter Charanis?

LE: Yes, Charanis, yes. He was Greek. ... I've told this story to many people--he had a pretty profound impact on me. One of my very first college classes, ... I'm pretty sure was Western Civ., he said, "In your four years here, if we do nothing else, in order to be successful, we must teach you to think and teach you to challenge, to think for yourself and to challenge what we say, what you read in your books, what you read in newspapers, to constantly challenge things." ... To me, coming out of the Roman Catholic [background], where you don't challenge anything, that really had an impact on me. I mean, it led me ... to my career. I mean, it's been a great source of success for me in life. I mean, it very quickly led me away from the Catholic Church. I don't believe that shit, [laughter] when we start thinking about it and reading history, and so forth, and getting a picture of what religion's really all about. ... By the time I was a junior, I was no longer a practicing Catholic and, shortly after I graduated, I guess, I decided I was really an atheist. I didn't really believe any of that stuff. ... It's helped me in business and in so many other ways, too. What I've done in my business career is, always is, "Don't bullshit me. Don't tell me that we're losing market share because our competitors are whores. We're losing market share because our expenses are too high, or our products are shoddy or whatever. I want to know the truth, why we're losing market share," and that has served me very well in my business career, because a lot of people do kid themselves and do think, "Oh, we're doing everything right and we can't be wrong," and so forth. So, that kind of advice from him really meant a lot to me, and then, I remember McCormick, who was a history professor, the father of--is he gone now, the President?

SI: He is retiring in June, I believe. [Editor's Note: Dr. Richard P. McCormick served as a Professor of History, University Historian and Dean of Rutgers College, among other roles, during his career at Rutgers University. His son, Dr. Richard L. McCormick, also a Professor of History and University administrator, served as the nineteenth President of Rutgers University from December 2002 to June 2012.]

LE: Right. I remember him, and then, there was a visiting professor, came in from Duke, and I'll never forget this guy. He was reading the roll of who was in the class the first day--this is sophomore year or junior year--and, of course, all these names are ethnic. They're Italian names, they're Polish names, they're Jewish names, and so forth. He's going, he's having a hard time pronouncing them, [laughter] and he makes the observation, he says, [Mr. English imitates his accent], "Well, this is already quite different from Duke, where every name is quite pronounceable." I looked at the guy next to me, I said, "Welcome to the ethnic world," but he was a smart guy. His name was Harbaugh, H-A-R-B-A-U-G-H, I think, and he'd written a book on Teddy Roosevelt, which I still have, and I developed a great interest in Teddy Roosevelt and the Progressive Era as a result of that class. So, he stands out in my mind. [Editor's Note: Professor William H. Harbaugh wrote *Power and Responsibility: The Life and Times of Theodore Roosevelt* (1961).] ... I can't remember who the economics professor was. ... I can't remember his name. I can still see him drawing the supply and demand curve and talking about elasticity, and so forth, and this little light bulb, "Yes, yes, I get that. I see how that works." I can still remember him talking about, "If the price of salt doubled, it's so small, it wouldn't [matter]," and what that means. I just can't remember the guy's name, but those were the things that I still remember as having an impact on me in my college years.

SI: You mentioned that an interest in politics led to your studying law at one point.

LE: My thinking about studying law, right.

SI: Where did that interest in politics come from? Were you looking at national races, that sort of thing?

LE: Well, and local, in New Jersey, but I think it stemmed from my inherent patriotism, a belief in our country and its institutions and a belief that, "We're the good guys. We were doing it right, we had the right system, we had the right structure, we were honorable people. We were the ones that suppressed the Nazis and we're going to overcome the Communists," and so forth. I think it stemmed from just that core patriotism, love of country and wanting, ... somehow, to be involved in it. I didn't run for office, either in high school or college. I never liked the idea of having to campaign, but I would go to events. I can remember, and I've told--several of my colleagues here in the office live in New Jersey--and I said, "I can remember Governor Hughes coming to campus and there was a big issue about a bond issue, to get more money for the University, but, in those days, New Jersey did not have an income tax or a sales tax. There was no broad-based tax. ... Of course, it was a big political issue--was there going to be a broad-based tax?--and Governor Hughes came up to the campus and he talked to a bunch of students and he took questions. ... I got up and really challenged him on how he's going to pay for this bond issue and all the other pressures in the state, and he said, 'Well, if you're trying to get me to commit that I'm going to advocate a broad-based tax, like a sales tax or an income tax, I'm not

going to do this, but I will say this, 'I can remember, [laughter] 'I will say this--we have the highest property taxes in this state in the country and we have to find a way to spread that around.'" [laughter] ... I told this story to my friends, they said, "We still have the highest property taxes and we have a sales tax and we have an income tax," but I remember that debate with Governor Hughes, in, I don't know, '61, '62, somewhere along the line. [Editor's Note: Democrat Richard J. Hughes won the 1961 New Jersey Gubernatorial campaign and served as governor from 1962 to 1970. His tenure was marked by several unsuccessful attempts to institute an income tax, but Governor Hughes did succeed in implementing a broad-based tax with the establishment of a three-percent sales tax in his second term. A state income tax was later enacted in 1976. At the time of the interview, New Jersey had the highest property taxes in the nation.]

SI: Many alumni talk about the speakers that came to campus and, also, the cultural events, like concerts. Do any of those stand out in your memory?

LE: Johnny Mathis at one big weekend, Ray Charles at another. We thought he was drunk; he probably was drunk. He did bad. Johnny Mathis was good. Other speakers, ... I don't seem to remember. I remember the Governor and that event. Oh, yes, yes, I remember a guy whose name was Willard Sahloff. He had a big impact on me, too. He was a DU and he came to our house as a speaker and I can remember a couple [things]. He was a big executive at GE [General Electric] and the first thing I remember is, he pulled up in, with a driver, not a big limo, but a Cadillac or something, was being chauffeured around. "Wow," and this was right after I'd almost flunked out. This is, like, two or three weeks ... into the first semester [after that], and he gave this motivational speech. He said, "By virtue of the fact that you're here, that you've been accepted, you got through your freshman year, you can do anything you want to do with your life. It's only a question of, 'What do you want to do?'" and I sat there thinking, "That's right, [laughter] and what I want to do is graduate and go on and get rich." I mean, I remember that and that had a very profound impact on me--never heard what happened to the guy, but he never, I don't think, became CEO of GE, was probably a hell of an executive, and so forth--but that was a profound impact on me, that ... it's not a question of ability, it's a question of desire. "What do you want? If you want it bad enough, you'll get it," and I said, "Man, I want to graduate, I want to graduate," so, off to the library every night. [laughter] [Editor's Note: Willard H. Sahloff, Rutgers College Class of 1930, was an executive at GE for nineteen years and also served on the Rutgers Board of Trustees from 1956 to 1971.]

SI: The Kennedy campaign and his election took place in your sophomore year.

LE: Yes.

SI: Did you follow that?

LE: Oh, yes, oh, absolutely, absolutely. I was a Nixon fan originally, while the primaries were going on, before it was decided who the candidate was going to be. Nixon had this widely publicized debate with Khrushchev at the World's Fair and I watched that--or read about it, I can't remember what--but I was quite impressed with Nixon. [Editor's Note: On July 24, 1959, Vice-President Richard M. Nixon and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev carried on an

impromptu debate on the merits of capitalism versus communism during the opening of the American National Exhibition in Moscow. The exhibition consisted of an archetypical home full of amenities available to the average American consumer, which Nixon offered as evidence of capitalism's superiority. Known as "The Kitchen Debate," it was recorded using the new technology of color videotape (a part of the exhibition) and broadcast in both countries. The debate contributed significantly to Nixon's nomination as the Republican Presidential candidate in 1960.] So, I was a Nixon fan going in, but, then, when Kennedy got the nomination, there was this Irish Catholic thing, that a lot of Jews told me that when [Senator Joseph] Lieberman got the nomination [as Democratic candidate for Vice-President in 2000] that they had this ethnic pride, and that's how we felt, a little bit. So, I couldn't vote, I was not twenty-one yet, but I probably would have voted for Kennedy. My attitude toward him changed very quickly, very quickly, once he got elected and got nominated, and I became a very anti-Kennedy guy, but, during that summer, in the campaign, there was this Irish Catholic thing, ... that ethnic pride thing that I thought might have led me to vote for him, if I'd been able to vote.

SI: What changed your mind?

LE: ... The big event was his slapping down US Steel from raising prices. His interference in the private market, I thought, was unconscionable. US Steel tried to--needed to--raise prices, in order to modernize their facilities. I mean, I think, if you look back at the economic history of this--maybe I'm wrong, because I haven't really followed it--but I know it was the beginning of our loss of the steel industry, that we couldn't make the investments that they needed to make. ... He slapped them down by denying them government contracts and all that kind of thing, and I was infuriated with the idea that he was so interfering with the private market. ... What was liberal in those days? I mean, he did cut taxes and that was good, but I just began to see him and the Democrats as the enemy of free markets and I was very much of a freedom and free market kind of guy. I don't remember his views on Civil Rights. They weren't that prominent, to be honest with you. I mean, he started that toward the end, but [President Lyndon B.] Johnson really carried the Civil Rights Acts, and so forth, yes.

SI: Would you say, at that time, on campus, students were more for Nixon or Kennedy or were most just apolitical?

LE: It wasn't as radical as it might be today, but I think it depends on where you were. If you were a fraternity guy, you were probably more on the conservative side. I was a member of Young Americans for Freedom for a while, but, toward the end, the Students for a Democratic Society began to make inroads. [Editor's Note: Young Americans for Freedom (YAF), a conservative and libertarian youth group, was founded in September 1960 at conservative writer and political commentator William F. Buckley's estate. Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) was a student activist movement during the early to late 1960s that expanded on college campuses across the United States to protest against racial discrimination, the Vietnam War, and other inequalities in the United States. The YAF and SDS were considered to be at opposite ends of the political spectrum.] So, I think, among the independents, the more intellectuals, and so forth, they were a lot more liberal, the fraternity boys ... tended to be more conservative, but it wasn't a highly politicized college campus. ... In my day, there weren't marches,

demonstrations. The big issue my freshman year was whether we'd be allowed to have beer in the dorms. ... The "great awakening" hadn't occurred.

SI: What did you do with the YAF?

LE: I just went to a couple meetings. I went to a big convention here in New York, at Madison Square Garden. They had [Republican Senator] Barry Goldwater and [author] John Dos Passos and a number of speakers. It was just a big rally at Madison Square Garden. I think it was the only big event I went to, and then, there were a few meetings. I didn't have any office or I wasn't a recruiter or activist. I just [attended because] my political thinking was along those lines. I mean, early on, in high school, I'd read [Barry Goldwater's] *Conscience of a Conservative*. In freshman political science, I read Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom*; I still give it out to people.

