

Interview with Judge Genevieve Blatt

May 17, 1980

The first question that you have asked me is how did you first become involved in working in Pittsburgh city government. I would say that I became involved by a fluke. I had been a friend and neighbor of the man who was at the time concerned the mayor of Pittsburgh. His name was Cornelius D. Scully and he had asked me a number of times to help him with his campaign for mayor, which I was glad to do, although I was pretty young at the time but I liked to help. And he knew that I wanted to study law and he had encouraged me to study law and I had been in law practice about a year when he gave me a ride into the city one day and asked me if I would do him a favor, which I said I certainly would if I could. And he said that he had a position in city government which was about to become vacant and that as he put it, the politicians had a replacement for me that I don't want to appoint. They won't object if I appoint you and if you would take it for about six months that would give me time to look around for somebody else that would be suitable to me and to the leadership. So I agreed for six months that I would be the secretary of the city's Civil Service Commission, although I said to him at the time that one thing you always advised me was to keep politics as my avocation and never to take a political job but to be a good lawyer. He said I still mean that but after six months you can go back to that and meanwhile he said I don't suppose as a young lawyer you are too busy anyhow but you can have whatever time you need to keep your law practice moving along as long as you keep this job moving along.

I went in for six months to be the Secretary of the Civil Service Commission. At the end of the six months he still didn't have a replacement and at the end of a year he still didn't have a replacement. I began to feel like the man who came to dinner, because he never would let me resign. And in fact insisted then that I move into the city law department where I could advise the Civil Service Commission even though I couldn't be their secretary and advise a few other departments. So I moved into the city law department and that was just at the beginning of World War II when men lawyers were somewhat scarce and I was all too available. And I could see that he really needed me so I stayed. That

was how I began. Now you've asked me what were the various positions that I held in Pittsburgh. I've indicated that I was Secretary of the Civil Service Commission and that I was Assistant City Solicitor and those were the only two positions of a governmental sort that I ever held in Pittsburgh. I worked with Mayor Scully, who was mayor when I came in, and before I left Mayor Lawrence was the mayor of the city and so I worked with him. Now there were other political leaders that I worked with politically, but those were the leaders of the government and I presume that's what you were mainly interested in.

(MBP: When did Lawrence become mayor?)

About '43, I would say. In that neighborhood. Maybe '41. We had a very chaotic situation in Pittsburgh at that time. Maybe you remember that we had a mayor elected in 1933, the first Democrat since 1890. And he had been a perennial candidate for everything, including president of the United States, up to that time. I don't think anybody expected he would be elected mayor in 1933 but he all of a sudden was. He played the violin on the Major Bowes amateur hour and did a number of other erratic things, for which he finally had to be removed from office. And then Mayor Scully succeeded him and Mayor Lawrence succeeded Mayor Scully. So I would say it was the early '40's that Mayor Lawrence came in.

Now you've asked me what led you to leave Pittsburgh and become involved in state government. I think there were two things. One was that I had become active in the Young Democratic movement and had been elected to several state offices over the years. And the other was that in 1944 I had been elected President of the Young Democrats of Pennsylvania and so I had some state-wide responsibilities and was very active in that campaign on a state basis, as a result of which Mr. Ramsey Black, who was elected state Treasurer that year, asked me if I would consider coming to Harrisburg as one of his deputies. I refused because I didn't want to leave Pittsburgh and my career there and go to Harrisburg, but he asked me a couple of more times between November, when he was elected, and May, when he took office, and I continued to say no and I remember very well being in a political function one night in late May or June when then Mayor Lawrence called me aside and said that Ramsey Black had called him to ask him if he couldn't bring some influence to bear on me that I would come to Harrisburg and again, as with my start with Mayor Scully, Mayor Lawrence said to me if I would go to Harrisburg for just a year that he would appreciate it and Mr. Black would appreciate it and then I could come back to Pittsburgh

and I would always have a place there. So that was how I came to Harrisburg, which was in 1945. I didn't come over till toward the end of the year, which was quite some time after Mr. Black took office, but then I came over.

Your next question is what do you consider to be the most important positions you have held at the state level and what do you feel were your most important accomplishments in those positions. I'm sure the most important positions I've held at the state level governmentally would include the one I now hold, which is Judge of the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania. As a lawyer I suppose I have a little bias but I always think that the judges are the most important people in government because they really do have the final say on what is the law that the other people write or enforce and so I suppose I would consider that the most important.

The second most important was Secretary of Internal Affairs, to which I was elected in 1954 and re-elected twice for four-year terms. It was considered at the time I was elected as a not very important office from a practical point of view although it was a constitutional office and the only administrative office aside from the fiscal officers that was filled by election. At the time I said I wasn't sure if it should be continued and if I found it had nothing to do I would recommend its abolition, but meantime I would get in and look at it.

During my first term I established to my own satisfaction that it had a lot of important work to do and so I felt that I didn't want to recommend that the job be abolished but as I went on into the second and third terms I concluded that as a matter of governmental efficiency while everything that the Secretary of Internal Affairs was supposed to do amounted in sum to a very important piece of work, it would be better if the secretary of that administrative department reported to the Governor as all the others did and if its duties were distributed among the other departments where it was suitable I just thought the governmental efficiency would be improved so I supported the constitutional amendment to take that office out of its constitutional status. I'm not sure in retrospect whether that was wise or not, but that's what I did.

