Introduction
- A LONG-TIME FRIEND OF MINE, A FORMER CITY MANAGER OF KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI, AND FORT WORTH, TEXAS, FREQUENTLY STATED TO ORGANIZATIONS BEFORE WHICH HE SPOKE, THAT ONE OF THE PRIMARY REASONS FOR REFORMED GOVERNMENTS AT THE MUNICIPAL LEVEL, WAS THAT CONDITIONS BECAME SO BAD, THAT THE ELECTORATE ROSE IN REBELLION, HIS RESEARCH ALSO DISCLOSED THAT "REFORMED GOVERNMENTS" HAD A "LIFE" EXPECTANCY OF NOT MUCH MORE THAN TWELVE YEARS.

- FROM MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE AFTER COMING TO PHILADELPHIA, THERE WAS NO DOUBT THAT PHILADELPHIA HAD "REVOLTED" AND DEMANDED VIA THE BALLOT PROCESS, THEIR INSISTENCE FOR A NEW OR REVITALIZED GOVERNMENT.

- BUT FOR A NEWLY RECONSTITUTED PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION TO FOLLOW THE PRECEDING COMPLETELY DISASTROUS EXCUSE FOR A CIVIC SERVICE SYSTEM DEEPLY INCORPORATED IN POLITICS, PATRONAGE, FRAUD, AND OPEN LEGAL VIOLATIONS OF THE PREVIOUS CITY CHARTER, COMPLETELY BOTHERS THE MIND. THE 1957 GOAL AND EFFORTS THEREFORE CAN BE LIKENED TO THOSE OF "REBUILDING FROM THE ASHES OF PHOENIX." IF EVER THERE WAS AN EXAMPLE OF STARTING FROM "ASHES," THE PHILADELPHIA (1957 EDITION) SYSTEM WAS A GOOD EXAMPLE.

- THE FOLLOWING QUESTION AND ANSWER MATERIAL SUPPORTS AND REFLECTS THE TRANSITION IN AT LEAST ONE DEPARTMENT OF PHILADELPHIA'S REFORM GOVERNMENT.
Interview with Walter M. Phillips
Based on Submitted Questions

Question 1. What had you been doing before you came to the Philadelphia Civil Service Commission and/or Personnel Department?

From 1935 until 1957, I was Personnel Director for the City of Flint, Michigan, except for two years, 1948-1949, when I was on leave of absence. During those two years I was in Japan serving as a Department of the Army Civilian as Deputy Chief of the Civil Service Division of Government Section on General MacArthur's Staff, G.H.Q., Scap, Tokyo, modernizing and overhauling the Japanese Civil Service encompassing 1.500,000 Employees. In March, 1957, I came to Philadelphia as Deputy Personnel Director.

Question 2. How were you selected for the position of Deputy Personnel Director?

About the first of January, 1957, Dr. Stephen Swerzney of the Fels Institute called me at home from Philadelphia. He talked to me regarding the possibility of coming to Philadelphia, with regard to the nationwide recruitment for the position of Personnel Director. I stated that I was not interested. For over the years, I had heard much about the incompetence and corruption of the Philadelphia City Government, and with particular reference and emphasis to that of the City's Personnel System.

I had heard about Lincoln Steffens and his book "The Shame of the Cities," and Philadelphia was somewhat of a joke to those of us around the country engaged in Public Personnel Administration. At that time, I was also had been actually involved in the Public Personnel Association, a national organization. Philadelphia was constantly held up...
Question 2 (Cont)
To ridicule, and at the time of Dr. Sweeney's call
I certainly was not interested into walking into
that kind of situation.

And then, two weeks later, Dr. Sweeney called me
again and though I still was not interested, that
Mrs. Roser and I might come to Philadelphia at
their expense, and that in doing so, I might find
it to be in my interest. We did go to Philadelphia,
and while there persuaded me to, at least as an
excuse, to return later and participate in the
selection procedures and interviews for the position
of Personnel Director. He informed me that by
that time 16 candidates had been selected, of which
I was one, and if I consented to participate, I
was to prepare and read a paper at a meeting
to be held at the Fels Institute.

