

Roland Dille

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Interview with Roland Dille

**Interviewed by Professor Clarke A. Chambers
University of Minnesota**

**Interviewed on July 19, 1995
University of Minnesota Campus**

Roland Dille - RD
Clarke A. Chambers - CAC

CAC: This is Clarke Chambers. This morning, Wednesday, July 19, 1995, I'm interviewing Roland Dille, in my office at 833 Social Science. Roland Dille was an undergraduate at the University of Minnesota and he was a graduate student in the Department of English in the early 1950s. He, then, went on to a long and very distinguished career as president of the Moorhead State University campus and, in that capacity, had a chance to observe higher education generally and how the state university system relates to the University of Minnesota and several campuses.

Roland, I welcome you aboard. As I was suggesting, we'll start with a little academic, intellectual, social, cultural—what you wish—autobiography . . . where you came from and how you got interested. Then, we're off and running.

RD: When I was in the sixth grade, I couldn't start school because my sister had scarlet fever. In those days, they quarantined the household. My brother, as soon as he found that out, headed across the fields to stay with my grandparents because he was going to be a freshman.

CAC: [laughter]

RD: I remember the first day of school because he came home and found my father and I out in the field—1936 was still a fairly dry year and we were doing a third crop of hay off of the meadow—and he said, "Dad, I'm not taking agriculture." "Not taking agriculture?" my dad said. "No," he said, "Mr. Moe said I had to take mathematics because I probably wouldn't go to college." That struck us in a real way. There had been other people in our family that had gone to college. My father had a brother who was a dentist and my mother had two brothers who had graduated from the University of Minnesota. Nevertheless, for our particular family, I can see now, it meant my father had to rethink what was going to happen to all of us.

CAC: What kind of farm did he have?

RD: It was 100 acres. It was a diversified farm. We had every kind of animal and every kind of crop there was. One hundred acres was not a very big farm, but it was big in that area. We were surrounded by people with fifty acres and forty acres. The reason you got by, of course, was that if they were anything at all, they were dairy farms. We also raised pigs.

CAC: That was your cash crop?

RD: Yes. We'd have six acres of this and twelve acres of that and, then, we'd rented hay . . .

CAC: That's old-fashioned, isn't it?

RD: We had to have a hired man besides.

CAC: Do people still farm in a mixed fashion in that region?

RD: They do, but they all work someplace else. They all work in Hutchinson with . . .

CAC: And their spouses, undoubtedly?

RD: And the spouses all work. There are, my nephew told me last week, only three dairy farms left in Dassel Township.

CAC: For posterity, we should say that Dassel Township and the village of Dassel is west central Minnesota.

RD: Right, part of Meeker County. Dassel Township is in the Big Woods and, right at the edge, what we used to call the Darwin Prairie begins, but it's also called the Great Plains in books.

CAC: Your sister had scarlet fever, so you stayed home?

RD: Yes. I tell that because of my brother coming home. This is absolutely irrelevant, but I told that story about Carl Moe and his commitment to students. Carl Moe had been at Dassel High School since 1932, when he beat out my uncle, a graduate of the University of Minnesota, for the job because my father was on the school board and in order for a relative to be hired, it had to be a unanimous vote.

CAC: Ahhh.

RD: And Herman Swanson voted against my Uncle Donovan, who had nothing to do then except go back to the University of Minnesota, which, essentially, he never left thereafter. He became a professor of mathematics and education.

CAC: [laughter]

RD: Carl Moe then came. Only after he came was it discovered that his wife was a Catholic, which was quite a shock to the town. [laughter] Carl, eventually, became Catholic, too. He was a North Dakota Norwegian Lutheran. I've told that story several times and a few years ago, Mrs. Moe said, "You always tell that story about Carl." She said, "I've never told this part of the story," which is part of it. She said, "Carl was paid back by your brother rather handsomely." When Carl was in the hospital, my brother was a doctor in Litchfield—he was not Carl's doctor—and he would stop by to see him. He always stopped by to see people he knew. He said, "How is he?" She said, "He is dying, I guess. The doctor came in and said didn't see any hope." My brother took a look at him and he called the nurse in and said, "Listen, he's suffering from drug poisoning." That happened a lot. It wasn't penicillin; it was the other one. He saw right away what it was and they took him off and saved his life.

CAC: How much longer did he live after that? That's a good story.

RD: He died in 1979 and this must have been in 1952.

CAC: Ahhh, all right.

RD: A couple of years later, my brother came in—Carl was in the hospital again—and he said, "How is he?" She said, "The doctor has left. He said that there is nothing to do for him. He will not last through the night." My brother took a look at him and said, "Nurse, bring me some forceps!" He had swallowed his tongue and he pulled the tongue out.

CAC: Oh!

RD: My brother was a marvelous diagnostician. He really was and he cared very much . . .

CAC: These small town doctors . . . my father was one. That's what they had to excel at.

RD: Yes, that's right.

CAC: Gosh! [unclear] listen, you'd tell them what's wrong with them. My father would listen. He had no elaborate tests. He just had to diagnose from symptoms and histories.

RD: Right. A good diagnostician . . . something goes on in the head faster than it does in other people. They put all those connections together. It was quite clear when I graduated from high school I was going to go to the University of Minnesota. The war had already begun. We were six months after Pearl Harbor. I came down with two of my friends. We rented a room up on one of the cross streets . . . Oak, I guess it was. I didn't quite finish the year. I got drafted before the end of the last quarter; but, I got full credit. I had a marvelous experience, especially in English, where I had a teacher named Bruce Deering. Bruce Deering later became president

of the University of New York-Binghamton. That's one of the four university centers. But, because he decided not to let the Marine recruiters in, he lost his job, essentially, and became a vice-chancellor for the system. He was really a marvelous man. In my class that first year, I did not know him. We didn't know anybody in our classes. We all sat that way. It was before anybody ever thought of students having to say to each other.

CAC: [laughter]

RD: Bruce Deering . . . one thing that impressed me . . . he wore a Phi Beta Kappa key and I determined I was going to get one of those. How I knew what a Phi Beta Kappa key was, I don't know. The student who was in the class that I think was the most distinguished graduate of the last fifty years of the University of Minnesota English Department was Samuel Hynes, who I think the university ought to recognize. I got terribly interested in literature, which I had been interested in all along. I remember getting very much interested in Thomas Hardy because we read *The Return of the Native*. It was the last test I took. I took it in Mr. Deering's office before I left for the Army. I used to tell the story about how important freshman English is because Hardy has been a lifelong interest of mine, but nothing compared to what happened to Sam Hynes, who is one of the leading scholars. He's done the very [unclear] of Hardy's poetry and he's our leading scholar of the Edwardian Age. That was all very well until Sam Hines' book about his wartime experience came out. He joined the Navy and flew. I discovered he had left at the end of the winter quarter and had not had the *Return of the Native* by Thomas Hardy. But, he was always very close to Bruce Deering and taught at Swarthmore where Bruce Deering taught. Deering, then, went to Delaware as the vice-president and Hynes has been at Princeton for years, and years, and years, and years.

CAC: I'm going to back up just a minute because what you say intrigues me. I wonder if there is something in folk culture that accommodates people to the telling of stories. I heard stories as a child and as a youth and became an historian, which is the telling of stories. The same thing with English. Do you know why the telling of stories and their analysis and their enjoyment would . . .

RD: I was asked that by Peg Meier, reporter, who asked my sister, how come all of us read so much.

CAC: Oh, see, what a good reporter I am. I'm asking the same question.

RD: I said, "Off the top of my head, I'll have to say that my interest in literature came about because my mother was a sentimentalist and, therefore, I had a great interest in plot, and my father saw that everything was funny so I had a great interest in character. [laughter] I think there may be some truth to that. My mother was a great storyteller. She remembered everything.

CAC: My mother was.

RD: My father was a great short story teller. He'd come home from town and tell what funny things people had said. For instance, we had a neighbor who drove the school bus and he called up one morning and said, "I've got to out and pick up the kids but there's a blizzard, as you know, and I might get stuck. Come along with the shovel." So, my father went with him. They were heading down the road, and there was a drift ahead, and he decided he'd go through it; but, he didn't. He stopped. He turned back to my dad and he said, "Yes, you know [Bruno] Hauptmann was lucky."

CAC: [laughter]

RD: That's the sort of thing my father really enjoyed. Hauptmann had just been electrocuted, of course, that winter. Of course, one read a lot when one lived on the farm.

CAC: Ahhh. Our generation read more anyhow.

RD: Yes, that's right. I read a lot of things that weren't all that wonderful.

CAC: Ohhh, it didn't make any difference.

RD: I know. I think I have a certain relationship to the printed word that has nothing to do with what's it's about. It's just the word itself printed. I had good English teachers in high school. I really did.

CAC: That helps.

RD: They encouraged me.

CAC: My mother was in a home economics club and she always gave the best papers. She'd go on the circuit in southern Minnesota with her papers, her book reviews, or what have you because she told a story that would make people cry.

RD: I'll tell you one thing about my mother. The university has been important to my family; my brother, and my sister, and I all graduated from it. Two of my children went there. One transferred and the other graduated from it. All my brother's children went there. It's been very important to us. My mother once told me, when she was quite old, "I was always very suspicious of the University of Minnesota." I never knew quite why. I know why she was suspicious, but I couldn't put any substance to it. When she was a little girl—she was born in 1888—when she was about twelve, she heard a visiting woman from the neighborhood say to her mother about a family that they were gossiping about, "Their two boys are going to the university, you know." It was said with such disapproval and she said, "I never knew why she disapproved . . . because she didn't believe in learning or thought it was a Godless place or whatever?" We knew the university, of course, best through its Ag[ricultural] School.

CAC: Sure, Extension.

RD: All sorts of people from the Ag School came out and spoke at meetings of the Farmers' Cooperative and this and that. Ralph Wein, the county agent, was really an associate professor at the University of Minnesota Ag School. My father, in 1932, was elected to the board of county commissioners, so he worked with them very closely. That election, of course, saved the farm for us. I don't know how much it paid . . . a couple hundred a year, but that was the difference between getting by and not getting by.

In the summer of 1942, two of my friends and I came down with the Superintendent of Schools Carl Moe, who was down here getting his master's degree, which he had to have to stay on as superintendent. We went and registered sometime in July. I took physics from the famous teaching dean over there, [J.W.] Buchta, along with Bruce Deering, who was also getting ready to go into the Navy and decided he better get some physics. I took European history from a man well-enough known here, long gone now, Bruce Deering. I took geometry and had to cancel out because I was about to flunk out, I thought. I took it again and passed it. I took political science, of course, from a man who just died, [Evron] Kirkpatrick.

CAC: For heavens sakes. He was young, and ambitious, and bright in those days.

RD: Yes, he really was and he was married at the time to Governor . . .

CAC: Hjalmer Petersen's daughter.

RD: Right.

CAC: I met her this winter in San Francisco.

RD: Oh, did you. Hjalmer Petersen was somebody that I had a long, deep interest in because on my twelfth birthday, he was in Dassel and school was let out for the funeral of Magnus Johnson; so, we all went out to the cemetery. He patted me on the head and said, "How old are you?" I was delighted to tell him it was my twelfth birthday. [laughter]

CAC: [laughter]

RD: Magnus Johnson was a local hero of ours.

CAC: I'll bet.

RD: The village never voted for Magnus, but the township did. I never understood that because they were the same people, really . . . brothers and sisters. The suspicion of the Farmer Labor Party in the town was very real. I think it had something to do with the fear that cooperatives would come in and wipe out all the local merchants. It may also have been something less

defensible, that is, a sense that they had arrived and they had a share in the Republican America and were not about to do anything else.

CAC: Ahhh. That's not uncommendable.