I did hold two other state governmental positions. One was Deputy State Treasurer to Mr. Black, which I held for about three years, and the other was Director of Departmental Audits in the Auditor Generals department, which I held for about a year. I don't think either of them was nearly so important as the two I've mentioned.

The next question -- when did you become a member of the ~~Democratic state~~ committee and how did you happen to become its secretary in 1948? I never was a member of the Democratic State Committee. I never was even a member of the Allegheny County Democratic Committee. I consequently can't boast of every having been a committeeperson and I'm rather sorry. I think that's something I would have liked to have on my resume of political activity. But I never was.

I however got my start in elections and learned a very valuable lesson right off when I was about 17 years old in supporting an older friend of mine who was running for Committeeman in my district. And he won the election by one vote, which I brought in at about three minutes of 8. So that I never was on any political committee in that sense, but in 1948 I was still the state president of the Young Democrats and I was appointed by the then state chairman as secretary of the party. I don't know what motivated him. I really can't tell you. I suppose I was willing to help and he knew that.

In 1948 Mr. Warren Mickel was the state chairman and Mr. Black was the State Treasurer and Mr. Black, who had appointed me as his deputy, was running in 1948 for Auditor General. Consequently, I was greatly interested in helping his campaign and the fortunes of the Democratic party were at a very low ebb at that time and one thing led to another and by 1948 November, when Mr. Truman won, for which I was very happy, Mr. Black lost, which made me very unhappy for Pennsylvania. And not only did Mr. Black and his running mate for State Treasurer lose but, I forgot the figure but we elected so few assemblymen that we could almost have had the Democratic caucus in a phone booth at the State Capital. And we didn't have either fiscal office, we didn't have the Governorship, and we had no legislators to speak of, and we were at such a very low point that it looked as if the Democratic party was about ready to fold, except in the minds of a few people. And I was one who had conceived the thought that we were probably at the bottom and we were really going to move up -- this was post World War II -- and I had a lot of faith in the returning veterans and I thought we could change and I was tempted to stay on and try to change so when they offered me the job of being a full-time executive secretary of the party, indicating to me that the chairman wouldn't do much, I jumped at it.

(WMP: Who was the chairman?)

Mickle. He didn't really want to be chairman. He was almost chairman by default. He was a very nice man, very hard-working and loyal, but not a very dynamic organizer and he said that if I would take the secretaryship and in a sense do the work he would hold the title but I could do what I wanted. And I thought this was a terrific opportunity because now we can really move upward. We had hit bottom and nowhere to go but up. And I knew many of these younger people had come back from the service and I felt sure that they were going to change things.

(WMP: How did you work on it?)

I don't want to sound as if I'm the creator of all this. There are other people that had the same thoughts. But I thought we had a very strong Democratic base in Southwestern Pennsylvania, where I came from, and I had seen how that had been organized, mainly by Mr. Lawrence and his allies in Southwestern counties. I myself had been born in one of the northwestern counties and I knew something about the people in the rural areas and in my Young Democratic work I had met a lot of the Philadelphia area people of the younger generation, and you'll forgive me if I say that I thought the older generation wasn't too worried about advancing Democratically over here and I thought the younger ones were. So I thought that if we could get all these people together, building on a strong southwestern base with a renewal of some of the Democratic strength which used to be in the rural counties -- my rural county had been Democratic since the Civil War but got a little bit disenchanted with Roosevelt, being a little bit too liberal for them -- but I felt they could be brought back. And I never understood at that time how Philadelphia could vote Democratic for President and Republican for local <sup>Candidates</sup>. So I thought there must be something here that you could grab onto to win a state victory and I was just really dedicated to it from that point on. And in 1947, when you folks in Philadelphia were making the first real stab at a comeback Democratically here we had a candidate for the Superior Court in Pennsylvania who was from Allegheny County, a very good friend of mine and a very good Common Pleas Court <sup>judge</sup> there, Harry Montgomery, and Harry Montgomery was selected to make the race partly because like me he was a country boy to begin with and he and his father had been very active in the Grange. So that Harry Montgomery and I almost made a two-person campaign in Pennsylvania contacting all the old-time Democrats in the Grange and talking to your people here in Philadelphia and to our

own people in the west and Harry Montgomery came within 36,000 votes of winning that off-year election, which absolutely convinced me we could take Pennsylvania someday soon.

Then in '49 when you folks did win in Philadelphia, then I was sure we could do it. I thought if Philadelphia now is in with us, we can do it. Of course, I don't need to tell you, but I will say for the record that I feel sure that the efforts that Dick Dilworth and Joe Clark made were of tremendous significance there.

(WMP: What about Jim Finnegan?)

