

George J. Mitchell Oral History Project

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George Mitchell (5)

(Interviewer: Andrea L'Hommedieu)

GMOH #225

May 10, 2011

Andrea L'Hommedieu: This is an interview for the George J. Mitchell Oral History Project at Bowdoin College. The date is May 10, 2011, and we are in South Portland with Senator George J. Mitchell, Jr., and this is Andrea L'Hommedieu. This is another in a series of interviews. I'd like to first start today and talk about the Mitchell Institute, give the background about how it developed and how it progressed later on and changed, and what it means to you.

George Mitchell: It means a lot to me. I've said several times publicly and privately that, after my family, it's the most important thing in my life. I'm often asked by reporters, historians, or people on the street or in a restaurant, what I think is the most important thing I've accomplished. Most of them either mention in the question the Irish peace agreement or major legislation that I was responsible for while I served in the Senate, but in fact I regard the scholarship program as perhaps, in the long run, the most important thing that I've done.

It started, as these things often do, in a way that I didn't plan or anticipate. Shortly after I entered the Senate, I was invited to attend a conference at the University of Maine, the subject of which was the aspirations of Maine's young people. I don't recall exactly when it was, but as I said, it was after I'd got into the Senate. I went to the conference and I spoke, and I also listened to a lot of other speakers, and generally participated, and I was not so much surprised but disappointed to get the impression that aspirations for Maine young people were not high, particularly those in the rural areas, those living in areas of high unemployment and low income.

In a sense it reminded me of my own high school times. As you know, I grew up in Waterville. My parents were not educated. My mother couldn't read or write English; my father left school we think after about the fourth grade, although the records aren't completely clear on that subject. But they placed a high value on education. Growing up, the life goal of many of the young men mostly was to get a job in the paper mill, then in Winslow. It was known at that time by the name of Hollingsworth & Whitney; it later was acquired by Scott Paper Company and then subsequently closed. It was a source of major employment in the Waterville-Winslow area and it paid well, in relative terms, and there was, at least at that time, the appearance of job security.

Higher education wasn't discussed very much at the time by myself or by many of those with whom I attended school or played with. At another time I'll get into—I may already have covered—some of my own experience in how, by luck and accident, I ended up going to Bowdoin. I myself was uncertain, insecure, lacking in direction, purpose, or self-esteem. I was sixteen years old when I graduated from high school. I saw the same emotions and reactions

among several young people I met at the conference at the University of Maine, young Maine high school students talking about themselves and their futures in a way that, at least to some extent, reflected not high aspirations.

That impression stuck with me—really has remained with me until this day—and it created in my mind a concern about the problem and a feeling of wondering whether there was something I could or should do about it. After I spoke at the conference, one of the officials there—I don't recall who it was, either a UMO [University of Maine, Orono] official or somebody from one of the attending high schools—said to me (because in my remarks I had covered my background and answered questions from students), this official said to me, “Well, Senator, you really ought to go around to the schools and talk to the kids, so that they can see that someone from a background not much different from theirs was able to become a United States senator. It would be good for you to get around the state, and it would be very good for them to hear you.”

So I began thinking about going to high schools around the state. I then had to run for election to a full term—recall, as you will, that I was appointed to the Senate in 1980 and my election was in 1982—and so I made a couple of appearances at high schools. Then after I was elected to a full term, I then had six more years until I faced reelection again in 1988, and I began to make an effort to go to more high schools. Originally I would be invited to speak at a class, a class in civics or government or history, and so I began with a few visits to schools, speaking to relatively small numbers of students.

There was a teacher at Bonnie Eagle High School, not far from Portland where we are right now; his name is David Ezhaya. David's family is originally from Waterville, so I knew them from Waterville, and David is very enthusiastic about current affairs and politics. He invited me to speak at his class at Bonnie Eagle High School, and invited me again, and again. I think it was the third time, it may have been the second but I think the third time that I went there and spoke to his class, I remember talking on the telephone afterward to my assistant here in Maine, who was helping make up my schedule as a senator. I said, “Well, I've been to this same high school to this same class three times. There's got to be a lot of other schools in Maine that I could go to. How come I'm just going back to this place?” The answer came back, “Well, he invites you [p/o].”

So I got together with Mary McAleney, who was on my staff and ultimately became my administrative assistant—just a wonderful, tremendous person—and a [very able] young woman named Diane Smith, who was specifically responsible for my schedule, and we discussed it and we agreed that we would engage in some outreach, to try to not just sit back and wait for an invitation but to see if I could actually reach out and get into more schools. So Diane and Mary put together a schedule of all of the high school graduations in Maine, a list of all of the schools, of the principals and the key people and so forth, and we embarked on an effort to actively get around the state. Although it was not my original intention when we started, as we proceeded I formed the goal of going to every single high school in Maine, and try to go to every one twice, to speak to a class or an assembly one time, and to speak at a full graduation another time.

As it turns out—this was the case then, I don't know if it still is—most Maine high schools graduate over one of three weekends the first three weekends in June, and some are on Friday night, some on Saturday, and some on Sunday; so it took about ten years to get around to all of them. There are about 130 of them, and I would do as best I could a couple of weekends every June. And by gosh, we ended up doing them all. I recall very clearly that the last three I went to were the three island schools: Vinalhaven, North Haven, and Islesboro.

Just as a complete digression but a matter of interest, the current congresswoman from this district, Chellie Pingree, lived on North Haven and I met her when somehow my office contacted her—she was a local official, and she drove me around when I landed on North Haven. There's a private airstrip owned by the Watson family, Tom Watson, who is one of the [early leaders] of IBM, and they have a private grass strip. It's the only way you can fly into North Haven. And Chellie picked me up in a station wagon, and in the back seat was her young, very nice and very blonde daughter Hannah, who is now, or was the speaker of the Maine House of Representatives, now the minority leader in the Maine House of Representatives. That was my next-to-the-last stop.

I ended up going to every one of Maine's high schools for graduation. I don't think I spoke at an assembly or a class in every one, although I got almost every one. In the course of that I began to become aware of huge disparities in opportunity, depending upon where the family happened to live and what I thought were differences in quality. I learned a lot of things. First off, every graduation takes about two hours, no matter if there are three graduates or two hundred graduates. In fact at North Haven, I think there were three graduates. I remember when I spoke at the high school in Lubec there were about twenty graduates. At big schools like Cape Elizabeth and some of the consolidated schools, which are larger in some cases than the inner city schools, they have two hundred or more graduates, and they took a couple of hours. So I knew I was committed to a couple of hours no matter the size of the school.

It was really interesting to do this, because I met people from all over Maine, students and teachers, and as I said, became aware of a lot of disparities and the absence of opportunity. For example, I recall very much being struck—now, we're talking about something that happened twenty-five years ago, but I can remember it as though it were yesterday—I went to a graduation in a rural area, relatively small school, obviously didn't have the financial capacity that a place like Cape Elizabeth or other wealthy Maine communities have. I sat there as they announced the scholarship awards to the students, and these were kids going to college, not many of them, an award of fifty dollars or thirty-five dollars. I thought to myself, what possibly can a student going to college do with that amount of money? Maybe buy a few books or something like that. Then I would go to a community where either there was a large industry in the community which donated, or the community itself was wealthy and there would be \$1,000, maybe even \$2,000. So you could see, well that did make a difference. So I saw the disparity.