RD: No, that isn't. If you're talking about people who spoke Swedish moving into town [unclear] farm, it was important.

CAC: Very important . . . property.

RD: My father was a Republican; though, he told me when I was twenty-one—I think it was an accident that I was twenty-one—"I think you should know that I voted for [Franklin D.] Roosevelt in 1932 and 1936, but I didn't think you ought to know that, at the time." [laughter]

CAC: My father spent his life waiting for another Theodore Roosevelt to come along.

RD: Oh, yes.

CAC: Finally, when they got "Ike" [Dwight D. Eisenhower], he thought that was all right and he died.

RD: I remember after [Richard] Nixon had resigned, the Republicans took an awful beating in the next election. I stopped to see my mother and she said, "What do you think of the election?" I said, "As you know, I see nothing wrong with the Democrats getting elected." She said, "But, so many of them. Isn't that dangerous?" I said, "Yes, there is a danger there." She said, "I keep worrying about what's going to happen. I remember what a bad Depression we had, the Depression of 1893 . . . "

CAC: Grover Cleveland.

RD: . . . the Cleveland Depression." She said that having lived through the 1920s that were pretty bad and through the 1930s; but, I suppose, it was the first national thing she had heard about so it always made a big impression on her.

CAC: Most of the young men were fleeing by the time you got here?

RD: Yes.

CAC: You, yourself, were drafted soon?

RD: Right. There were five of us from Dassel who came down. Two were at the Ag School, but only one of us finished, Norman Groth. He was in a B-12 program and stayed on and got his.

CAC: Weren't you in ASTP, at some point?

RD: Yes. I took that test and so off I went to ASTP.

CAC: Just for posterity, remind me what that was.

RD: Army Specialized Training Program.

CAC: Good.

RD: There was a slightly different name for it in the First World War, Student Army Training Program. They closed that down. After my basic training, I went to the University of Nebraska, where I met some marvelous English teachers. W. Bailey became chairman of the department and Joe Kwiat . . .

CAC: In Nebraska?

RD: Yes, he was Nebraska.

CAC: [gasp]

RD: He took a [unclear]. He and his wife had us over for dinner . . . about five or six of us who were interested in literature.

CAC: Isn't that interesting? Then, he comes in American Studies here.

RD: In our group of engineers, we had a little group of poetry lovers. We called ourselves the Ezra Pound, E.E. Cummings Poetry Circle.

CAC: [laughter]

RD: We would go down, when we had our breaks between dinner and . . .

CAC: Ezra Pound was not a good name to choose during the war, sir.

RD: No, I know and we knew that, but we also knew he was terribly important. We would go down and read old literary magazines in the library at the University of Nebraska.

CAC: You really were incorrigible.

RD: [laughter] Yes, I've thought a lot about Pound. I for one, do not forgive him.

CAC: Is this where you met Paul Murphy?

RD: Yes. We were in that little group, yes.

CAC: For posterity, Paul Murphy, professor of History, later at Minnesota.

RD: Paul disappeared. We all went into the Army then, into the Infantry, and went overseas. I had a choice. My sister-in-law was the secretary of the dean of dental school. My brother was in the medical school at the time. He wrote out an acceptance into dental school for me. He took a look at my transcript and saw I was a good student. All I had to do was finish [unclear]. If had turned that in to my CO [commanding officer], I would have been sent off to the University of Minnesota to become a dentist. I walked around for a weekend and, finally, decided, no, it had to be the Infantry for me. Part of it was that I didn't want to be a dentist, but there was also something else there. It had nothing to do with courage or even a sense of adventure. It was the feeling that this was for us . . . to go into the Army. This is what we had to do.

CAC: This is our generation's mission.

RD: Yes. It all worked out very well with the Infantry. Paul went to the Infantry, too.

CAC: Ten million of us would tell the same story.

RD: Yes, that's right. I get upset with people . . . Sam Hynes writes about that experience very, very well . . . *Flights of Passage*, he calls his book. He's doing a book on growing up in Minneapolis now. Paul Fussell—I think he pronounces it—had a book called *Wartime: Understanding and Behavior in the Second World War* where he sort of misses the whole thing about how we felt. He earned the right to say what he wanted. He landed, I think, on D-Day. He was a lieutenant and he took his troops all the way to Germany and was badly wounded, so he has a right to say what he wants to. I think he probably came out of an Ivy League experience that didn't allow him to know what an opening up of life the Army was in many ways for us. We complained about it, but I came out of it all right.

CAC: It was a key sequence of events for many of us.

RD: Yes, it really was.

CAC: It changed my life. I was changed more by the Army experience than by college, I can tell you.

RD: Yes, I think that's true for me, too.

CAC: You got to Europe after the Normandy and in time for the [Battle of the] Bulge?

RD: We left England when the Bulge was being fought; but, we never got there. One of our ships was sunk in the channel and we lost 1,000 men. That may not have been the thing . . .

CAC: You weren't on that ship?

RD: No. We came the next day, but we knew it had been sunk. It was a really dreadful thing because there were a lot of friends around. We didn't know which of our friends were on there. We had all come from either basic training where we'd been together or the University of Nebraska. We ended up, then, surrounding the towns of Lorient and St. Nazaire where there were 900,000 Germans. We were there to keep them in. They shot at us quite a lot. I never shot at them. I did enough to say that I'd done it because when the war was almost over with—I was in a [unclear] tank company—they lined us all up and said, "Each of you gets three shots at that town, which is held by the Germans." So, we each fired three shells. It was a way of getting rid of the shells and there was a plane, a little Cub, up there telling us how close we came. I suspect there was no town, that they just made that up because who's going to shell a French town with a 1,000 shells even though they were not explosive shells. They were armor piercing shells. That would have been a rather stupid thing to do; so, I think it was all just a way to get rid of the shells. They fired at us quite a bit. I was in a war, in any right, enough to know what it was.

CAC: I was in the Pacific and was often shot at. I didn't carry arms. I was in intelligence, and cryptography, and so forth.

RD: Oh, really?

CAC: So, I never had to shoot back.

RD: We had the opportunity . . .

CAC: I don't think I could have. I wouldn't have been a very good soldier.

RD: Before we entered our dugout, we sat and watched the Germans across the canal. We could shoot at them if we would. None of us ever did. It would have been not at all defensible in terms of the goal of the war. I think if I had been moving forward with my troops and there were Germans ahead of me, I assume I would have shot.

CAC: Sure.

RD: They say you always did because you worried about your friends. None of us could bring ourselves to shoot at a German in the distance.

CAC: And the lieutenant didn't tell you to.

RD: Oh, no, no. It was permitted.

CAC: That's your war experience. Then, you come back here to Minnesota?

RD: I started, then, in 1946, thinking I was going to be a writer, as so many of us did who came out of the war. There were great numbers of people and, of course, there was a program you could get into rather easily, taught by people like Elizabeth Adkins, who was a very strange woman, but a pretty good teacher of writing and Dr. Anna Von Hemholtz Phalen . . .

CAC: I don't know her.

RD: She ran the Writing program.

CAC: This would be the program for undergraduates?

RD: Yes. It was called Composition and that's what I majored in, a thing called Creative Writing, then. But, of course, they also had people teaching the program. Robert Penn Warren taught courses. Saul Bellow . . .

CAC: Did you work with either of them?

RD: No. I took courses in literature from Warren, but I didn't take anything from Bellow because he was in and out. It never worked out that way. Warren was a marvelous teacher.

CAC: He was wonderful in what concrete ways?

RD: It used to be said about Huntington Brown . . .

CAC: I knew Huntington Brown.

RD: . . . who was the old scholar, a dry as dust scholar, the worst teacher the university, by any standard you bring except the fact that you got excited and learned things from him. Things actually happened to me and I could almost give you a date where understanding struck me in his class; so, he was a marvelous teacher. By all the standards that are used . . .

CAC: Give me one for instance. I'm really interested in how people get turned on.

RD: What he had about him was an excitement that he couldn't master when he came across a passage that delighted him. What delighted him mostly was discovering real language or real sentence structure in the Renaissance artificial languages. Of course, with Shakespeare, you going to come across it all the time. He'd read a sonnet and he'd say, "Now, this is a sonnet that's imitative of [Francesco] Petrarch and it's like all sorts . . . but notice in that third sentence, he uses a couple of words he could have got only from the street."

CAC: Ahhh.

RD: He loved that. He was an absentminded professor. He always came with his notes. You'd hear about the Brownie notes of the instructors. He came with blue books and that's what he had his notes in. Near the beginning of the last week, he put the blue book down, and picked up the next one, and looked at it, and looked at it again, and he said, "I guess the class is over." [laughter]

CAC: [laughter]

RD: Despite his doing of that, his passion for something exciting was there.

CAC: A passion and the skill was a close reading [unclear].

RD: That's why people said, "Oh, come on. Huntington Brown is a new critic pretending to be a scholar and Robert Penn Warren is a scholar pretending to be a new critic." That, of course, was one of the things you remembered about Warren. He knew so much. He really was a terrible well-educated literary person. In 1948, 1949, we all knew about *All the King's Men*, which became a movie in 1951, I think it was, and it won all of the awards.

CAC: Yes, a great movie . . . a great book.

RD: A great book. I think it's one of the great modern American novels.

CAC: He wrote that while he was here?

RD: Yes. I took course after course from Brown—it's the way it happened—including a course from him, my last course I think in Graduate School, a seminar in Shakespeare's tragic and comedic art. There were only three of us in the class, sometimes only two, for the whole year. I came in to do my final report and he said, "Let's see, what was your name?" [laughter] He shared a waiting room, if not an office, with Allen Tate. There were a couple of those in Folwell Hall with sort of a little outer office where people sat and waited for Tate here and Brown there. One day, at a department coffee party, a graduate student said, "What do you think of Tate's poetry?" "Uh," he said, "dreadful stuff." "Really?" said the student. "I thought it was rather good." "The poetry of Nahum Tate, good?" he said. [laughter]

CAC: [laughter] He had the wrong Tate.

RD: Yes. He was the kind of person who called Pope a modern poet. Anything after the Seventeenth Century . . .

CAC: What's the earlier Tate's name? I don't know him.

RD: Nahum.

CAC: How do you spell that?

RD: N-A-H-U-M.

CAC: Okay.

RD: He's famous for two things. He wrote the Christmas carol, *While Shepherds Watch Their Flocks by Night*, which is in all of the Protestant religions. He also—interesting, considering what's going on at the Guthrie [Theater] right now—rewrote *King Lear* with a happy ending, which was produced in London, I would say about seven years ago. All serious critics said, "This is not nonsense. It's not Shakespeare, but if you take what he's doing . . ." There was an awful lot of that sort of thing going on in the Restoration because, of course, the Restoration was very doubtful about Shakespeare. They admit it . . . everyone. Between [John] Dryden [unclear] he was the greatest. Nobody touched him, but he was so unclassical.

CAC: You were working in Restoration among other . . . ?

RD: Sam Monk was here; naturally, I worked in the Restoration.

CAC: Ahhh, you worked with Sam Monk, too?

RD: Yes. When I say that Warren was a great teacher, he was, but I think the best of them all was Samuel Monk.

CAC: You're talking about teaching this seminar level now?

RD: No, not the seminar. I'm talking about the course I took as an undergraduate in my senior year, which is why, in my senior year, I decided that I'm also going to major in English as well as composition because I want to be a college teacher. It's a kind of teaching, I guess, you don't get much of nowadays. It was lecturer, pure and simple. We thought he might have memorized it. Every lecture was virtually a publishable essay. He worked at his teaching. When his colleague went to Berkeley as chairman, Henry Nash Smith, somebody ran into him at an MLA [Modern Language Association] conference and said, "Are you going to take Monk away from us?" "No," he said, "Monk's not hireable at Berkeley. He doesn't publish enough." Everything Monk published was important; but, he said, "I can't publish more. I teach twenty-four hours a year. I've got to revise my lecture notes every year. I don't have any time to do that." He was an interesting man. When he died, many of his former students gathered in his apartment. I got a long letter from Earl Minar who was one of his students. Earl Minar became one of the editors of the Dryden Papers. He's also at Princeton. He wrote me about everybody sitting there kind of waiting for Sam Monk to die and going in to talk with him from time to time. It was an act of real appreciation for a fine teacher.