Absolutely. I think Mr. Finnegan had a tremendous influence. So did Senator Frank Myers, who I knew in a state-wide way before I knew any of the other Philadelphians because he was in the United States Senate and he had been elected the same year that Mr. Black was elected to the state treasury post so that many people deserve credit. But at any rate, I always look at '47 as the beginning year and '49 as the year I was sure and then when you folks actually elected a mayor in '51 I knew it was only a question of time. And in '52 when Adlai Stevenson was our candidate for the President I was entranced with Adlai Stevenson -- I just never have known a public figure that I admired more and I was so extremely sorry that he did not carry Pennsylvania but it happened that I was on the ticket that year. Many people have forgotten that, but I was a candidate for Auditor General and George Leader was the candidate for State Treasurer and we worked as hard as we could for Governor Stevenson as well as ourselves and when the election was over with, however, Eisenhower had swamped Stevenson but we were very close -- relatively close -- to winning. We were way ahead of Stevenson. So I thought Pennsylvania is moving even if we had a bad set-back here nationally. And in '54 of course George Leader and I again were on the state ticket. I must say largely because nobody else much wanted on, but we both believed that this was a takable state and we won and then the rest is history. We had reached that goal.

Your next question that you asked me was could you tell us something about the relationship between the state committee and the Philadelphia city committee at that time -- and at that time refers to when I began as Secretary of the committee in 1948. At that time I would say the relationship between the state committee and the Philadelphia committee was respectful but distant. I don't think the

Philadelphia city committee thought we did anything of much importance upstate. In fact, in all due kindness, I don't think they thought there was anything upstate to get worried much about. And as far as we were concerned at the state level, I think we were always a little baffled by what went on in Philadelphia -- they could be Republican in a national election and Democratic -- I mean Republican in a local election and Democratic in a national. We just didn't understand what was going on down here and were inclined to think if you can run it, run it, but we don't understand you. We got along but didn't have very much back and forth.

The seventh question you ask me is who were the most influential state-wide leaders when you were involved in government at the state level. I suppose I should be sure that we are talking about the time frame that you mean. I came into state government, as I told you, for the first time in 1945 and I was in it for four years almost in the state treasury department but then I was out again governmentally speaking. Politically I was active all that time until 1955 when I went back into the office of the Secretary of Internal Affairs. If you start back in 1945 and go up to the present that covers a very long period of time to talk about who I think were the most influential state-wide leaders. I'll just take a stab at it and say that I think the most influential over the longest period of time was David Lawrence. And that was true whether he was in office or not in office. He had a long continuing influence. And after him I would just have to name an awful lot of people and I'm not sure what priority rankings to put them in. Certainly I wouldn't want to be responsible for figuring it out right now. I still think that Richardson Dilworth and Joe Clark were very important and Jim Finnegan, Frank Myers, John Rice, who was from Adams County and who was state chairman for a while, Joe Barr, who was the mayor of Pittsburgh and had a lot of influence. And there have been members of the state legislature at various times who had a considerable amount of influence. The several time speaker of the House, Hiram G. Andrews, had a great influence with the rural members of the General Assembly. Senator John Dent, who was the leader of the Senate during the Leader administration and I believe part of the Lawrence administration, had considerable influence. From time to time there were local leaders that had a lot to say -- Commissioner Lawler had a substantial input. Bill Green from Philadelphia when he came more prominently on the scene. But frankly as I look to all of them in relation to Lawrence I'd say he so outweighs them in importance that I don't know how to rank them.

There were many things about him that seemed to me different and have always made me grateful that I came on the political scene when he was there and I could learn from him and help him.

It may sound unreal and I think many people would say I'm wrong about that, but in all the years that I knew him I never knew him ever to say and not even to imply that I want to do this because it will be good for me. I just never heard any suggestion of selfishness in any of his motivations. He was a partisan in the sense that he was looking to put the Democratic party ahead -- he really believed in it -- and he was a little provincial in the sense that maybe a lot of us are -- he thought that Pittsburgh was a great place and he wanted it to be greater and he had a lot of love for it. And I heard him say this wouldn't be good for Pittsburgh or this wouldn't be good for the Democratic party. But what was good for Lawrence I never even heard him suggest that he cared about. And I think it was part of his greatness and he was very selfless about it. He was also a great unifier and I heard him criticized many times particularly out in our home county because after someone would oppose him strongly in a primary votes would hardly be counted -- Lawrence usually won -- when he would call the person up and say now come around, we can use you, we want you to help us. And chances are he would put him on the ticket the next time and support him and some people who had been loyal all the way through would say that was terrible -- here he is helping along a dissenter. But he was always trying to bring in useful people in the party -- people who had something to contribute in the way of ideas or votes or influence. He didn't hold it against them if they opposed him. He saw it in a bigger way than his personal ambitions or anything else. And he devoted almost too much time to it. I never knew any man that put more time to politics and government than he did. It was a seven day a week....

(WMP: What did he live on?)

He had a very successful insurance business in Pittsburgh which he had set up as a young man and before I knew him ~~was~~ I suppose when he built that business up without regard to politics because the Democrats didn't amount to anything there in those days. He was a good salesman and I think he had a very good solid business. It never made him very rich but he never cared about money. I never saw a man who cared less about money. I guess he had enough to live on and that

was all that really concerned him.

