Interview with J. S. Clark
March 18, 1975

1. Because early motivation leading persons into public life is of general interest, I will appreciate your ruminating as to what caused you to become interested in public affairs and government. Perhaps you would start as far back as when you were at Middlesex School. It seems hardly an accident that the little wood panel which you carved in your school days there and which is probably still a small segment of the paneling of the assembly hall depicted the Capitol building in Washington with the American flag flying on the top of it. Either it is a mighty rare coincidence that you became United States Senator or else you did have a very early idea which successfully prevailed.

In response, I would say that I have always been interested from my childhood in politics, public affairs, and government. I have said often that at the age of 11, I decided I wanted to be a United States Senator, which I didn't reveal to anybody because it just seemed like a bad joke. With reference to the panel at Middlesex it is a picture of the flag pole at Middlesex with a flag on it, and the reason I chose the subject was because I was so very bad at what was then called manual training or wood carving as we adapted it, and this seemed the simplest design that I could carve without ruining the whole thing. Many of my classmates were much more skilled and did infinitely more complicated subjects. I remember in the end I had to get assistance from my classmate, Tom Carnegie, to make even this simple drawing -- carving -- acceptable to the faculty committee which passed on the panels. So I'm afraid it isn't a coincidence at all.

2. Do you think that the element of contest which you enjoyed on the baseball field at Middlesex and at Harvard may have conditioned you for the game of politics and the contest of elections?

There's no doubt to my way of thinking that competitive sports, particularly contact sports, do have a salutary effect in the future life of the individuals who engage in sports. Of course although I was never very good at it, I played a lot of football in school and also freshman year in college. Baseball was my primary sport at which I had some competence. But I think the whole American concept of competition which runs through all of our philosophy does apply in politics. You will remember that Frank Kent of the Baltimore Sun once wrote a book called The Great Game of Politics. And it is a game in many ways. I have more recently come to the view that competitive sports such as professional football are really sort of a war game and do condition people to look with excitement on war as opposed to peace. This is certainly true also of professional boxing. The whole idea of competitive sports does have an implication for politics and government. I'm not sure at this point how salutary it is.
3. Could the same be said, do you think, for Dick Dilworth, who I understand played on the Yale football team and who certainly seemed to enjoy political battles?

Yes, Dick was a great competitor. He loved competitive sports of all sorts. He also rowed on one of the Yale crews and he was a competitor from start to finish. I have no doubt that this influence has had an impact on politics.

4. Would you recall for me as best you can how you came to know Dick Dilworth and would you describe how you took turns managing each other's campaigns when one of you ran for city council and also when one of you ran for the legislature?

I met Dick Dilworth as I have frequently said when we learned the American way of life together on the beaches of Southampton, Long Island, about as plutocratic an institution as one could find. Dick was several years older than I and was always a very glamorous figure. I admired him very much -- we didn't really know each other terribly well at the time because the difference between being 14 and being 17 is a very great one at those ages. I came to know Dick better when he moved to Philadelphia after he married Bobbie Brockie (sp?), a Philadelphia girl, and rented a house in Chestnut Hill. We became interested in Democratic politics through a character by the name of Harry Conway, who was one of the two Democratic ward leaders of the then 22nd ward. At that point the Democratic organization was under the control of the Republicans and the other ward leader named Pat Howard was a stooge of the Republican party. Conway was a lovable Irishman who used to get drunk all the time. Dick Dilworth would habitually bail him out of jail when this happened and was in a sense closer to him than I was. We really didn't take turns managing each other's campaigns. In 1934 in the Spring there was a vacancy in City Council in the Germantown 22nd ward area due to the death of Bill Roper, the coach of the Princeton football team who had been a City Councilman. A special election was called to fill the vacancy in the Spring of 1934. At the same time the regular primaries were going on for election to the State Legislature, the State Senate, Congress, etc. Harry Conway persuaded me to run for the vacancy in City Council and Dick Dilworth filed for the nomination for State Senator from our senatorial district. We were by then good friends, but neither of us had any particular impact on the other's campaign. Although the Democrats had carried Philadelphia in the Fall of 1933 with the assistance of two incredible characters -- S. Davis Wilson, and Will B. Hadley -- I was defeated for City Council by a very respectable Republican, Samuel Emlen, by about 4,500 votes. Dick also failed to be nominated for the State Senate.

5. Did you know Bill Roper when he was a City Councilman elected from the Northwest section of the City, and if so, did you do any political work with him?

I did know Bill Roper, who was a charming and attractive fellow, with unfortunately no particular administrative ability in a political sense. The 22nd ward was then largely independent of the Republican organization and Bill got himself elected to City Council on several occasions running as an independent.
In, I guess it was the Spring of 1926, which of course goes behind my answer to the last question, Bill wanted to become the ward leader of the 22nd ward. He had been a City Councilman, but he had never been able to control the ward committee, so he asked me and a fellow by the name of Clement to run for committeemen in the primary on the Republican ticket in our division of the 22nd ward. This we did -- waged a hot campaign and got beaten. A fairly close election. A fellow by the name of Brown, who worked for the Pennsylvania Railroad, was a delightful individual and only had one arm, but he knew the organization game much better than Clement and I did and while we did door-to-door canvassing in our division, we were defeated by Brown and his colleague, whose name I forget. One of my remaining recollections is that mother, who was interested in my political career, filled a big thermos bottle full of hot coffee generously spiked with bourbon whiskey and sent it up to me when we were counting the votes when the polls closed. This resulted in a good deal of hilarity and good feeling, but I don't think they counted us out. I think they won the election honestly. It was an amusing occasion.