CAC: Yes.

RD: He was a tragic man. His wife and daughter had drowned in circumstances where he always—it wasn't his fault—said, "Why hadn't I got there earlier? I might have stopped them." Then, he went into the Air Force and was a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force during the war and got to know a number of people at Cambridge because of that, knowing B.M.W. Tiliard who he brought over.

CAC: What talents could he bring to being a lieutenant colonel in the war?

RD: I don't know; but, he said he was once on a quiz show and they said, "Dr. Monk, here's an easy question for you." It was on tonsillitis. I think it's because he had a Ph.D. and could write decently. He must have gone in at an administrative rank; though, his skills were not administrative.

CAC: Nooo. No. I can't imagine him in the service. That's a sidelight.

RD: That Army got put together very fast.

CAC: They did win a war.

RD: I remember the day that he came into class and he said, "I want to talk to you people seriously. I don't mind writing letters of recommendation, but I hate to write them about people I don't know. People put my name down and the first thing you know I've got to write a letter of recommendation and I don't even know who they are. That happened last summer, but luckily I had my grade book with me so I saw I gave the student a grade. I could write a decent [unclear] so I knew he was a good student." Clyde Deneroth, a good friend of mine said to me, "He's talking about you, you know." I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "I was in the office and he came out of his office and said, 'Who in the hell is Roland Dille?'" I came up to him afterward and said, "I'm Roland Dille. I'm going to remind you of something that happened last year. The University of Minnesota decided it was going to nominate a person for a Rhodes scholar and John Wolf told me that my literature recommendations were fine, but I really needed a letter from the chairman of the department. So, I went to see Joseph Warren Beach. Beach said, 'I'd be happy to write a letter for you but Samuel Monk is taking over; so, why don't you go to see him?' So, I went to see Samuel Monk. He said, 'All right, I'll be glad to do that. You give me the names of the people in the department you worked with.'" He'd forgotten that. He was terribly embarrassed. He hadn't attacked me personally. He sort of got even with me anyway. The next day he came in and said, "Was Alexander Pope a poet? What do you think, Mr. Dille?" Thereafter, about once a week, he'd ask me an impossible question on that track.

CAC: [laughter]

RD: I admired him extravagantly. I took a seminar from him on Dryden and his times. Earl Minar was in the class—he left UCLA about ten years ago and went to Princeton. Jules Chimenski was in the class—he was editor of the *New England Review*. There were other very good people in the class. But, we'd never taken a seminar before. I remember the second time we met, somebody had to give a paper and we decided we were going to rebel. We said, "Mr. Monk, why don't you just talk?" "No, no," he said, "this is a seminar." We wanted to hear what he had to say.

This reminds me of a woman and a man—she was Caucasian and he was black—who taught a course in the arts of black Americans . . . literature and music mostly. They had a lot of black students in there. They decided they were going to get everybody involved. Team teaching is very difficult, but there's one thing you can do is you better get [unclear] people involved. One of the black students [unclear] said, "If you and Dr. Condell know something, why don't you just tell it to us?" [laughter]

CAC: [laughter]

RD: I'm sorry, I digress.

CAC: That's fine.

RD: What I had, of course, was a marvelous undergraduate program.

CAC: And you kept right on with the same folks in Graduate School?

RD: Yes.

CAC: Who, finally, was your adviser?

RD: My final adviser was Leonard Unger, but my real adviser was William Van O'Connor.

CAC: Ah, of course.

RD: O'Connor was the person that kind of kept a watch over me.

CAC: O'Connor was a [William] Faulkner scholar, among other things.

RD: Yes, but he was also one of the few people who were writing about Bloomsbury. He told me, "It's time for you to get yourself a dissertation topic. There must be one more dissertation left in Bloomsbury." Of course, I finished my dissertation and within three years, Bloomsbury was all over the place. There must be a dozen books about Bloomsbury every year; so, it was just the beginning of that.

CAC: Just this last year . . . it's a big industry. The *New York Review of Books* has got something on Bloomsbury . . . four or five new things.

RD: About three years after I finished the two volume biography of Lytton Strachey by . . . it's just been republished now and revised somewhat. For the first time, people talked rather openly about Bloomsbury and its sexual relationships, which was not talked about much before that.

CAC: Who was your dissertation on?

RD: Mine was on David Garnett in the Bloomsbury Group.

CAC: I don't know him.

RD: He was a minor figure. He wrote *Aspects of Love*, which was a Weber musical. His best known book was called *Lady and the Fox*. He wrote a lot of reviews for the *Spectator* and *New Statesman*, mostly for the *New Statesman*, as a matter of fact. He wrote all kinds of things. *Lady and the Fox* was published in 1922 and it's never been out of print. He's what they have in England that we don't have. He's a minor writer.

CAC: Ahhh.

RD: We have writers that aren't as good as other writers. We don't have minor writers. His mother translated all of the Russian novelists. His father was the editor for D.H. Lawrence, and [Joseph] Conrad especially, and some others. He was a rather important family.

CAC: In the Bloomsbury industry, does he appear frequently or occasionally?

RD: Yes, he's mentioned a lot.

CAC: Mentioned but not as central?

RD: What happened to him . . . what makes him appear more often than he should is that he married Angelica Bell, who was the daughter of Virginia Woolf's sister, the painter. Her father was not her mother's husband but her mother's friend. Her mother married Clive Bell, the art critic and painter. I think Roger Fry may have been the father; I'm not really sure. In his memoirs, David Garnett talks about being at the hospital when Angelica was born and, later, he married her. He's always been known to be sexually very straight and, also, to have been a very decent person. I wrote an article for this *Dictionary of Literary Biography* of about 100 volumes. I wrote the thing on David Garnett for them a few years ago. That's when I was chancellor so I had to get it done in a hurry. I sent it all off and praised him for being a decent person and off it went. The proofs went back. I was in Washington two weeks later for a meeting of the National Council of the Amenities. I picked up an English newspaper in that bookstore that used to carry them right next to the White House, the Century. "Angelica Garnett Tells All." It turns

out, he was a brute. He treated her badly, forced her to marry him, really. Oh, well. You never know, do you?

CAC: Did you have to amend your entry?

RD: It was too late to do that.

CAC: To come back to Minnesota, did you know that you were fortunate to be in the *classic* period of the English Department's history?

RD: I think it was Monk who told us, "Let's not kid around. We are right there with Berkeley, Michigan, and Yale. I don't think anybody else touches us." We knew that.

CAC: That was a pretty accurate assessment, at that time?

RD: I think so, yes.

CAC: Did you follow the department subsequently? What happened to it? They got old and died?

RD: Oh, yes. I have kind of a mean-spirited explanation because he was a wonderful person, but I think hiring a librarian to be dean may have been a mistake. It probably should have been somebody else.

CAC: We're referring now to Errett McDiarmid?

RD: Yes.

CAC: In the Arts College. He didn't build support when these fellows faded?

RD: One of the things that happened was that when Warren left, they made an offer to a very important scholar from the University of Washington. He wanted \$25,000, and they wouldn't give it to him, and he didn't come.

CAC: That was a very generous salary, at that time.

RD: Yes, but he was a man who knew his worth. Then, they got Tate. Now, Tate had almost nothing going for him because he had never taught very long any place, but he was a very able poet, and a more than able critic, and I think a pretty fine teacher. I got to know him quite well. We'd have lunch together in one of the other instructor's offices . . . bag lunch.

CAC: I can't imagine Tate eating out of bag.

RD: I think he more or less watched us and bummed what he could from us.

CAC: Yes.

RD: He tried to talk me out of my football tickets on occasion. When O'Connor left, I asked to have Tate for my adviser, but Tate said, "No, it would be improper for me to have a doctoral candidate for advisee." Unger took me. Unger had done some work with [T.S.] Elliot, though he was basically a scholar of the Renaissance . . . [John] Milton. Unger had the impression that I had worked on my dissertation with O'Connor, but I hadn't really.

CAC: You were on your own.

RD: Yes. I never even sat down in Unger's office. I came in and he said—I'd taken a couple courses from him and I knew him—"Go ahead and keep doing what you're doing. When it's all done, ship it to me."

CAC: Let me tell you a story. This is a conversation as well as an interview. I was a very young non-tenured faculty member here, but I had friends in the English Department who were also non-tenured and young. They said, "We sometimes have lunch with Tate at the Dutch Treat over in Dinkytown."

RD: Oh, yes.

CAC: "If you were to come on Wednesdays, you could get to meet Tate." So, I went. We were all there. We went through the buffet line, and we got our food, and we kind of ate it kind of gingerly waiting for him to come. Finally, the great man comes and he puts something down on his plate. We're all waiting for him to speak. We defer. Talk about changes of climate in academic worlds . . . we're waiting for him to say something. He took a couple of bites of whatever it was, hash, or something and he says, "Tastes like saltpeter."

RD: [laughter]

CAC: That was my introduction to the great poet and scholar. Oh, my.

RD: I think it's generally agreed now that Tate was not a very nice man.

CAC: I think that you'd find agreement on that.

RD: Partly, that is a kind of feminist defense of Carolyn Gordon who was, apparently, treated badly by him; but, we really admired him.

CAC: [unclear] scholarship and his criticism. I think you're right.

RD: He was very fine sitting around that office with Jerry . . . a pretty good friend of his who later went east, who became a painter.

CAC: You were there in the classic days.

RD: Yes.

CAC: When the people you describe fade, and retire, and die, then, it starts slowing down?

RD: Right.

CAC: [unclear].

RD: They brought back Bellow for a bit. Bellow, like [John] Berryman and that marvelous sociologist . . .

[End of Tape 1, Side 1]

[Tape 1, Side 2]

RD: I'd like to tell you one thing about Warren, if I could.

CAC: Okay.

RD: Warren had a contract with a publisher; so, at the end of the first quarter, instead of going on teaching the Techniques of Fiction, he gave up the class. This is sort of interesting because of the kind of work we're doing now. The man who took his place had just written the history of the University of Minnesota [*University of Minnesota: 1851-1951*].

CAC: James Gray.

RD: James Gray had not taught in a university. He was a women's club lecturer, pretty much. Here, he was replacing a man in a class . . . Many of them had come from all over the world to take a class from Robert Penn Warren. That was bad enough . . . the disappointment everybody felt. There are a couple of things . . . The class started—it met two hours every Thursday afternoon—with Warren coming in and introducing Mr. Gray. He said, "Mr. Gray has been gracious enough to allow me to finish saying what I didn't get finished saying about [Gustave] Flaubert in the last quarter. I really want to finish this and he was very kind to let me do this." Warren, then, gave what was possibly the best lecture in his life. He was pressed. He had a lot to put in there. It was just marvelous. The hour was up and he said, "Now, I turn the class over to Mr. Gray." Mr. Gray did not have a very good voice. Do you know John Flanagan, the American literature person . . . folk tales and so on? He lived out here north of

town . . . the University of Chicago. He had an article in *Minnesota History* a few years back about the University of Minnesota English Department. He was there.

CAC: Ohhh. I didn't know that.

RD: He's worth looking up. He talks about one of the teachers who took roll [call] everyday. James Gray was in the class and when he called out the roll, James Gray in his high pitched voice said, "Here." He looked up and said, "Who was the young woman who's pretending to be Mr. Gray?" This is the voice he brought into the silence that left us.