Now, question 8, since you served under both Governors Leader and Lawrence would you compare their administrations in terms of the quality of government at the state level. I had the good luck to be in state elective office with or under -- of course having been elected, I always considered myself equal, not under -- really five governors because as I told you I had an appointed position as Deputy State Treasurer when Gov. Duff was governor and I admired him very much although he was a Republican. But I was elected with Governor Leader and I was also elected with Governor Lawrence and then I was elected the same time Governor Scranton was. Of those four governors that I worked closely with I actually think that with the exception of Governor Pinchot, whom I've always admired, that those were the four best we've had in many long years. Now you ask me particularly about Leader and Lawrence. They were different but both very good. Governor Leader was younger and more inclined to opt for some new approach to things, more innovative, more willing to take a chance on something that nobody had tried before. And I enjoyed working with him. I was young then, too, and shared many of the same ambitions and ideals. Governor Lawrence was older, more experienced -- his government was much more stable. He was much more on top of it.

(WMP: Did he use his cabinet to get their advice and participation on big decisions or did he try to do the things himself?)

I would say that neither Governor Leader nor Lawrence used the cabinet much for advice-taking purposes. Governor Leader called cabinet meetings and told them what he had in mind and they exchanged ideas but it was not exactly a working group in the sense that some people have made it. Governor Lawrence called them to hear what they were doing. Leader wanted to tell them what he wanted to do; Lawrence wanted to hear what they were doing. Both of them worked individually with their cabinet members. Governor Leader had the concept that he wanted to name a staff member to keep track of this cabinet and that cabinet. Governor Lawrence didn't go for a lot of staff. He kept after them himself, which takes a lot of time. But on the other hand, Governor Lawrence was very economical of his time and people didn't waste words with him. If you were a cabinet member you didn't come in to sit down and have an hour's chat, you came in to give a ten-minute report and then get out. So he got

more done in the same length of time. They had different approaches. I think the government under Lawrence was much more stable and predictable but not as exciting as it was under Leader. I enjoyed them both. I felt more secure with Lawrence, but it was more fun with Leader.

Next, would you comment on the relationships between the political figures in Philadelphia and Lawrence and Leader? In regard to Governor Lawrence I think the political figures then in power in Philadelphia while he was governor were very cooperative and mutually respectful, I think. With Governor Leader I think the powers in Philadelphia at that time were inclined to think they had a country boy that they could dominate. It turned out they couldn't, but I think they thought they could. And so there was a lot of tension at various times. With Lawrence I think they knew they couldn't dominate him and didn't try.

Ten, would you compare the style of political leadership in Philadelphia with that in Pittsburgh, where the Mellons were so highly influential. I'm intrigued by that last clause, where the Mellons were so highly influential. Not that I don't think they weren't, but I imagine this seems to indicate to me that you maybe put more stress on their influence than I as a Pittsburgher would be inclined to. Because as I look at it the Mellons saw that Lawrence had something that was good for the city and even though he was a Democrat they decided that it was worth their while to support him. And they did. Now I think many outside observers look on it the other way -- they think the Mellons put Lawrence in. I don't believe that a bit. I was there and that didn't happen, so far as I know. But I do remember that Governor Lawrence did not want to run for Mayor of Pittsburgh at all. He fought it every inch of the line because he didn't think he could be elected and he didn't want to lose.

(WMP: Leader came from what part of the country?)

He came from ~~New~~ York. But in Pittsburgh the Mellon family had of course dominated the Republican party for years and years but at the particular time that we are talking about the Republican party was disintegrating. In fact, you could put it in the past tense -- might have disintegrated. We had a very strong Pinchot wing and we had a very strong conservative wing and they actually adopted another party

name, which I now forget -- something like the Square Deal party or something like that -- so that the Republicans won even the minority offices with one wing of the party having the majority and the other with its new name having the minority offices. I don't think they needed to cultivate Democrats particularly. They just had to make peace with themselves. And the mayor of Pittsburgh, who was Charles Klein in 1933, was indicted and convicted. There were about 150 Republican committeepople indicted and convicted for election fraud after the 1932 elections. So the Republican party was falling apart and as we went on into the '40's they weren't getting together any better because of course Roosevelt had been elected and so there was a little Democratic resurgence coming up and I think -- I know the Democratic party people had to work awfully hard on Governor Lawrence, who was just plain County Chairman Lawrence at that time, to persuade him to run for mayor. But he did. However, I think the Mellon family recognized that he could do something for Pittsburgh and they were always very good, loyal Pittsburghers. They spent their money there. They believed in Pittsburgh. And I think they were anxious to support somebody that would help along.

Be that as it may, you ask for the style of leadership and I have always thought that it was a mark of the greatness of Mr. Lawrence that he didn't say you are Mellons, I don't want any of your kind around me. He said if you want to help let's work together. And I think that was a very good thing that he did and maybe it wasn't very partisan but I think it was a wise thing for the city. And I remember way back, Dick Dilworth and Joe Clark talking to me about our Allegheny County Conference and wishing they had something like that in Philadelphia and I think you eventually got it with the Greater Philadelphia Movement. But we did have the Allegheny Conference first which was largely Mellon financed and funded but ~~it~~<sup>it</sup> had Democratic officials ~~running it~~ who held the government offices -- the county commissioners, John Kane and George Rankin, who were very progressive and innovative. And I won't comment on what you had here in Philadelphia in those early days. You know it better than I do.