I also have to say that although I didn't begin with a political objective, it helped me politically. As you know, in Maine, as in most parts of the country, urban voters tend to be more Democratic and rural voters tend to be more Republican. Going into the rural areas, to the high schools, to the graduations particularly, which are very big events—the number of attendees is far higher

than the number of the graduates (local families and so forth)—I was able to appear before them. In fact, if you do this often enough you sort of develop a pattern to it, and I did it well over a hundred times because, as I said, there are 130 high schools, I went to every single one, and some of them I went more than once.

What I found is that people were pleased and flattered to have me there, a U.S. senator at a high school graduation, particularly after I became Senate majority leader. Secondly, they were receptive, but only up to a point in time, and I found that the old saying “brevity is in order” applied very much to graduations. So I developed a basic speech which I gave, with modest variations, depending on the locale, at every graduation, and I always made sure that it was less than ten minutes. At some of the schools, particularly those I knew were in an area that was heavily Republican and not likely to be supportive of me or impressed by me, I would say at the beginning, “Now, I know you’re all worried about how long I’m going to speak. I want to promise you, I commit to you that I’ll speak for less than ten minutes, *and* if I’m still speaking in ten minutes, then I urge you all to vote against me in the next election.” Well, that always got a good laugh.

But I kind of had this speech pretty much down pat, so when I’d get to nine minutes I would begin to hear and see the rustling in the audience, the looking at watches, the knowing glances. Then I often would say, “Now, I know what you’re all thinking, but ten minutes isn’t up yet,” and then I would always sit down sometime between nine and ten minutes. I enjoyed it, and many people in the audience got a kick out of it. It was terrific. Also, in many cases I met all of the graduates—not all of them, not every occasion did I meet and shake hands with every graduate—but often I did, and talked with a lot of them about their futures, their hopes and so forth. All of this created in me a sense that we had to do more in terms of making higher education available and accessible to Maine youngsters. I constantly thought of myself, how incredibly lucky I was, how I very easily could have ended up working at the Hollingsworth & Whitney plant. Not that there’s anything wrong with it, but it has a lot of uncertainty to it, and in fact the plant did ultimately change hands and close.

I won’t attempt to make the case here of the importance of higher education because I think it has been very well made in economic terms. In fact, I just read in the newspaper yesterday or today a study which indicated that in terms of long term unemployment now, in 2011, an adult American who is out of work is more than three times as likely to not have a college degree as one who has a college degree. That is, people who don’t have a college degree are more likely to be unemployed than those who do, in percentage terms. There are numerous studies that make clear that lifetime income, cumulative income in one’s lifetime, is substantially higher for those who [] go on to get higher education. So we really need it in Maine, particularly in [view of] the sweeping information and technological changes that are occurring throughout the world now.

So all of this developed in me a sense of: I have to do more, I have to do more. I was very active in a major change and expansion in higher education legislation that made funds available. That was universally applicable to the whole country, one of what I think are the most important things I ever did in the Senate. But by the time I came to retire from the Senate, I had made up my mind I wanted to do something, and that provided me with the opportunity.

Before I decided not to seek reelection in 1994, I had raised \$2 million for my campaign. I believe I was the only candidate for the United States Senate in that year who established a cap on fund-raising. I had a good position because I was Senate majority leader, I had access to fund-raising, and I knew I could raise much more than that, but I didn't want to do that and so I said, before I started, that I would raise \$2 million and then I would stop.

I'll make another digression to tell you how unpredictable human nature is. I got quite a lot of flak and intense personal criticism from a few people whose checks were returned to them, because they sent money in after we reached the two-million-dollar limit. I don't want to say this was widespread, but I had a few calls and personal conversations with people who were insulted that I wouldn't take their money. You know, "Am I not good enough for you, Senator?" or something like that. It really was eye-opening, because I didn't think people would mind not contributing.

AL: They didn't understand, but they didn't care what the reason was, they just didn't want it returned to them.

GM: That's right, that's right. I had accepted other people's money, so that was the difference. That's a small digression. But in any event, once I reached \$2 million I stopped. Then later, before the election, I decided not to run. So I wrote a letter to everyone who had contributed to my campaign, and I said, "I'm not going to run. I appreciate the confidence you've shown in me. If you would like your money back, please so indicate and your contribution will be returned. However, I'm going to take whatever money is left with me and create a scholarship fund for needy Maine youngsters, and I hope you'll leave your contribution with me to do that."

Interestingly enough, it broke down—I don't know the numbers of contributors, but in the dollar amount—about \$1 million went back to the contributors and about \$1 million stayed in the pot. And so I had there the seed money to start the scholarship fund. Then when I told President Clinton that I was not going to seek reelection, he of course tried very hard to persuade me to run again. When I insisted that I was not going to run, and didn't run, I told him I would ask him for a couple of things and one of them, I said (because he was very grateful to me, he said, "Oh, you've been very helpful to me," and so forth and so on), "Well, I really would like to ask you to do something for me in return." He said, "What's that?" I said, "I'm starting this scholarship fund and I'd like you to come and speak at a dinner that I want to have to try to raise money for this scholarship fund."

And he came. We had a big fund raiser in Washington, I think it raised about \$500 thousand, so that increased the seed money. I then came and held a similar function in Portland, which didn't raise those large amounts but was substantial. *That* added to the seed money, so I had a base to begin with. And I also began going around after I left the Senate trying to raise the money that created the endowment that now exists. I spent a lot of time at that, about a third of my time for the next few years.

In trying to figure out how to set up a scholarship fund, how to distribute the money, what should be the criteria, I had several conversations with a lot of friends of mine here who helped me get it started, local people: Shep Lee, Harold Pachios, others. But I also sought help from those I thought would be really knowledgeable on the subject, and that's how I met Bill Hiss, who was then I think the director of admissions at Bates; I had not known Bill previously. I contacted other admissions directors and college officials to find out how, knowing we had very limited amounts of money, we could make the dollars most productive and effective.

Bill was fantastic in helping to inform me and others involved in shaping the way this was set up and how to maximize the funds that we had. I was so impressed with him, and I still am, that I asked him if he would become the first director of the program. We had to set up a structure and a staff to run it, and I thought Bill would be a perfect guy for it. He said no, he couldn't do it, he had tenure at Bates and he wanted to stay at Bates. He subsequently became a dean at Bates, I believe. He's just a great guy. "But," he said, "I have someone else I can recommend to you." I said, "Who is that?" He said, "It's my wife." It turned out that his wife, Colleen Quint, had worked for me in Washington. I knew Colleen, and she was by then a lawyer specializing in education law. So on Bill's recommendation and my own, we hired Colleen, who got it started, and it's developed tremendously.