SI: [Friedrich] Hayek. [Editor's Note: Austrian School economist and Nobel Laureate Friedrich Hayek advocated for the tenets of classical liberalism in works such as *The Road to Serfdom* (1944), in contrast to the theories of John Maynard Keynes and others who encouraged a greater role for public sector economic planning and regulation.]

LE: Hayek, *Road to Serfdom*. I became a very strong free market advocate and that led me to more conservative political leanings.

SI: From what I understand, Keynesian economics was the drumbeat in economic departments, particularly Rutgers, at the time.

LE: Oh, yes.

SI: Did you find that you were running counter to your professors?

LE: To a degree, yes. I mean, I really believed in this, but, if you think about [it], ... I know Hayek and [John Maynard] Keynes were great adversaries, and so forth, but the idea that government spending [could be wielded] to stimulate the economy, I mean, that seemed to make some sense to me, in those days. So, I wasn't radically opposed to [it]. I think everybody just sort of accepted Keynesian economics in that sense, of government fiscal policy being utilized to regulate the economy, to simulate it when it slowed down, and so forth. So, yes, that was all we were taught and that was what was accepted, but, yet, the ideas of freedom that are in here, I mean, the pages that I would underline, like, "We're going to do all this for the common good--who gets to decide what's the common good? Suppose I don't like the common good--do I have to buckle under and live according to the common good?" So, my economic thinking really developed beyond college, when I got into the business world, but this influenced me. Ayn Rand, I read *Fountainhead* and *Atlas Shrugged* and I don't believe in everything--Ayn Rand was kind of a nutcase in some of her theories of objectivism--but the idea of "The Moochers;" did you ever read it, *Atlas Shrugged*?

SI: No.

LE: The idea of "The Moochers," the people that are taking out of the government, versus "The Producers," ... was, to me, very valid, and is still very valid to me today.

SI: During this time, the Cuban Missile Crisis was a big event. Do you remember what that period was like?

LE: I do, yes. I mean, it's now depicted--and I guess this happened--as a great panic and everybody running away, thinking nuclear war. I mean, I went to class. I can remember, the day after Kennedy declared the embargo, going to a history class and we were studying the embargoes that'd been imposed during the War of 1812. ... There were different terms, like, a strict embargo, and somebody saying, "Well, how would this fit into the embargo? How would this compare?" I mean, it was just another day. ... I do not remember having any anxiety about a nuclear war. I guess I was naïve or whatever, but I don't remember being in a panic mode. I remember going to school, I remember going to classes, I remember going to work. Obviously, I watched TV. I remember Adlai Stevenson with his charts and all that kind of stuff, but I didn't have, nor did anybody around me have, this sense that historians would portray now as everybody was panicking, leaving New York, and so forth. ... I wasn't in that group, if that was happening. [Editor's Note: In October 1962, the United States demanded that the Soviet Union remove nuclear missiles it had clandestinely installed in Cuba. The United States initiated a naval blockade around the island nation on October 23rd, creating a tense standoff between the superpowers that many feared would lead to nuclear war. The presence of the missiles in Cuba was proven to the world in an October 25th presentation to the United Nations by Adlai Stevenson, then US Ambassador to the United Nations.]

SI: Was that after you were married?

LE: Yes.

SI: That schedule must have been difficult. Were you working as a bartender and in the plant and going to school all at the same time?

LE: Part of it was. So, I got the job at Ford in June, okay, and I kept it until October and I worked at the bar part-time during the summer, on the weekends, and I kept working at the bar on weekends in that period. So, there was one period of time, ... like September, October, we went back to school, like maybe September 17th, for maybe four or five weeks, I was doing all three, and then, I couldn't do the assembly line anymore. It was too physically demanding to go there at four o'clock, come home at eleven and thirty-eight cars an hour rolling down the line, and so forth, and then, do my studies. ... I just couldn't keep up with it and I had never planned to stay even into September and October, but they needed me and I thought, "I'm making three bucks an hour," or whatever. ... I kept doing it as long as I could, and then, I finally burned out and I quit that job, but I kept doing [the other job]. ... In the bar, I would work forty hours a week. I'd work twelve hours on Saturday and eight hours on Sunday, a couple of nights, ... and I made pretty good money, good tips, and so forth. ...

SI: Where did you and your wife live, in New Brunswick?

LE: Initially, we had an apartment in Franklin Park, and then, we moved on campus. We moved into married students' quarters, up at University Heights.

SI: Okay. What were those like then?

LE: One room, I could show you pictures, ... kind of cinderblock walls, one room that was kind of kitchen/dining room/living room and a bedroom and a bathroom, was okay.

SI: Had they been built recently or was it old World War II housing?

LE: They were pretty new, Bevier Road. I don't know whether it's still there or not, but they were pretty new then. I don't know exactly when they were built, but they weren't old. They were pretty new.

SI: Tell me a little bit about your ROTC training and what that entailed on a weekly basis, what the tenor of it was like.

LE: It wasn't bad. I mean, you'd have classes twice a week. It was like a two-credit course or three-credit course and you'd have drill once a week. On, I think it was Wednesday at noon, you'd ... put your uniform on and marched around the field. There were a few exercises at night and mostly classroom [work], so, the main training came during the summer camp, but I couldn't go to summer camp after junior year, when most people did, because I didn't have the money to go back to college. So, that's when I worked on the assembly line at Ford and I went to summer camp after my senior year, after I graduated, and then, I got my commission at the end of that. So, I don't remember it being real intense during college days. It was like any other course. You had to do some work and some studies and pass the tests. You had the weekly drills and there were occasional nighttime exercises, but no camping out, no military training exercises. That took place in the summer camp, where I went to Fort Devens in the Summer of 1963.

SI: You have mentioned a few times this sense of patriotism. You had an ROTC commitment, obviously, but you also had a wife and child.

LE: I could have gotten out, yes. I didn't want to. I told my wife that before we got married. I said, "I want to serve in the military. I want to be a paratrooper. I want to serve in the military." There was no war. [laughter] I wasn't thinking about that, "But, I want to have that experience. I've always wanted to do it. I'm patriotic," and she agreed. ... Then, the baby came along, I said, "Well, obviously, I've made this commitment." ... The interesting thing was, now, I was looking for a job and the placement director at Rutgers had sort of befriended me, took me under his wing. I tended bar; he had a New Year's party and he asked me to tend bar for him. He'd given [me] a lot of aptitude tests. I can remember him saying to me, "Larry, based on your tests, you either ought to be a lawyer, a teacher or a salesman," and I said, "Mr. (Kirkpatrick?), I don't have the money to go to law school. Teachers don't make any money and I want to get rich. So, I'll be a salesman," and he said, "Okay, let's get you started on some interviews." So, he said, "If you really want to make money as a salesman, you should go in the insurance business." So, I started interviewing with insurance companies, and the military was an issue. So, I remember Connecticut Mutual saying to me, "You could be really good at this, but get out of the military."

Just pay them back. We'll lend you the money, pay them back." You got twenty-seven bucks a month. If you reneged on your duty, you had to pay that money back and it was hundreds--it wasn't a lot of money. No, I didn't want to do that, but, then, Connecticut General came along and there were two things about it that really appealed to me. One, it wasn't selling individual insurance. There wasn't going to be "kitchen table" stuff. It was selling to business, selling employee benefit plans, and so forth, selling company to company, and I didn't like the "kitchen table." I didn't want to do that, selling life insurance. So, I liked that, and, two, they said, "Well, when do you have to go in the military?" and I said, "I don't know. You can put in your request. Some people go right after graduation and other people go in September and you can defer it for a long time," and they said, "Well, defer it for as long as you can. We'll offer you a job and you work for that period of time and [resume] when you come back from the military." I mean, companies did that in those days. It was just unbelievable. So, I went down and I said to ... whoever the military commander was, I said, "How long can I defer my reporting for active duty?" He said, "Oh, I'll put you down for next June." I said, "Wow, okay." So, I graduated in June, I went to summer camp, I got my commission, and then, two days later, I went to work for Connecticut General. ... They sent me to the Baltimore office and I worked until the following June, and then, I reported to Fort Benning, Georgia, spent two years in the military, came back to Connecticut General afterwards. So, Connecticut General was very good to me in that regard and very liberal. They did this for a lot of people. I mean, if they saw somebody with talent, they wanted to get their hooks into you. ... So, they knew people had to serve in the military. ... The guy that was recruiting you had served in the military, all the men--it was a man's world in those days--you know, were all military veterans, and so, they were very liberal about that. So, yes, I could have dumped it, and one company encouraged me to, but I still had this, "I've got to do this. I have to serve. I want the experience."

SI: Why were you so adamant about going in the airborne?

LE: The excitement of it. I'd never been up in an airplane. [laughter] I'd never been anywhere. Now, by this time, ... I told you, I'd never been north of 42nd Street. So, now, I get recruited by Connecticut General and they had me take a train to Hartford. "Wow, Hartford, Connecticut. Man, I've never seen Connecticut," and then, they said, "Okay, we want you in the Baltimore office. Fly down to Baltimore and meet the manager." That was my first airplane ride, down to Baltimore, and then, back, from Newark, "Wow." ... So, now, I've been to Maryland, I mean, but the idea [of], "I'm going to go to Georgia, I'm going to go places," and so forth, I mean, it was just really exciting to me. I guess I thought if I ... just went into the insurance business, I'd never travel anywhere. It turned out to be not the case at all, [laughter] but it was just very exciting to me--and the idea of being a paratrooper and the physical challenge of it and the prestige of it. Younger, I wanted to be a Marine. Then, I segued into wanting to be a paratrooper, and that was all part of that patriotism thing. So, I worked for Connecticut General for eight or nine months, and then, I went in the Army for two years.

SI: Where did you go for the summer camp?

LE: The summer camp was at Camp Devens, Fort Devens, in Massachusetts. That was the six-week summer camp before the commission. Then, in June of '64, I reported for active duty at Fort Benning, Georgia, the Infantry School.

SI: What was Fort Devens like, that experience?