Next, were Philadelphia and Pittsburgh highly competitive for state services and if so, what sort of difficulties were caused by that competition? How were any such difficulties resolved? I think we were very highly competitive and still are, for that matter. But in those days, very much so and

I think the Pittsburgh people got the better of it. Principally because it ... if you remember, we had a Pittsburgh package of bills that we needed for Pittsburgh's improvement. Some were tax bills, some were building bills, but we got everything through with Republican support in the legislature. We began to get some of it even under Governor Fine and we got more of it under Governor Leader. And more yet under Governor Lawrence, because both Democrats and Republicans from Pittsburgh generally were for that. And I don't think you ever had the same kind of bi-partisan approach in Philadelphia.

I really do think Philadelphia historically speaking has often seemed to stand against the rest of the state or the rest of the state against Philadelphia. I think there is a little envy on the part of the rest of us out in the upstate -- they think Philadelphia has got everything. It's not true, but we think it. And I think Philadelphia thinks the rest of the state is draining off things we ought to have, and that's not true but they think it. I think there ~~is~~ always those tensions. But the people on the other side of the mountains always consider themselves a little bit forgotten.

Number twelve, did Philadelphia's good government reform movement have much of an impact on Harrisburg~~x~~ in terms of pressure to deal with reform issues at the state level? Frankly, I don't think so. I think that the Dilworth-Clark reform movement, important as it was for Philadelphia, was not any more reformist than the Leader's were out in the rest of the state. On the other hand, surely I think they were mutually supportive and maybe the Leader type wouldn't have had the courage if it didn't have this behind him. But I don't think really that the influence was to high.

Thirteen, could you tell us how patronage in regard to state government affected the relationship between Philadelphia and Harrisburg? I find that hard to answer. Governor Leader was a partisan. He really believed that to the victor belonged the spoils. But he also believed in efficient government. He really did. And he had a very hard time reconciling those two beliefs. He had been a student here at the University of Pennsylvania in the Institute of Local and State Government and he had come under the influence of Dr. Sweeney and some others there and he very much admired them and as you may remember we, he, I, all of us together had an idea that as soon as he was elected we got

together a task force that Dr. Sweeney headed and we asked him to get people and the other state-related or supported universities to study every agency of the state government and have a report ready for the new agency head in January as to what was going on there and what ought to be changed and we assumed it had to be changed. And that was done for us. It was a very great thing. George Leader was committed to good government. But he knew people, for example, your leadership here in Philadelphia had helped him to be elected and they were ready with long lists of people they wanted appointed to all kinds of jobs. And many, many of those people had not only no competence in those jobs, but didn't even know what they were. In other words if you asked what is the competence of candidate X for job 1, 2, 3 there was absolutely no matching. Just candidate X had to have a job and this looked like a good one. My own feeling was that the Philadelphia idea of patronage was entirely different from the Harrisburg or Pittsburgh idea. We were looking for good Democrats, who were fitted to the jobs. But it seemed to me that most of the Philadelphia politicians wanted us to put good Democrats in whether they fitted or didn't fit. And so there was a lot of tension there.

I may be wrong in emphasizing Philadelphia. This wasn't confined to Philadelphia. There were many people who had that feeling. And I think some individuals had that feeling even among my own group in Pittsburgh. But in the main there was a tension there because I think Leader wanted to put efficiency first and the other people wanted to put politics first and neither wanted to exclude the other but it caused a problem.

(MBP: So in the end you got good Democrats in these jobs and the relationship between the city committee and Harrisburg was ok?)

By the time we got into the Lawrence administration things were pretty peaceful. After the four years that Leader was in all of us were very new when he went in and by those four years we had learned a lot, had met a lot of people, had screened out some bad ones, and located some good ones, and I thought that Governor Lawrence was very lucky that he came in to a pretty good running system. And then he supplied the stability to it for another three or four years. But we didn't have quite the same tensions.

Question 14 is would you tell a little bit about Lawrence's role in national politics? To begin at the beginning, about which I know nothing personally, but only remember his talking about it, he went to his first Democratic national convention in 1912 as a messenger. He was working as a clerk for a lawyer in Pittsburgh, who was an active Democrat, and he took him along to Baltimore when Woodrow Wilson was nominated. And he apparently became badly bitten by the political bug at that convention. I don't think he ever missed one after that as long as he lived, until 1966. I remember hearing of him first through my mother and father who had just got a new radio, which was considered a very big development, in 1924 when the Democratic national convention was in Houston -- no, New York. And that's when John W. Davis was the nominee and I remember all the talks that we had at the dinner table at home which as a child went over my head, but I still remember them. My mother and father who had been life-long Democrats, both of them, determined they couldn't possibly vote for John W. Davis, but they also couldn't possibly vote for Calvin Coolidge or Herbert Hoover, or whoever. So I guess LaFollett got their votes. However, I remember that on this new-fangled radio that mother and daddy were listening to all the time and that David L. Lawrence was a name that came up every now and then because there were 124 ballots taken. I do remember Governor Lawrence telling about it later that he went over there to that convention. He was not the state chairman, of course, but he was of some influence, and by the time of the convention got up to its about 100th ballot, so many people had gone home that those who still stayed, including himself, began to be much more prominent than they would have been otherwise and they stayed till the bitter end. He and Mrs. <sup>Thomas Guffey</sup> Elmer Guthrie Miller (2) who was our longtime national committeewoman were among the delegates that stuck it out till the last ballot. So I remember his talking about that '24 convention and I would say that at least from '24 on he must have played a very important role in every Democratic national convention.