After that, I didn't do much -- of course Bill Roper was dead. That was about my only experience with Roper although I admired him very much and watched his activities as coach of the Princeton football team during the rest of the '20's.

6. I recall your having said at one time or another that it was repeal of the Volstead Act during which the United States endured a period of prohibition of alcoholic drinks that brought you into political activity. If that is correct, would you tell what action you took in support of repeal?

Well, I think that's a half-truth. I was very active in the anti-prohibition movement. There were three civic organizations -- I guess we now call them N-G-O's who were most active in the repeal of prohibition in the commonwealth of Pennsylvania. One was the Association Against the 18th Amendment, which was headed by the bankér, Robert K. Castei (sp?). The other was the Women's League for Something-or-other -- Liberty and Freedom, I guess. That's not an accurate title. It was headed by my aunt, Mrs. Herbert L. Clark, Aunt Betty. Then there was a youth group called Crusaders, which was a national group. And I became the head of the Pennsylvania chapter of the Crusaders. We worked very hard for Franklin Roosevelt -- actually we worked very hard for Al Smith in 1928, but of course he got licked. We worked hard for Franklin Roosevelt, who had as part of his platform the repeal of the 18th amendment. So when he won it was a legal job to get the 18th amendment repealed and a Pennsylvania state law substituted for the then Pennsylvania State Prohibition Law. The Volstead Act was the national law. So when the amendment was repealed, it was obviously necessary to substitute some Pennsylvania legislation, although nothing much was needed at the Federal level. The Volstead Act became inoperative when Prohibition was repealed. Gifford Pinchot was then the Governor of Pennsylvania and Bill Schröder was Attorney General. Pinchot was a rabid prohibitionist, but an extremely charming man and Bill Schröder was of course as able as anybody who came along and was really quite decent about it.
The 18th amendment was repealed by the Convention system, which is rather unusual, and an election was held in Pennsylvania to elect delegates to a State convention which would vote on behalf of Pennsylvania to repeal the amendment. Aunt Betty and Bob Cassat and I were all candidates for election and we won, since the state was overwhelmingly wet. We met in Harrisburg and passed the necessary resolution to repeal the amendment and thereafter Pinchot and Schneider called Aunt Betty and Bob Cassat and me in and said now you people have gotten rid of this amendment, you're going to have to take the lead in helping to draft the Pennsylvania legislation which will take the place of the act which went out-of-date with the amendment. Well, Bob Cassat and Aunt Betty didn't take much interest in this, but I did and I had a number of conferences with Bill Schneider and did help to draft the Pennsylvania act which created the State Stores and in effect it was intended to get rid of the saloon. As administered by later governors, it was a great failure in this regard. I could go on and on on this subject for quite a while, but I don't think I will.

7. I vaguely recall Jerry Flood of Common Pleas Court #6 telling me that you worked in Harrisburg under the Earl administration and I think he said it had to do with the liquidation of banks in Pennsylvania which had failed in the early Depression years. Is that correct and how long did you perform that role?

Jerry Flood, my dear friend and yours too, became a Deputy Attorney General early in the Earl administration in charge of closed banks. He and I were then law partners -- Jerry was a partner with me in my father's law firm until I left it in 1934 and of course Earl was not elected until '34 so Jerry didn't become a Deputy Attorney General until '35, at which point I had left father's firm and gone into the partnership with Bob Deckart, Curtis Bok, and Jeff Smith. But when Jerry got to be one of the top Deputy Attorney Generals in the Earl administration, he got me a job as Assistant Deputy Attorney General, working in the closed banks field. I did a good deal of work under his guidance there and actually argued one case in the Supreme Court of the United States, which he was kind enough to let me handle because he knew that like any young lawyer, I was ambitious to argue before that court. I suppose I stayed on as Deputy Attorney General through the Earl administration, although my recollection is not too clear, and as you know, the Democrats got licked in 1938 and since the Deputy's Attorney General were all patronage jobs, I was promptly fired. In the meanwhile, of course, Jerry Flood had become a judge at the Court of Common Pleas Number 6 by appointment of Governor Earl rather early in 1935.

8. Would you please tell how and when you left your father's law firm and joined with Bob Deckart and Jeffrey Smith in starting the new firm of Deckart, Smith, and Clark. Would you say a few words about the status of that firm ....