LE: Well, a World War II camp, physically demanding--you weren't officers yet--and a lot of humping through the woods and a lot of basic infantry training. I lost the upper range of my hearing on the machine-gun range. They gave me no hearing protection, but there was a lot of familiarization with the basic what they called TO&E, ... table of organization and equipment, how you handle [your unit's weapons, equipment and personnel]. In those days, we had M-1s, then, M-14s and M-16s, and the sixty-caliber machine-gun, the 106-[millimeter M40] recoilless rifle, the eighty-one-millimeter mortars, all the basic orientation to weaponry, and then, exercises, some live fire exercises and maneuvers. ... It was very infantry oriented, even though all these officers weren't going to go infantry. It was very physically demanding. ... I can still remember having the job of having to carry the machine-gun ammunition. I was the gunner assistant on this one exercise and remembering thinking, "I can't do this anymore, but I have to do it. [laughter] I have to keep going and I have to keep holding on to these damned things," and I did it and it was that kind of training. ... At the end, we got our gold bars and most of them went back to school, ... because it was between their junior and senior year. I had already graduated, so, I got my bar and the rest of them went back to school and I went to Baltimore to sell employee benefit plans to small companies.

SI: Do you think they were any tougher on you because you were an officer candidate?

LE: You mean at the summer camp up there?

SI: Yes.

LE: No. They were all going to be officers. This was an ROTC summer camp. ... The only difference between me and the others is, typically, they go between their junior and senior year; then, when they graduate, they get their bars. I couldn't do that. I had to work to get the money to go back to Rutgers, so, I was going to get my bars at the end of it, but everybody there was going to be an officer. ... It was an officer training program.

SI: You must have really enjoyed that job, since you stayed there for thirty-three years. What was it like for those first nine months?

LE: Mixed things. First of all, financially, it was the hardest nine months of our marriage. When I was at Rutgers and I was working and she was working--and then, even after the baby, she went back and did some work--I always had money in my pocket. We could always go to Old Queens [a New Brunswick bar and grill] and have a pizza and a beer. Then, all of a sudden, now, I'm a college graduate and I've got to wear a suit and a hat every day, I have to go out to lunch every day, I have to pay to park my car. ... I'm getting a salary, which seemed astronomical to me, but it meant, at the end of the month, I didn't have any money left. I mean, we were really, really scrounging. I can remember, I think my wife and I remember going to one movie in the whole period of time we were there. ... I would never, ever think of asking for help from my parents or hers, and hers couldn't do it, mine probably could have, but, I mean, I remember that, but I loved the business world. I mean, I just loved what I was learning. I loved

going out on sales calls. I discovered this is what I was really good at. ... I understood the products, I could make good presentations. I just really loved the work and I knew that this was going to be my life's work, was going to be in the business world. That part of it, I really loved. Then, when I went in the Army, I got TDY [temporary duty assignment] pay, I got jump pay--I mean, once again, I was back. I lived better when I was in the Army. We lived on post. [laughter] It was just that one period of [time when], really, it was really tough, financially, but I loved the work and I was pleased to get back to it.

SI: What was your first child's name?

LE: First child, Richard.

SI: He was born in ...

LE: '62, yes. [Referring to a family photo hanging in his office] That's him on the left up there.

SI: Can you tell me your children's names and when they were born?

LE: Yes. Richard was born in '62, Laura was born in '65 and (Steven?) was born in '67.

SI: Tell me about reporting to Fort Benning. Was it earlier in the summer?

LE: June, June 20th, I think. Well, first of all, the excitement of the trip down, going through Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, seeing the still--now, this is after *my* awakening on Civil Rights--but seeing the still obvious evidence of Jim Crow laws. I mean, "Colored Here," [in] restaurants, I mean, the segregation still existed everywhere in the South. That was kind of a shock, but just the excitement of seeing states I hadn't seen before and being places I hadn't been before. So, the trip down was exciting, and then, reporting for duty, the training was rigorous and we made friends. There were a couple other married officers there and we made good friends. We could go to the officers' club. ... As I say, it was very rigorous. This is the infantry officers' school now, so, it was all infantry, all weapons training, all tactics training, escape-and-evasion training, but I really liked it. I mean, it was very physically demanding, and so forth, but I really kind of liked it. It was an exciting period. Somehow, while we were there, my wife got pregnant again. [laughter]

SI: How many weeks was it?

LE: It was all summer, June, we finished in September. Yes, so, it was pretty long; well, September, that included jump school, so, three weeks of jump school. I think it was six weeks of officer training, infantry training, and three weeks of jump school.

SI: The Gulf of Tonkin Incident ...

LE: ... Happened while I was in jump school. [Editor's Note: In early August 1964, the USS *Maddox* (DD -731) and the USS *Turner Joy* (DD-951) were involved in a controversial naval attack by North Vietnamese forces in the Gulf of Tonkin. Congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin

Resolution on August 7, 1964, authorizing the President to take retaliatory action against North Vietnam.]

SI: What was the reaction to that? Now, we look back and we know it marks the beginning of heavy US involvement in Vietnam.

LE: Yes.

SI: At that time, was there any indication that this might change your life?

LE: Yes, I mean, yes, if you were a young infantry officer and the Gulf of Tonkin occurred, I mean, we knew about Vietnam, we knew about advisors, we knew people had been [sent there], but, until then, it was clear that Vietnam was a choice assignment for career guys, the West Pointers. They wanted to go and get their combat experience, and so forth, and it would be impossible for a non-[career officer] to get one of those assignments over there, but, now, all of a sudden, it looked like, "Oh, maybe there is going to be a war." Yes, there was a sense of excitement coming out, "We'll go kick their asses," that kind of view that young men have at the beginning of every war, I guess, dumb as it is.

SI: What was jump school like?

LE: Physically quite demanding. You had to be able to do so many push-ups, pull-ups, sit-ups, all that kind of stuff. You had to run. It was mostly that--it was mostly running, pull-ups, push-ups, exercise, and then, practicing ... how you land and how you take care of the equipment and what happens if you go wrong. ... Then, they had this period where they have these towers that you would jump [from] to weed out people who weren't going to be able to jump out of the airplane. They figured if you could jump off of this tower and have confidence in the equipment, which was a cable that would slide you down the end, that you'll probably do it when you get up in the airplane. So, that was pretty rigorous, but ... what I remember most about it was the physical aspect, the practicing how you land and fold your knees and do the parachute landing fall, and so forth, because you still hit the ground pretty hard when you're coming down. Yes, that was easy and jumping out of the tower was easy, but the physical [training] every morning, ... these five-mile runs or whatever they were, at a pretty vigorous pace, with your jump boots on, and then, the sit-ups and the push-ups and the pull-ups and all that kind of stuff. It was pretty demanding, and then, the final week, the jumps themselves. You had to make five jumps to qualify, some of them with all the equipment. We kind of looked like the World War II paratroopers, all of the equipment strapped on them and everything.

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: We were talking about your qualifying jumps.

LE: Yes, so, a C-119 Flying Boxcar goes rumbling down the runway and there were, I think, like, eight or nine guys on either side. I was the only guy on the airplane who'd ever been up in an airplane before, and I was only up once. ... So, they go flying around and they come out over the drop zone. Now, you've seen the films, I'm sure, "Stand up, hook up, get in the door," green

light goes on. ... Everybody's scared to death in those few minutes, ... on the plane ride, but, then, when the commands start, this is where you've been trained, "Stand up, hook up, check your equipment, sound off for equipment check, stand in the door. Green light, go," I mean, it just was automatic and the next thing you know, it was the sensation I felt. You get hit by the propeller, prop wash, they called it. It was like being hit by a tennis racket, and you didn't have a sense of falling at all, but rather being thrown backwards from the blast of the propellers, and then, "Poof," the parachute opened and you landed. ... So, everybody got on the ground, doing high fives and saying, "Oh, I can't wait to do it again. It's great." Then, you get up again, everybody'd be scared again, and so forth--so, five qualifying jumps and we got our parachute wings.

SI: What was your first active duty assignment?

LE: Well, it was kind of interesting. I really wanted to go to the 82nd, but ... I was a Reserve officer and assignments in the 82nd were hard to get. They went to West Pointers, mainly, and so, I had asked to be assigned to Fort Bragg and I get assigned to ... Third US Army at Fort Bragg. ... That just meant they'd do whatever they wanted to do with me, but I put ... an 82nd Airborne Division patch on my uniform, put [on] my paratrooper's uniform, I have a little cap and everything, and reported to Headquarters, XVIII Airborne Corps, "Lieutenant English, reporting for duty," and the Adjutant looked and he says, "English, what the hell are you doing here? You're assigned to Third Army. They're supposed to report down the street." I says, "Sir, you mean I'm not going to be in an airborne unit?" He looked at me and he said, "Well, let me see what I can do." So, he assigned me to Headquarters Company, XVIII Airborne Corps, and I did a pretty good job there for three or four months and my captain said, "I'm going to get you in the 82nd." So, in four or five months, I was assigned to the First Battalion, 505th Infantry, 82nd Airborne Division, as a platoon leader. That was the unit that landed on Sainte-Mère-Église [in the June 1944 Normandy invasion] during World War II, which was, you think about it, ... only twenty years earlier. [laughter] It seemed like ancient history to me, and so, I loved it. I liked being an officer, I liked being a platoon leader, I liked being out in the field, I liked all the training we did. ... Then, of course, the rumors of Vietnam started building up, and my wife was pregnant at the time with our second child and we got to April of '65. Now, I've been in the 82nd for maybe five or six months--I think I went there right before Christmas--and she was late. The baby wasn't coming. So, the doctor said, "Well, we're going to have to induce labor." So, I went to my colonel and I said, "Sir, I need to take leave starting April 26th, because my wife's pregnant, she's going to be induced and we have another kid," and he said, "All right, English, just make sure you're up-to-date on the duty roster." Officers had to take turns being officer of the day or officer of the guard, and so forth. So, I went to the Adjutant and he said, "All right, you pull officer of the guard the night before your leave starts." So, that night, day before my daughter is born, I come back from my inspecting of the guard, to brigade headquarters, and there was a guy named (Spencer Folsom?), a first lieutenant, West Pointer, who was officer of the day. ... I come back at midnight and start shooting the breeze with him and the next thing I had to do is come back at six in the morning and take this guard off and the new guy would come in. ... While we were talking, the alert phone rang and he picked it up--and I can still remember his eyes--and it was, "DEFCON, DEFCON," which means you're going someplace, this is an alert. ... He says, "Shit, English, what are we supposed to do? What are we supposed to do?" I said, "Call the Old Man," the Colonel, and there was a safe. We had to open a safe and we're