The first one that I personally attended was here in Philadelphia in '36. I thought I was going to be the youngest person there and I found out later that in the <sup>Amish</sup> seven states delegates were allowed to name their own alternates and since I had been elected as an alternate I found myself older than the 17-year-olds that they appointed to serve from other places. But nevertheless, I know that in 1936 he was clearly the leader and from then on until he died he was certainly the leader of Pennsylvania's delegation and he generally always had an important role -- a committee chairmanship or something equivalent at the national conventions. And that President Roosevelt, President

Truman, President Kennedy, always regarded him as a Pennsylvania leader and listened to his suggestions and recommendations. There was a lot of competition, I guess, before I really came around, between him and Senator Guffy, who was also a western Pennsylvanian. And they were bitterly divided in the 1938 election. I would say that Lawrence was always the predominant Pennsylvania figure in my experience, but just before my experience and under Roosevelt, maybe Senator Guffy was.

Question 15 -- how did you come to run for the United States Senate in 1964? What was the basis for your support and what were the forces that prevented you from winning? That would be about four cassettes worth! In 1964 as we were getting ready for that election there were a lot of people who thought and were at least saying to me that they thought I ought to run for Senator, simply because I had been the biggest vote getter in '62 among the Democrats, having been elected when most others were not. And I wasn't encouraging the talk because in a selfish way I didn't think anybody was going to be elected United States Senator from Pennsylvania that was a Democrat that year. And I wasn't anxious to make the run. I thought Hugh Scott was very strong and would no doubt be re-elected. And I also thought that John Kennedy would be the nominee and that he being a Roman Catholic and I being the same we couldn't both be on the head of the ticket. So that I didn't have any real interest, although I was flattered that people thought that I ought to think about it. However, as we got closer to the election or to the time for nominating and endorsing candidates for the election, I began to hear that the leadership in Philadelphia was promoting Justice Musmanno as the candidate and I inquired of them as to whether or not he would resign from the Supreme Court to be the candidate and was told no that he wouldn't need to and I said I thought he would need to under the canons of judicial ethics if he wanted to run for a non-judicial office. Well, I never got a satisfactory answer that he would resign or retire and then I was told that the way it was going to be handled was that he wasn't going to announce as a candidate -- they were going to draft him and that that would obviate the prohibitions of the canons of judicial ethics if he was in a sense required by his party to run and given the nomination.

I had had <sup>a</sup> little experience with him and so had everybody else back in 1950 when he ran for Lt. Governor without resigning ~~at~~ the bench, which I had opposed at that time. I thought that was inappropriate.

*Common Pleas*

I just demanded that if he was going to be the Democratic candidate for the United States Senate he should have to get off the Supreme Court. I said it would be embarrassing to the party as well as to him to run when he would be defying the canons of judicial ethics. Nobody paid the slightest attention to me on that. I tried to get several other people to run that I thought could be good senatorial candidates and might have a chance to win and nobody was interested in being a candidate. And to make a long story short, when it came time for the Democratic state committee to meet and to endorse candidates the Philadelphia leadership adamantly insisted on this so-called draft of Justice Musmanno and since I hadn't been able to find anybody else that would oppose him I said then if nobody else will, then I will. And Joe Clark said that if I would he would support me.

Even if he hadn't said it I think that I would have run because I was so affronted at the idea of -- I have nothing against Mike Musmanno personally but I thought the idea of a Supreme Court judge not getting off the court to run for a legislative office was unthinkable. And since I couldn't find a candidate, I had to be it. And once having got into it of course I gave it all I had. And Senator Clark did assist me and Mrs. Miller, the national committeewoman, did help me. And although 66 of the 67 county chairmen joined in a telegram campaign to me to tell me to get off the ticket I did carry almost every county in the primary, except Philadelphia.

(WMP: What was the problem in Philadelphia?)