CAC: He wrote a pretty good history of the university.

RD: Yes, he did. He did.

CAC: These conversations are to help do a sequel.

RD: Yes, I know. That's why I bring him up. He was a reviewer not a scholar. His collections of reviews is called *Silently Tolls the Bell for the Three Soldiers* or something. It was [Ernest] Hemingway, [F. Scott] Fitzgerald, and [John] Dos Passos. He started out, then, by talking about Clifton Fadiman and *Moby-Dick*. Clifton Fadiman was somewhat of a scholar, but he was really a reviewer. He'd written a book about *Moby-Dick*. Suddenly, he was interrupted by a hand. He called on this young woman who spoke with great difficulties. She was what we, then, called spastic. She was very bright. She would recite once in awhile and Mr. Warren—one of the kindest people in the whole world—was very patient with her . . . very patient. But, something she said irritated another student who interrupted, and he stammered very badly, and they got in this terrible exchange. Of course, Gray hadn't any idea how to handle it. I don't know how anybody would have handle it. I remember the story vaguely; but, a friend mine, who also teaches at Princeton, told me how vividly that had struck him. He was just over here from Denmark. That was the way it was. Really, with Warren leaving, I think the decline began somehow. How many people are there yet who are . . . ? Warren was a matter of luck. I started out in graduate school as the assistant to Robert Moore.

CAC: Later, chair.

RD: He may have been the best undergraduate, lower division teacher there ever was.

CAC: He was one of the great hits on radio and TV because of that.

RD: Yes. right.

CAC: My sister had written to me about him when I was in the Army and when I came back on furlough, I actually visited his class. There was somebody else who was briefly chairman of the department who also taught that course, Survey on English Literature and because of the

hour, I had to take a course from him. He told me, "I really work at this course. I work, and work, and work, and work. I'm a good teacher and it's acceptable; but, then, I look at Moore and he's got 110 farm kids out there who, in the second day, discover that they're simply wild about literature. How does he do it?" He did it by playing upon his affectations.

CAC: Yes.

RD: He didn't try to hide them. He played upon them.

CAC: He was very good in that social circuit that you talked of earlier with James Gray. He was a great hit. That's why he was good on radio and TV.

RD: He read with such drama and he would do Samuel Johnson, who was his particular love, with an artificially lowered voice. He really could do it. He would call on three or four students a day. We all sat in assigned seats.

CAC: That's an older kind of pedagogy, isn't it? Now, we're informal and seek to have our students initiate.

RD: The last time I talked to him, I said, "I always think about what a great teacher you were." "Were, is right," he said. "I don't sell these days. I'm not what they want." I said, "I can't believe that." He said, "It's true." I said, "I've always been disappointed about the way my life turned out because I thought I was going to be scholar like Earl Minar." He said, "Well, yes. I taught at UCLA and Earl is a wonderful, wonderful person, but he has to be the dullest teacher who ever lived." I'm sure that's true.

CAC: You know his tragic end. He became Alzheimers very early.

RD: Very early, yes. Even as an undergraduate, we had fine teaching. I had [William] Dunn for Shakespeare; though, I should have had him for Milton. People said he had the very voice of Milton. I had Unger for Milton, who taught me something interesting . . . that you could be Jewish and teach Milton. You didn't really have to have been raised as a Christian to understand what was going on there. Unger was not a great teacher, but he was a solid teacher. I had O'Connor who was not a very good teacher. When O'Connor left, he said, "I want to go someplace where you don't get promoted by your conversation at a cocktail party."

CAC: Ah! Did you know about that aspect of the English Department, too?

RD: I didn't really know about it.

CAC: As a graduate student, you wouldn't have known that?

RD: No. No.

CAC: Other people tell those stories. It was a heavy drinking department.

RD: Yes. I remember Miss [Elizabeth] Jackson—who was not a heavy drinker. She taught a marvelous course, incidentally, in Modern Poetry. Practically anything I know about modern poetry to this day, I think I learned from Miss Jackson. A friend of mine had to see her after class. She said, "Come on down to my office." He went down and sat down. She opened her desk, and took out a bottle of sherry, and poured herself a little drink. She said, "I drink constantly, but I don't drink much." [laughter]

CAC: [laughter] That could not be said of Mr. Tate and others.

RD: No, that's right. O'Connor published a book a year, and an article a month, and a review a week, but almost nothing he published was very good except his dissertation, *Climates of Tragedy*. He was right there. He read everything and he commented on everything. He was a very nice person.

CAC: Yes, I knew Bill.

RD: I really liked him very much. He used the name Dille in a short story he wrote. I always admired that in him. [laughter]

CAC: You were certified now?

RD: I was ready to do my dissertation, which I ended up [unclear] doing because I had children and I moonlighted all over the place.

CAC: Sure, I'll bet. Then, you went to St. Olaf?

RD: I went to St. Olaf.

CAC: You taught there how long?

RD: I taught there for five years and I moonlighted there, too, because I didn't have enough money.

CAC: You moonlighted and you were working away at this dissertation?

RD: No, I didn't touch the dissertation really. I made up the thirteen incompletes I had when I left though . . . that sort of thing.

CAC: Mr. Dille.

RD: They were all kind of enough. I never got a master's degree. I never could figure out what a starred paper was; although, Monk wrote on one of my papers, "This will do for a starred paper." I passed the exam, which was the same as a qualifying exam for the Ph.D. Henry Nash Smith said I did very, very well; so, I went on for the Ph.D.

CAC: And five years at St. Olaf and, then, you went to . . . ?

RD: California Lutheran for two years. I left St. Olaf because I didn't have my degree when tenure time came up. I'd said, "Next year . . . the year after." I kept saying it all the time. One thing that happened to me at St. Olaf . . . the Carleton Library had marvelous holdings of Twentieth Century magazines; so, I went through them very carefully for anything about Garnett. It may not be a very good bibliographical search, but it really told me what the literary life of England was like in the 1820s, 1830s, and 1840s and that was a very useful thing.

CAC: Just across town.

RD: I had somebody type my dissertation and she had a very odd type style, a modern IBM type style and, then, she didn't finish it for me. She said, "I'm tired of it." It was one of the things that happened in California. Classes were out in California. I came back to Minnesota. I had telephoned IBM and found out I could rent a typewriter with this particular kind of print. I found a typist to do the rest of it while I was finishing my research. There were a half a dozen things I knew were in the Minnesota library and nowhere else. I finished it up. I left it on Unger's desk and he sent it out to the readers and set the final oral exam. I came to the exam. I flew in from California, borrowed a car from my brother-in-law, was hit by a large truck . . .

CAC: Oh!

RD: . . . [unclear] the back seat, staggered into O'Connor. He said, "Are you ready?" I told him what had happened. He said, "Are you going to be all right? Do you need any . . ." He opened up his drawer. He had pills of every color in there. It kind of scared me. [laughter]

CAC: Just take your choice.

RD: I said, "No, I'm all right." He said, "Did you proof your dissertation?" I said, "No, I didn't proof my dissertation?" He said, "Why not?" I said, "Because it was typed the morning I turned it in. If I read it through, all it would have done was to destroy me because I would have seen the typos [typographical errors]." He said, "There were twenty-five typos." I said, "It doesn't surprise me. What difference does that make now? The typos will be taken care of." He said, "The chairman of the department"—the only Medieval man, a strong Episcopalian . . . Anglican, he would prefer to be called—"is death on typos. You're going to have a very unpleasant time." I said, "Am I going to flunk?" "No," he said, "you've got the Ph.D. The readers decide that. This is [unclear] reason we do it, but we're going to do it." Nobody could have been nicer than that chairman. One reason, of course, was that I had taken, essentially, a graduate course from

him when I was a junior, Advanced [Geoffrey] Chaucer. It was a marvelous course. I was just in love with that course. Everybody else in the course had an M.A. I think he sort of admired me for my obvious interest in this sort of thing. Besides, when you've been around a long time and you come back, they say, "Gee, we must know this guy pretty well. He's probably one of our old friends. We'll get him through"—except Huntington Brown, in my prelims. Huntington Brown was known as a very unreliable member of the pre-lim [unclear] because he would ask things that couldn't be answered. He asked me, "What did [Edmund] Spenser get from the Italian epic writer, [Ludovico] Ariosto?" I said, "He might have gotten the idea of having lots and lots of different incidents." "No, no, no, no, no. There's something else he got." He wouldn't let go of that. We went on and he kept coming back and coming back to it. I really knew quite a little bit about Spenser. I had taken a course in Spenser from Brown, as a matter of fact. But, he came back to it in the end and he, finally, said, "We have to go on. I'll tell you what he learned. He learned that you could use the living ruling family in an epic and didn't have to write about the past."

CAC: Ahhh.

RD: Well, yes. Many, many years later at a cocktail party at the National Council [of the National Endowment for the Humanities], I sidled up to the president of Yale [A. Bartlett Giamatti], the man who became baseball commissioner, who was a great scholar of Italian literature and I said, "What did Spenser gain from his reading of Ariosto?" He said, "He learned the necessity of a great deal of incident." [laughter] So, I go to my grave knowing that I was not altogether wrong.

CAC: My friend, I was asked on my oral, among other things, why they voted Republican in eastern Tennessee and I didn't even know they did. That was a similar embarrassment. It turns out that eastern Tennessee is hilly, and the hill folks didn't have large plantations and didn't have slaves, and they voted Republican. Well, well, well.

Tell me how you got to Moorhead, then.

RD: One more thing . . .

CAC: All right.

RD: You know John William Ward?

CAC: Yes, indeed!

RD: He had a terrible experience in his pre-lims because . . .

CAC: Oh, my friend, I know. Go ahead.

RD: . . . [Philip] Jordan asked all such questions about Minnesota history. There was no reason for John to know about Minnesota History. He gave him a conditional. [] Hornberger was so angry—Ward was the star of my generation—that he went to the president and said, "If that condition isn't removed by fiat by your office, I am leaving this institution." It was removed.

CAC: Jordan ended up even on his final oral exam and failed it. This is the book on Jackson that came to be published and an award winner right away. That also lead to a new rule in the Graduate School that you could pass the final oral with one dissenting vote. That took a lot of politics.

RD: Really?

CAC: Yes. It always was assumed that everybody would agree—or disagree. If you had one outstanding negative vote, that was not a pass. They had to change the rule. We know John Ward—Bill Ward, as we knew him better—went on to be president of Amherst and, then, president of the Learned Society and, finally, committed suicide. He was younger than you?

RD: Oh, no. I think we must have been the same age. He'd been a captain in the Marines in the war.

CAC: I always thought of him as substantially younger than I.

RD: After I had been almost destroyed by Huntington Brown, the next questioner was Robert Moore who undertook to get me back on track.

CAC: [laughter]

RD: Do you know what he asked? He said, "Pick a decade in the Eighteenth Century and tell us what happened in it." You thought real quickly which one you knew most about and off you went. The art history person had come in late and missed the Brown one. He was my minor. He saw what was going on and he realized this was somebody they wanted to pass. [laughter] He asked me what were the connections I saw between literature and art?

CAC: Sure.

RD: Let me go back and talk about Bill Ward and all the rest of us. We were all ex-GIs and we never really amounted to much. We were really very bright and very much interested in things; but the number of scholars produced in each department was really very small.

CAC: Ward was really in American Studies. His degree was American Studies.

RD: Yes, I know. We had a lot of courses with him. I remember Warren saying one day—introducing us to *As I Lay Dying* by Faulkner; none of knew anything about Faulkner—"There have been only two good things ever written about Faulkner. One, of course, is the *Introduction to the Portable Faulkner* by Malcolm Cowley, which really brought Faulkner back." "The other," he said, "is written by [Russell F.] Roth." He just died. He was a newspaper man. He was a contemporary of ours. He was in our class. He was a jazz critic, among other things.