fumbling with it and we get the safe and we call the Colonel and, Christ, Colonel comes in. The next thing you know, the lights are going on all over the place, because they called every brigade headquarters and people were coming in. ... I was in my class As [dress uniform]. I was dressed up to do the guard mount and my colonel came in and I had some fatigues, combat clothes, in my locker and I put those on. ... He said, "English, you're my liaison. Get up to division headquarters, find out what the hell's going on. Where are we going? We going to Vietnam? What's happening?" and so, I went up there and I started hearing, "No, it's not Vietnam, it's not Vietnam. It's the Dominican Republic." That's the first time I heard that, and so, I went back and I said, "Sir, it sounds like we're going to someplace called the Dominican Republic," and he said, "Oh." [Editor's Note: On April 24, 1965, the Dominican Civil War began, pitting the rebel Constitutionalist against the ruling Loyalists. The Constitutionalist supported former President Juan Bosch, democratically elected in 1962 and deposed in a military coup in September 1963, and the liberal 1963 constitution. The Loyalists supported the Triumvirate that took power after the coup, backed by conservative forces such as the Catholic Church and admirers of the authoritarian Trujillo Regime that had ruled the country from the 1920s to the early 1960s. The Constitutionalist quickly seized and held key points in the capital, Santo Domingo, including the National Palace. Fearing that a Constitutionalist victory would lead to another Communist regime in the Caribbean, US President Lyndon B. Johnson decided to intervene on April 28th, initiating Operation POWER PACK, which rapidly deployed US Marines, elements of the 82nd Airborne Division, the Seventh Special Forces Group and other units to the Dominican Republic to restore order.] I think he was disappointed. He wanted to go to Vietnam, but, anyhow, then, he looked at me--and, now, it's like four in the morning or something, right, and I'm supposed to take my wife to have a baby induced--and he said to me, he said, "All right, English," he said, "I remember your family situation. You get your ass out of here. Go take care of your family, but, if you hear this unit has gone someplace, you catch us in twenty-four hours." "Yes, sir." So, I went home, [took] my wife, the baby was born. I called my parents and said, "Yes, you've got to get down here and help," and they came down the next day. ... Sure enough, the next day, my unit landed in the Dominican Republic and, that night, I caught them. ... My father took me out to the base and I went to my locker, got my weapon and they gave me ammunition and all my pack and everything. ... There was this massive airlift. We put twenty-five thousand troops on that island in a very short period of time. It was unbelievable. So, there's this line a mile long, of jeeps, of trucks, and so forth, going to the airport. So, there was a small contingent left at my battalion headquarters and I said to one of the sergeants, "You've got to drive me to the head of the line, drive me to the head of the line." So, I go to the head of the line. There was a colonel there and I went up and saluted and said, "Sir, I'm Lieutenant English. I'm a platoon leader in the 505th. I was on leave. I understand they've deployed and I need to catch up." He said, "All right, Lieutenant." He calls this sergeant over and he says, "Get this officer on the next aircraft." So, this guy takes me in a jeep. We go out and they put me on a C-130 that is filled with fifty-gallon drums of gasoline. [laughter] ... The crew chief is going around with his little slide rule and shaking his head and all this kind of stuff and he says to me, he said, "How much you weigh, Lieutenant?" [laughter] I said, "150 pounds." He said, "All right, I want you in the cockpit during take-off," and I thought, "Jesus, my 150 pounds is going to make a difference?" ... So, I sat in the cockpit. I'll never forget it, "Vroom," roaring down there, I thought, "My God, I'm going to war, I'm going to war." ... They take off and they get up to altitude and the pilot says, "If you want to crap out, just go back there and lay down," and so, he says, "It's going to be like a five-and-a-half-hour flight." So, I thought, "It's

late." I go down and I took out my sleeping bag and my air mattress, blew up my air mattress, laid down on top of the fifty-gallon drums. [laughter] ... The next thing I knew, we hit the ground in Santo Domingo and I slid off the air mattress--I mean, so much for, "Fasten your seatbelt"--and then, I reported to the unit. ... I still remember the conversation, "So, Lieutenant, you ready to go to war?" I said, "Yes, sir." ... The one unit had already advanced into Santo Domingo and there was a ragtag army of Communists that were trying to take over the country, but they have guns and they were killing people, and so, we crossed the Duarte Bridge into Santo Domingo. ... Our unit set up a little base on that side of the river, and then, other units started passing through us, and the Marines landed on the other side of town and we eventually forged a corridor and boxed the rebels into a small area where they were confined. ... People were getting shot and there was a lot of shooting going on as we did this. ... I remember, the second day, the first day we were actually in Santo Domingo, it was a Sunday and the Catholic priest was saying Mass and, all of a sudden, all hell broke loose. ... This is the only time--no, there was one other time--that I actually heard, "Pfft, pfft," the bullets going by, but it was our guys. It was [that] one of our units was passing through our lines to continue this and they took some sniper fire and he, "Brrrp," started to shoot in every direction. [laughter] You give paratroopers a lot of live ammunition, somebody's going to get shot. Anyhow, nobody got hit in that one, and then, we pushed on a little bit further, and then, we just sat there. We just sat there, absolute boredom, because we now had these guys boxed in and we were taking sniper fire. ... Every once in a while, a guy'd be standing there and, "Boom," his head would fly off. It was terrible. ... Really, this is where you learn how random military action is. There are no "John Wayne heroes." ... You could be the most physically fit, highly trained, prepared Ranger, and so forth, and just be standing there and a fifty-caliber round gets fired by a sniper and takes your head off, and that happened. I can remember, the guy was a West Point officer, Class of '64, ... I can't remember his name, but [he got killed], and then, we just sat there, and then, the excruciating boredom of sitting there. ... At one time, my colonel knew I had a new baby at home, he said to me, "I want you to take some prisoners back to Bragg," not enemy prisoners, but GIs who'd gotten in fights or insubordination, to go back to the brig or whatever. [laughter] So, I got to go back and see my baby and I was there for two or three days, and then, I went back. ... Then, the boredom just got to be so bad and, again, the Colonel, he kind of liked me, he asked me to be liaison to division headquarters. So, every day, I would, with my driver, go to division headquarters, which was probably fifteen miles from where my unit was, and I'd listen to the briefing that the General was getting from all his different commanders. I'd go back and I'd brief my colonel on what was going on, and then, while I was up there, ... somewhere along the line, I met the public information officer and I heard he was being transferred. ... I'm now bored out of my mind and I'm really eager to get back to Bragg with my family and everything and nothing's going on. It's like, now, September, October of '65, and I said to him, "I was editor of the high school yearbook and I can write pretty well." He said, "Let me see what I can do." The next thing you know, I get appointed to division staff as a public information officer, great job now. So, my buddies are still sitting there, twiddling their thumbs. We'd already won our Combat [Infantryman's] Badges and everything, all that action was over, and, now, I get to take all the reporters around. ... I met a lot of people who later became kind of famous by shuttling them around and giving them the briefing, and then, we came back to the US, I think, in December of '65. ... The fascinating thing was, now, the war in Vietnam had really gotten going. ... While we were in the Dominican Republic, they'd sent the First Air Cav, they sent the Fourth Infantry Division, they sent units of the 173rd Airborne, the 101st Airborne, and it was only a question of

time before they would start sending us, but I was too short. There was a political decision made by Johnson and [Secretary of Defense Robert] McNamara that they would not call up the Reserve. They didn't want to--they wanted to pretend it wasn't a war. I guess all politicians seem to want to do that, and so, what they did is, they just expanded the draft and made the draft much more [vital]. So, here I am, a fully trained airborne first lieutenant with some combat experience and I'm due to be released from active service in July or June of 1966 and the war is [escalating]. I said to my wife, "There's no way. I'm going to wind up in Vietnam. We just have to accept it," and I was less enthusiastic about going. I was enthusiastic, but having seen what I saw in the Dominican Republic about [how] you can't tell--I mean, you don't know. You're going to just be standing there, you're going to get shot and it's random, it's luck, it's terrible. So, I was more aware of my own potential mortality, I guess, as a result of that experience--and two kids, no money--but I said, "If I have to go, I have to go." ... She was comfortable with that, but, no, May, June, I was released. I was released from active duty, and so, I went back to Baltimore and, now, I had to serve four years Active Reserve. That was the deal, ROTC, two years active duty, four years Active Reserve. So, I go to sign up for the Maryland National Guard and the colonel there said, he said, "English, do you know that there's an airborne unit here in town, National Guard airborne unit? It's a Special Forces unit and you'll have to go through Special Forces training, but it's no more time commitment than this is and you get jump pay," and so forth. So, I did that. I joined the 19th Special Forces Group and my theory there was, I was sure we were going to get called up and I wanted to go with guys who were volunteers, who were professionals, knew what they were doing, as opposed to going with the draftees. We never got called--well, we got called up once. We were federalized once. In 1968, when Martin Luther King was assassinated, ... the National Guard was federalized in Baltimore to contain the riots that took place--terrible duty, terrible experience--but, then, in 1969, '70, I was honorably discharged from the US Army as a captain. [Editor's Note: In April and May 1968, race riots erupted in 125 US cities, including Chicago, Baltimore and Washington, DC, sparked by the assassination of Civil Rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr., on April 4, 1968.] [My] military service was over and the war was still raging and it raged for another four years. I mean, it was amazing. I mean, I think the Dominican Republic probably saved my life, because, if it hadn't happened, we would have gone to Vietnam. We were always first to go. We just happened to be in the Dominican Republic when Johnson decided to deploy more American troops, and the mortality rate for infantry platoon leaders was pretty high. So, I was very lucky, very fortunate I had the military experience. I got enough of it and I survived without getting hurt--lost my hearing. [laughter]

SI: I want to ask more questions about this whole period. First, airborne units are renowned for their camaraderie and esprit de corps. Can you talk a little bit about the relationship within the unit, particularly among the officers?

LE: Absolutely, absolutely. I can remember occasional events, maybe once every three months, called officers' call, where we would put on our class "As" and we'd go to the officers' club and the General would be there. ... We would have cocktails and we would have dinner and we would have wine and, before dinner, the General would get up and go through "the sequence." All the officers would stand up when the General stood up, obviously. He would raise his wine glass. He would say, "Gentlemen, to the President of the United States." "To the President." "Gentlemen, to the Secretary of Defense." "To the Secretary of Defense." "Gentlemen, to the

Secretary of the Army." "[To the] Secretary of the Army." "Gentlemen, to the Commander of the Joint Chiefs of Staff," and right on down to his boss. We would drink those toasts, and then, after dinner, they'd come around with cigars. I mean, this was like, think about a 1890s men's club. It had that aura to it--everybody dressed, everybody very formal. They come around with cigars and in would come the chorus and they would sing patriotic songs. I mean, it was a very delightful experience. It was an experience that made you feel very much a part of the Army, very much a part of the country, very proud to be where you are, to do what you're doing, made all the nights of sleeping in wet clothes and all that kind of stuff in your training exercises seem worthwhile and a real sense of pride. So, yes, there was that camaraderie. It was a very strong camaraderie and, in the Dominican Republic, we had an officers' club that we would repair to, periodically, and drink and sing patriotic songs and tell war stories, "This almost happened and that happened," and so forth. It was very meaningful to me, and in the Special Forces. ... I still am in touch with some of the people. ... Our summer camps, ... we jumped into Utah, West Virginia and we conducted all kinds of exercises and we did them pretty seriously, [laughter] because we always thought it was only a question of time before we wound up in Vietnam. ... There was a great camaraderie in the officers' corps and, in the Special Forces, in the enlisted corps, too, because you had a twelve-man team in Special Forces and everybody was very close. I mean, the sergeants, and so forth, were high-ranking sergeants, all had training. I mean, it wasn't quite a first name basis, it was always, "Sir," but we were pretty close, pretty good, and then, you're out in the woods for long periods of time together. So, the camaraderie was quite strong and I'm very proud of the experience I had in the military. ... At times, I feel a little guilt that I didn't wind up in Vietnam, but I was willing and that's the way the cards fell.