Father had never had a law firm in the earlier days. He and his younger brother, Percy, and several other lawyers including Paul Wagner, who I guess you know, practiced law without any partnership agreement, but with father as the senior lawyer of the group.
When I came into Father's office after I had graduated from law school in 1926, I thought it was stylish to have a law firm so I persuaded him to form one. It was called Clark, Clark, McCarthy, and Wagner. Shortly thereafter I persuaded Jerry Flood, who had been with the other firm of Townsend, Elliot, Munson to come and join us and he and Paul Wagner and I made an earnest effort to rehabilitate the practice which had pretty well disintegrated by reason of the Depression. Father had initially represented E. W. Clark and Co., which had extensive banking and public utility interests all over the country, and also was the counsel for the First National Bank, but E. W. Clark and Co. sold its utility business, actually on the day of the big crash in 1929 and father's practice slowly disintegrated so there were just not enough fees coming in to keep the firm afloat. At that point Jerry went off -- no, Jerry stayed on for a while, because he had built up his own practice, largely in the building and loan trade -- but I had an opportunity to join Bob Deckert and Curtis Bok and Jeff Smith in a firm which Bob and Curtis had formed and which Jeff had joined at a later date. This was in 1934 and when I went over to join them they were kind enough to put my name in the firm so it became Deckert, Bok, Smith, and Clark.

Shortly thereafter, at the same time Jerry Flood was put on Court of Common Pleas Number 6, Curtis: Bok was also, so his name was dropped out of the firm. Initially there were only Deckert and Bok, but Curtis had a large practice due to his family interests, including the Curtis family and Bob brought with him the business of the Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company, so they were doing alright. Jeff came over, I suppose in the early '30's from Drinker, Biddle, and Reath (sp?), which was then called Dixon, Ditler, and McCourt, and I came in 1934. We grew at a satisfactory rate despite the Depression during the rest of the '30's and Owen Rhoads came in, Carol Wexell came in, Albert Gilmer came in, Jack Bishop came in ... I suppose when I left to go into the Army Air Forces in the summer of 1941, we had 8 or 9 lawyers in the firm. Now, the present firm of Deckert, Price, and Rhoads -- incidentally, all three of the main partners have retired -- has well over 100 lawyers and about 25 of what are now known as para-professionals. It is one of the two or three largest firms in size of the legal profession in Philadelphia. This is due to the fact that when World War II came along, or shortly before that, the then firm of Barnes, Biddle, and Myers, which was Mr. John Hampton Barnes, Francis Biddle, subsequently Judge of the Court of Appeals for the 3rd Circuit and Attorney General of the United States -- their firm had 13 lawyers and our firm had 13 lawyers. The total membership of the two firms was 26, of whom 13 went off to the Armed Services during World War II and 13 stayed behind. When we came back at the end of 1945, it was a very real economic problem to see whether the 13 who had been away, towards whom the firm had been extremely generous in terms of paying them some money while they were getting an inadequate salary in the Armed Services -- the problem was that the practice which 13 lawyers had been conducting had to provide enough fees to support the 26 who came back into the firm which was then called Barnes, Deckert, Price, and Smith.
It turned out that we could and did, and the reunited firm was extremely successful. Bok, of course, had gone on the bench. Smith had become President of Girard Trust Company, and finally Mr. Barnes, a sweet and dear old gentleman, a good lawyer too, died and the firm name was changed to Dechert, Price, and Rhoads, Price having been one of the original Barnes partners, and Rhoads having been one of the original Dechert partners.

9. Would you please take a few minutes to summarize the role which you played in World War II, including your work in Washington, D.C., how you got transferred to Burma, and the position you had with General Stratmeyer?

I had a close friend at Middlesex and Harvard by the name of Guido Pererra, a Boston lawyer. He was very much interested in the military situation in 1940 and '41, and he became convinced that World War II was inevitable. He had acquired a commission in the Judge Advocate General's office, and was assigned duty with the Army Air Force in Washington, leaving his practice in Boston. Around July of 1941, he called me up on the phone and made a strong pitch for me to come down and join him, telling me he could get me a commission as Captain without any formalities or bureaucratic problems or indeed any dirty work out in the field. It appealed to me, so I went down and went to work for Pererra on Headquarters Army-Air Force's staff. Of course the Commanding General, Army-Air Force in those days was Henry H. Arnold, and his Chief of Staff was George E. Stratmeyer. Pererra and I worked for a Colonel, later Brigadier General, known as Hungry Gates, Byron E. Gates, who was a delightful character, not a West Pointer, and a somewhat controversial character who became shortly the Chief of the Office of Management Control, which included the statistical service, a legislative service, and two or three other divisions manned by pretty competent men, including Jim Aston, now the Chairman of the Board of the Republic National Bank in Dallas.