CAC: Heavens.

RD: He wrote something very, very . . . He wrote it in the *Minnesota Daily*—can you imagine?—or the *Ivory Tower*, I guess, it was.

CAC: What you're describing is a group of students, who knew each other, with high morale working in a department that knew it was good?

RD: Right.

CAC: The conjunction of those two things doesn't happen all the time.

RD: No. As an undergraduate, I was editor of the campus literary magazine, a magazine called *Undergrad*. I got to know an awful lot of very bright people through that.

CAC: O'Connor, himself, published on Faulkner?

RD: Yes, he did.

CAC: Well, let's get you to Moorhead.

RD: One more thing about . . .

CAC: All right.

RD: As we got older and our degrees got farther away, I was so happy to read in *Who's Who* . . . I wanted to find out where Sam Hynes got his undergraduate degree because I don't remember him after the war. He had been in the Navy program. He came with loads of credits and he got a degree right away at the University of Minnesota. So, I looked up [unclear], at the same time. I was so pleased he was covered. He got his degree about the same time I did. He's also at Princeton . . . his Ph.D.

CAC: All the names you are conjuring . . . they're all men.

RD: Yes.

CAC: [unclear] anybody in the 1950s, humanities and English would attract women.

RD: But, you see, the men because of their age dominated . . .

CAC: Because of their age and their war experience?

RD: Yes, I think so. We had some very bright women there.

CAC: But, they don't show up in your stories [unclear] first.

RD: I wanted to graduate summa cum laude. That meant I had to write a paper and have an oral examination from five people, only one from my department. There was another student who had better grades than I did—a woman. She flunked her orals. They said, "The reason for the oral exam is to discover whether you're widely educated." They asked me what magazines I read. They asked me if I liked sports. I said that I was a baseball fan and we spent much of time discussing whether Dizzy Dean or Bob Feller was the greatest pitcher. For that sort of thing, we were all primed for that.

Then, we noticed something happened—this is why I come back to this story—all of a sudden, our juniors began to show up, and we decided they were brighter than we were, and they were more single-minded. They knew exactly what they were doing to do. They had been picked out as juniors or sophomores in high school for what they were going to be; but, they didn't know anything. They were so naive and they talked nonsense a lot. That was our view of it. Jerry, Tate's friend, who I talked to every night had been captured during the war. He was Jewish. Like any smart Jewish boy, he had *P* for Protestant.

CAC: Ahhh.

RD: He said, "It didn't fool them for a minute. I was really frightened. I was a prisoner of war and they treated me all right." W. Moylan . . . thirteen days on a raft when his plane was shot down in the Pacific. W. never got his degree. It really wasn't that important—of course, he was rich. He had a great deal of money from his grandmother.

CAC: It really was the war experience that created this camaraderie with people you're talking about.

RD: Yes. Hans Ausliffe showed up in Denmark. He was younger than us. He'd been in Denmark during the Occupation. He qualified, too . . . knowing what the world was all about.

CAC: That is interesting.

RD: What's also interesting, it seems to me, is that all of that had something to do with our approach to the novel. We were all wild about . . . it was a time when more people read more

poetry more carefully than at any time. New criticism did that. You can say what you want to. I introduced [Cleanth] Brooks at the Jefferson lecture and I pointed that out. Whatever criticism there is, more people seriously read poetry in those years and loved it, than at any time before or since.

CAC: Perhaps, it was because the poetry you could read was accessible?

RD: Yes.

CAC: By the 1970s, who the hell could read it?

RD: And by the 1980s, who wanted to because it turned into all this . . . Who can read John Ashbury with any kind of delight at all? There's not any delight there at all.

CAC: It becomes so [unclear] to a tense degree.

RD: Yes. One person in our group, Kingsley Widmir, refused to register for the draft and the university treated him very badly. He was sentenced to Sandstone [Prison], which we all thought was ridiculous. He had a purple heart and a bronze star. It seemed to me, he earned the right not to register for the draft after the war if he wanted not to, without being persecuted.

CAC: I don't understand that story at all. He'd been in the war?

RD: Yes.

CAC: I thought that ended our commitment.

RD: No. They brought back the registration in one of those years.

CAC: I don't remember registering again.

RD: I don't either, but I know he refused.

CAC: Oh, my heavens! Tat's an awful story.

RD: "What is your reason?" "The Army is not a democratic institution," he said. I remember him sitting in class. Alfred Kazan was teaching it. It was on [Herman] Melville and they were doing *Bartleby the Scrivener* and . . .

CAC: Kazan here?

RD: For one summer, yes.

CAC: My, god!

RD: He was kind of a wonderful teacher.

CAC: If you could attract Kazan in the summertime, then, you really were a . . .

RD: Right. Kingsley Widmir was arguing that people could not really make a real sacrifice out of idealism. I really wanted to tell Kazan, "Watch him. He just chose to go to prison rather than register for the draft."

CAC: Ohhh! Go to Moorhead.

RD: When I came back for the examination for my Ph.D. in 1962, it was just after I had sent a letter to the board at California Lutheran telling them they should fire the president. A friend of mine and I had done it. He was an historian. Half the permanent faculty had signed the letter. They, then, responded, as church colleges do, by sending us a letter that was dated the day after Pentecost. [laughter] They were going to have a meeting, then, of all of the faculty and the board. I had to be back here.

CAC: Did the fire sit upon their tongues?

RD: We were not going to be allowed to say anything really. I came back for two reasons. I came back for my dissertation, but I also wanted to go to Mary Ellen's wedding, which I did do.

CAC: This is Mary Ellen Schmieder?

RD: Yes. That was in the afternoon and my twentieth high school class reunion was that evening, so I had a lot of good reasons to come back. I got to both of those. Naturally, when I went back, I knew . . . The day after we arrived, there was a dinner where the Board of Higher Education of the American Lutheran Church appeared and the president of our institution, who had [unclear] it, spoke and spoke. As we left, my wife said to me, "We won't be here long will we?" [laughter] By Christmas, I was deep in trouble. You can't stand for that kind of petty tyranny. I like magnificent tyranny, but petty tyranny, that's terrible.

CAC: What happened to him subsequently? He probably survived?

RD: No, he didn't. He left.

CAC: Yes.

RD: He left and we've always thought that he left because the board would not accept his condition that they fire the dean. The dean was a good man. He was by no means someone who encouraged the rebels. They wouldn't accept that because the dean was just in the process of

being named the new president of Luther College. They sort of understood [unclear] really seemed to be simpleton. I think he had laid the condition down and, then, he left.

CAC: But, Roland, here you were just barely getting your degree, non-tenured, wife and children, no prospects and you do this radical thing.

RD: There are some things you have to do. That's why I got my Ph.D. I didn't have a master's. I knew when I hit that . . . if I didn't get a Ph.D., I was done in the academic world.

CAC: How did this recommend you to Moorhead?

RD: I had lots of offers. I was something of a . . .

CAC: This is like the year 1960 what?

RD: This is 1963. I had offers from four California institutions, all of whose English . . .

CAC: The market was suddenly good, starting [unclear].

RD: All the English chairs knew about me and the presidents didn't. I came to a Moorhead whose president was John Nuemeyer. I came because John Nuemeyer was president.

CAC: How did you know him?

RD: I didn't know him. I had seen him in the halls of Folwell. He was in that marvelous junior humanities faculty . . . he, and Ray Livingston, and others like that.

CAC: I didn't know that.

RD: I'd see him there. I was struck by him, though I didn't know who he was. I didn't know who he was until an article appeared in the Minneapolis paper about his becoming dean, which was a CEO [chief executive officer], of Hibbing Junior College. Then, he went to Moorhead, and I thought, that's the kind of person I want to teach for. I don't want to teach for these terrible, terrible people.

CAC: He was a young man. That's something to have established that kind of charisma that early.

RD: Yes. He came back to Moorhead two years to give a series of lectures. Dr. [Andrew] Conté was arranging for it. He sent a student out to get him and when the student came back, having taken John and his wife to the Hotel, I heard Andrew saying, "Is he able to get about? Does he walk all right?" He was thinking that he was twenty five years old than me. He was three years older than me.

CAC: He didn't last long. You went there to teach English?

RD: Yes. He'd been there five years and he was there five more years.

CAC: Oh, he was there that long. All right.

RD: Somebody from California Lutheran, whom he had known, told him, "You made a mistake in hiring Roland Dille. He'll have you out of your . . ." We got rid of two other presidents before I left. They didn't hire anymore presidents till after I'd gone, then, at California Lutheran. One of them lasted only a day, which I do believe was a national record. [laughter]

CAC: [laughter]

RD: The other son-of-a-bitch, we had to leave to God. He took him off with a stroke the day after we appealed to the AAUP [American Association of University Professors]. That, of course, piqued John's imagination. The first day I was there, I was in his office. He had picked me out of the hall . . . Duane Scribner and I. Do you know Duane Scribner?

CAC: Oh, yes.

RD: Duane and I taught together there. He said, "Come in. I want to talk to you." He wanted to ask our advice about somebody he was hiring for the head of the campus school. John had a couple of blind spots. He had such a commitment to the liberal arts that if he saw somebody had studied Latin or Greek, that person was hired no matter what the defense. It's kind of a lovely defect on his part. John kept a copy of Voltaire's *Candide* on his desk. Every once in awhile, he'd hold it up and say, "The answer to everything is right in this book." He was really taken by that. [unclear]. The result of it all, of course, was that I got to know John very, very early and John and I agreed on practically everything there was to agree on. I was not in the habit of agreeing with administrators. But, as I told him, "After seven years in Lutheran education, it's a real joy to be teaching for a real Christian gentleman at last." We'd been talking about the way words change their meaning.

In my first year, he asked me to give a lecture because the governor and his entourage were coming up to look at our institution. He said, "We want to have a convocation. We want to have a lecture. Do a lecture on modern literature so he'll see that we're interested in that sort of thing. The governor came in half way through and I was giving my lecture.

CAC: Was this Karl Rolvaag?

RD: Yes, Karl Rolvaag. Then, Karl Rolvaag was taken over to the library where the philosophy department gave a very thorough analysis of what was wrong with our library to the point that, from that year on, we always got extra money for the library in the state system. It was terrible. Then, Frank Noyes gave an impassioned plea for more equipment for the sciences. He said,

"There's nothing here for our faculty to do any post-doctoral research." It turned out later, of course, that Frank didn't have a Ph.D. and I had to fire him. At the moment, he was your great young scholar, I'll tell you. We had dinner that night and I found myself sitting next to the administrative assistant to the governor. She asked me, "What do you think of your president?" I said, "He's the best man I've ever met in education." I didn't know that she was his mistress.

CAC: [laughter]

RD: I worked hard and I was very effective, but I do have a feeling my fortunes really began to change at that moment. [laughter]

CAC: That was a hard thing to pull off at Moorhead . . . to have a mistress?

RD: Yes. That's why he left Moorhead because he couldn't marry her. It was particularly bad because the tempo took against him altogether and over on the side of his wife, as you would expect. Rudy Perpich agreed to testify at the hearing that [unclear] to anybody who knew it at all, had failed completely and had failed. She was a wonderful woman and he was a wonderful man, but it had failed for the simple reason that so many things happened to bright young women who found that they had no place in life that matched their abilities, and to be the wife of a president is never all that happy, and to be the wife of a president like John Nuemeyer who kind of glittered and got attention all over . . .

CAC: Oh, yes, wherever he went.

RD: She simply did not give him any kind of admiration or respect, which was hard on John. That would have been all right, but it hit a real hostility. They have—thank goodness—after all of these years, come back together, and they can visit together with the children, and so on. She made a good life for herself after she left. John was so eager to get out of here. Of course, he took most of his salary with him. Sally Luther, I think, has got money. That's a very happy marriage, Sally Luther and John Nuemeyer.