SI: When you described your deployment to Santo Domingo and crossing the Duarte Bridge, you made it sound like you just moved in. Was there any kind of resistance?

LE: No, no. ... We did it, we just moved in. The first shots I heard were the ones I told you about, from my own guys. Later, I heard a lot of sniper shots and rounds going by and, later, sometime in June, we were actually ordered to extend the, what we called the LOC, I guess Line of Communication is what it was. Anyhow, it was this two-block area that we'd carved through the city. We were ordered to extend it another two blocks toward the sea and we encountered resistance there. In fact, there were several casualties in my unit. Now, I didn't see anybody shooting at me. I fired my weapon once at what I thought was a sniper, but, mainly, I was directing my men. I saw one act of heroism, when there were a lot of shots going off. I think they were all ours, but there was this woman that got caught ... sort of in, whether it was crossfire or not, but it was fire. ... This one sergeant got up and swept her and her kid off the street and got them behind the lines. I never knew who it was, because we're moving very fast, but, then, we took [the objective]. So, that was the only action that [we saw], and it wasn't much. I mean, I didn't see any bad guys, nobody near me got hit. That was the only real action that I remember, but it was pretty exciting. I mean, you didn't know. ... When the order comes to start moving, you didn't know what was on the other side, and there was stuff on the other side. ... They even had a tank that we [destroyed]. I can remember, a 106 recoilless rifle, I was, like, over here and this guy was in the cross-section and I remember the 106 recoilless rifle going off, which, in the back of it, it just knocks you down, the backwash. ... Then, I looked around the corner. It was this old World War I tank that the bad guys had, that, "Boom," just got blown up. So, they were there, but it wasn't anything like the firefights that they had in Vietnam or World

War II or any other [war]. It was a little war, but it was enough, [laughter] and for the guys who got killed, might as well have fired all the nukes to them.

SI: You said, initially, you had the rebels bottled up in this one area. Did they just leave them there or were they slowly reducing them?

LE: Yes, well, the OAS [Organization of American States] came in [in September 1965] and the Dominicans re-formed a provisional government, the *Junta* that they called it, and the OAS brought a peace team in and there were peace discussions. ... I've got to tell you, Shaun, it was an overreaction on Johnson's part. He was so afraid this was going to be another Cuba in the Caribbean. What had happened was, they deposed the long-term dictator, Juan Bosch, who'd been assassinated some years before. They elected a democratic government. The guy was kind of weak, the president. The Army tried to take over, but there were Communist factions, ... and then, all of a sudden, it broke into chaos. Nobody was clear who was going to be in charge and whatever information Johnson got--I haven't really studied the history of it--but he was just so fearful there was going to be another Communist takeover that he grossly overreacted. I mean, we crushed this ragtag group of rebels, we called them. I don't know how many of them there were. They certainly were not a threat to the United States Army [laughter] or the 82nd Airborne Division. They weren't a match for it and, eventually, they restored the democratic government. Another interesting sidelight to this, there was a time I was in a bar, during this period of boredom. I can't remember what the circumstances [were]. I was having lunch someplace and I was in uniform and I had my rifle slung over my [shoulder] and there was this young guy from the Peace Corps who was there and I started talking [with him]. Well, that young guy turned out to be Chris Dodd, who became Senator from Connecticut, who I later knew in another life. ... When I was lobbying and I met with him, I said, "You and I have something in common; we met in the Dominican Republic in 1965." He said, "Yes, we did," waxed on about all those characters on the political side of things. [Editor's Note: Democratic Senator Chris Dodd served Connecticut in the US Senate from 1981 to 2011. According to the Peace Corps website, he served as a volunteer in the Dominican Republic from July 1966 to September 1968.]

SI: You were able to actually go into the city and interact a little bit with the locals.

LE: Well, this two-block area, we had ... men stationed everywhere along this two-block area, and then, beyond that was safe and, yes, I mean, we could. I would have a mission; the Colonel would send me on these liaison deals. ... When I went back to division staff, as public [information officer], now, I have free rein. I could call the [motor] pool and say, "I've got a couple reporters. I want a helicopter to take us out to..." I had everything, my freedom, in terms of my ability to travel in that last couple of months when I was there as public information officer. So, yes, we could move around. I have some pictures ... of those days and some films that I took of those days.

SI: At that point, when you were public information officer, what were they covering?

LE: I don't know. I remember, my instructions were, "Do not let anything go out of this office that says, 'war torn,' 'strife torn,' 'chaotic.' Make believe that everything is just fine here," but the reporters were [asking], "What's the US doing here? Who are the bad guys? What are the

issues? Can I talk to the General?" They always wanted to talk to the General. It was my job to keep them away from the General. It was that sort of thing, but, then, pretty much, pretty soon, they all went to Vietnam, because that's where the real action was and they realized there wasn't that much going on. ... There were guys--Tom (Stridehorse?), I think it was, from CBS News, I squirmed him around for a while, and Ted (Schultz?)--I mean, there were a couple of guys who, later, I would see on the evening news, in Vietnam or someplace else, but they just wanted to see, "What's going on? What are you guys doing? Why did we come here? Well, who are the bad guys? What's the endgame going to be?" Those were the [questions], and, "Can I see the General?" [laughter] Those were their questions and I'd say, "Sir, the General..." "I know, the General's a very busy man. I've heard that before, Lieutenant." [laughter]

SI: What was a typical day like when you were in this waiting period?

LE: When I was still with the unit, before division? play hearts.

SI: Was there any patrolling or checking on things?

LE: Not really. I mean, we were stationary; played cards, read letters, shoot the breeze, go back to battalion for a briefing, go back to company for a briefing, make-work. At one point, ... another lieutenant and I got the assignment of preparing the lading tables, if we were going to be shipped out by boat. There were rumors, ... "This boat's coming to take us. We're going to go directly from here to Vietnam." I mean, the rumors were just absolutely horrible. You just didn't know what was going to happen one day to the other. Well, I actually got the assignment, with this other guy, to figure out how much equipment we had, how many jeeps and how much it weighed and there were these forms we had to fill out in preparation for our moving out by ship, which we never did. We went back on airplanes, but ... I think it was make-work, keep these guys busy. It was excruciatingly boring. You're wishing that somebody would--I've heard this from other military veterans--"Let's get some action. Let's attack. [laughter] Let's do something. This is terrible."

SI: Did you have any interaction with the locals?

LE: Yes, you'd see them. They would shine your boots, little kids would shine your boots. ... I never did, but there were an array of prostitutes, that one guy told me there were more VD cases than men in his battalion. In other words, some guys got it twice. The prostitutes were all over the place. There'd be guys buying beer. I didn't meet any sophisticated locals or anything, just had interaction [with], we called them "the *ropa-ropa* women." I guess, "*Ropa*," means clothing in Spanish, and these ladies would come around, they'd do your laundry, and we called them "the *ropa* girls" or "*ropa* ladies," say, "*Ropa, ropa*." "Oh, yes, here, clean this stuff," and they'd bring it back and you'd give them a dollar or something. So, it was that kind of low-level kind of interaction that I had.

SI: When you came back and you were released from active duty, you were working for Connecticut General.

LE: Right.

SI: Can you give me an overview of your career there?

LE: Well, yes. ... So, I came back and I still had the military [obligation]. So, I had to devote a weekend a month and two weeks in the summer to that. ... I was pretty successful as a salesman, selling, what people think of today as health care, but we thought of it as group insurance. It was hospitalization plans and major medical plans and disability plans. ... My first nine months, I'd been calling on small companies and I started moving up to bigger companies and getting bigger accounts to service. ... I was doing pretty well, but, then, in the late '60s, I was really fearful that government was going to take over the healthcare system. Nixon was really thinking about it and actively looking at it, Kennedy, [Democratic Senator] Ted Kennedy, wanted to do it, and there was another division of the company that sold retirement plans, pension plans. [Editor's Note: The Nixon Administration forwarded a proposal for a national health insurance program to Congress in February 1971 as part of its National Health Strategy.] This is before 401(k)s, when we sold defined benefit plans, and that was more sophisticated, because we're basically selling the ability of the big insurance company to invest your pension assets. It wasn't an insurance product at all, and so, I saw an opportunity to do that and I switched over to being a salesman in the pension area. ... They sent me to Washington to open a new office there. So, I became a district manager in Washington. We moved to Fairfax County, Virginia, and, as I got into this and the investments, I realized there was really kind of a missing piece in my education and I decided to go back to school. So, I enrolled at George Washington [University]. They had a very flexible program for an MBA. Some classes were in the day, but my boss was okay with that and, from 1969 to 1974, I completed an MBA program at GW. I wanted the accounting, I wanted more finance, I wanted to learn about these new computers that were coming along. I figured, "If I'm really going to do what I want to do with my life, I need more education." So, that was hard, because I was working full-time, I was doing pretty well and I had to travel some and I went to school a lot. I went to school a lot in the summer, but I finally got through it and, at about that time, in '74, about the time I was ready to finish the MBA program, the manager of the New England region died unexpectedly and I got that job. ... I was still in my thirties, early thirties--this was a really big promotion for me. ... They moved me to Hartford--not the home office in Hartford, but to manage the New England region--and so, I moved my family to Connecticut in 1974 and I did well in that assignment. ... Then, in 1976, one of the executives called me one day and said, "I want you to come into the home office," and, see, this is a big decision, because I was making a lot of money. In sales, you get commissions and bonuses and all that kind of stuff, and he said, "We can't pay you as much as you're making now, but, if you're as good as I think you could [be], you could be CEO someday. So, I want you to come in and do this." I talked to my wife and I said, "Well, best case is, maybe I will be CEO someday, whereas I'm now thirty-five and, basically, I'm at the peak. I'm at the top of the field career. I've got one of the bigger regions and there's nowhere else to go. I'll be doing the same job for the next thirty years, but, if I do that, maybe I can do more. ... We have to take a pay cut, but I'll get more later and, if it doesn't work out, big deal--they'll send me to Chicago. I mean, they know I can do the field job and, if I'm not good at the executive job, then, [I will go back]." So, I did it and went through a series of jobs, and then, I got recognized by the board and put on the high potential list and went through [another series of jobs]. The chairman at the time--I'm talking the late '70s now--had the view that the future management of the company, and he was looking at the guys in their thirties, mainly guys, still, had to work in all