I did agree to come. At the April 5th Meeting at
Fels, there were the newly appointed members of
the Philadelphia Civil Service Commission, representatives
from the Committee of Fifteen, and others, totaling
25-30 people.

I read the paper and subsequently was interviewed
by members of the Commission.

WMP: Was your interview before the Commissioners took
office?

No, the Meetings at Fels Institute which I attended was
on January 18th, while the Commissioners took office
on January 7th. I understand they were in fact
appointed-designate for a number of weeks
preceding their Swearing-in Preparing for the
Reorganization and Implementation of the
reconstituted Commission and Personnel Department.
- After the interviews and returning home, I had no indication of what was to happen until ten days later when Dr. Swinney called me again and (1) told me Frank Escobedo had been selected as Personnel Director, and (2) to ask me if I would be interested in the Deputy's position, to which I said I would not be interested. I understand now that the reason I was considered was the fact that I had rather extensive experience in labor relations in my work in Flint, Michigan, and of course, labor relations would play an important role in Philadelphia's city government.

But I was not interested in the Deputy's position for I did not know Escobedo and moreover I really didn't want to come to Philadelphia.

- Then began a series of telephone calls and eventually one from Shippin Lewis who wanted to know why and what my objections were. After telling him, I said that during my visit to Philadelphia I had tried but had been unable to obtain a copy of the city charter, so that he suggested I return to Philadelphia and perhaps we could resolve most of my questions. I returned and he made arrangements for me to meet with Clark as I wanted to know from Clark what the outlook appeared to be for Philadelphia. Clark assured me that never again in Philadelphia would there be a repetition of what happened before. That if I had seen the street-corner meetings, the dedication, and the new birth of a reform movement, that I would not have any concern, I then asked to talk to some newspaper reporters and they gave me the same indication. I was also persuaded by talking to some people associated with the public personnel association to the effect,
Question 2 (Cont)

That at the worst, try it, it might be of some interest and value to you—if it might open up new values to me—and finally it wouldn't be fatal. At my age I could get another job!

So I came! Arrived on March 15.

WMP: Do you recall that one of Joe Clark's very high interests was Civil Service?

— It certainly was. He indicated that he intended to carry out the intent of the charter—that the discredited Civil Service system was going to be replaced by an honest-to-good civil service program, and that I would find he would support the establishment of a really fine system. (I say retrospect, he was a man of his word.)

(Raymond Male served as temporary director, probably for a few weeks prior to January 7, 1957, and left on or about March 15 when Escobar arrived.)

Question 3 What was the condition of the Civil Service system just prior to the Clark administration?

— For 67 years prior to 1957, Philadelphia bore the dubious distinction of having probably the most discredited merit system of any large city in the United States. In spite of all the traditional Civil Service legal provisions in the City Charter, the system was eviscerated by political influences and fraud. As Lincoln Steffens once epitomized the situation existing in Philadelphia, "Philadelphia was the most corrupt and the most contented.

To appreciate the state of affairs, or that of the Civil Service system, try to imagine a system
**Question 3 (cont)**

Where the application form for employment itself, required the naming of political sponsors, where politically selected or appointed department heads wrote essay-type examinations for positions in their own departments; where the only definitive requirement for promotion was the dollar amount charged for such advancement; where fraudulent eligible lists were standard operating procedure; and where the civil service staff was intentionally kept inadequate in numbers and ineffective by being hamstrung by a "starvation budget," and with the personnel offices located on seventh, eighth and ninth floors of City Hall, one, two and three floors above elevator service.