CAC: This leads to your deanship and, then, presidency?

RD: Yes. I became dean in a rather odd way because the dean decided that I should be chairman of the department. Cy Kless[?] had been chairman for a number of years. He said, "I think Cy wants to retire." It turned out Cy didn't want to retire as chairman of the department. It also turned out that the English department was full of people like me who backed the president into a corner and before he got out of that meeting, he had agreed to let them have a vote, which we didn't have [unclear]. I had written, as president of the AAUP, the rule, which was that the president would ascertain the opinion of every member of the department, but that the president would make the decision, which meant when I became president, I interviewed every faculty member whenever we had an opening. That was a very good thing to do. I really knew what was going on, except, once in awhile, I'd walk in and there was no doubt who they

wanted. I always left it open because people do get bullied into being for someone they don't really like.

CAC: That's one of the most important things that a dean or a president can do is get heads and chairs who will do a good job.

RD: Yes. Of course, I'm the man who has always gotten the blame for the present situation because when they had the hearing for unionization, the labor hearing, I was the one that argued that the chairs should be in the union, be members of the union. I said, "You don't need a heavier management. If you do that, you will destroy any possibility of collegiality. It's going to be hard enough. The fact that a chair leans both ways is the only real bridge you have between a faceless administration and the faculty that's doing the work." I'm right. I was right. It would have been a lot easier to keep the chairs out, but I don't think it would have done anything for quality or for more morale.

CAC: Let's turn this conversation now. You become dean briefly and, then, president?

RD: Yes.

CAC: President when?

RD: I became president in September of 1968.

CAC: I know the story of the war protest on your campus is a very interesting one; but, I think for purposes of this interview, probably we should switch now . . . You were there from 1968 until last year?

RD: Right.

CAC: You had twenty-five years?

RD: Twenty-six years.

CAC: You became the senior president in the state university system and you became acting chancellor for a year . . .

RD: Part of a year.

CAC: . . . which would suggest that you really were not only senior but respected by your colleagues on other campuses. You were a real leader of higher education in the state.

RD: I'd like to think so but . . .

CAC: I'm saying so.

RD: All right. That's a judgment I respect on almost everything there is. [laughter]

CAC: [laughter] For twenty-five years, it gave you an insight into higher education in the state of Minnesota, including the University of Minnesota?

RD: Yes.

CAC: I think that's what we should concentrate our . . .

RD: Okay. That requires me to go back to when I was dean. Before there was a Higher Education Coordinating Board, there was an Association of Minnesota Colleges. It was for the private colleges, not the community colleges but the state colleges, and the University of Minnesota. It was a good sort of thing to have; but, what it did is, it took the responsibility for setting the PSAT [Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test], and MSAT [Minnesota Scholastic Aptitude Test], and things of that sort, which had to be administered at the same time around the state. It was responsible for doing that job as well as for certain recommendations to the legislature about scholarships. John Nuermeyer was a frequent speaker there, as he was everywhere, and it became quite clear to everybody that he really disliked the University of Minnesota. He said he didn't. His argument was always that for programs at the same level, the University of Minnesota and the state colleges should be supported in the same way; that is, there should be no reason why a student going to Moorhead State should have less available to them as an undergraduate than an undergraduate at the University of Minnesota. Now, that's a pretty good thing to argue; but, of course, what it fails to take into consideration is the complexity of budgetary constructs. There is no such thing as an Ely budget. You construct from here and there and how are you going to construct the cost of freshman English and keep it out of the graduate budget?

CAC: Yes.

RD: John was right in seeing that we were not very highly respected and John was out to see that we were.

CAC: Moorhead or the whole state system?

RD: The whole state system, but of course, it was Moorhead that he had in mind. We had in the University of Minnesota-Duluth, an institution of the same size as Moorhead and he, finally, talked the legislature into taking a look at the different kinds of support. Now, of course, Duluth has always complained bitterly about not getting its decent share of the university's budget. It turned out, they were treated rather more generously than we were, but primarily, it was in non-faculty positions. In other words, the University of Minnesota's well-known proclivity to develop bureaucracy had reached as far as Duluth. That's one of the things one might say about that, that

the University of Minnesota has always had, what you might call, third-level administrators in great numbers: directors of this and directors of that. Meeting them at meetings . . . you remembered having seen them somewhere else, but you didn't know quite what they did. They were not leaders. They were managers.

CAC: Middle managers, as we would say in the corporate world.

RD: Right. I remember the president of St. Marys taking him aside and saying, "John, you've got to quit attacking the university. People don't think it's very good." He used to talk to me at great lengths. I tried to calm him down because it seemed to me that there was more there than just that particular issue [unclear].

CAC: Sure.

RD: The university, from the time I came in, underwent a lot of changes in the presidency. That had a lot to do with . . .

CAC: You became president when [Malcolm] Moos was coming on?

RD: Moos was president. Moos was not highly interested in the legislative process. He brought to it about the same interest he brought to the campus itself.

CAC: [laughter]

RD: The story is always told that Moos would arrive in his office and read the *New York Times* and, then, head off to Lake Minnetonka to have a noon drink and never get back. In a way, of course, that's true. He had a serious problem with liquor. Everybody knew that. He liked *society* a good deal. He also had, what seemed to me and everybody else, a remarkably good lobbying staff . . . Stan Wenberg, being the chief lobbyist.

CAC: And he had Gerry Shepherd, among others, to hold the fort and manage the shop.

RD: Yes, he had good staff, right. Wenberg was a man who really did work well with the legislature. Stan Kegler carried on some of that pretty well, but Wenberg, I think, was an absolute genius at that. He never gave the impression to anybody that he had an education or anything like that, so he wasn't offensive to anybody over there. The University of Minnesota had to be very careful that it did not parade its independence.

CAC: Its constitutional autonomy?

RD: Yes. That was real, but the university also had the money so they had to be careful. I think it was 1954 that there was a real—this was long before I . . . I was still at the University of Minnesota—rebellion against the cost of the University of Minnesota in the legislature.

[End of Tape 1, Side 2]

[Tape 2, Side 1]

CAC: We were talking about Mr. Moos. He came in 1968, I think it is. [O. Meredith] Wilson was here from 1960 to 1967 and, then, you come into Moorhead in 1968; so really, you were contemporaries, in that sense.

RD: Right. Let's say that the University of Minnesota's top people did not fool around much with the Association of Minnesota Colleges. They all sent vice-presidents or deans. That wasn't so true when [C. Peter] Magrath took over. He was a great one for getting out, but without too much affect, as a matter of fact.

CAC: We'll talk about that later.

RD: Yes. I was talking about 1954 and the real feeling that the University of Minnesota was getting too big for its britches. It had not won a great championship for a number of years in football and was not to win another one until 1960—and don't think that isn't important.

CAC: You think so?

RD: Unfortunately, it is. It's important to the people you talk to on the street. I had a lot of part-time jobs. That's where I talked to people. I used to argue that, "No, we didn't have to be the best in everything; but, we were a state that was singularly blessed and we certainly owed to the national welfare doing our part in producing a piece of strong education." There were many things to be proud of in the institution at the time. The Medical School, of course, got the highest grades. The School of Engineering, I think, was highly regarded, at that time.

CAC: I think Mr. [Ray] Amberg was director of hospitals, at that time, and was a partner of Stan Wenberg's in presenting the university's case.

RD: Yes. The university, in 1954, began to emphasize agriculture all at once in its presentations. As you think back on the time, the power in the legislature rested with rural Republicans, many of them farmers.

CAC: Right down to the early 1970s.

RD: Yes. I remember Ted Mitau, when he became chancellor of the system, went around to see all of the legislators. He had gone up north and he'd visited in a very small house on a small farm where one of the leaders of the legislature lived. I remember him saying to me, "I didn't believe that Minnesota was a clean state. You would after visiting the power of the legislature and finding that they aren't getting money from anybody who doesn't [unclear] what they earn." You had [J.A.] Josefson from southwestern Minnesota in the legislature, who was one of the

people responsible for Southwest College being put in there—really a bad decision, I think as almost everybody agreed. Then, the university seemed to have suggested its superiority . . . the decision making of putting Morris in right after that . . . these two places very close together. You had the man from Brainerd, the most powerful member of the legislature for many years, finally defeated on the abortion . . .

CAC: People often talk about [Gordon] Rosenmeier from Little Falls.

RD: Rosenmeier . . . Little Falls, I'm sorry. Yes, he was defeated by Stephen Wenzel.

CAC: Rosenmeier was there for years, and years, and years.

RD: And he was so powerful and he was a great admirer of John Nuemeyer. John, I remember, corrected him once in a meeting for his use of a word. He said, "You talk about class size. Are there any moral imperatives governing that?" "Well," said John, "let's take a look at that phrase moral imperative. It was first used to mean . . ."

CAC: [laughter]

RD: He said, "No, there is no moral imperative." [laughter] Rosenmeier liked it.

CAC: Isn't moral imperative [unclear]?

RD: Yes, [unclear]. John pointed that out. Rosenmeier liked people who knew what they were talking about. I remember the first time I testified before the legislature in 1966.

CAC: When you were dean?

RD: I was dean. It was a night that our Center for the Arts was being inaugurated so that John couldn't come down. He sent me down. I didn't really know very much. I testified and Peter Popovich, who was a member of the board was there; he'd been in the Senate for years. [James] Nickerson from Mankato didn't know something that he was asked, but he made up an answer. Afterwards, in the hall, Peter Popovich grabbed him by the lapel and said, "Nickerson, you're a goddamned idiot. Never make up an answer. Those guys are so much smarter than you that they'll catch you at . . ." [laughter]

CAC: [laughter]

RD: "There's nothing wrong with saying, 'I don't know. I'll find out. I'll get back to you tomorrow morning.' That's what you do when you don't know the answer to a question." The university, of course, because of its very complexity was frequently thought to be less than fully honest in its presentations. I always thought it was probably about as honest as it could be

because I do think the budget is immensely complicated. You could make 100 decisions on what you charge here or there.

CAC: Yes, [unclear].

RD: Right, and all of which are different.

CAC: Then, you have the mixture of graduate, and professional, and undergraduate. Although, the legend has it that Mr. [William] Middlebrook, who was a real genius at this, deliberately created a budget that nobody could understand, except himself and Mr. Rosenmeier.

RD: [laughter] Yes, I know. When we went before the legislature, our business chancellor said, "For God's sake, remember that you can't say that these figures are absolutely accurate. The budget is not that sort of thing. We get something from here, and we get something from here, and we get something from here, and we put it all together, and we divide it up as well as we can, and that's how we do it. That's the only way we can do it. We have to [unclear] that we know what we're talking about; but, don't tell them something they won't believe, that is not an artificial construct."

CAC: If you're presenting the budget for Moorhead, for example, which you probably don't directly . . . it was for the whole system, right?

RD: Yes.

CAC: If you were, the overhead on research grants would not be a major item, for example? For the university, in the 1960s and 1970s, overhead on research grants is just an enormous mushy figure?

RD: Right.

CAC: It's from private foundations. It's from eight federal bureaucracies, etcetera, etcetera. You're describing a reality for the university's budget certainly, yes.

RD: There was reason to emphasize the agricultural part of it, but, of course, agriculture became less important and even the rural legislators who retained some of their power . . . There are still very powerful rural legislators though the power of the vote has switched to the metropolitan area. When you moved from Rosenmeier to the St. Paul legislator, now dead, frequently thought of as us the best floor man . . .

CAC: Nick Coleman?

RD: . . . Nick Coleman, that's the big switch, I think, right there. You have some power now and then from areas as far away as Mankato and St. Cloud, but they are pretty much thinking in metropolitan terms.