The first year we gave out I think twenty-five or thirty scholarships of \$1,000 each. Now we give out 130, one for each public high school in Maine, \$6,000 each. We are trying hard to raise money to keep increasing the value of the scholarship, and we'd like to increase the number of scholarships. We have expanded it to, instead of just four-year colleges being the places where the students go, to the community colleges and others. At one time we did provide scholarships to non-public schools, that is to religiously-affiliated schools or home schools, but we weren't able to continue that and we pared back to the public high schools. I'm going to devote a lot of time to this in the future, to get our endowment up to the point where we can both increase the number of scholarships and the amount of the scholarships.

It's a wonderful program. The criteria that we settled on were academic ability, financial need, and commitment or a spirit of public service. We've gotten wonderful, wonderful young people into the program. Each August we hold a lunch at the University of Maine at Orono to which all of the students who have the scholarships that will begin school in September come, and I have a picture taken with each one. I meet their families and I speak with them, then we have a good orientation session for them. It's been a very meaningful thing for Maine young people.

As of now, I'm not sure my figures are completely current, but we've provided more than \$8 million in direct financial assistance to about 1,800 Maine youngsters. And of course the number grows each year, the number of students and the amount of money. As I said, one of the most important goals in the remaining years of my life will be to increase the endowment so that we can expand the amount of scholarship assistance each student gets, and the number of scholarships given out.

AL: I wonder if you can talk about the research part of the Mitchell Institute now, because the educational research going on I find is extremely important, and dovetails well with the scholarship program.

GM: It does. It initially began exclusively as a scholarship program, and 1995 was the first year. I left the Senate that year; that was the first year we got started. In 1999, with the increase in the size and function—I'd been able to raise enough money to increase the endowment and increase the income—the program was expanded to include educational research, and *other* educational activities. Some years after 1999 we were approached by the Gates Foundation, which wanted to conduct a pilot program on improving high school education in Maine. We'd developed the scholarship program and the institute had developed such a good reputation by then that they asked us to administer the program for them, which we did.

There have been a number of very valuable publications exploring barriers to higher education in Maine, suggesting ways to deal with them and to provide mentoring and other assistance programs for Maine young people. So while the scholarship program remains the core of it, it has branched out significantly into other important areas of education.

AL: And I think also the Mitchell Institute provides some programs and services to the students receiving scholarships?

GM: That's right.

AL: That to me, from the outside looking in, seems to be a nice supportive safety net for students, being the first in their families many times going to college, to help them, not lose them along the way.

GM: That's correct. There are mentoring programs; there are leadership programs; there are job assistance programs. We work very hard to maintain a lifelong relationship with our students. I tell them all when I speak at the annual lunch at the University of Maine, to each incoming group of scholarship recipients, that they have no legal obligation whatsoever on receipt of this money. It is unconditional.

However, I tell them, we hope you have a sense of moral obligation that, once you get out in life, that you do well—and I expect that most of them will—that you're able to repay the amount that you received in scholarship assistance so that someone like yourself ten or twenty years from now will be able to get the same opportunity that you had. And so we're trying to build that up. Although that does not yet constitute a very large part of our fund-raising, it's a future pool that we've got to rely upon.

AL: Let's talk about baseball a little bit, if you feel like you've said everything on the Mitchell Institute.

GM: Yes.

AL: Most people who know you or worked with you or drove you around know that baseball, listening to baseball games, was something that you appreciated the opportunity to do. I wonder if you could talk about from what age were you interested in baseball and how it's followed you throughout your life as an interest.

GM: I've told you the story separately of my brothers being great athletes in all sports. They're best known for basketball, but they were also very good baseball players and football players. Then I came along and I was not as good as my brothers, in *any* sport. In fact I jokingly told this, this will be a repetition for you, that I was so bad that not only was I not as good as my brothers, I wasn't as good as anybody *else's* brother. So I developed very early a great interest in sports, a desire to live up to the reputation that my brothers had established, even as I recognized, slowly and painfully over time, that I didn't have their talents. With that came an inferiority complex, but the interest never waned.

I liked all sports. I played basketball in college, at Bowdoin, but I was really never good enough either in high school or college to make the varsity team in baseball. But I played a lot of youth league baseball. They had a local league in Waterville, it was sort of a precursor to the Little League. It wasn't quite as organized, but each business in Waterville would sponsor a team. I think we were maybe ten, twelve years old. A former mayor of Waterville was a man named Russell Squire, and he had a store, Squire's, and by some circumstance which we were at the time not familiar with, he sponsored our team. So I remember I had a jersey: "Squire's." That was the name of the team that I played for.

As kids we played all summer. I had a very close friend, now deceased, named Ronnie Stevens; we were about the same age and we were very good friends, both loved baseball. I can remember many summer days as kids that Ronnie and I would go up to the old - It was called Severns Field at Colby College. The old Colby campus was down near Front Street in Waterville, and the athletic field was named Severns. In the summer time of course there weren't many people there, and Ronnie and I would go with a bat, three or four old balls, and he would bat and I would pitch three or four balls to him. He'd hit them, and then he'd drop his bat, I'd drop my glove, we'd go out in the outfield, pick up the three or four balls and then he would pitch and I would bat, just the two of us. We couldn't play a game, but we'd practice pitching and hitting and then throwing, and we spent many, many, many hours at that. He and I as kids, and we became very good lifelong friends. He died a few years ago. Just one of the nicest persons I've ever met.

So I had an interest in baseball, followed it from as early as I can remember as kids, listening on the radio, hearing my brothers talk about it, arguing about sports, being a Red Sox fan, that was sort of common at the time. There were a few of the kids I grew up with who liked the Yankees, and there would be friendly arguments and kidding and razzing back and forth about it. But I followed it from my earliest days and always was interested as a fan.

Again, I really got involved in professional baseball many years later completely by accident. I'm trying to think of the years now, because it's been so long. I can't recall exactly when or how I met Bud Selig, who is the commissioner of baseball now, but it was back when I was in

the Senate. There were some legal disputes between the Players Association and the owners, and both sides came in and were lobbying on legislation that affected them. I don't recall all the details now; it had to do with an antitrust exemption that baseball had. So I met several players, and in the course of that I met Commissioner Selig.

This is kind of an example of how things are blown up in the press beyond what they really are. As with any group, if you took any group of a hundred American men you'd find a number of them are baseball fans and a number of them are not. In the Senate there were quite a few. Now, the Senate was not all men, of course; most were. Quite a few baseball fans, not every one of them, and so they would stand around and talk about baseball, particularly in the World Series, the playoffs, when it's very much in the news. I got to meet and talk with several senators who knew owners, who knew players. You get to meet people when you're majority leader in the Senate. A lot of people want to meet you to make their case for whatever legislation is of interest to them.

In 1994 Selig was the acting commissioner. The previous commissioner had been replaced by Selig on an acting basis—they had an internal dispute which is not relevant to this discussion. I can't recall exactly how it happened, but I do remember that baseball was considering appointing a permanent commissioner, because Selig was there originally as acting—but he of course became permanent and has been there now for a very long time.

AL: He was acting commissioner for almost a decade, I think.