Well, all the Philadelphia people were for Musmanno. They drafted him. They were very proud of having drafted him. I won the primary, but when the unofficial votes were counted I was about 3500 ahead, which again, I was happy to settle for, but the primary election hadn't been over with for two full days when Bill Green announced that they had failed to count some votes in Philadelphia. And I was always intrigued by the fact that 3500 was the exact amount they had failed to count down here according to him. And these were votes that were on the voting machine on the line below where you voted for Democratic candidates. In other words, on a blank line that he said was obviously intended for the Democrats who were above the line rather than for the Republicans who were below the line. If all this sounds a little complicated... that's what he said. Consequently, the

Philadelphia organization proceeded to insist that Musmanno had won and not I. When I saw that -- particularly it intrigued me that they had this absolutely coincidental figure. For my own protection I began to challenge some absentee votes that had been cast here in Philadelphia which I had some doubt about and some other votes that I had some doubt about. I can't remember how many challenges there were except that I know that there were more than 30 cases we had in the Common Pleas Courts in Philadelphia relating to challenges that I brought against Musmanno absentee ballots and that he brought against me on this basis that they had failed inadvertently to count some votes.

All that went on, you may remember, to a long summertime of litigation, so that I was never assured of the nomination until the 12th of October, at which time the last appeal was decided in the U.S. Supreme Court. So I didn't have very much time that I was the undisputed candidate. And so far as I know my name never appeared on a sample ballot, on a poster, on a billboard, or anything in Philadelphia right up to the election day. I really didn't think the chances of beating Hugh Scott would be worthwhile that year. A lot of things changed -- President Kennedy died, Bill Green died, the picture changed around dramatically. I think I could have been elected. I think I could have beaten Hugh Scott if Philadelphia had been for me, but they weren't. They being the organization. They just had -- I only lost by 72,000 in the whole state.

Frank Smith was the chairman and I think Frank was always convinced that Musmanno had won and was going to see that he won and if he had given in and said I had won at any time right up to October 12, I still think I could have carried Philadelphia. But he never really forgave me, I think, for going against him.

So, that's that.

There's one other factor that I think entered into it, too. Pennsylvania has had a history of splitting its vote. We voted for Eisenhower and Joe Clark. Voted for Johnson and Hugh Scott. And in that year too California voted for Johnson and knocked on Salinger. And New York voted for Johnson and knocked out Bobby Kennedy. The senatorial candidates just didn't seem to go well and I think what happened was a lawyer friend of mine in Pittsburgh, who was a very strong Republican, <sup>and who went</sup> says he had always voted for me except that one time. And he said when he got into the ballot place he couldn't vote for Goldwater. He said I just

could not make myself vote for Goldwater. So he said he voted for Johnson because he couldn't vote for Goldwater and then when it came to Senator he thought but I don't trust Lyndon Johnson, really, he ought to have a strong Republican in there to hold the reins on him and I think Hugh Scott would do that and he said I just couldn't cast two Democratic votes. <sup>Other</sup> people might have read it that way, <sup>two</sup>.

Anyhow, I think lots of things combined to prevent my winning and I guess I wasn't meant to win so that's alright.

Number 16, you say when and how did it happen that you became a judge? I was out of the state, working in Washington with the Johnson administration when the constitution was amended and the Commonwealth Court was created. But I remember Joe Clark saying at the time it was created, you know, that's the kind of a court you ought to be on. And I thought it was rather prescient of Joe because I hadn't thought much about it but it's a court, you know, that is devoted exclusively to governmental appeals and having spent my whole life in the field of governmental law and administrative law it certainly couldn't appeal to me any more than it does. At any rate, I wasn't interested in or considered when they made the first appointments. And they were made by the legislature with the governor and on a party deal that the Democrats got half and the Republicans got one more than half and Governor Schaffer appointed the Democrats to suit the Democratic organization and Republicans to suit to the Republican organization. But in 1971, when I was back practicing law in Harrisburg, one of the Democratic judges of the Commonwealth Court was elected to the Supreme Court, so there was a vacancy. And Governor Shapp appointed me to the vacancy. I took office the first Monday of January of 1972 and then I had to run in November of 1973 and was elected and my term runs till 1983. That's how I became a judge.

(WMP: What do you feel about Milton since then?)

Since then, before then, I always considered that he was a very bright man and I think dedicated to providing good government, but he proves a point that I've often tried to make unsuccessfully, and that is that a businessman is not the best man to put in governmental office. I think

running a government is an art and running a business is an art and they are not the same kind of art. I think he did the best he could and I have admired him for that. I have had some differences of opinion with him about some things but on the whole I think he did a good credible job. And of course he is the first governor in Pennsylvania's history that had a second term, which is something I always thought would be very advantageous, but in his case I think his second term did him in. He'd have been a lot better and a lot higher regarded if he'd never had it. I think he became a little disinterested in his second term. Of course, also another factor that intervened was his running for the Presidency. He had other people do things for him while he had that on his mind and things got a little bit confused.

Now your last question -- of the political leaders with whom you worked in Philadelphia, whom do you consider the best political organizer? I have indicated already that the best political organizer I ever knew was Governor Lawrence, but I know that he said that the best political leader he worked with in Pennsylvania was Jim Finnegan and he was very greatly crushed when Jim Finnegan died because he had anticipated his continuing leadership. And as I look back on the things that have happened in the last 20 years I'm often inclined to wonder what would have been different if Jim Finnegan had lived. I think quite a lot would have been different. Of course the problem is, if he had lived in poor health he wouldn't have been effective. So I suppose the Lord took him when it was best. But he had a faculty for leadership and for unifying divergent points of view in people that is very rare and he also had a personal dedication and selflessness that reminded me a lot of Governor Lawrence. I don't think he ever tried to advance Jim Finnegan's interest. I think he did try to advance the Democratic party and what his idea of good government would be and I admired him very greatly and I think it might have made things a lot different. I always was inclined to sympathize with him in his position here in Philadelphia. I would not have wanted the role that he had to play of trying to keep peace between the people who wanted to improve the government and other people that wanted just more of the same but under a Democratic label. More of the same being more of the old-time Republican handling. And I think that probably wasn't very good for his health. It was a big strain on him. But nevertheless, I think he enjoyed it and so who is to say that he shouldn't have done it.