the businesses of the company. So, I got rotated from the pension department to the individual department to the reinsurance department, back to the individual department. I went through a whole series of assignments, each one higher, each one more challenging, each one more difficult. ... Then, finally, after the merger, when the chairman who had been my mentor retired and a new guy took over, he was about my age, so, I'm now thinking, "I'm never going to get that job," and he and I didn't particularly like each other. We had different backgrounds. He was an actuary, I came out of sales, very different, but I was running, at that time, the individual business and I tried to do a leveraged buyout of it. ... I was very close to being successful, but, for a lot of reasons, it didn't work, but it established my credibility with the board, because I took one of the more troubled divisions, put together a team to do a leveraged buyout and, in the meantime, fixed the business. They put me in discontinued operations and I had a few things, good things, happen ... in terms of the competitive environment, like, a couple of other companies we were competing with went bankrupt, but I had a real success with that. ... In the meantime, ... now, I'm into the late '80s, right, I'm now a very high-level executive, making a lot of money, had access to the corporate plane and everything, but don't necessarily get along with the chairman. ... He had made, and the company had made, the strategic decision that they were going to go into the healthcare business and the HMO business big time and they'd made a major acquisition, paid almost a billion dollars, which was a lot in 1990, to buy Equicor. ... The guy that was running that division, [which] was now the biggest division in the company, couldn't handle it. He was steeped in the old ways. ... He just couldn't handle it, couldn't handle the integration, couldn't handle the tough work, and so, they did an outside search and the board said, "Well, what about English? Look at the great job he's done with the individual business," and I got the healthcare job. So, that was the pinnacle of my career [at CIGNA]. Now, as CEO of CIGNA HealthCare, ... I had a really great run, but, when I got to fifty-five, now, I'm reporting to the guy I don't particularly like and who doesn't particularly like me, but he really ... had problems with the P & C [property and casualty] business. He was on the ropes himself with the board. The board liked me. I thought, "Someday, I'll get his job," but, then, he fixed the P & C business and the politics of it were that I was not going to get the job. ... I hated working for him and I'd vested in my stock options and the stock had gone up and I was a relatively wealthy person. So, we had a mutual parting of the ways and I took what they called early retirement. I was only fifty-six. So, I cashed in my stock options and, having had that experience of working for that guy, I said, "I'm well enough off--not filthy rich, but I'm well enough off--that I never have to have a boss again," and I never have. [laughter] That was a long time ago. So, then, I did some private investing. I did some investing with ...

SI: That was 1996.

LE: '96, I left, yes. I did some work with venture capital funds, with a few startups, but, then, I realized that every time I'd gotten promoted at CIGNA, it was because somebody else or something else had screwed up. When I went to reinsurance, it was [because] they'd shifted from permanent to term insurance and the guy couldn't cope with it and I figured out what to do and I fixed [it]. ... Same thing, I mean, every time, the transition from the indemnity insurance to the HMO business, I figured it out quickly and I fixed it, and I liked that. I really liked the analytical [aspect] and the deciding. The analytical, "Figure out what you need to do and act on it." So, I started L.P. English, Inc., [in 1999], which I billed as a crisis management and turn-around management firm. ... I went around and I started networking with private equity firms,

bankruptcy people, people I knew around the industry, and I got one series of jobs after another. I went to Miami ... as interim CEO of a private international health insurance company. I went to Houston to oversee the bankruptcy of a for-profit hospital chain. Then, I was recruited to be CEO of a healthcare information technology company. ... This time, I went to San Francisco and, this time, I actually had to move. ... By now, by [the] mid-'90s, I was doing well enough that my wife and I had one of these luxury condos in Florida and we had the house in Simsbury. We never gave that up, but, when I got the San Francisco job, we actually took an apartment in San Francisco and we lived there for a couple of years. It was a great experience for us. See, by now, our kids are grown and they're out of the house and we could pretty much do what we want. ... I closed down the West Coast headquarters of that, moved it all to Reston, Virginia. So, now, I had an apartment in the Washington area and I got that company fixed. That one was a particular challenge, because ... it was a public company and I had it during the Sarbanes-Oxley and all the scandals of the early part of the 2000s. [Editor's Note: In October 2001, news broke that the Enron Corporation, in collusion with its auditor, Arthur Andersen, had engaged in accounting fraud to hide its financial failures from investors. This led to the collapse of Enron, the dissolution of Arthur Andersen and the investigation of other firms serviced by Arthur Andersen, such as WorldCom and Sunbeam, resulting in further prosecutions and bankruptcies. The federal government responded with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, enacted in July 2002, aimed at regulating corporate boards, management and public accounting firms.] So, I endured SEC [Securities and Exchange Commission] investigations and accounting restatements, but, eventually, got out of it with a pretty good chunk of money, and then, in 2006, I stepped down from being CEO, remained on the board. I still had an investment in the company, but I took most of my money out, decided--now, I was sixty-five years old--that I want to have some more free time. So, my wife and I did things that we always said we would do in terms of travel. We rented a villa in Italy for a month and traveled and I started studying Italian and getting into the opera and all that kind of stuff, but, by the end of '07, I got bored. ... Then, when the financial crisis hit, I said ... I felt like a West Point guy who'd trained all through the '20s and '30s and retired right before Pearl Harbor, right--you want to get back in the game, right? This is the defining event of your life. [Editor's Note: Mr. English is referring to the Global Financial Crisis that developed in 2007 after the collapse of the United States' real estate market, producing severe repercussions in the financial, banking and corporate worlds and causing a global recession from 2008 to the time of the interview.] So, I started making some phone calls around, people I knew in New York, "I want to get back in the game," and so forth, and I got a call, "How would you feel about handling the runoff of the monoline credit insurer?" and I said, "Well, I'd love it," and I've been here for three years now and it's been a great success. This is one of my bigger successes, actually. ... I've had a ringside seat to the whole financial debacle. ... What this company did is, it sold credit default swaps on securitized mortgage bonds. ... My job was to pay those claims off for pennies on the dollar. That's essentially what we've had to do over the course of the last three years, the threat of, ... "I owe you a hundred million dollars. I'll pay you ten and, if you insist on the hundred million dollars, I'm going to go drop the keys on the insurance commissioner's desk and he'll run the company. You'll never see a penny, so, take the ten, or how about fifteen? Well, how about twelve?" that kind of thing, and we paid the things off for pennies on the dollar, [laughter] whereas the federal government gave AIG the money to pay them off at a hundred cents on the dollar--idiots. [laughter] So, here I am, and I'm still doing it. It's kind of stable now, but we still have fifteen billion of exposure to Europe and nobody knows what's going to happen in Europe. I mean, they're trying to muddle through, keeping

enough pressure on the southern countries that they reform their social programs, but not letting them go bankrupt. It's a very, very difficult balancing act. If they go bankrupt, we're into more claims, because we've guaranteed bonds issued by the Region of Lazio, by the Rome Airport. We've guaranteed bonds on infrastructure. I mean, we have a lot of exposure over there that, right now, looks like we're not going to have a claim on it, but, if there's a debacle in Europe, we have a problem. So, I came to New York and ... I took an apartment. My wife came with me and she got bored pretty quickly. She said, "What am I sitting in New York for? You're working all the time. We can't go out to dinner every night and we have this beautiful place in Florida in the winter, we have this great place in Connecticut in the summer, my grandkids are there, my friends are there." So, I am a commuter. [laughter] In the summertime, I take Metro North to Connecticut. In the wintertime, I take JetBlue to Florida, usually on Thursday afternoons, sometimes Friday afternoon, then, I come back Sunday night, Monday, depending on what's going on. So, it's been a great assignment and very lucrative. I mean, they paid me very well for it and they've had good results.

SI: Being an expert in coming into a company and turning it around, what are some of the challenges you faced in coming in as an outsider?

LE: Professor Charanis' advice, yes, really. Ruthless objectivity is the way I describe it--don't bullshit me. What are the facts? The company's bankrupt--you're bankrupt, admit it. You can do some accounting gimmicks that keep the liabilities off your balance sheet, but that doesn't mean they're not there. They're there, face it, face the reality--then, having done that, you need to figure out what to do about it. The hospital chain was a classic example of this. I mean, they'd had way too much debt, they got in trouble with a shareholders' suit and some accounting issues. ... I'm sitting there, looking at the income statements, "You don't have enough income to pay the debt. You can't do this," and I wasn't in the management, I was chairman of the board. ... We had these German shareholders and Germans feel differently about bankruptcy. To them, it's prestige; here, it's a strategic [option]. It's not a [problem], you do it. It's a reorganization is what you're doing, and I said, "We've got to file for Chapter 11 protection. We've got to negotiate with the bond holders. They've got to take a write down." "Oh, no, we have to refinance. We have to go to New York and find financing, refinancing." ... I said, "There's no way." I mean, that's a classic example, but I couldn't force them. I mean, they were directors, too. They owned a big chunk of the company. So, I wasted two or three months with that exercise, but, eventually, we filed for bankruptcy. We sat down with the bond holders and we said, "Can't pay you," [laughter] and they said, "Well, how are we going to get the bond holders to talk to us?" I said, "Well, don't we have like a twenty-million-dollar interest payment due on March 1st?" "Yes." "Don't pay it. [laughter] They'll come. Don't pay it, they'll come and talk to us," and we did and we worked out a reorganization. The company came out of bankruptcy and the bond holders now owned the company and they asked me to stay on the board of the reorganized company. So, I did that for a while, and then, we basically liquidated it, sold off the remaining hospitals, but I was getting checks from them for a long period of time. ... What is required in my business is a ruthless objectivity and an ability to analyze a balance sheet and income statement, the market, and figure out, "What's this company got? Is there anything in here worth saving?" In the hospital case, there wasn't. In this case, there wasn't--there's no ongoing business. "Okay, so, what's the next course of action? Let's pay off the claims as cheaply as we possibly can and keep the company solvent," and that's pretty much what we've