GM: Well, I didn't know that. I don't know exactly how long it was. But I can recall in '94, after I announced that I was not going to seek reelection, I received telephone calls from two or three owners of baseball teams who said to me, "Would you be interested in considering the position of commissioner?" I said to them the same thing that I said to many others from whom I received calls—law firms, universities (I received quite a number of calls from universities wanting to know if I would come and teach there, participate in their government programs). I said to them, "I've made no decision as to what I'm going to do when I leave the Senate. I'm open to considering all offers, and when I do leave I'll be glad to discuss any part of it with you." I left it that way with all of them.

When I did leave the Senate, I decided to join the law firm in Washington primarily because two of the senior partners were good friends of mine who I'd met many years before: Berl Bernhard, who I'd met in the Muskie campaigns, and Harry McPherson, [who] was his partner (Harry had worked for President Johnson in the White House and I'd known Harry for many years). I felt most comfortable with them, so I joined their law firm immediately after leaving the Senate in 1995. I also went to Northern Ireland.

Now as it turned out, in baseball, that was the year they had a strike and the World Series was cancelled—1994. That was my last year in the Senate. The owners basically shelved any issue regarding a permanent commissioner until they were able to resolve the dispute with the players. I joined the law firm and I went to Northern Ireland—not even thinking about baseball when I got involved in Northern Ireland. When it came time, you said several years, I don't know how

long, a couple of years later maybe, that they were interested in a permanent commissioner, which they ultimately settled on Selig, I was asked if I was still interested and I said, “Well, I just now got involved in chairing the negotiations in Northern Ireland, so I really can’t leave now.”

So the discussions I had were general in nature. I did talk about it a little bit with Selig back in ‘94, but it never really progressed to the point that I got an offer. First off, people always said to me, “Why’d you turn down being commissioner of baseball?” Nobody ever offered it to me, so I never turned anything down, and it never really reached that stage. I think, looking back, it’s clear that the owners wanted Selig, who was one of their own. He’s done a good job, so they made the right choice []. While there was a brief flurry of discussion which got into the press and was exaggerated somewhat, that’s the story in terms of the commissionership.

But I did meet Selig at the time and got to know him, so a few years later—and I think it was about 1999, so it would have been after the Northern Ireland agreement was reached—Selig called me and he said that there were serious economic problems with baseball. There was, they feared, a loss of what they called competitive balance, that the same teams were winning all the time and it was based upon the high revenue teams doing well and the low revenue teams were not, and that he was going to create a commission called a Blue Ribbon Commission to analyze and report and make recommendations on the economic aspects of baseball, would I join. I agreed to do so.

There were four public members of the commission, and it ended up there were just the four of us. The other three were Paul Volcker, who had been the chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, an outstanding public figure and financial leader; George Will, who was a nationally syndicated columnist, he’s written quite a few books about baseball, very knowledgeable, very interested in the subject; and an economist named Richard Levin, Rick Levin is the name that people knew him by. He is the president of Yale, and he’s a very highly regarded labor economist. So we became the four-member Blue Ribbon Commission.

It was maybe a year-and-a-half or two years later that we published our report, which became to a significant degree the basis for the next round of collective bargaining negotiations between Major League Baseball, the owners, and the players. They reached agreement without a work stoppage for the first time in many decades, so they were very pleased with the results. Not everyone liked every part of our report. It was controversial in many respects. It was a compromise, as inevitably, you get four people and forty participants. But we met with every owner, individually or in groups. I got to know a lot of them. I made it a point to go meet with the head of the Players Association, the union representing the players. So I gained a great deal of knowledge about the economics of baseball, how the leagues are structured, all of that kind of thing. I thought it was very interesting and I enjoyed it.

Shortly thereafter, the Red Sox came up for sale. Years earlier, the long-time owner of the Red Sox, Tom Yawkey, had died. I don’t know the background of this in any authoritative way, so what I’m going to tell you is an abbreviated version and I’m not confident it’s fully accurate, but in general terms I think the issues are well known. There was a charitable trust or a foundation established that owned the team, and under the law they were required after a period of years to

dispose of the asset, to convert it into cash so they could use it for the charitable purposes of the trust. So several years after the deaths of Mr. Yawkey and his wife, the team came up for sale.

There were several potential bidders for it, I think perhaps a half dozen, and three or four of them contacted me. They knew: first, that I'd been involved in the Blue Ribbon Commission, so I had some knowledge of the workings of baseball; and, two, that I had met all of the owners, and any new owner has to be approved by three-fourths of the existing owners. They knew that Selig had selected me for this Blue Ribbon Commission and that I had a good relationship with him, and I became somewhat of a spokesman when we presented the commission's report publicly. So they thought it would be helpful, that I could help guide them in their relations with Major League Baseball.

I met with the leaders of two or three different groups, and then decided to join the group led by John Henry, who ultimately became the owners of the Red Sox. I had met John several years earlier in Florida, where he owned the Florida Marlins baseball team. They were trying to get a stadium, and John had asked me to join the board of the Florida team and in particular to try to assist them in getting a new stadium. The way things happen in life, Miami is just now building a new stadium—it'll be ready next year—but in the meantime John sold the Marlins and purchased the Red Sox. So we did not succeed in the mission of getting a stadium approved in that ownership, but the subsequent ownership, the current owner, a man named Jeff Luria, was able to get the stadium approved locally, and it's literally right now under construction. You drive along one of the highways in Miami and you'll see it right off the road.

So I agreed to join the group led by John Henry and Tom Werner, both terrific guys, really very, very outstanding—not just baseball people, perhaps even less so baseball people than just human beings—and we had an excellent relationship. I then participated in assisting them in putting together the presentation, their bid for the Red Sox. I also knew quite well—another reason why I think people asked me to join—John Harrington, who had been in effect the president of the Red Sox while they were owned by the Yawkey Charitable Trust. He'd worked for the Red Sox for many years and became head of the organization when it was owned by the charitable trust—another very fine guy.

They got the team, and we continued our relationship, I as a consultant and an advisor—basically a lawyer, hiring a lawyer to help you out in dealings with the league and other relations. I became a director of the team, although it's a legal anomaly because it's a partnership, not a corporation, and partnerships tend not to have directors, but that's the title bestowed on me which I accepted. It's been a great relationship.

AL: Have there been many opportunities that they've asked for your consultation over the years?

GM: Oh yes, yes. I continued in consultation with them. There's a lot of legal work in connection with the operation of a Major League Baseball team and its relationship to the league and to the other teams: division of revenues, rules which guide how people can or can't do things. I don't think it would be of interest to people reading this, but yes, there was. I had a

continuing relationship with them, which I very unfortunately and with great regret had to terminate when I accepted President Obama's invitation to serve as U.S. special envoy to Middle East peace.

Under the ethical requirements of the State Department and the White House, I was forced to sever all outside interests. I resigned from my law firm. I resigned from my position as director of the Red Sox, and I severed my relationship with them, and so I have not had any business relationship with them for the past two years, since I've been in this current position. Someday I hope to return. Nobody serves in any position forever. But I've remained a friend of theirs. I don't see them nearly as often now, and the other members of the ownership team. Just a wonderful bunch of people with whom I've had dealings over the years, not the last two years but in the past. So that's how I happened to become involved with the Red Sox.