**Question 4:** What were the first major tasks and actions of the new Civil Service Commission?

Almost the first task of the new commission, in early January of 1957, together with the temporary personnel director, the personnel consultant and three trained technicians, studied the test papers of past examinations together with resulting appointments. Evidences of major fraud was found on February 5, 1957. The Civil Service Commission cancelled all existing eligible lists (300) because of such fraud. That drastic action meant that the yet to be recruited and examining staffs had a massive workload before it even started— for by the abolishment of all eligible lists, existing at the time, the newly established personnel department started with no eligible lists.

Also, there was neither a job classification plan nor compensation (pay) plan worth of the name. The chaotic condition of the classification plan...
**Question 3a.** As stipulated by the 1957 Charter, what were the stated functions of the Civil Service Commission versus those of the Personnel Director (or Personnel Department)?

**The Primary Powers and Duties of the Commission are to:**
- Advise the Mayor and Personnel Director on Personnel Management Problems.
- Appoint a Personnel Director who shall serve at the pleasure of the Commission.
- Hear and Dispose of Appeals relating to Dismissals, Demotions, Disciplinary Actions, Examinations, Pay, Classification Actions, etc.
- Approve Civil Service Regulations following Hearings.

**The Primary Powers and Duties of the Personnel Director are to:**
- Administer the Civil Service Programs in accordance with the regulations.
- Foster, Develop and Staff, involving others, those of Recruitment, Testing, Classification, Compensation, Labor Relations, Training, etc.
Question 4 (Cont)

is indicated by the fact that persons were appointed to positions irrespective of their qualifications or duties, i.e., laboratory technicians hired as laborers, at laborer's pay, or employees who had no civil service status at all.

-the confidential nature of the existing examination material was so questionable and the material itself of such poor quality that new tests were required for all examinations; test materials that we did not have and which could not be developed immediately.

Thus, at least four major programs and problems faced the new department at the outset:

- Staffing the department on a nationwide recruitment basis;
- The development of personnel policies;
- The development and implementation of city-wide qualifying, open competitive and promotional examinations to establish status for those without civil service status and eligible lists for new and promotional appointees;—and a pay plan.

Question 5. What were the roles and contributions of Raymond MacR and Frank Escobedo?

Raymond MacR served, as I was told, from late in 1951 following the election until the arrival of Frank Escobedo, or about March 1, 1952. During that period his role was to initiate and planning for the new personnel department prior to Jan. 2, 1952, and following that date and until Escobedo arrived help to develop with the assistance of Frel's Institute temporary or provisional personnel policies to be utilized until permanent policies could be prepared and adopted in accordance with charter requirements at a later date.
Question 5 (cont)

In addition he had the task of "Holding the Fort" during that chaotic period, such as attempting to answer the endless questions which arose as the result of the provisions of the new charter, plus pressing employee issues in dealing with one of the unions regarding the adoption and then almost immediately thereafter the abolishment of a 40-hour work week for the civilian employees (as identified from the uniformed personnel).

As director, Frank Escobedo's contribution and/or role for the two and one-half years during which he served was a rather impossible task. Not only did he set in motion the initial tasks of the new system as outlined above, but also to insure that the new personnel department was in truth going to follow both in letter and in spirit the merit system concepts as set forth in the new charter. A number of newly elected Democratic officials disagreed with Escobedo on this point - the new and temporary personnel policies were questioned, the AFL and CIO employee unions were in a court battle on the 40-hour work week. The county court offices refused to comply with charter requirements covering their inclusion under civil service and court proceedings followed.

But one of the major issues which in great part caused his downfall, as it probably would have for any other person holding his position at that time, was that we were completely "Rebuilding our House" while at the same time, of necessity, living in it. The period in which there was too much to do in too short a time to meet the demands, those more serious pressures came from members of our own team - department heads, so determined to provide the people of Philadelphia with superior service in their own area, that their demands on the personnel department
Question 5 (Cont)

Frequently became unreasonable and/or impossible. Our inability to comply during those first three years often became the basis for bitterness and ill feeling.