I also had a lot of respect for Senator Myers. I always thought Pennsylvania lost a lot when he was defeated for reelection. He was, you remember, the assistant majority leader of the United States Senate at the time, which was rather unusual for a first-termer. And I think he could have gone on to be a very important Senator. But it just wasn't a good year for Democrats in 1950. But I considered those two the most far-seeing and the least selfish political leaders from Philadelphia.

Now one of the highlights of my memory of those early days was coming to Philadelphia -- and I suppose it was 1949 -- was that the year that Dick Dilworth debated Austin Meehan? I remember coming down to that. I came down on the train from Harrisburg and a couple people in Harrisburg said what was I coming down here for -- I said I have a hunch that I'm going to hear something historic. I just want to be there to see this debate. And I always have felt that I was in on something really exciting. I came down a couple of times to hear them on the street corners and that made a big difference in what work I did out in the state because we didn't do outdoor meetings up to that time. But I was intrigued by seeing Dick and Joe up on the ladders and ...

*in 1948 I suggested some of this sort of campaigning to Mr. Beck.*  
 .... I convinced him to try this out in the state and I remember Senator Lane was his running mate <sup>and</sup> was running for State Treasurer and they did not like it. They said they felt ridiculous. I rented a flat-bed truck and of course we were so impoverished that I expected at least one of them to ride up in the cab with the driver. They didn't like it a bit and they said they felt dumb standing on the truck and talking. But then, that was '48, and in '50 Dick ran and he knew how to do it and carried it out and we had no more trouble after that. And then in '52 and '54 we used it to a fare-thee-well out in the state and we used to paint up station wagons and we had a platform on top of them. And I remember going up to <sup>Condoverport</sup> ~~Cottersport~~ one day and there was a woman up there named Marianne Stone, she had been very prominent and her father had been and so on, and she was running for the state legislature -- a sacrifice candidate. No Democrat ever got elected to anything up there in Potter County. But anyhow, we were parked in the town park with our station wagon and if there was ever a caricature made -- I don't mean this in an abusive sense -- but if you were to draw

a picture of the typical New England school teacher that is what Marian Stone looked like. And she looked up at this thing and she said do you go up there? And she said how do you get up there? I said you climb that ladder. She said I don't think I can do that. I said Miss Stone if you don't want to we can have the chairman announce you and hand the microphone down over the side and you can speak on the running board. And she said no, if you can go up there, I can go up there. So she went up.

*Speaking again of Philadelphia leaders, there is*  
 ...A one name that I didn't mention and should have was Congressman Michael Bradley. I know that when I came in as Secretary of the party I had some conferences with him a number of times and I felt that there was a really good man that wanted to have good government here. And I remember that he expressed a sentiment that I had been thinking that once we got the men back from the service that there would be a number of fine young men among them who would be willing to take on some of these burdens that seemed a little bit too heavy for some of the older ones. And I know that he spoke of Jim Finnegan, for example, as someone that he thought would be able to help and I know that when Dick Dilworth ran for mayor in '47, which I think is about when Jim Finnegan came in as city chairman, that Congressman Bradley was instrumental in getting a few people together who said they would take care of Jim Finnegan's expenses if he would be the chairman. And they didn't offer him any salary that I ever heard of but they said that they would take care of his expenses. And he said he would do it. And I remember thinking at the time that that wasn't a very good deal, selfishly speaking, but if he wants to make it that's for him. And I guess we all made that kind of a deal at various times that cost us more than we ever got out of it. But at any rate, I always saw that Mr. Bradley, who felt that he himself couldn't continue, ~~but~~ he certainly did play a large part in getting Jim Finnegan in and established as city chairman.

Another person I ought to have mentioned among the Philadelphia political leaders that I truly did admire was Michael Byrne, who was the deputy mayor to Mayor Clark and was his administrative assistant when he was in the United States Senate and who was a tower of strength to me when I ran for the Senate. I just could never have run without Michael Byrne's help and he again was a man who was extremely self-effacing, who put Joe Clark ahead, number one, all the time. And when he was working for me he put me ahead, much to his own detriment. But he was a very knowledgeable, very well thought of and respected person who again, could keep communications open with his worst enemies. I don't think

he had many enemies, but probably that's the reason he was as good as he was. He always kept in touch. He knew what everybody was thinking, doing, saying, and they were evidently glad to tell him because everyone respected him so much and I think he contributed very greatly to the success of the party in this city and I imagine to the success of your city government too.

(end of interview)