Now, those experiences led in turn to the steroids investigation. I can remember this as though it happened yesterday. At the same time this was occurring, the latter years that I've just described, I served on the board of directors of the Walt Disney Company. I joined the board in 1995 when I left the Senate, and about ten years later I became the chairman of the board of directors of the Walt Disney Company. We went through a little bit of turbulence.

AL: Can you characterize it a little further?

GM: Well, let me do that separately. But just to say, because it ties into baseball only in a coincidental way, as chairman of the board of directors I presided over the annual meeting of the shareholders of the corporation, common in all public companies in this country. The Walt Disney Company is unusual in that the annual meetings tend to be attended by very large numbers of people. Back in those days, if you were a shareholder and you went to a meeting, you got a free pass to go to one of the theme parks, so it tended to attract a lot of people who might otherwise [not] have gone to a meeting. They were in the thousands—in the tens of thousands, eight thousand, nine thousand, ten thousand—so they were held in large arenas.

One of them was held in the arena in which the Anaheim, California, professional hockey team played, the Mighty Ducks. They were owned at one time by Disney, and Disney also owned at one time the Los Angeles Angels baseball team (they were then known as the Anaheim Angels). So there was at least some business connection through Disney.

It was in March of 2006 that I was in Anaheim at the Disneyland Hotel, and the annual meeting was scheduled that morning. I got up, I had breakfast, I got dressed, and I knew I was going to preside at the annual meeting so I couldn't be late; I wanted to leave early to make sure I got to the meeting in time to open it and not have a delay. Literally as I was walking out the door of my hotel room, the phone rang. For a moment I thought, "I've got to let it go because I don't want to be late for the meeting," but then I decided otherwise. I said, "Well, it might have something to do with the meeting."

So I closed the door, went back into the room and picked up the phone, and it was Bud Selig on the phone. He told me that there had been a lot of concern and publicity about the use of

performance enhancing substances in baseball, that he had decided to request an independent inquiry in an attempt to determine what had happened and how, and most importantly to make recommendations for the future to reduce the use of such substances, and that he wanted to appoint me as chairman. I said to him, “Bud, I can’t get into a long discussion now because I’ve got to go preside over this annual meeting and I don’t want to keep I don’t know how many, eight, ten thousand people, waiting.” But I remember telling him, “Look, I’ve never said no to whatever you’ve asked me, so I begin with an inclination to do this if you think it will be helpful, but we have to talk about it a little bit more, I would have to be completely independent,” and so forth and so on.

In any event, we did talk about it further. We hung up and had another conversation either later that day, or the next day, at which we discussed it. I became involved as the head of the inquiry, which resulted about eighteen months later, in December of 2007, in the release of the report that we made, that got a lot of publicity and a lot of attention—a lot [of] flak and a lot of praise, both. But I must say to you that there are far more people in this country who know me because of that than anything I’ve ever done politically. Senate majority leader, my work in Ireland, my work in the Middle East, that’s really incidental in terms of public recognition. To this day, this is now four years after the report, I get every week a few—earlier it was in the hundreds, even totaling in the thousands—requests: would I sign a copy of the report; would I sign six baseballs for someone’s kids; would I sign this picture, and so forth. I still get them, all stemming from that report.

I can remember a baseball official telling me—I have no way of knowing how accurate this is—that on that day in December of 2007 when I stood up in a very widely publicized press conference to announce the results of my report, that the report itself, which is over four hundred pages long, was put online by Major League Baseball and by ESPN and that several million copies were downloaded. Until I took this job in 2009, wherever I went, that’s what people asked me about. I used to do public speaking at universities and other organizations around the country before I became the U.S. envoy in January in 2009, and so for the next—it would have been about thirteen months—wherever I went this was question number one, question number two. Maybe question number nine was about the Senate or Ireland or the Middle East or something. It’s just incredible, the interest that it’s generated.

I must say it was a very difficult assignment. I was extremely fortunate in that I was affiliated with a great law firm, DLA Piper, and they had outstanding lawyers. I selected three of them to be my principal assistants. We didn’t break down the functions immediately the way they ended up, but as they ended up, a lawyer from Baltimore named Charlie Scheeler, one of the smartest lawyers I’ve ever met, one of the nicest persons I’ve ever met, headed up the investigation. Former assistant U.S. attorney, he’d handled many big cases, he has a phenomenal intellect and memory and excellent judgment. Another DLA Piper lawyer named John Clarke, who was based in New York, another wonderful guy, ended up basically writing the report. He wrote the first draft of the report, so he channeled into that and did a great job. And then a third lawyer, Peter Pantaleo, who was based in New York (who had been with me at the law firm in Washington [p/o] and who joined DLA when we merged with them, so I’d known Peter actually quite a bit longer than these others), he served what I would call the position of general counsel.

He gave [solid] advice on everything, and he interacted very closely with the Players Association and with others.

Then we had maybe twenty or so other lawyers who did the actual investigation. It was very difficult because the players were adamantly opposed to the investigation, and they refused to cooperate, totally. The Players Association took a very strong position against cooperation, refused to participate, refused our request to obtain from them relevant documents. Since I had no power of compulsion—I had no subpoena powers, all voluntary—it was very hard at first.

Gradually it developed that we got information and quite a fair amount from former players. When a man is a Major League Baseball player he is a part of the union, but the day he retires he's no longer a part of the Association. Many players who had recently retired were not only willing to talk but anxious. I don't want to exaggerate the numbers, it was a minority of the total, but they were significant. And then we got -

AL: And were you able to do that anonymously with them?

GM: For the most part, yes, for the most part yes. There were others, people who had been involved in the distribution of drugs who were themselves prosecuted who we were able to gain access to, and so that led to it. But I must say it was really a very, very tough thing. What made it particularly more so—this is kind of personal but this is an historical record—is that when they called me, it was in March I think, at the annual meeting - We basically got started in April or May, and the [p/o] following year, in June of '07 I was diagnosed [with prostate cancer]. We were trying to bring it to a conclusion then, and I didn't know whether I should try to get the treatment right away, which would interfere with my completing the report, or whether I should wait until I was all done with the report and then start the treatment. Was I risking anything by the delay?

I consulted with a lot of doctors and concluded that it was a—prostate cancer is a slow developing or growing cancer. There is a risk that it can spread outside the prostate to other parts of the body, which makes it a much more serious problem, but I concluded, I think correctly, that that risk was minimal and that I could complete the report and make it public. We in fact did that. The report, I think it was December 13, 2007, that I announced it and made it public. I began my radiation treatments for prostate cancer on January 2nd, I waited until after Christmas and started in January.

It was a very interesting experience, extremely difficult at the time, a lot of hard decisions to make. I was dealing with people's lives—with their reputations, with their livelihood. There was a tendency to react immediately negatively toward the players, who had been almost unanimously opposed to the investigation and had refused to cooperate and participate. Especially since I had made the decision that before I made public any allegation about a player, I invited that player to meet with me, in writing, and made it clear that I would present to them all of the evidence that our investigation had developed regarding allegations of that player's use, to give the player the opportunity to respond to it, to rebut it, to deny it, to present contradictory

evidence, and almost unanimously they said no. The Players Association recommended that they say no, urged them not to cooperate, and almost unanimously they did not cooperate.