The New Personnel Department, by New Charter requirement inherited a stupendous task of little value in resolving the civil service status of thousands of employees-some without any status - some working out-of-class-some whose positions were misclassified. The qualifying examining program, in turn, caused a much greater problem, affecting the department heads, as referred to above, in that open competitive examinations and/or promotional exams could not be held until 1953. Thus, it was not until March of 1953, that the critical demand from the operating departments for eligible lists, that an examination's priority Committee was appointed.

Question 6. Did Joe Clark take a special interest in the establishment of a strong civil service system?

The establishment of a modern, progressive and comprehensive personnel system, based on merit principles, as set forth in the new City Charter, was high on Mayor Clark's agenda. He indicated that he intended to carry out the intent of the chapter-and that the discretionary civil service system was going to be completely replaced. That we would find every opportunity would be available to install a really fine system.

Question 7. What were the most important, early policies of the Civil Service Commission and/or Personnel Department?
QUESTION 7 (CONT.)

Obviously, during the early years there was need to determine priorities of programs, of planning, organizing and staffing of programs. This question has been covered in larger part in preceding questions, but the following, as a listing, might be considered a more comprehensive list of early policies:

1. The adoption of the temporary or emergency Civil Service regulations.

2. Agreement to recruit on a nationwide basis, its technical and/or professional staff of 60 technicians.

3. Obtained from the City of Detroit the loan of 150,000 test items from its item library, and two experienced staff technicians on a loan basis for a period of one year. The State of Michigan Civil Service Commission also loaned the Department a staff technician for one year.

4. Entered into contracts with the Public Administrative Services of Chicago to prepare a classification plan and a pay plan under the supervision of the Director.

5. To cope with employee unions, a labor relations director was appointed.

6. Obtained a legal opinion to permit an extension of the one year requirement for completion of the qualifying examination program.

7. Adoption on December 30, 1957, of the position classification and the pay plans.

8. Permanent Civil Service Regulations, while partially developed during 1957, were not adopted, until problems recognized, or not even known at the time, could be handled and/or resolved.

9. A City Council Ordinance was passed in accordance with City Charter and requirements as to residence uncles.
 QUESTION 8  DID NOT THE POLICIES AND ACTIONS OF THE NEW CIVIL SERVICE PROGRAM AND ITS POLICIES RESULT IN A LARGER INCREASE IN THE EMPLOYMENT OF NEGROES?

SIMPLY BY CARRYING OUT THE INTENT OF THE CITY CHARTER, THERE WAS PROVIDED AN EQUAL AND IMPARTIAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ANY QUALIFIED PERSON TO COMPETE FOR CITY EMPLOYMENT. IT ALSO PROVIDED FOR RIGHT OF TENURE AND RIGHT OF APPEAL AGAINST DISCIPLINARY OR ADVERSE ACTION.


 QUESTION 9  WERE NOT NEW RULES (PERSONNEL POLICIES) FOR THE PERSONNEL SYSTEM FORMULATED AND PROCLAIMED? WHAT WILL THE SIGNIFICANT CHANGES?

THE EMERGENCY OR TEMPORARY CIVIL SERVICE REGULATIONS ADOPTED ON JANUARY 1, 1957, WERE NECESSARY TO IMMEDIATELY IMPLEMENT THE MANY PROVISIONS OF THE CITY CHARTER RELATING TO THE MERIT SYSTEM. WHILE THOSE REGULATIONS WERE RATHER EXTENSIVE, THEY WERE BY NECESSITY RATHER GENERAL AND REQUIRED REVISION IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THEY WERE PREPARED WITHOUT THE BENEFIT OF OPERATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF THE NEW PERSONNEL SYSTEM.
Question 9 (cont)

As previously stated, many of the policies to be adopted needed extensive study: definitive approaches to many prospective programs, and consultation with the City's administrative officials, and union or employer representatives, followed by public hearings before adoption. Also, there were admissions, inadequate or non-existent experience or even views, of which required study, with respect to several subjects. Included among these were regulations relating to the adoption of the classification and pay plans, and the appeal procedure relating thereto; vacations and sick leave; a system of job performance ratings of employees by supervisors; lay-off of employees; salary adjustments, and many others.