We worked together reorganizing the Air Force; doing various chores of an administrative nature. We began to run out of work along 1943 and I persuaded Hungry Gates to send me to the Command and General Staff School in Fort Levinworth, Kansas, where they were giving quickie courses to train staff officers for jobs in the various theaters of operation overseas. I took the personnel course, because it was the one that I thought was the easiest to get me overseas. Most of my friends took the intelligence course and I was of two minds as to whether that wouldn't be more fun, but I'm glad I did take the personnel course because when I got back to Washington in the early Spring, I guess, of 1943 I found that General Stratmeyer was being designated as Commanding General of the Army Air Forces in the India-Burma theater and was looking around to build a nucleus of a staff to take with him. I put in a strong pitch to Hungry Gates to be given this job overseas -- I've often wondered why -- I was then in my early '40's and there wasn't any reason in the world other than the desire to get closer to combat, which was rather foolish in view of the fact that I had
a wife and two children. But anyway, I wanted to go and Hungry helped me and I knew Strat reasonably well, but not as well as I later came to know him and he took me along with him to our first Headquarters, which was in New Delhi, India in the summer of 1943. I had a job as the assistant to a fellow named Jimmy Hicks, Colonel Jimmy Hicks, a National Guard fellow but a charming guy, who was Stratimyers' Personnel Officer, or A-1. Actually, the personnel job included all the administrative stuff over there and it was a much bigger job than just personnel. Hicks got homesick after about six months and he persuaded Strat to send him back home and Strat promoted me to be his A-1, or Personnel Officer, and I served in that capacity until I was invalided and sent home in Sept. of 1945. During that period we moved to a place called Hastings Air Base -- it was an old jute mill just outside of Calcutta.

I recently completed the third life of Joseph Sill Clark which has to do with my service in the Army Air Forces and if you need further detail, I can get it for you from there.

I guess I should just add a couple of further notes about my service in the Air Force overseas -- I never heard a gun fired in anger and I spent a lot of my time on the grass tennis courts, both in New Delhi at Hastings Air Force Base. I did on two occasions get over the hump to China and on one occasion at least our tail gunner thought he saw a couple of zeros coming in on our tail and fired at them. Whether they were there or not, I don't think he really knew. The second time I went over to China was with a man who has become my life-long friend, William E. Morgan, for many years after the war the President of Colorado State University at Fort Collins, Colorado. Bill and I were sent over to make arrangements for moving our headquarters from Calcutta to China and we stayed in General Al Wiedemyers house in Chung King. Either in Kung Ming or in Chung King I picked up amoebic dysentery from some bad food and was hospitalized when I got back to the Calcutta area for a couple of weeks. I finally was cured, and at that point having what we called 44 points for service overseas for a good stretch of time, I persuaded Strat to let me come back and be relieved from active duty, which was consumated in Sept. of 1945. Actually, I got out of the service on VJ Day, which of course was a coincidence.

10. While you were in military service overseas, did you give thought to the problem of post-war needs in Philadelphia and foresee the possibility of becoming politically active in the city when back in civilian life?

Yes. While I was in the Calcutta area we got a copy of Life magazine which had an article about Bill Bullitt running for Mayor of Philadelphia in 1943. The pictures were really rather comical. They showed Bill campaigning in South Philadelphia in a coon-skin coat and derby hat. Of course he was badly beaten by Barney Samuel in the election. But I thought to myself if that guy -- and I admired Bill Bullitt; I thought he was a fine person -- I thought if that guy could get to be Mayor of Philadelphia, certainly I can. So I made up my mind then and there that when I got back into civilian life, I would get back into politics and see if I couldn't get
myself nominated and elected Mayor.

11. When you returned here what civic and political connections did you renew and what additional contacts did you make in furtherance of your interest in city affairs?

Well, shortly after I got back I think through the good offices of Jerry Flood, I met you and Jerry Flood also introduced me to a number of other people. You were then a Republican, but most of the others were Democrats who were interested in trying to rehabilitate the city government of Philadelphia. You got me interested in the Citizen's Council on City Planning and I eventually became a Vice President, I think. I was active in the Committee of 70 for a while, and perhaps you will remember what other civic organizations -- that thing of Dorothy Montgomery's -- Philadelphia Housing Association, Bureau of Municipal Research, and later the Pennsylvania Economy League. Those I guess were the principal non-governmental organizations that I became interested in very largely through your help and assistance.

Before the war I had been active in organizing the Pennsylvania Merit System League, which was a group trying to get civil service established for Philadelphia -- Pennsylvania. Bryn Mawr Professor Mildred Fairchild was also very active in that organization. We had a pretty good group organized around the state but we never did get very far with civil service in Pennsylvania, except to the extent that when there were federal programs which appropriated money to Pennsylvania, the State, as a condition to getting the money, had to establish a civil service system, but only for those particular areas.

12. When did you renew your political association with Dick Dilworth?

I really can't remember when that started, but it certainly was in full swing in 1947 when Dick ran for Mayor. Through Jerry Flood and -- no, just through Jerry Flood -- I had been introduced to Mike Bradley, who was then the Chairman of the Democratic City Committee and a number of the other active Democratic politicians, including Albert Greenfield, Matt McCloskey, and John B. Kelley. When Dick and I guess I'd better not go into that now because it's more about him than it is about me. When he got the nomination for Mayor -- let me come back to that.