CAC: In suburban terms, yes.

RD: The farm thing doesn't really count for an awful lot.

CAC: I'm told that when—let me check with you—this transition takes place in the early 1970s with the reapportionment of the state legislature and it's there that the suburban and metropolitan legislators are empowered and that changes things. Is that your sense from looking at it from Moorhead?

RD: That's right. Some people have earned a certain amount of power even though they represent the rural areas, but there are not as many of them. There is somebody like Dean Johnson who's fairly important and . . . It's hard to come up with a lot of them.

CAC: Is it fair to say that, in the 1960s and 1970s, the conservative rural Republican senators still have a great confidence in the University of Minnesota?

RD: I think so, yes. Like me, we had always seen the university there as something that was full of good things for the people. When you put with that the fact that a declining agriculture was likely to lead to a real decline in outstate Minnesota—I use that term which I like better than greater Minnesota—unless all sorts of technological advances could make another Glencoe-Hutchinson or a Dassel, for instance, which has sixteen manufacturing companies, something like that. Some may have only three or four people. They do docks. They do all sorts of things. Those things, for a long time, were thought to arrive from the University of Minnesota. I think that the sudden develop of technical schools in the 1960s was an attempt by the state of Minnesota to provide that kind of assistance closer to home. It hasn't been all that successful in doing that. What it has been successful in doing is producing certain kinds of workers who could work in those industries, but I don't think it has done very much.

CAC: It also created a system of competition for the educational dollar.

RD: Oh, yes, yes, yes. And a bad kind, too, because they were locally run but financed by the state and the feds. The reputation of the University of Minnesota as a good and useful place still exists, but it's been shaken. It's been shaken, I think, partly from some of its mistakes but partly because of unfair advantages taken of it by other places, including the state colleges and state universities.

CAC: Why do you say unfair advantage?

RD: Saying things about the University of Minnesota that reflect badly on it in order to advance our agenda. Now, that's particularly true at Mankato and St. Cloud.

CAC: Say more. Tell me . . . I don't understand that.

RD: Mankato hungers to have doctorates.

CAC: Oh, I see.

RD: One of the ways of having doctorates is to point out the University of Minnesota does a terrible job of preparing doctoral students for certain kinds of jobs . . . the practitioner doctor's degree, for instance, by which is meant mainly, of course, the doctor of education.

CAC: Ahhh.

RD: There's a great problem with the University of Minnesota School of Education, which was a very good school, a very good school. It has chased after as many fads as most. It has taken less seriously the education of teachers than it has the pursuit of strange knowledge.

CAC: And deliberately chose that path several years ago?

RD: Yes. Oh, yes, right. Yes, not very many years ago, maybe as recently as six years ago, 70 percent of the University of Minnesota School of Education's faculty said they thought they had plenty of interchange with the public schools. Well, maybe they did, but they probably didn't.

CAC: The state system derives out of a state teacher's college system where the training of teachers is a primary mission, but that fades also in Moorhead, and St. Cloud, and Mankato in the 1960s and 1970s or not?

RD: Surely, one of the great changes in the state universities has been the opening up of a whole variety of career opportunities for bright young women so that you have them going into accounting rather than elementary teaching. Another thing, of course, is it makes a lot of difference that the state of Minnesota is not really very generous when it comes to funding public schools so that you make do with many fewer teachers than you need. Teachers stay on a long time. The pension plan isn't the greatest in the world, by any means, and there just aren't very many openings and we tend to graduate more teachers than we need. In some places, this means that you are graduating some people who maybe shouldn't have gotten into the program. I don't think that's true at the institution I know best where we seem to be producing very bright young teachers at every level.

CAC: And can find jobs for them?

RD: Three years ago—the last time I have this kind of anecdotal figure—there were no openings in an elementary school within 150 miles of Moorhead. But, they do other things. They go to California, and they go to Montana, and they go to North Dakota. We have been trying to cut back on the number. It is some kind of a commentary that should be listened to by people, who criticize the schools, that an awful lot of young people want to be teachers. They have had models that have suggested to them that that's a good life and a useful life.

CAC: But, it does mean that the mission of the state universities and the University of Minnesota had to change during your tenure up there?

RD: Yes. So what are we? I suppose a third of our students still go into education, about a third go into business, and a third into other pursuits, many of which are vocational, social work, and so on. The pure liberal arts graduate is something of a rarity. Liberal arts graduates really were people preparing themselves to teach high school, but hoping they wouldn't have to. That's where English teachers came from.

CAC: From this perspective, how does a university change its image? You spoke of problems and it's not only losing athletic teams but the other kinds of difficulty. Can you explore that more?

RD: Let's take a look at education. There have not been a great number of University of Minnesota graduates in most school systems I know. That's because of the strong hold of the old teachers' colleges and, all along, of the church colleges.

CAC: Ah, of course.

RD: Most school boards with a majority of the people being Lutheran would rather hire a graduate from Concordia of average ability than a good student from Moorhead. That's one of the facts of life. As a matter of fact, I have a whole sermon on this which I'd be glad to give you sometime. One of the problems that one sees as one looks at the University of Minnesota is that it is entering into—I'm glad that [Nils] Hasselmo, who you might think would fall for this, hasn't—an unholy alliance with the private colleges so that with a merger, you now have what Bob Carruthers warned us about eight years ago.

CAC: Who is Bob Carruthers?

RD: Former chancellor of the state system. He wasn't there long. Eight years ago, he said, "We have to worry about one great problem and that is a line being drawn between the University of Minnesota and the private colleges on the one side and everybody else on the other side, including the state colleges. It will mean that we are the institution for grunts." And that is what the merger aims at doing—not deliberately. When Roger Moe says that the great effect of merger is to make it easier to transfer from technical colleges to universities, he's not talking about increasing quality. He's talking about the fact that what happens in the technical colleges is not

altogether that different from what happens in the first two years of a state university. The fact is that a student with two years of accounting at a technical college cannot handle the third year of accounting at Moorhead State. I haven't been able to get it through his thick head; I'm sorry, but I haven't. So, they're going to upgrade the technical colleges. What you have, as a result of the merger then, is a great change in the pattern of education with increasingly weaker liberal arts courses, general education courses . . .

CAC: Throughout that whole combine system?

RD: . . . being the lot of everybody who is not in the state colleges and, soon thereafter, in the state colleges. The idea that you are going to pay off on the number of students who graduate means that you no longer will flunk students. It also means that if you take in badly prepared students, which you will have to do, from Moorhead Technical College, you'll have to see they graduate in two years whether they know anything or not.

CAC: This is leading back—if I can make an inference—to the University of Minnesota and the good, elite private colleges, the church colleges, and others being a quality elite, right?

RD: Yes.

CAC: And the rest of the system fulfilling another kind of lesser function?

RD: That's right. Of course, Metropolitan [State University] is talking about that function as though it had something to do with Moorhead State. We're going to be judged by Metropolitan's idea that every man a king or every man an M.A.

CAC: You spoke of Mr. Hasselmo not buying into this . . .

RD: Yes, he has not accepted the idea that greater amounts of state aid should go to private colleges. He has opposed that resolutely, despite his own private college background.

CAC: Ah, so it is budgeting? It comes back to budgeting?

RD: Of course. Of course. Why should more state money go to Concordia, under whatever ruse, to support a 15 to 1 ratio before more money comes to Moorhead State to relieve us of a 23 to 1 student/teacher ratio? That's my simpleminded argument.

CAC: Sure.

RD: So, the private colleges have taken to talking about state subsidy of the state colleges. We're not subsidized. We are state institutions. That's a very great difference.

CAC: Now, we have just recently taken on the former president of St. Olaf [Melvin George] to be a development officer for the University of Minnesota . . . outreach officer. That doesn't suggest to you a coalition?

RD: I don't mind some coalition between St. Olaf and the University of Minnesota, Carleton and the University of Minnesota, but how about St. Thomas and the University of Minnesota? St. Thomas is a kind of scandal and name the rest of the colleges.

CAC: That's a very successful scandal.

RD: Of course, it is . . . so is [unclear] University. What happens in the way of education? Not very much. Macalester, for instance, which gets by mostly on brag, is not an institution that challenges its students very much.

CAC: Let's go back—you're president in the late 1960s and Moos comes in the late 1960s—and kind of go through your perception of not only Stan Wenberg and Stan Kegler but the presidents and how they related to the state of Minnesota and to the state legislature from your perspective.

RD: One thing the University of Minnesota has always done is to try to develop outstate some kind of support system. When I was on the student senate at the University of Minnesota, back in 1948, they developed something called the Committee of Eighty-Seven [counties]. Garrison Keillor can name them all in order.

CAC: [laughter]

RD: We'd all go back home and organize support groups for the University of Minnesota. It's always tried to do that, but not very easily. The problem is this, that you send somebody out to Moorhead, a graduate who becomes a dentist, a doctor, a lawyer, a teacher, whatever, and as soon as that person lands and gets his first paycheck, Concordia College is after that money. When the second paycheck comes, Moorhead State is after that money and it is good business practice—what better reason than that?—for supporting your local people. The University of Minnesota's alumni support does get very quickly diluted around the state.

CAC: Ahhh, I see.

RD: Now, that there is going to be in every single senatorial district a merged institution, that will count, too.

CAC: This begins in the 1970s, doesn't it, really?

RD: Yes, it's the 1960s that all the great growth takes place. It's early in the 1960s that the community colleges become . . .

CAC: But, it's in the 1970s that the state legislature increasingly appropriates monies for the other systems in competition to the University of Minnesota?

RD: It's a scholarship program which goes back to the, I think, late 1970s, where, naturally, a disproportionate amount of the money for scholarship does go the private colleges because the tuition is so high. During this time, tuition at the state universities went from 18 percent of the cost of instruction to 49 percent.

CAC: Explicate that a bit more.

RD: The state would provide 81 percent of the cost of instruction. Now, it provides 51 percent.

CAC: Okay.

RD: [J.S.] Carlson, former president of Gustavus [Adolphus College] and, later, head of the Private College League, and I conducted a series of debates—just by accident; it wasn't quite the Douglas/Lincoln [Stephen Douglas / Abraham Lincoln] debates—on tuition costs. He always held out that students should pay 50 percent of the costs of their education in a public school because then they'd appreciate it more. Well, I pointed out that they couldn't afford that. Now, they're doing it. That's hurting Moorhead State quite a lot because, with a very low tuition institution across the river, students, in great numbers, are taking those dreadful classes over there rather than going to Moorhead State.

CAC: Let's come back to your perception of the changing mission of the University of Minnesota but also of the various presidents. You come in at the same time as Moos and, then, we have ten years of Magrath, etcetera. Can you say something about how the presidency looks from the outside? If that's not a fair question, we won't pursue it.

RD: Let me tell you who I admired. Who I admired quite a bit was Ken Keller. He didn't know how to do it, but he knew what a university was all about and he was willing to lay it out there; but, life was much too complicated—it's always too complicated for a scientist—and he didn't know how people reacted.

CAC: You're suggesting that neither Moos nor Magrath before him had the same vision or . . . ?

RD: Magrath really had a lot of the attributes for a good president . . . his view of general education as the background, his view of the relationship of an institution to its community. All along here, you get more and more the idea of very close relationships between business schools, engineering schools, and the local enterprises.

CAC: Ahhh.

RD: There are . . . North Carolina, the University of North Carolina, and the chambers of commerce sort of own everything in common. The University of North Carolina is a good . . .

CAC: Research triangle there.

RD: Yes, it's a triangle there. I thought that Magrath understood all of that very well. He was not a very effective salesman for it because he seemed, to almost everybody, to be pretty silly. I'm sorry. If I can talk about one man drinking too much, I can talk about another loving too well. It was generally thought that when he turned over the governance of the university to the director of the Union Bowling Alley, that something was lost in the way of vision.