It was not until late 1954 that the regulations were considered to be initially completed.

Question 10. Was the new non-white employment largely in the lesser-skilled and lower-paid jobs? Did the Personnel Department or the Operating Departments have programs to train and upgrade them?

Part of this question is answered in Question 8. Obviously, most of the Negroes were simply by their backgrounds, non-professional or lacked managerial experience or proficiency. But of course there were many exceptions, and if they applied for city positions, found qualified and were high enough on the eligible lists following the examinations to be appointed, they were hired. The crux of the question deals with "programs to train and upgrade them." That element would apply also to whites, but the answer is that Negroes appointed to the higher paid positions had to be "qualified and experienced" regarding the new position.
QUESTION 10 (CONT)

The same as for white appointees. In the case of promotion to a higher level position the white or the black appointee almost universally did not receive extensive training before assuming his new assignment any more than is done today in the business world. Hopefully, the written test and the oral examination would have indicated his real potential or lack of it for the new position. (See Question II)

QUESTION II. WHAT IN-SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAMS WERE INSTITUTED TO IMPROVE EMPLOYEE EFFECTIVENESS, TO ENCOURAGE AND EXERCISE LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROFICIENCY?

In 1955, planning conferences were held with training representatives from local business and industrial firms having outstanding training programs to discuss and explore plans and procedures involved in instituting and establishing a city-wide training program. In 1956, a training director was recruited and appointed, following which, training manuals were developed, published and distributed. Surveys of training needs were conducted in the operating departments resulting in appropriate programs mainly in the area of management-supervisor development.

An external training program which, during 1957, involved 240 City Employees from 22 departments enrolled in 116 courses were trained in various colleges and educational institutions at a cost of $50,000. Educational expenditures were approved only in cases where (1) the City was unable to recruit persons with the requisite skills and knowledge to be able to successfully perform the work; or for new or different duties that resulted from
QUESTION II (CONT)

The introduction of new techniques or developments in the employee's regular job responsibilities or (2) to enable an employee to perform his assigned duties with greater competence and to meet higher performance standards, these programs are continuing today.

- In 1958, a 40 hour course of instruction in the principles and techniques of conference leadership was completed with the training held at Fel Institute. Several successive courses were held each year for promotoes at the supervisory level (Police & Firemen for example).

- The establishment of the Philadelphia City Training Institute, the operations of which were placed under the jurisdiction of a board composed of representatives of the city government and local educational institutions. The purpose of the Institute, which is still very much in operation today, was to provide training of a specialized nature relating directly and specifically to Philadelphia's needs, policies and practices. The training, in addition, was designed to promote career development in city government. Average enrollment per semester (two per year) averages 150-175 employees, with courses held in the evenings with employees paying $10 per course. For teachers usually from the departments or the public school system courses given, vary from nine to eleven per semester.

- An executive development training course was given to 25 top and middle management personnel in 1963 by the Psychological Corporation of New York City.
Question 11 (Cont.)

Training-Instructor and Job Instruction Training Classes for Middle-Management and Supervisory Personnel were instituted in 1969.

Training has been conducted on an on-going basis since 1968 of formal training for housing, fire, plumbing, and electrical inspectors in the Department of Licenses and Inspections involving as many as 18,000 hours of formal training per year.

Question 12 What role, if any, did the Civil Service Commission play in fostering high morale and efficiency in City Government Service.

-I think the original Commission played an important role. They were recognized through their conduct, their statements and their administration-by the public, the Políticos and municipal personnel as men of integrity-of values-and independence-and not of a compromising nature. They were non-political in the sense that they were to perform their appointed tasks in accordance with the Charter's intent.