There was one player about whom an allegation was made who retained another attorney himself, not the Players Association attorneys, and told his story to the lawyer and the lawyer urged him to come in and see me. He came in with his wife and he told me his story, and it was basically that he had purchased these substances as alleged, but we had no evidence that he'd used them. Nobody had actually observed him using them; the supplier had supplied him with the drugs. He told a story that fortunately there were others involved who could independently verify, so we conducted an independent investigation, and I was satisfied that he was telling the truth: that while he purchased them, he had not used them. So I didn't put his name in the report. I just felt that it was the only fair thing to do.

I also did not put in the report several names about whom we received allegations but I didn't feel the allegations were substantial enough to put it in. Now all of these are judgment calls, and as I said, I had a specific assignment that I wanted to conduct very completely and thoroughly, but also fairly. I had to be satisfied that the evidence was substantial regarding any individual player, and I couldn't let any emotion or feeling of anger, or negatively toward the players who refused to cooperate, to lead me to put people's names in out of spite or anything like that. I was very careful about that. I leaned over backward in several instances. [p/o]

So it was difficult in that respect, that was the hardest part: making the judgments on what to include and what not to include. They're all human beings, they've got wives and children, families, careers and so forth, and you have to be very careful about this. At the same time, you have to do what's right in terms of fulfilling the mission that I was assigned.

AL: Do you think the American public got it, that it was more of bringing the issue to a forefront and discouraging it for future, rather than being a punitive thing? Because I think you made a point, that we're not trying to be punitive here but move forward in a more healthy environment for Major League Baseball.

GM: Yes. In fact, one of the most controversial recommendations I made was that the commissioner not pursue disciplinary action against anyone named in our report. That was in part pragmatic, because the rules under which Major League Baseball was operating changed over a period of years, and so what was against the rules one year might not be the next year or vice versa. Secondly, many of the allegations that I received went back several years, and you always have to keep in mind that it's a reality of life that people frequently are judged by current standards on past actions, when standards were different.

Thirdly, I felt that as I was trying to focus on the recommendations that we made to improve the program to reduce use in the future, if the commissioner initiated disciplinary proceedings, there would have ended up being a very large number of such proceedings. My report named almost ninety players, each of whom was entitled to some kind of a hearing and a determination, and then appeals, and it would take years and the focus would not be on the recommendations that I made. As it turned out, the focus of the press, and I guess this is just a function of what is or is

not news in our society, was on the individual players, and particularly the bigger name ones, and not on the recommendations I made. There was very little published about that and very little follow up.

We did some follow up and we made a lot of recommendations, and I think that was at least as significant as finding out and publishing what happened, how, and why. I made very clear in the report, explicit in the written report, that I did not represent this as a complete and exhaustive identification of everyone who used such drugs. In fact, it clearly *was* not that. I did not represent it as having the answer to all of the questions. I clearly could not do that, but I did say I think we know enough to describe generally what happened, how, and why. That's what we did and then we made the recommendations.

Right toward the end of the preparation of the report, there was an effort made, public pressure I guess from players and others, that I shouldn't name anybody, that my report should be abstract in the sense that I could identify the practices without identifying a person. I gave that a lot of thought; we had a lot of internal discussion about that. But in the end I concluded that I would not have been faithful to the assignment that I was given had I done that. That, difficult as it was, I had to make the individual judgments as to when there was sufficient credible evidence to include allegations in the report and when there was not.

(brief pause)

AL: I wonder if you could tell me a little bit about how you met Red Auerbach, the legendary coach of the Boston Celtics basketball team, and the nature of your friendship.

GM: I can't recall the first meeting with Red Auerbach, but I know that our relationship was entirely the consequence of the fact that he lived in Washington. Although he was the legendary coach of the Celtics, he maintained a permanent residence in Washington in an apartment on Massachusetts Avenue, in the northwest section of Washington, and he belonged to a country club somewhere in the area. I don't know where it was; I never went there.

Red was a tennis player, and a pretty good and a cagey one. I'd try to play tennis whenever I'd get a chance, and Red and I met—and again, I'm sorry to say I can't remember exactly how, when or where. I'd been a Celtic's fan for many years of course; I knew all about him. We had several mutual friends. In an earlier discussion I talked about my brothers and basketball. My brothers John and Paul played on the Waterville High School team in the winter of 1943-1944, which won the New England High School Championship, the only time that a team from Maine has ever won when high schools from all six New England states were participating.

One of the players on that team was Ted Shiro. His family owned a restaurant in Waterville, and Teddy (he was known universally as Teddy) was a really great basketball player. He made All New England when he was fifteen years old, which is just phenomenal. He was a great all-around athlete, but especially a great basketball player. By complete coincidence, when he was a senior at Colby and I was sophomore at Bowdoin, we played against each other, and he got a big kick out of describing how great he was compared to me, and how great the Colby team was

compared to Bowdoin—in both instances he was correct. We have been friends all of our lives, although he's a much closer friend to my brother Johnny than I, because he was in high school with him. Teddy went on to have a tryout with the Celtics, with Auerbach, and Teddy himself is a character and Auerbach is a character, so I can remember raising it with Auerbach and joking about it, and joking about it with Teddy as well. That's not how we met, that's something that we talked about after we met.

In any event, I saw him—I won't exaggerate the number of times, we weren't really close buddies or anything—but I saw him many times in Washington, went to his apartment a couple of times, and played tennis with him many times, and it was very enjoyable. As you'd expect, he was aggressive, argumentative—in a nice way!—and tricky on the tennis court, a lot of spin and misdirection and so forth. But it was a really wonderful experience. Of course I loved talking and listening to him, because I followed the Celtics throughout his great era. I used to go to quite a few games in Boston. I lived in Portland for a while and it wasn't that big a deal, a couple of hours down to Boston, and always was an admirer of his, and Bill Russell, great center who was the leader of his teams, and all the others. So it was a friendly relationship. I would call it more an acquaintance-ship, I don't think I could ever consider myself a close friend of Red's (*unintelligible*). But it all happened because he did live in Washington and that's where I was at the time and happened to meet him, and so we played our tennis together.

It was a sad day when Red left, because he really was a great guy. He was one of the best and most entertaining story tellers I've ever heard. He had a story about everything, and of course he'd lived through these great years with the Celtics and wasn't shy about talking about things. He liked to talk about them. Many times we'd sit there after playing tennis, a couple or three times in his apartment, and what you would normally think of as called 'shooting the breeze,' but he was doing the shooting and I was doing the listening, I was sort of the audience. But I encouraged him, I asked him questions, I kind of induced him into telling these stories because I loved hearing about them. He was a wonderful guy, and one of the good fortunes of my life is to have known him even as incidentally as I did.

AL: And if we can jump backwards, in terms of your time in the military as a young person, was it just out of Bowdoin that you went?