done. So, it's analytical and it's fairly easy. It doesn't matter whether it's a software business or the financial services business or the healthcare business or whatever it is--profit equals revenue minus expense. So, you just start with that equation. "Now, where's the revenue come from? Why can't we get more of it? Where is the expense coming [from]?" So, you've got two components of expense, right. You've got variable costs--well, in this business, we don't have any variable cost, really, inventory or stuff--you've got fixed costs, and fixed cost is, usually, eighty percent of it is people. I'll say, "You've got to cut costs, you've got to cut people." It's not hard. It really is not hard to do the analytics and to figure out, "Is there something worth saving? If there is something worth saving, how do we save it? Do we have to come up with new products? Do we have to lower our cost base? What is it we have to do?" and then, execution, being tough enough to do it, is being tough enough to say, "Yes, we're going to do this." ... I wrote to several of my Senators and, one, this guy [Marco] Rubio in Florida, talking about the federal budget, and I said, "Look, I've done this a lot. Here's what you do. You tell them, across the board, every department of the federal government, 'Reduce your staff by ten percent.' Let them scream, 'Oh, this will happen,' but here's what'll happen. They'll reduce the staff by ten percent, but, if you pick the people who know they're going to stay, they know, in order for them to survive, they have to execute on the core mission. So, they'll get rid of the people who aren't working on the core mission and, when you're finished with a massive layoff like that," and I've had this [happen], "you go around and you look at what everybody you let go, what they were working on, what was on their desk, and probably, 'Yes, that's interesting, that's important,' but the fact is, it wasn't essential. It wasn't essential to the core business of getting things done. So, you didn't need to do it." Of course, they [the government] won't do that, but you have to have the guts to say that. You have to have the guts to say [that]. This was true of the software company. After the last round of finance, when we got the balance sheet fixed, there was a ten-million-dollar difference between our fixed costs and our net revenue, revenue after variable costs, and that meant laying off a hundred hundred-thousand-dollar a year people. So, I just said, like, December 17th, "On January 15th, I want a hundred hundred-thousand-[dollar a year] people out of here. Do it. You figure it out. ... You pick who you're going to let go. I want it done--it's going to be done," and a lot of people can't do that. They can't. They think, "Oh, my God, what's going to happen? Maybe we won't be able to make our regulatory filings, maybe we won't be able..." yes, you can. Somehow, the people who are left gravitate toward the essential stuff and stop working on the merely important stuff that was not essential. So, that's been the key for me, ruthless objectivity, analytical ability and decisiveness, pretty simple. You don't have to be a genius, just have to do that.

SI: You mentioned that you were in charge of a company around the time of the scandals in the early 2000s.

LE: Right.

SI: Not understanding that business entirely, from what I understood, one of the major problems was the cost of the ...

LE: Sarbanes-Oxley?

SI: Yes, the regulations created by the act.

LE: Right.

SI: Can you talk a little bit about its impact?

LE: Yes, well, there was a combination of things that happened. So, there was a big scandal with Enron. They'd built a house of cards and it imploded. Then, there were several others, WorldCom and a couple of other big companies went under, and they were all accounting scandals. People were cheating, I mean, basically, lying about their revenue and their expenses and how they accounted for people. So, the government passes this law, Sarbanes-Oxley, but they did a couple of other things. One, they put Arthur Andersen out of business. That scared the hell out of every other accounting firm. So, if you're a public company, you have to report your company's ... results. Sarbanes came along and said, "Okay, the CEO and CFO [chief financial officer] have to sign this little thing in the back of the public filings that says they've reviewed them and they're accurate." So, my lawyer's coming in and explaining this to me. I said, "So, before this bill, I could file false ones? Is that what you're saying?" "No, no, but they're making it more [formal], the penalties are stricter." So, yes, nothing had changed, as far as I was concerned, and the other part of Sarbanes-Oxley, "the infamous 404," required that the auditors do a separate audit of internal controls and it became an incredible bureaucratic nightmare. That's what cost a lot of money, and we flunked it the first time through it, at my company, but here's what really changed--one, the accountants became fundamentalists and the SEC, embarrassed by what had happened, became witch hunters. ... So, the next thing I know--I'd taken over this company in June of 2000 and did my little shtick, "What do we need to do?" and I fixed the company. The share price, when I was able to buy, which was, like, in August, I put a couple hundred thousand in at a buck, [was] a buck a share in August of 2000. By the end of 2001, it was eleven dollars a share, and I had a million options. Right, so, I'd made a lot of money. We had a success. We got rid of the crap. We got rid of the businesses that weren't making money, we cut costs, we fixed the company, but ... Arthur Andersen had been the auditors. Now, they're gone, and so, here comes PricewaterhouseCoopers. ... In the early part of the relationship, like, we brought them in in late 2001, the early part of the relationship, everything's fine. They do their due diligence, they look at the books, they check us out--everything looks good, and so forth. Andersen was out of business in the Summer of 2002. All of a sudden, [after the collapse of] Arthur Andersen, PwC's saying, "We don't have confidence in your books." Before I got there, the company had done twenty-seven acquisitions. It was what was known as a rollup. I fixed the business, but ... acquisition accounting was not something I was worried about, "Did they do the accounting for the acquisitions correctly?" There were certain rules as to how they had to be done. All of a sudden, PricewaterhouseCoopers's saying, "We don't think they did that correctly." I said, "Well, Andersen was their auditors. They're not around anymore." "Well, we have to do the forensic work and certify that all these twenty-seven acquisitions--that were done long before you got here--are right. In the meantime, you can't file any more public statements, you can't raise money--you can't do anything. You're delinquent," and, as soon as that happens, the SEC comes in and says, "Oh, what's going on here? We need to have an SEC investigation," and then, the shareholders sue, because you filed false returns. ... It was the whole culture that was created as a result of the SEC and Sarbanes and the accounting firms being fearsome. In the SEC investigation, ... I hadn't done anything. I didn't sign any of these reports that were bad. They were all my predecessor, but, now, I'm being dragged into

Washington for an SEC interview. [laughter] I said to my wife, "I now know how those screenwriters felt when they were called in front of the House Un-American Activities Committee." [Editor's Note: In 1947, the US House of Representatives Un-American Activities Committee investigated allegations of Communist influence in the motion picture. Screenwriters, performers and others who refused to testify were charged with contempt and blacklisted by the industry.] It's like you're guilty just because you're one of them, you're a businessman. It was a nightmare. I spent fifteen million dollars of the company's money and eighteen months doing the forensic work, going back and demonstrating that poolings were done correctly, that acquisitions were done correctly, that purchase prices were allocated correctly, that revenue recognition was done correctly. ... We wound up moving numbers up and down the income statement and balance sheet and over time periods, and so forth, but cash always remained the same. I mean, the real money was always fine, and the company came out of it. We settled the shareholders' suit, the SEC let us go and we finally got the books restated. Then, I had to go out [and rebuild?], yes, but it really hurt the company and, obviously, it hurt me, because I got out of it with a fair chunk of money, but not what I would have got out when the share price was at eleven bucks a share, because the share price plummeted with all that kind of stuff. ... Everybody complains about 404, which is a big bureaucratic pain in the ass for a little company to do. Internal controls are--you know, I think of internal controls as, "Who's got the cash? Who can write checks?" that kind of stuff. They're thinking about internal controls over, "Did you report your revenue right? Did you obey this accounting rule correctly? Did you close your books correctly?" I mean, ... it is a worthless exercise. Sarbanes was an unnecessary law. ... They created the Public [Company] Accounting Oversight Board, was one of the things they did, and I went to a meeting, a National Association of Board of Directors [The National Association of Corporate Directors?] meeting, once, and this guy gets up to talk about what the Public Accounting Oversight Board is going to do. ... I'm sitting there, taking notes, and I'm with my CFO. I said, "Everything he said is, today, the responsibility of the SEC or the stock exchange or the accounting firms. I mean, this is just a redundant layer of more oversight, that, now, they're going to audit the auditors." All right, so, you've got the auditors auditing you and they've got the auditors looking over their shoulder at the Public Accounting Oversight Board, the auditors seeing their friends that worked at Arthur Andersen who lost their livelihoods. It was an environment that lasted, I'd say, from 2002 to 2006. It was really that bad. What good did it do? I mean, did it save Lehman [Brothers]? Did it save Bear Stearns? Did it save Citibank? Did it save all the [rest], AIG? No, the government had to step in to save them. I mean, it didn't do any good. Where's the proof? and, now, Dodd-Frank's going to be just as bad. [Editor's Note: Mr. English is referring to the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010.] ... They just lay all this complication in and it's just unbelievable. Governments are so stupid. [laughter] This is really frightening, really frightening. ...

SI: Going back to your Reserve commitment with the Special Forces group, did you have to do any additional training to transition from the airborne to a Special Forces unit?

LE: Oh, yes. I mean, Special Forces is more counterinsurgency, anti-guerilla tactics, guerilla tactics and all that kind of stuff. So, yes, I had to take courses in counterinsurgency and the training we did, our summer camps, were quite rigorous. In one summer camp, I was the executive officer on an A team and our mission was--so, they put these guys, this is in West

Virginia, ... out in the field, who were pretending they were guerillas, like, ... what do they call those guerillas they had, they worked with, in Vietnam?

SI: The Vietcong?

LE: No, they were the bad guys. ...

SI: The Montagnards?

LE: Yes, Montagnards, [indigenous people from the Central Highlands of Vietnam]. So, they were a group that [was] pretending to be them. We had to drop in, organize them, and then, there was a regular Army unit. We were going to blow up their stuff and interdict them and all that kind of stuff. So, that was pretty hairy. I mean, we took off in these C-119s and we dropped--it wasn't a cushy, soft drop zone, like at Fort Bragg. We're dropped over some farmer's field. I have a picture of this--three of the guys, three of the twelve, couldn't walk off. They got hurt. Nobody got killed, but they got hurt, and then, we conducted those operations for a couple of weeks. Then, we did the same thing the next year in Utah, only the next year, in Utah, I was the guerilla chief. I was out in the [field]. ... I had to go out a week early and organize this ragtag guerilla force. They were all GIs, ... and then, the Special Forces dropped in and organized us and I had to pretend I was a big pain in the butt and didn't want to do what they wanted. [laughter] Yes, it was a lot of special training, and so forth, but it was good training and they were good people.

SI: What was the deployment to the riots in Baltimore like?