-They were well thought of, and they provided the public image that was expected of them—respect. In retrospect, the Clark Administration used excellent judgment in selecting the first four Commissioners, including Shippen Lewis, who unfortunately passed away in May, 1957.
Question 13: To what extent did the Personnel Department recruit to fill technical and professional positions, and how much of the success of good government of that period was the result of such recruitment?

The first major recruitment task occurred in May of 1952, that in the face of local opposition, recruitment and subsequent examination produced a technical staff of 50 experienced technicians, pre-excellence, from all parts of the United States. That staff was absolutely necessary in initiating the qualifying examination program and competing by January, 1953, a new classification and pay plans.

In the face of many new top and subordinate administrative professional and technical exempt appointments such as department heads and their deputies, it was necessary, in the absence of eligible lists, for them to recruit able subordinates from whatever part of the country they could be recruited—on a provisional basis.

Such appointees came to Philadelphia in large numbers. As a matter of fact, local prospects were not interested as a rule because they were not convinced after all the years of corrupt municipal government, that change was really happening.

In 1957, at long last, the qualifying examinations were administered to all remaining city employees requiring such examinations. A recruitment officer was appointed, and emphasis was placed on recruitment activities to obtain professionally trained and administrative personnel in shortage-area occupations. Thus, an independent recruitment function, directed by an expert in the field of recruitment, publicity and public relations.
QUESTION 13 (CONT)

WAS ESTABLISHED TO OVERCOME LONG-STANDING NEGATIVE ATTITUDES TOWARD THE CITY'S PAST REPUTATION AS AN EMPLOYER, AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYMENT IN GENERAL, AND TO MAKE DIRECT RECRUITMENT CONTACTS WITH HIGH SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND BUSINESS.

- A SPEAKERS BUREAU ALSO WAS ESTABLISHED IN WHICH TOP-LEVEL OFFICIALS FROM VARIOUS OPERATING DEPARTMENTS, ACCOMPANIED BY THE PERSONNEL DEPARTMENTS RECRUITING TEAM TO SCHOOLS, DESCRIBED NOT ONLY CAREER OPPORTUNITIES, BUT NEW AND OUTSTANDING WORK PROGRAMS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE DEPARTMENTS. BY 1959, 31 COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES WERE VISITED BY DEPARTMENTAL REPRESENTATIVES. OVER 300 STUDENTS WERE INTERVIEWED DURING THOSE VISITS. MORE THAN 650 PAID ADVERTISEMENTS WERE PLACED IN LOCAL AND SELECTED NEWSPAPERS IN A 400 MILE RADIUS OF PHILADELPHIA, AS WELL AS IN PROFESSIONAL JOURNALS IN EFFORTS TO AID IN RECRUITMENT FOR THE "SHORTAGE AND PROFESSIONAL AREA CLASSIFICATIONS."

- INFORMATION INCLUDING FEATURE STORIES CONCERNING VACANCIES WAS PROVIDED TO THE PRESS REGULARLY. THE PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT IN 1963 RECEIVED AN AWARD FROM RADIO STATION WIP "IN RECOGNITION OF THE CONTRIBUTION TO PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING."

- AS AN EXAMPLE OF RECRUITMENT FOR HIGHER LEVEL POSITIONS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE, DURING 1968 SUCH POSITIONS AND FOR WHICH APPOINTMENTS WERE MADE WERE ASSISTANT HEALTH COMMISSIONER FOR AIR MANAGEMENT SERVICES; MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL RETARDATION ADMINISTRATOR; DEPUTY DIRECTOR, FREE LIBRARY; DIRECTOR, YOUTH SERVICES; ASST. DIRECTOR OF AVIATION; POLICE LABORATORY DIRECTOR; CHIEF OF DIAGNOSTIC RADIOLOGY, AND CHIEF, PATHOLOGY LABORATORY.
Question 14: What pressures, if any, were brought on you and/or the Civil Service Commission (a) during Clark's term; (b) during Dilworth's; (c) during Tate's? - The term "pressures" can refer to both non-political as well as political issues.