GM: Yes. In my senior year in high school my father lost his job, and he was unemployed for a year, so there was some uncertainty about whether I would go to college, what I would do that year. I've told you that story in an earlier interview about my going to Bowdoin. But when I went there, my parents couldn't provide any amount of money, so I got it through a little scholarship aid and mostly through working. I worked a couple of jobs in the summers, and I worked in a variety of jobs; the cumulative effect was a full time job while I was at Bowdoin. I mentioned it to you in a previous interview. I drove a truck for the Morrell family's company, Brunswick Oil & Lumber it was called then. I'm not sure they have it now.

They didn't give out athletic scholarships, or if they did I wasn't good enough to get one, but they helped in other ways, as I mentioned to you. I got what they called a concession for the basketball program. I would personally go out and sell all of the advertising to put in the

basketball programs that were distributed at the home games, and I would arrange for the printing and I could keep the difference. That's one of the jobs I had. So for, I think it was probably three years, maybe two years, although I'm not sure of the number of years at Bowdoin, as the vernacular was, the way it was described, I got the concession and that's what I did. I went out and I went to businesses—of course many of them had advertised in previous years—and arranged for the printing, and I kept the difference, so it was a source of income.

I also one year was the steward of the fraternity to which I belonged, the Sigma Nu fraternity, which meant that I got free meals and a free place to stay. Then in my senior year I moved out of the fraternity house into a dormitory and I was a proctor in the dormitory, which meant that I got free room. So in a variety of ways with a lot of jobs, I was able to get through college.

One of the other things I did in part to earn income was to join the ROTC, the Reserve Officer Training Corps, which was at Bowdoin. We would train, I can't now remember the number of days (it's a long time ago), but we'd train regularly during the year and you'd be paid a stipend for your participation. In return, you committed to serve in the Army as an officer for a period of two years when you got out.

One summer you had to attend a few weeks training at a military base, and I went to [Fort Eustis], a military base in Virginia near Williamsburg, and I was assigned arbitrarily, when I joined, to the Transportation Corps. I think that may have been what the entire Bowdoin program was, training officers to join the Transportation Corps, to assist in transporting people and equipment. That's what I was preparing for: two years in the Army when I got out of Bowdoin, to serve in the Transportation Corps.

Then I think it was sometime in my senior year, somebody from the ROTC called us all together and told us that the Army projected a surplus in Transportation Corps officers and they were seeking volunteers to serve in other branches of the Army, and they identified several of them as possibilities and discussed them with each of the students—would you think about, instead of being Transportation, doing this. One of them was the Intelligence Corps, and that sounded more interesting to me, so I inquired about that, and what I was told was that, while there was the advantage of having possibly a more interesting subject in intelligence work, there was a huge disadvantage which deterred many of the students from taking it, and the disadvantage was that you could not be certain as to when you would be called up. If you graduated from college, say, 1st of June, the Transportation Corps were all scheduled; you knew that you would go into the Army on June 15th and you'd have two years to serve.

However, if you signed up for [Intelligence] Corps you were subject to being called up on two weeks' notice, but there was no indication of when you might be called up. You might wait months, you might wait a year. That was a risk, and I think as I recall most of the guys preferred the certainty so they took Transportation or some other one where they had a certainty. I decided I didn't have any real plans for the future, I was twenty years old.

AL: You were a young college graduate.

GM: Yes, I was young, and in more ways than one. I was immature and still somewhat insecure and uncertain. So I said, "Well look, I'll sign up for it and I'll wait until I'm called." I really thought it would be maybe a month or two. It turned out to be a really long time. So that summer, this is summer of 1954, I couldn't get a permanent job because of course I was obligated to tell any prospective employer that I might be called into the Army at any time on two weeks' notice. I actually did a couple of interviews and of course the employer said, "Well, we're very sorry, but we can't hire a guy who may only be here for a few weeks." I didn't know how long I'd be. The Army didn't know; they decided these things when they decided them, and that's the deal I had made.

My father, as you know, had been a janitor at Colby College, and my father had no education but he was an intelligent guy and so he kind of progressed until he was sort of like what I'd call a supervisor, not just of janitors but of all the grounds crew at Colby. So my father got me a job on the grounds crew at Colby College the summer after I graduated from Bowdoin. I spent that entire summer mowing lawns, painting the wood frames on window panes (a very arduous and painstaking task), doing repair work, just working generally on the grounds crew.

I've told this story before publicly, that my father used to get the biggest kick out of saying to people who he'd see or know that he might be talking to, "You see that boy over there mowing the lawn?" The person would say yes, and my father would say, "Well, he just graduated from Bowdoin." The person, whoever he was talking to, didn't know what he was talking about, and he'd say, "That's the extent to which Colby has progressed. It's now an institution of such high standing that in order to get a job on the grounds crew at Colby you have to have a Bowdoin degree." (*laughter*) My father loved telling that story. He told it over and over again, it was very funny.

I worked and lived at home as a new college graduate until the Army saw fit to call me in. And would you believe it, the Army summoned me to report to the U.S. Army Intelligence School in Fort Holabird, in Baltimore, Maryland, on December 26, that would have been 1954. They called me to report the day after Christmas, so I had to travel on Christmas Day to get to Baltimore to report to the school for duty. It was an awkward timing. I thought, they've had all this time, I don't know how many months it is from June to December, six or seven months, and I hung around up at Colby waiting for the call. I finally got the call and I reported to Fort Holabird on the day after Christmas, 1954.

The course there, the intelligence course, was about five or six months, so I spent that winter in Baltimore, learning how to be an intelligence agent, and then was assigned to travel to Berlin, Germany. I had no say in the assignment. When I graduated I got an order: you will report to such-and-such in Berlin, Germany, on such-and-such date.

There are only two noteworthy things about the military school. I did very well at the school, I ranked very high, and it gave me a little bit of confidence that I didn't have. Now, here I was with guys, college graduates from all over the country, various schools all over the country, and I had no sense of how to get along, and I did quite well at the school, and it really made a difference in my life and my outlook on things. Secondly, they organized the students into

different units. I think they may have called them battalions, but I don't remember the description of unit. At the beginning, the Army selected people who it thought, based on—must have been on their record and so forth—if they were leaders, and they chose three or four commanders out of the student body.

After a period of time, the student leaders—the commanders—selected a person that they wanted to be the number two. They were required to choose someone that would be their deputy commander and successor if they left for any reason. To my complete surprise, one of the guys asked me to become the deputy commander. I said, “Me, be a deputy commander? You got to be kidding.” “No, no, no,” he said, “I want you to do it.” So that, combined with doing well at the school, I left feeling that I had done reasonably well.

After leaving Fort Holabird, I was assigned to Berlin. I then had a brief visit home—I hadn't been home since Christmas; that was a long time to be away for me—and I set off for Germany. There was a military transport flight out of a place called McGuire Air Force Base in New Jersey. First time I'd ever flown—I'd never been on a plane—and I got on the military plane that flew from New Jersey to Frankfurt, Germany, and what an experience it was. It was mostly dependants, but I would say three-fourths of the people on board were little kids, babies, and everybody was sick and barfing and I thought, boy, this flying isn't all that it's reported to be. It was a very rough flight, very, very difficult, my first time on a plane.