Actually, the organization which brought Dick and me together and in which I devoted an enormous amount of time was the Americans for Democratic Action, which was a liberal democratic group. The Philadelphia chapter was deeply interested in reform in the political life of Philadelphia. I became the Chairman of that group one year and Dick Dilworth became the Chairman the next year. We were initially working under some very capable women -- then Emily Ehly, Elise Balen, and particularly Ada Lewis, whose husband John Frederick Lewis was well-to-do and helped support the organization. It was
pretty much opposed even then to the Democratic organization, but it was clear that if we were going to get rid of the very corrupt Republican machine which then ran the city, we would have to join hands with the Democratic organization. Dick was anxious to run for Mayor, as indeed was I, but we struck up a pretty friendly relationship and there seemed to be an opportunity for Dick to get nominated for Mayor in 1947, which was four years after the Bullitt fiasco. We always worked our problems out. In 1947, Mike Bradley was the Chairman of the Democratic City Committee, and he wanted Dick to run for Mayor as an Independent, realising that the Democratic organization people couldn't possibly win an election all by themselves. In those days, the Republican registration of voters was two or three times as high as the Democrats, so it was obvious that if the Democrats were to make a showing and indeed to win, they would have to get some allies from among the independents of the ADA and other independent groups.

There was a fellow named Joe Sharfsin, very active in political life in Philadelphia for a generation or more, and Jim Clark, who I sort of mentioned earlier as one of the Democratic leaders that I came in contact with, wanted Sharfsin to run for Mayor, and Sharfsin was anxious to. Mike Bradley thought Sharfsin didn't have a chance of winning, so he called a meeting of the policy committee at which he was entitled to vote only in the case of a tie. There were 17 members of the committee, including Mike, and when they took the ballot, it was 8 votes for Sharfsin and 6 for Dilworth -- whereupon Mike Bradley pulled out of his pocket two proxies of absent members, voted them for Dilworth which created a tie and then broke the tie by voting himself in favor of Dilworth. Jim Clark was unhappy, and so was Sharfsin, but Mike's tactics prevailed. Dick ran for Mayor and Mike and he agreed that I should be the Chairman of Independent Activities, which of course was the only job I was capable of filling. I had thought I might be campaign Manager, but Mike was going to hold onto that himself, as indeed he should.

We waged a vigorous and active campaign. Dick invented the street corner technique of going out on a sound truck and arranging the neighbors and he caused an awful lot of havoc among the Republican party, but in the end he got licked by 93,000 votes. We had a suite of rooms -- we Independents -- in the old Ritz Hotel the night of the election and I remember the enormous enthusiasm and also the chagrin that we had gotten licked, because we all thought we were going to win. And the determination to continue with the fight until we finally did win. I remember taking Harry Goldner, who was then a judge, but never very scrupulous about staying out of political affairs, and Frank Myers, who was then United States Senator, from the Democratic City Committee room up to where we Independents had gathered and Goldner came back and said to Kelly and Bradley and others, "Jesus Christ, you ought to see all those crazy youngsters up there just determined to reverse the result of the next election. We've got to keep them in our party."
This made quite an impact on various people, including Jim Finnegan, who was shortly to become the Democratic City Chairman.

Walter has asked me to say a word about how Jim Finnegan got to be a Democratic County Chairman. Mike Bradley had done a good job, but he had been in Congress for six or seven terms and when he became the Democratic County Chairman, or City Chairman, he gave up his Congressional seat. So he was looking around for a job -- he was not a rich man and he wanted to get out of the job of City Chairman and get a Federal patronage job.

Harry Truman was then President and Mike had his eyes set on the job of Collector of the Port, which paid a nice salary and didn't require an awful lot of hard work. But there was some sort of patronage hang-up in Washington and Frank Myers, who was supposed to get the job for Mike for quite a while was not able to produce. Mike refused to resign, until he got the new job because he thought he would just hang on to the Chairmanship and sooner or later these other pols would have to meet his terms and get him the job of Collector of the Port, which finally was done. In the meanwhile there was a bit of a fuss about who should become City Chairman to replace Mike. Dick and I were strongly in favor of Jim Finnegan, whom we had come to know well during the 1947 campaign. Jim had been a Lt. Colonel in the Army Air Force in World War II, in charge of a combat carrier squadron, and he was very easy to get along with and an absolutely straight guy. So we were plugging for Jim -- others wanted a different leader, but in the end our view prevailed and Jim became City Chairman and stayed at that job until he went off with George Full in 1955 after some matters with which we will recount later.

13. Was the fact that you and Dick had had an earlier pre-war political association an important factor in your getting together again after the war and working as a team, in effect taking turns at running for top city offices? How do you account for the fact that you and Dick were able to work out your personal, political objectives without open conflict?