(A) During the Clark administration there was the serious problem previously referred to, in the Personnel Department's inability to produce examination and eligible lists for new hires or appointments, in the face of the charter requirement of handling the qualifying examination requisite. That problem, again as stated before led to an investigation of the department directed by the Fels Institute, which in turn resulted in Frank Escobedo's resignation.

- There were no political pressures brought upon the commission or the staff of the Personnel Director during the Clark administration.

(B) During the Dilworth administration there were no pressures brought to bear on the Civil Service Commission. There was however during that administration, one pressure brought to bear on the Deputy Personnel Director, upon the appointment of Donald Wagner, Personnel Director (who succeeded Frank Escobedo in 1954) to the position of Managing Director, Mayor Dilworth requested through Sidney Dexter, Chairman of the Commission, that I as Deputy remain as such, and that Joe Lockhard, Dilworth's patronage chief, be appointed Personnel Director. I refused to remain in that position, the Commission later met with the Mayor, and I was subsequently made Director.
**Question 14 (Cont)**

- There were no further pressures brought upon the commission or the personnel director during the balance of the Dilworth administration.

(c) During the Tate administration, there was but one major problem involving the commission and the personnel director.

- Early in 1969, Mayor Tate determined that, in addition to the two filled exempt deputy police commissioner’s positions (which the charter permitted, but no more than two), he decided that two additional such positions should be established.

- He moved to fill two more exempt positions without authority apparently on the advice of a former deputy personnel director who had recently taken a position on the mayor’s staff, and had incorrectly advised the mayor. Unfortunately, the matter became widely publicized in the news media, embarrassing the mayor, the commission and I were called to the mayor’s office and because the commission’s refusal to concur in the face of the charter limitation on the number of such appointments, together with the adverse and embarrassing publicity, a serious confrontation occurred between the mayor, the commission and the director.

P.S. Shortly after the above, the former deputy personnel director “resigned” his position on the mayor’s staff.

**Question 15** Did you stay on as personnel director during Rizzo’s administration?

- I continued on as personnel director during the Rizzo administration until my retirement on March 1, 1974. (The commission appoints the director, not the mayor.)
EPILOGUE


THE YEAR 1959 WAS INDEED A BANNER YEAR. IT WAS A BANNER YEAR FOR SEVERAL REASONS. THAT WAS THE YEAR THAT WE FINALLY "CAME OF AGE". THE MAJOR GOALS WERE LITERALLY ALL ACHIEVED. THERE WERE NO BACKLOGS, OUR PROCEDURES WERE FULLY OPERATIONAL, THE DEPARTMENT WAS COMPLETELY STAFFED AND EQUIPPED. WE WERE DOWN TO 22 PROVISIONALS.


AND WHILE THE HONOR WAS BESTOWED IN NAME AND PERSON OF THE PERSONNEL DIRECTOR, IT WAS IN EFFECT AN HONOR REFLECTING AND EARNED BY THE COMBINED EFFORTS OF THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION AND THE ENTIRE STAFF OF THE PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT. WITH THIS
Honor, we had indeed achieved national stature.

Also, credit must be acknowledged for this honor. The Committee of Security, following an in-depth survey of the operations of the Personnel Department at our request in 1957-1958, recommended the Philadelphia Personnel Department to the Public Personnel Association in competition with other public jurisdictions at the Municipal, State and Federal levels. Normally, "no man is wise in his own country," so we were doubly honored by the Committee of Security.
AND ON TO EPILOGUE...

1. The continuation of a successful merit system, in
   spite of wide acceptance is dependent upon
   several considerations, none of which may be
   mutually exclusive:

   1. It must have the approval and active support
      of the mayor and civil service commission.

   2. The approval and active support of the chief
      executive is the basic foundation of any
      successful merit system. Without such support,
      managers and employees alike are vulnerable
      to pressure from the mayor and/or political
      leaders.

   3. The continuation or entrenchment of the merit
      system depends on the action or decisions of
      the two major political organizations, neither
      of which may be committed to the system.