When I got off the plane in Frankfurt, I was immediately taken to a train station along with one other guy. He was a young officer like myself who was from Texas, and we were assigned to go to Berlin. So my first time on an overnight train—I'd never been on a sleeper on a train before—I got on the train in Frankfurt and went to Berlin, and got to Berlin at seven o'clock on Sunday morning. I remember that very clearly; it was a Sunday morning.

I didn't realize it at the time, but West Berlin was isolated within Eastern Germany, which was Communist-controlled, so we could only travel in and out of Berlin by a U.S. military train, or flying, and this was the U.S. military train that we went on. It's also a very small point but interesting point about the role that chance plays in life. This other young guy and I arrived in Berlin at seven o'clock on a Sunday morning. There was a car and a driver there to meet us, and he took us to the headquarters of the unit to which we were assigned in Berlin, the Counter-intelligence Service headquarters in West Berlin. We went to the office of the officer who you would think of in normal terms as the personnel director or the human resources officer. I think they called him the adjutant, he was in charge of making assignments for people coming in, and I got to know him pretty well later.

It turned out that this guy used to play golf every Sunday morning in the summer. This was in June, and he was pretty upset because he'd been summoned to come in and assign these two young guys to their jobs on Sunday morning, so he missed his golf game. When we walked up to the door to his office I was first, and I opened the door, and I said to the other guy with me—his name was Bob—I said, “Bob, you go ahead.” [He] walked in first, and as he walked into the door, before I had even come around and closed the door, the adjutant looked up and kind of barked at him, “You're the new supply officer.” Neither of us knew what that meant. Then I

walked in the room afterward and he said to me, “You’re the new”—he called it, “You’re in C-2.”

He didn’t even know which one was which by name, he just assigned them. Well, the other guy got to be the supply officer. He spent the next two years in an office in Berlin, in uniform. He and I used to kid about it—you know, handing out blankets and uniforms and boots and guns. I got into a really interesting part of intelligence work, working in counter-intelligence. My primary mission, which I didn’t do immediately (I’ll tell you the immediate part afterward), was to work in screening of refugees who came from East Germany or other parts of Eastern Europe and were fleeing to the West. This was before the Berlin Wall was built, so there was free access for travel between East and West Berlin. You could take a bus—they called it the S-Bahn and the U-Bahn—but basically you could just get on a bus and cross the line. You could walk across the line, and many thousands were doing so.

The U.S. Army and the Intelligence Service, our Intelligence Service, had set up a screening [facility] alongside the border in a district of Berlin called Marienfelde—that was the name of a district, like you’d call parts of Portland Deering Heights, or parts of South Portland by various names. There was a center set up there where a group of employees of the U.S. Army, some of whom were German civilians who were hired for the job, others of whom were American service enlisted men who spoke and understood German, screened refugees as they came from East Berlin into West Berlin and on into West Germany.

They screened them for three purposes. One was to try to get as much information as they could from each of them about the East German government and particularly its secret service, the German phrase is *Staatssicherheitsdienst*, which means basically secret service, their secret police that Communists used as a way of maintaining the totalitarian government, in each of the communities or neighborhoods that the people had lived in, basically accumulating a database on all of the people in the secret police and the government in the East.

Secondly, to attempt to ferret out and arrest those who might be coming for the purpose of establishing themselves in the West to spy for the East; that was a common problem back in those days, and in fact it continued many years later. The chancellor of West Germany, Willie Brandt, was embarrassed by the fact that a member of his staff had been one of these sleeper agents who’d come from the East, lived what appeared to be a normal life in West Germany but then actually was spying for East Germany. There was a lot of spying back and forth, and so we tried to figure out who might be such a person or persons and prevent them, arrest them and prevent them from coming into the West.

Thirdly, at the same time we tried to find those who might be willing to go back in our behalf, become a spy for us back in their homes. It was very interesting work, and I can’t remember the exact numbers, but I probably had a dozen or two people working for me, about half Germans and half U.S. servicemen of enlisted rank who spoke German, who did this screening for the reasons I’ve suggested. We accumulated this database; we tried to prevent people from coming in. We did make some arrests, and we also recruited some people to go back.

It was extremely interesting work. I really did enjoy it. And I love Berlin. It's a great city. The German people were wonderful. The memories of the Berlin airlift were still fresh. This was in 1955 and 1956—the Berlin airlift occurred in 1948, so Americans were very popular and the Germans were very gracious and hospitable, and there were relatively small numbers of Americans there at the time. It's a great city, a great economy, just a wonderful, wonderful place, and I loved every minute of it.

I got to travel around Europe some. So much so that - At the urging of my brother Paul I had applied to law school at some point after graduating Bowdoin. I first wanted to go [to graduate school] to become a college history teacher, and my real goal in life was to teach at a place like Bowdoin. I loved Bowdoin, and I feel so indebted to it. I thought, what a great life, teaching history to these students—which I as a student, I loved the learning of it and I thought it would be really great. That was my goal. I think at one point I actually applied to Northwestern. I was recommended by one of my advisors. I majored in modern European history and thought I would teach in that field. But along the way my brother persuaded me that it would be wise to apply to law school and think about getting a further education and maybe having that at least as an alternative.

When I got to Berlin, of course I made many friends. One of them was a young man who had just graduated from Georgetown Law School. His name was Charlie McElvey from -

AL: Did he go by the name “Smooth,” nickname? I was going to ask you about him.

GM: You've heard one of my other stories?

AL: No, I was going to ask you, because I haven't figured out who he is and how you knew him.

GM: Yeah, they called him “Smooth” McElvey because he was the opposite of smooth, he was a rough-hewn character; but he was a really great guy. Oh, gee, he was so much fun to be around, so funny, just had the greatest sense of humor. But Charlie McElvey was raised in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, and after the army he went back and practiced law in Williamsport and was very successful—married a great gal from Washington, who I knew, and had a large family of kids. Both he and his wife have since passed away.

He had just graduated from Georgetown Law School, so of course in talking and getting to know him I told him about my ambition to go to law school, but again, I didn't have any money, I didn't have any way to pay for it. He said, “Well, you know Georgetown has a very good night school. You could go in the evening and you can work full time during the day.” I thought, well, that's something I could do. So I applied to Georgetown and I got admitted.

When my two years [were up], actually it was a little less than two years—about a year-and-a-half in Berlin (I had a two-year overall commitment), the first five or six months were in school, Intelligence School, so the rest of my service was about eighteen months), I wanted to stay. And the Army was receptive. They strongly wanted me to stay and to remain for another year or two.

But Georgetown said, “Look, we accepted you, you’ve got to come. If you don’t come, come back and see us whenever you do decide you want to go and we’ll look at it then.” I didn’t want to take the chance of not being able to get into law school, so I left Berlin toward the end of the year in 1956, and I came back and started at Georgetown in the middle of the school year, which would have been January of the following year, after the first semester, so I started second semester. I went at night to night law school, and I got a job working full time.

AL: That’s a great place to stop, I think, today. Thank you.

End of Interview