The answer to the first question is yes. It really wasn't difficult to work out who was going to run for what, because Dick had a great ambition to become Governor of Pennsylvania and that meant that he would want to run for that office in 1950. In the meanwhile I probably anticipated a bit, but there was an election in 1949 for City Controller and City Treasurer. The City Treasurer's job was a sinecure, but it was still an elective office and Dick felt he could run for City Treasurer in 1949 and then go off and run for Governor in 1950 without any serious criticism because we had both decided that when the new City Charter came along, which didn't come for several years, the elective office of City Treasurer should be appointed, and it should become a bureau in the Director of Finances office. He said to me that Controller is obvious the better job, but you run for Controller and I'll run for Treasurer and then I'll go off and run for Governor in 1950.
Well, that worked out all right and we both won in 1949 and Dick did run for Governor in 1950. There was no particular criticism of his leaving the job of City Treasurer. Again, unfortunately, he and Frank Myers, who was running for reelection as United States Senator, were defeated in a very close election. Then again, to anticipate, when Dick came back to private life -- I'm not sure that Dick Dilworth actually resigned as City Treasurer when he ran for Governor, but I think he did. There was then no legal requirement that he should, because the charter wasn't adopted until the spring of 1951. I'm a little vague about this.

When 1951 came along, I had been Controller for two years. I can't remember whether Dick had resigned as Treasurer or not. But in any event, the problem was who was going to run for Mayor. Dick thought it was my turn and he was very decent about it. We didn't have a definite commitment with each other, but he made it clear to me that he wanted me to run for Mayor and said that he would run for District Attorney.

In the spring of '51, the Democratic leaders whose names I have heretofore mentioned, met at the Old Ritz again to decide the question of who should run for Mayor. By that time, Mike Byrne had become my alter ego as Deputy Controller and principal political adviser. There was a strong movement in the Democratic leadership to draft Dick for Mayor and to have me stay on as City Controller for the balance of my two-year term -- which of course from the political point of view made excellent sense. However, I didn't want to do it. Dick was perfectly prepared to go along with me as the candidate for Mayor and to run for District Attorney with the thought that he might run for Governor again in 1954 and would be confronted with the same old problem of resigning if he was elected Mayor. Because the City charter was fairly close to coming up at that time.

At any event, Mike and I decided that this meeting of the Democratic leaders was going to go for Dick for Mayor and persuade me to stay on as Controller and we didn't like this a bit, so in order to out-wit them, I announced my candidacy for Mayor before I went into the meeting, giving the story to the Philadelphia Bulletin. When I went into the meeting, Albert Greenfield pontificated at great length about how he thought that Dick should be the candidate for Mayor -- maybe it wasn't Albert -- it might have been Matt McCloskey or Jack Kelly -- but at any event, they put a strong pitch to me to get out of the race and support Dick for District Attorney. Dick was sitting there and he obviously had nothing to say, so I said well, gentlemen, I'm very sorry, your arguments of course make a great deal of sense, but I have announced my candidacy for Mayor and if you'll buy a Bulletin on your way out of the meeting, you will see. So they decided they couldn't have a primary fight between Dick and me and they were convinced that I was stubborn enough to stay in, so they yielded and Dick said he would be glad to run for District Attorney, and that's how that particular election worked out, which was the last time of course that Dick and I were in any conflict.
I never had the slightest feeling of resentment on Dick's part. I've covered this in considerably greater detail in the book of which I have a copy here called No Mean City, which deals with the reform movement from right after the war through 1955 and there is a great deal more detail in there.

14. Do you recall occasions when you and Dick were at cross purposes and if so, would you tell how you worked out such conflicts?

Well, actually the answer to the question is no. We never had a cross word about any of these problems. He was much more politically minded than I was and much less interested in civil service and the merit system. But we never had any troubles at all, so we never had anything to work out. There were times when the relationship was strained because we disagreed about various matters, but it never broke, and as I think back about it, it was really one of the very happy times of my life and I think of his too.

15. Do you concur with the impression that I have that it was Michael Bradley who opened the door of the Democratic party in Philadelphia to reform-minded leadership, namely Dick and you? Do you recall that Gerald Flood was consulted by Michael Bradley and that Flood guided Bradley to you and Dick, both of whom had been overseas during the war and both of whom had had an interest in some activity in politics before the war?

The answer to that question is yes, and I have answered more fully already.

16. Did you know that Flood also threw in for Bradley's consideration both Lewis M. Stevens and me, neither of whom had been in military service during the war, but had been deeply involved in civic affairs throughout the war years and the immediate post-war period?

I think you told me this, Walter, some time ago, but my impression is that Lou Stevens was always a Democrat and you on the other hand were then a Republican, which would have made it if not for other reasons, difficult for the Democratic Committee to nominate you, but not Lou. And Lou was definitely in the arena for nomination for several years including this one.

18. Do you recall the evening shortly after Dick's election when you had supper on your porch with the Dilworth's, the Freedman's and Mary and me to talk with Dick and I think Ann was there too on the subject of who might run for District Attorney alongside of Dick on the Democratic ticket? In those days you will recall the DA and the Mayor were elected in the same year?

Yes, I remember that very clearly because Dick had told us that he was going to be slated, or perhaps already had been slated, for Mayor and he wanted very much to have one of us run for District Attorney with him. Well, we all turned him down -- you and Freedman and I -- and I felt pretty badly about this. You had good reasons and so did Abe, so as Dick and Ann left the house, I said to him, "Look I don't feel very good about this and if you want me to be Campaign Manager, I would be glad to do it." He grabbed at the opportunity
and that's how the campaign of 1947 finally got underway.