   4. It is not difficult to foresee how easily the
      merit system can be undermined if either
      political party elects a mayor and council that
      is hostile to municipal employment based solely
      on merit.

   Unfortunately, there are indications that if in the
   final analysis the public is not alert, the
   Philadelphia system can once again revert to the control
   of one of the major political organizations.
   If happened before it can happen again
   without an alert and active electorate.
Dear Walter:

This is an addendum to our discussion, which you requested at your home on Monday, February 2, regarding the installation and development, and the accomplishments relating thereto, of a modern and progressive merit system in the Philadelphia reform government during the 1950's. You will recall that I discussed a number of points in random fashion that you asked that I record. Accordingly, the following may be of some interest to you:

One of the areas that I think was important in the establishment of the new and/or modernized merit system were the revised charter provisions embodied in the new charter. It was my understanding that members of the charter commission visited cities such as Detroit, Minneapolis, Los Angeles and Cincinnati, and states such as New York, Michigan and California, all of which were known as having excellent merit systems. During the visits each jurisdiction was asked which features of their programs were both desirable and satisfactory as well as which aspects of their respective programs, they deemed to be unsatisfactory. Thus, our charter provisions embodied feature which had proved to be satisfactory elsewhere. Also, a great amount of correspondence was carried on with other cities and states, to determine what should be recommended for Philadelphia.

Also an important aspect of the charter

Walter M. Phillips

Feb. 16, 1976
Revision relating to personnel was a detailed piece of legislation rather than one or two generalized paragraphs which would have set forth in general, the concept of personnel administration. The general concept has the disadvantage that it always can be interpreted, at any time, to meet the desires, and/or the objections to the existing practices at the moment—whereas, detailed legislation, although opposed by the political scientist, has the clear advantage of not being amenable to change at the whim of the politicians. For example, in 1976, the Rizzo administration is confounded by many stipulated requirements spelled out in the charter provisions.

One of the other aspects of the charter changes which was of great value was the requirement that one-half of one percent of the total appropriations for civil service personnel was to be appropriated for the operation of the personnel department. This is extremely important because otherwise, if the politicians are adverse to the civil service concept and/or its operations, the budget can be reduced drastically. "Starving" civil service departments is a common practice in many jurisdictions. It helps "patriotize" aspects and it effects the entire effectiveness of the whole personnel department.

However, we in Philadelphia, after 15 years or so, have proved once again, that good legislation is no assurance for good government. My opening remarks in my introduction of the material I submitted to you, indicated that a "reform" government has a life expectancy of approximately 17 years.

Today, at all levels of government, we are...
Being shown that individuals seeking office, all too often are really very little interested in the citizens or voters they represent, but rather are primarily concerned in perpetuating themselves in office, and in doing so, to do it through the "art of compromise.

With regard to personnel administration, locally, the name of the game today, is of course, patronage. In the past, Philadelphia has been in vanguard of governmental jurisdictions, cities in particular, of going all out in being supportive of, and friendly with the unions. Wage surveys are disregarded in determining pay rates. Negotiations, by the seat of the pants, at the expense of the taxpayer, is the answer, because it shows that mayors do not want to be misunderstood by their "supporting" labor organizations. So the unions start with impossible wage and fringe benefit demands and "God forbid" that there should be a "strike!"

The police and firefighters succeeded in getting through Harrisburg legislation for a constitutional amendment for binding arbitration - which can result in even better agreements for the unions. So today, through the unions and the politicians, personnel administration is becoming less and less important as an operating entity, and I forecast the day when the governmental personnel department will simply handle recruitment and testing for entrance appointment. All other facets will be developed and administered through labor contracts covering promotion, pay, fringe benefits, discipline, and discharge, times change and they have changed. Never again will charter provisions regarding personnel be written as they are now written in the Philadelphia City Charter.

"Maybe we were lucky though, we did get eight years of "Reform Government"