LE: Terrible, I mean, just terrible. So, Martin Luther King was assassinated and riots erupted all over the country and we get called up and got sent downtown to guard this area and keep them cornered. ... I watched a group of them hit a liquor store. ... You ever seen the films of the piranha eating a cow or something? It was like that, and the hostility. It's our own country and you're walking around and we were mostly white. ... We had black guys in our unit, but we were mostly white and the hostility was terrible. ... I'm thinking, "I'm not one of those racists. I'm just doing my job and trying to keep you from burning houses down." ... So, we settled in. We were sleeping in some shopping mall and, now, ... came the job to patrol. They put a curfew in, and so, our job was to patrol the streets at night, and only officers had live ammunition, thank God. They wouldn't give ammunition out to the troops. They did in some instances, but this was still before Kent State, but, anyhow, ... the troops didn't have live ammunition. [Editor's Note: On May 4, 1970, Ohio National Guardsmen fired on students at Kent State University, killing four and wounding nine others. Some of the students had been protesting the United States entry into Cambodia, while others had been passing nearby or observing the demonstration.] So, we were patrolling the streets and nobody's supposed to be out after ten o'clock or whatever and we're going through this one black neighborhood. ... A guy in the jeep in front of me saw somebody running across the street, all jump out and they catch him and they bring him back to me and I said, "Don't you know about the curfew?" He said--you know, he's a black guy--he says, "Yes, man," he said, "but I work at Sparrows Point [a steel and shipbuilding area in Maryland] on the night shift. I'm coming home from work," he said, "and, goddamn it, I just got back from Vietnam." I thought, "Jesus, what are we doing here? So, this guy ... was in

Vietnam, fighting for his country, and, now, we're arresting him for coming home from work." So, we took him home [laughter] and I said, "So, where you get off the bus?" and he said, "Down there," said, "We'll meet you tomorrow night. We'll give you a ride home," and we did that for two nights, but it was just a very sad experience, to be doing this police type work in your own country and having these people exude so much hate toward you for doing it. It was sad. It lasted about two weeks, I think, and was worse in other cities. Washington was bad, oh, a terrible time. The '60s were a terrible time, [laughter] terrible time, wouldn't want to live through them again.

SI: You mentioned that when you started at CIGNA, or Connecticut General then, that being in the military was viewed as a very positive thing and they were very supportive. Did you see that change a great deal over the course of your business career? Was it always an asset? Did it become a liability at any point?

LE: No, no. It was awkward; I remember coming to Washington once, right before I got out of the Army, for some reason, in my uniform and feeling very uncomfortable, because I had some ribbons and combat stuff. ... So, I felt a little of that in Washington, but, no, I think, ... in the business community, by and large, [it is] a conservative community, pro-military. ... I mean, it wasn't something you talked about all the time, but, I think, almost everybody in my generation was a vet and, no, it was never a liability and, frequently, an asset, that you'd been an officer, you'd been a leader, you were in an elite unit. It was more of an asset than a liability, never a liability.

SI: Did you get involved in any veterans' organizations or things like that?

LE: No.

SI: Is there anything else you would like to add for the record? Is there anything we skipped over?

LE: No, I don't think so. I didn't think I could talk this long about all of this stuff. [laughter] I consider myself very lucky. ... I survived that period of the '60s. I did lose the patriotism and ... the '70s were a period of massive disillusionment for me, the debacle in Vietnam, the Watergate [scandal], and I am as anti a politician as you can find. Now, my manta is, "I love my country, but I hate the government." I am not a Republican or a Democrat. ... Frankly, I think they're a bunch of dirtballs that run the country. ... I've had this conversation with many and, ... I mean, I know all generalities, including this one, are wrong, I guess, right. So, there's some fine people, obviously, and dedicated people, but I think that the business of politics is so ruthless and so brutal. In this business, when I was in the insurance business or whatever, I wanted to take Aetna's customers away from them--I didn't want to destroy their lives, I didn't want to put them in jail. They do. I mean, ... they're so vicious and they hate each other so much that why would anybody go into that business? and so, who goes into it? We wind up with the least competent members of our society, I think, going into politics. It's frightening. I watch these "Gong Show" debates, I can't stand it. I turn them off, "Tells us, Mr. Romney, in ninety seconds, how would you fix our entitlement programs?" [laughter] It's sad, it is sad, what has happened to our country, and I have very little hope for it. I mean, I think we have gotten to the

point in this country where we have more takers than givers, and this is what's happened in Italy and Greece. When you get more people who are taking money out of the system than are putting into it, they obviously want to keep getting more, so, they'll vote for the people who will give them more. ... The people who are running things, this is what's happened in Greece and Italy, it's pretty simple, they keep making these promises, "Big pension, big health care benefits. You can retire when you're fifty-five," quack, quack, and they keep doing this and they keep trying to tax the people who aren't taking from the government, but, eventually, those tax rates get so high, the people don't pay them. They evade them. ... The one business thing you've seen me do today is to figure out how not to pay taxes, right. When the tax rates get high, that's what people do. They find ways to evade them, to get around them. They do cash, they do all kinds of things. So, there's a diminishing return on what they can tax. So, then, they borrow, to keep these promises and keep making these promises, but, then, they run out of people to lend them money. Now, what are you going to do? You've got to break your promises, and then, people riot in the streets, and that's what's going on in Italy and other places and it's going to go on here. I mean, you add up the federal employees, the state employees, the local employees, you add up the retirees, the ones who are going to retire, Social Security recipients, Medicare recipients, Medicaid recipients, unemployment recipients, you add all those people up who are getting money out of the system, and then, you look at how many people are putting money into the system, and they're pissed. I mean, I'm really pissed about paying taxes. I don't mind paying taxes to help some really disadvantaged person. I'm happy to do it, but I'm paying taxes so some schoolteacher can retire at fifty-five at a hundred grand a year? No, I don't want to pay it. [laughter] I don't want to give you money, in Washington, so [that] you can use your corrupt earmarks to buy votes. I don't want to pay those taxes. So, I do everything I can to [avoid it]. It's not that I need the money--I don't want those corrupt people to have it, and almost everybody like me feels that way. Warren Buffet doesn't, but he's an exception, [laughter] but almost everybody like me feels that way. It's not that I'm opposed to doing my patriotic duty, to helping somebody that really needs help, but I don't want those corrupt bastards to have it and it's just terrible. So, I still love my country, I still believe in the founding principles, I still believe in the principles of Hayek, and I'm very sympathetic to helping people who need help. I carry around an article with me that appeared in the *Wall Street Journal* not long ago. So, there are people at the bottom of our society that really need help, right. So, this article is about this lady who has got MS [multiple sclerosis] and has no family. She's in a wheelchair and the South Carolina Medicaid, a program for the poor, had been sending a nurse around every day to help her go to the bathroom and clean herself up, and so forth, but they cut the Medicaid benefits so rigorously that that lady was only going to get the nurse every other day, and so, she has to wear diapers in-between. So, that's how we treat the bottom of our society. In the meantime, my millionaire golfing buddies have new knees and hips popped in, in very clean hospital facilities, paid for by Medicare and they're back in the foursome in three weeks. How does that make sense? Who are we taking care of in this country? Are we taking care of the people ... really at the bottom or are we taking care of the people who ought to be able to take care of themselves? [laughter] ... The answer is, the people at the bottom don't vote, don't give campaign contributions, but, if I go to my condominium down there, where everybody is a millionaire--I mean, you have to be; the units cost, on average, three million dollars apiece and nobody has a mortgage--if I were to get the group together down there and say, "We should all not take our Social Security checks and we should pay for our own medical expenses," they'd go nuts. "Oh, I paid into the system," quack, quack, quack. I think we're hopeless. [laughter] I really do. I just don't see any way out.

It's sad, it's sad what's happening. Anyhow, I didn't mean to wax on to that, but ... I have segued from the patriot who's willing to give his life for his country to--boy, and these wars that Bush led us into, boy, that, I mean, poorly thought out. You know who Jack David is? He was my fraternity brother. ...

SI: What was the last name?

LE: Jack David, D-A-V-I-D.

SI: No, I do not.

LE: I had lunch with him recently. I hadn't seen him for a long time. He was in the Bush Administration, trying to justify the wars, and he's a very smart guy, much smarter than me. [Editor's Note: Jack David served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction and Negotiations Policy from 2004 to 2006.] ... I said, "Come on, Jack," I said, "so, they didn't know? I mean, I didn't know, because, hey, I'm not a foreign policy expert, but you didn't know there were Sunnis and Shiites and that they were going to start trying to kill each other when you took Saddam out?" You got a war? raise taxes, pay for it. I'm very disillusioned by all of them. This guy, Obama, in there now is just an idiot. [laughter] In my view, he just doesn't know ... what he's doing and they just have this view that, "We're all in this together and we all have to be equally miserable." I think it's that kind of a deal. I said to one of my Socialist friends, who was arguing about, "Why do you need all this money?" and so forth. I said, "You don't understand human nature. If you and I were both born in the Soviet Union in 1940, I would have become a commissar and I'd have a *dacha* in the country and more toilet paper than you." [laughter] That was a long time ago. ...

SI: Just to end on a different note, could you tell me a little more about your family? You mentioned that you have three children.

LE: Yes, everything is good. We were skiing last week in Utah. Not everybody skis, but I took--[referring to a family photo] that's my son-in-law, my grandson and my son and his wife and my other grandson. So, we did a week of skiing out there. None of them are big business people. I mean, they grew up in circumstances very different from mine, always had everything they wanted, but they're all good kids. My son does website design. If you look at my website, that's his work--it's [lpenlsh.com](http://lpenlsh.com), not CFIG. My daughter works for a property management firm. My son works for Marriott Hotels. My son-in-law works for a construction firm and my daughter-in-law works for a healthcare firm, ... all in Connecticut, all within ten miles of where our house in Connecticut is. So, we see them a lot in the summertime and everybody's healthy, and my wife is the one next to me there. ... She will be seventy in July, but she's still very active. She's on the board of the Sarasota Opera and she's on the board of the animal rescue coalition down there, which goes around spaying and neutering cats, and she keeps quite busy with that. ... In the summer months, when she's in Connecticut, she's busy with the kids and the grandkids and she comes to New York, if something's going on. [laughter] ... We've been very lucky in that, fifty years of marriage and still going strong. Of course, with my career and the amount of travel I've had to do--we were on a trip, a hiking trip in Italy, ... in one of these upscale tour companies where you do a lot of hiking, and so forth. ... The first day, we had

lunch; people are getting to know each other and we're all basically the same age. So, somebody said to me, "How long have you guys been married?" and I said--at the time, I think it was forty-three years--and she says, "Yes, but we've only been together twenty-five," [laughter] because of my travel schedule. So, I've been very lucky in that regard, no problems with typical teenage problems, had no problems with the kids, and everybody's very close.

SI: If there is nothing else, thank you very much.

LE: Thank you, glad to do it. I look forward to seeing it. ...

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Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 7/26/12

Reviewed by Lawrence P. English 8/16/12