19. Do you remember that Dick asked you to run for DA....

Well, I've already answered that. I'd better read the whole question --

Do you remember that Dick asked you to run for DA but you said no because of your legal practice (that wasn't the reason -- I said that I had never done any criminal work and I thought I'd make a perfectly terrible DA -- I didn't like criminal work). Dick then asked the same question of Abe Freedman who said no because of his legal practice (I think he thought the case was hopeless at that point) and having finally asked me and I had to say no because of a commitment to Emmet Caldwell and Henry Ingersoll Brown, my partners in the toaster manufacturing business.

Yes, I do recall.

20. Do you recall that both Dick and Ann Dilworth were quite angry that none of us would go on his ticket although probably any one of us would have managed to say yes to the top spot?

I don't recall that they were angry -- I recall that they were very much disappointed. I wouldn't say that they were angry.

21. Do you recall that the Dilworths got up and left in an obvious mood of annoyance and that you followed them out of the driveway and talked to them there, promising to help him in his campaign, or was it actually to be his campaign manager?

I've answered that. I don't remember a mood of annoyance, but it may have been there. I wasn't conscious of it.

22. Were you at the meeting of the City Policy Committee, which happened to come a few days later and was in the form of a summer outing where the speaker, George Taylor, I believe, at our house in Torresdale to which Dick came in hopes of finding someone who would make a satisfactory candidate for DA and be willing to run?

I don't actually remember it, but I'm perfectly positive it did take place.

23. If you were there, do you recall how Dick pulled several people one at a time back to our laundry yard in order to talk to them and sell them on the idea of running for DA on his ticket?

No, I don't. But again I have no doubt it took place. As I recall it was a fairly large party and people were moving around.
24. From my own calendar I now ascertain that I had lunch with Dick Dilworth at the Mid-Day Club on July 18, 1947, so it was to him, I believe, that I made the suggestion of campaigning in the neighborhoods during the evening hours when people are sitting on their front doorsteps to cool off from the heat of the day. I had observed that when in 1944 I became President of the Bureau of Municipal Research and in the evenings when Mary was at Cape Cod I would bicycle through the neighborhoods of the city to get a better feel of various residential sections.

Of course I don't have any recollection of that, but I have no doubt it took place and it certainly was an idea which took fire.

Now the question goes on ... it was you, Jim Finnegan, and perhaps others, I believe, who actually developed the format of Dick's street corner rallies and did it so well that the daily press was forced to carry the stories, thus making Dilworth a well-known figure and opening future possibilities of communication to the public from him. Would you now tell me about the carrying out of the street corner rallies, how you and Dick obtained inside information which was necessary to the charges that you made on the street corners of corruption in City Hall and would you give your opinion as to whether these charges were the key to the impact which he made and the momentum which you two then had for 14 years after?

I can't contribute anything to this because really I didn't have much to do with the street corner rallies except to go out every now and then, sometimes with Dick, sometimes without him in order to keep the pot boiling. You're quite right that these street corner meetings did force the daily press to carry the stories and did make Dick a well-known figure. The carrying on of the street corner rallies was primarily Dick's job -- I just went along for the ride. Sometimes helping to do the scheduling as to where the rally was to take place and who was to go there and coordinating that with Finnegan, whose job it was to get out the organization supporters so we would have a crowd at the meeting, which would cheer Dilworth and hoot the opposition. Dick dug up himself, or with the help of others who I don't know, all the charges of corruption in City Hall. I wasn't then in office -- when I got to be Controller, I did a bit of digging up myself, but in these days in '47, I really had nothing to do with the charges which he made and was often startled by them and somewhat concerned as to whether they had a basis in fact.

I do think that that street corner rally campaign in '47 and the ones we continued to wage in '49 and '51 did have an important impact in the momentum which we then had for the following year.

WMP: Joe, it may refresh your mind a bit if I mention that Dick hired a former FBI man named Charter to do his underground investigations in City Hall and I think that's how he got going.
I have no doubt that's true -- I had forgotten all about it and no face bobs up when you say Charter.

25. Do you recall how Dick's campaign of 1947 was financed and what roles were played by Mike Bradley, Jim Finnegan, and others?

Would you also tell me about the support of the Philadelphia Record and the position of the Philadelphia Inquirer which I believe was one of Dick's clients at least as to libel suits?

I don't recall how the campaign was financed except in general terms. I assume we had started $100 dinners by then for the Democratic party, which were organized by Matt McCloskey and I assume the Democratic organization held such a dinner and got the money from it to pay the workers at the polls on election day.

WMP: I would guess that Matt McCloskey, Jack Kelly, and the other wealthy men who backed the party put up money as usual.

However, I know we did raise a lot of money from the Independents -- how much, I can't remember, but we had some reasonably wealthy Independent supporters. I know that a good part of the campaign costs they picked up the tab for. Mike Bradley of course managed the campaign. Finnegan was around, taking an active part, but I don't know that he held any particular office. Another active character was William J. Green, Sr., who had been defeated for Congress in 1946 and was hanging around looking for a job. He got reelected in 1948. The Record was about to go broke as I remember. I don't remember what year it did go bust. I remember the last few issues were printed on brown paper because David Stern couldn't get the newsprint to keep the paper going and it was going broke anyway. But it was very effective and did support Dick very strongly. The Inquirer I think you are right in saying that it did not support Dick in that election although he was their lawyer. Annenberg subsequently turned over, but at that point he was supporting the Republican.

26. You remember, I trust, that shortly after your return for war, you became a Vice President of the Citizen's Council on City Planning, of which I was then President. You recall, of course, the Better Philadelphia Exhibition which took place in the Fall of 1947 while Dick was campaigning for Mayor against Bernard Samuel who was seeking reelection. My question is: do you recall your making a release to the public media charging that the Better Philadelphia Exhibition was a political device used by City Hall and Republican businessmen to promote Bernard Samuel so that he would be reelected as Mayor?

I certainly do, and I was mad as a wet hen at you and all of those other characters who put this exhibition on -- it was a great exhibition, it made Barney look great. Everyone who went to the exhibition got a personally signed letter from Bernard Samuel who was running against Dick for Mayor saying, "Look what I've done, and see how we Republicans are going to rebuild the City of Philadelphia." I thought it was a terrible thing to do. I got very angry at Jack Kelly, too, because you had persuaded or somebody had persuaded Jack Kelly to support the Greater Philadelphia Exhibition and I raised hell with him and he just laughed it off and said, "Oh Joe -- cool off."
27. Do you remember the incident of my receiving a telephone call from James Skinner, Chairman, I believe, of the United Fund at 7:15 in the morning that the story broke in the press. He was outraged because you were identified in the statement as Vice President of the Citizen's Council on City Planning, an agency supported by the United Fund, of which he was, I believe, the Chairman. He charged that it was a strictly political act and therefore totally improper conduct on the part of an officer of an agency supported by the United Fund. Would you confirm my recollection that I was able to say to him in that phone call that you had already resigned from your position as Vice President of the Citizen's Council on City Planning and was merely citing the fact that from having held that post you were able to speak with knowledge on the subject?

That's an awfully good reply by you, Walter. I don't remember it. I remember Jim Skinner, but I don't remember the telephone conversation. I remember how mad I was at the whole thing and I'm sure that you handled that particular situation with great aplomb.

28. Do you remember that Skinner carried out his threat and had the Citizen's Council on City Planning expelled from the United Fund, but Ed Hopkinson turned around and personally solicited the financial institutions of the City and various businesses on behalf of the Citizen's Council on City Planning with such success that direct contributions from these sources year in and year out kept the Citizen's Council on City Planning in operation for 15 to 20 years thereafter?

No, I don't remember that, or any part of it although I'm sure you reported it to me in some anguish at the time it happened. Ed Hopkinson was always a great supporter of yours and I had not appreciated that he had saved the Citizen's Council financially. Among the many fine things that Ed Hopkinson did for the City, that was certainly one.

29. While we are on the subject of Ed Hopkinson, I would like to inquire whether you would confirm my recollection of how you handled the question of Chairmanship of the City Planning Commission in the transition from the old Republican regime to your new administration. As you will recall, you and Noel and Mary and I went to Ponti Vidri in Florida for a rest shortly after the November election. While we were there several telephone calls came to me from John Phillips -- no relation of mine -- who was then President of the Citizen's Council on City Planning. He and others were disturbed at the possibility that Albert M. Greenfield, one of your important backers, would prevail upon you to appoint him as Chairman. I think you sent word back through me that Hopkinson should not resign.

I don't recall the details, but I do remember that you and a few others strongly urged me to keep Hopkinson on and that all the Democrats and I guess Dick too were of the view that Hopkinson should be fired and a good Democrat put in as Chairman. I thought you were right, and I remember having lunch with Ed Hopkinson at the Philadelphia Club shortly before I took office, in which I asked him to stay on as Chairman of the City Planning Commission
and he agreed to do so. I'm not sure when the date of my luncheon with Hopkinson was -- it may have been only a few days before we took office, or possibly even after we took office, but that was what brought the thing to a head. I do not recall what you said when we were off the air -- that I let him swing on the vine twisting slowly in the wind, I guess is the phrase these days, but it is entirely possible that that did take place. I never had the intention of getting rid of Hoppy because I knew he had too strong a position with the Philadelphia business community and one thing I liked about him was that he was not a member of the Greater Philadelphia Movement and therefore acted quite independently and I was pretty sore at the Greater Philadelphia Movement at that point because they all supported Polling for Mayor.

30. Would you confirm the following memories which I have of the campaign organization and how it was conducted?

Walter suggests that I should say something about the campaign of 1949 when Dick was elected Treasurer and I was elected City Controller. That was a sort of a replica of the 1947 campaign -- street corner meetings, charges of corruption, it's all a little blurred in my mind now, but I have it all down in detail in the book I referred to earlier. There's a whole chapter on the 1949 campaign.