CAC: That's a reference that . . . I know lots of references . . . I don't know that it means.

RD: His wife was the assistant director of games in the Union.

CAC: I see.

RD: We almost hired her at Moorhead State. We hired a man from Duluth and he had his choice of two people to take. He didn't take Diane [Skomars Magrath], which, no doubt, saved my marriage. [laughter] You don't really publish in national magazines, even of low circulation, the Peter/Diane letters.

CAC: Were those published?

RD: Yes, in the Associated Governing Board publication.

CAC: I am learning things.

RD: They ought to be looked at by a future . . .

CAC: How on earth did that happen?

RD: He submitted them to show how important a wife's support is and how useful her insights are in governing a university.

CAC: In what publication did these appear?

RD: It's the journal of the Associated Governing Boards, AGB.

CAC: Governing boards of what?

RD: That's just what it's called . . . American Association of Governing Boards. Robert Gale, formerly of Carleton, was head of that group for a number of years. He's now retired. One of our board members was at the meeting of the Associated Governing Boards in San Francisco and he was sitting next to two board members from the regents. One of them poked the other one and said, "Hey! there's our former president." He looked and it was Diane. What I'm saying is that though we all know better than this, because Magrath was not a negligible person, you can't afford to come across as a wimp. The question is, how can anybody who was happily married to Coleman ever marry Peter Magrath. It's a question that just naturally occurs to all sorts of people.

CAC: This is perceived by informed citizenry generally but, therefore, by the legislature?

RD: Yes. I'm meaner-spirited and more informed than most, so you'll have to keep from generalizing too much on that.

CAC: [laughter] Yes.

RD: The University of Minnesota has to have somebody who comes across as a substantial person. There was a time when that substance was really there, I think in [Guy Stanton] Ford, and it was there in [Lotus] Coffman, and it seemed to be in whoever succeeded Coffman.

CAC: [James Lewis] Morrill?

RD: No. Between them there was somebody from the Ag School.

CAC: Yes, Walter Coffey during the war.

RD: Just during the war years, yes. Morrill was not a substantial person, but he had a sort of courtliness about him. Courtliness is the wrong word; but, he was a man who acted appropriately and I think that counted. You have to remember that in the 1940s when you walked into the legislature, you walked into a number of people who were prepared to be impressed by the University of Minnesota. Minnesota is *the* great institution! It no longer seems to be. Now, you can find all sorts of reasons for that, but certainly it has something to do with the loss of faith in American institutions generally and certainly it has something to do with a greater willingness to tell all and make harsh judgments about leaders.

CAC: This is accelerating starting in the mid 1970s, isn't it?

RD: Right.

CAC: If it isn't war, it's Watergate. Then, it [unclear].

RD: After Nixon . . . that's an easy thing to point to but . . .

CAC: It's more than symbolic.

RD: . . . it's almost a sufficient reason for it happening. You get Keller in and Keller does a couple of silly things, like not saying, "My god! what are you doing over at that house [Eastcliff]? I'm going to have somebody's head for this." He attempts to defend that in a way that seems droit de seigneur-ish . . . this is his right to do. So, he said, "But, don't you understand that we serve 300 meals a year there?" to which my nephew, who was in the house and had four kids said, "President Keller, we don't ever have any company and we serve 6,000 meals a year in our kitchen." [laughter]

A few years ago, testifying to the legislature, one of my predecessors talked about various comparisons and the way in which they tended not to produce much in the way of information. You can compare faculties or results and all of that . . . that's a very complicated thing. "Oh!" said one of the legislators, "the University of Minnesota wants to compare itself with everybody." They were doing a lot things on salaries, and support, and so on. When I got up, I said, "You have to realize you are talking to the state university system and about the University of Minnesota. The sad fact is that for the last twenty-five years, every year, the University of Minnesota has been a little weaker and every year, without any exception, Moorhead State University has been a little stronger. That sounds like a silly thing to say but, essentially, that's true." They wanted to know why it was true and I said, "We've got certain advantages in the way we use our money. There really hasn't been enough money for a place like the University of Minnesota to get to be better." It really has to be all things to all people and we don't—and it's full of dumb people.

CAC: Say something more about that . . . that we have two diverse constituencies at the University of Minnesota?

RD: What can you drop . . . certainly, somebody else will pick it up. You can drop some things because nobody thinks you need them. You can reduce the Classics, and drop Scandinavian Languages, and not have Italian and the Italian Institute, but they don't take much money. All the things that take money have large groups of vocal supporters saying, "There goes the university again getting rid of what we really need in the state of Minnesota." Meanwhile, of course, nothing is . . .

CAC: By that do you mean the professional schools, elite graduate programs?

RD: Right, or elite master's programs . . . social work, for instance [unclear]. Touch the social work program in the University of Minnesota and forty people in Stearns County bleed. It seems to them that's the sort of thing the University should be doing, something that has immediately impact on the citizenry.

CAC: Maybe we come back to Keller . . . he was committing to focus and willing to trim some programs which were peripheral and that some other people could do better?

RD: And it all came across as . . . some used the phrase, hocus pocus. Another thing that has to be remember is that the University of Minnesota has a faculty is not terribly supportive of leadership. How can it be? You're hired because you are free-standing independent thinkers . . . thinkers, first of all. You meet your classes . . . sure, somebody arranges them but, in a way, it's you and the class and the registrar is only a little shadow there that makes it possible. A good faculty is made up of people who, by one definition of the word, are entrepreneurs. If it weren't that way, you wouldn't have very much exciting going on in the classroom, or in the laboratories, or in the library. But, it does make them very hard to lead and it makes it very hard for them to see anybody else's rights in the matter except their own and the people they come together with.

CAC: I think you spoke earlier on tape—I forget—that, at Moorhead, you have no local board of directors, or regents, or whatever you call them—there is for the system—and that that removes one constituency that you did not have to deal with at Moorhead and that you resisted an advisory board? Could you say a bit more about that?

RD: The trouble with an advisory board is that an advisory board, essentially, would have no power. An advisory board made up of leading citizens, unless the president chose them himself, would tend to be tolerant of general education and terribly committed to a fifth year in accounting. Now, a fifth year in accounting may very well be needed. Under the merger, of course, we're lucky to have three years in accounting coming down the road. It does seem to me that what that local committee tends to become is a committee for developing support locally and from the legislature . . . consider our faculty as against your faculty. We've got extraordinarily bright, able, publishing people who teach twelve hours a quarter year, after year, after year and do like to define a degree, a major, because they think they have more skill in doing that than anybody else around and to say, "You're doing very well here." You threw away most of them by getting a union so unions have no opinions—the senate does, at least. Now, we're going to bring in this outside group to tell us what . . . I may be wrong because when Carruthers—it was Carruthers—as chancellor put together what was called the Q-Seven Committee, made up of all sorts of lay people telling us what we ought to do, the faculty by and large bought that. It broke my heart. I saw all the things I might have done if I hadn't been so careful about the faculty's feelings being pushed about by somebody who was not an authority on anything.

CAC: Do you have any perception from your corner of the state of the role of the Board of Regents in the University of Minnesota?

RD: Magrath, I think, started something—I understand he did it; it might have been earlier—that really has hurt the university and that is, allowing vice-presidents to report in some things to the board. That, I think, was a real mistake. They are *his* vice-presidents, the president's vice-presidents. They report to him. To by-pass the president, of course, is to suggest the president is less than the director as far as the director of anything. Then, of course, some really awful things have happened with the Board of Regents. Here again, Roger Moe's insistence that Stan

Sahlstrom be on the board boggles the mind—not if you know Roger but . . . The idea that a man absolutely committed from its very beginning to a branch of the university should take his place among the layman whom the board represents is an impossibility.

CAC: We remind the listener that Sahlstrom was, whatever his title, head of Crookston for a number of years.

RD: Yes. He ended up in the position called chancellor. He was a provost. He should not be on that board anymore than I should be on the state board—whatever it's called now. Then, the new system, which is meant to dig up the best candidates, has scarcely worked any better than the old system.

CAC: How do you account for that? That was supposed to be a great reform. You're talking about the selection of regents.

RD: I account for it in part because a man I admire—again extravagantly—Elmer L. Andersen, has in his old age grown polite. Of course, he was a polite governor and that's why he only lasted one term

CAC: He only lost by ninety-one votes the second time around.

RD: I know. He ought to, I think, now and then, ask some tougher questions. I sat in on a hearing once. He knows what he is . . . *the Minnesotan*.

CAC: And he really is.

RD: And he doesn't want to act as though he knows that—I mean, take advantage of it. What's Wendell Anderson doing on that committee? Do you realize some of the lawyers you have in Minneapolis who would make wonderful members of that board? There's Wendell who was a good governor but a bad senator—he wasn't really much of a senator [unclear]; he didn't have a lot of time—and an average lawyer.

CAC: He was a good hockey player.

RD: A good hockey player, yes. His life has not quite paid off with what he reverts to. It's hard to forget the Olympics. I don't suppose any of us ever would, unless we got exactly what we wanted out of the rest of our lives and he hasn't. He should have been the athlete dying young.

CAC: Yes. I hesitate to say this because, then, it turns the conversation but some people have observed that the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota—not universally; there are

obviously very talented and committed persons—tend to represent what they perceive to be their own constituencies to the university rather than the university to . . .

RD: Right.

CAC: Would that be an accurate assessment from your point of view?

RD: Very much so. That's the opinion of the recent chair who was not above representing special beliefs if not special interests. She really accused the board of not being people that think of the whole system.

CAC: Yes.

RD: You often find that. I've worked for a lot of boards; I've worked with hundreds of board members. I seen it happen but it's a little easier for a board with seven institutions. It was a good decision, made years ago, not to have a local member appointed. What's happened, of course, is the governors are now appointing local members and they happen to find it a little bit hard. There used to be what was called resident director.

CAC: How is the board for the state system, now the new coordinated system, appointed?

RD: I don't know. The governor will appoint. There won't be any legislative election. There's another process and I forget what it is.

CAC: Now, we have a screening for the Board of Regents at the University of Minnesota but still, finally, it's a political decision by legislative district with, then, some at-large.

RD: That happened in the last election when somebody got elected and somebody didn't on a matter of pure politics, apparently. Pinky McNamara didn't get elected.

CAC: Well, and for other reasons.

RD: Yes.

CAC: It also has been observed—I'm not saying as an historian that I fully agree with it now, but I'm reporting some other conversations—that the central weakness of both Moos and Magrath invited the regents to play a more activist role in internal governance than would have been otherwise the case.

RD: I think that's right. Both of them should have said, "No, my vice-president is not even going to come to this meeting let alone talk to you." Then, that would have been it. They did start managing this, that, and the other thing.

CAC: Are there other reflections about the role of the University of Minnesota in the larger context of higher education that you wish to share?

RD: No. I am . . .

[End of Tape 2, Side 1]

[Tape 2, Side 2]

RD: The fact that Minnesota is a very high tax state makes it very difficult to argue for more support of institutions that are really badly supported.

CAC: Yes.

RD: How can you argue for more when there . . . ?

CAC: We probably support higher education in all of its forms, per capita and per capita income, higher than most other states.

RD: It's interesting . . . the legislature in passing the merger and lecturing all of us about duplication managed to do one thing in the last two years . . . to establish two more four-year colleges: Metropolitan and Crookston. None of that makes any sense to me. I understand why there's Metropolitan.

CAC: Over institutionalized for the state of Minnesota's resources?

RD: Yes. So why are we adding more and, then, lecturing about having too many? There are an awful lot of simple answers out there that find adherence very easily. Sometimes, I wish that Roger Moe was smart enough to be a Machiavellian. I think he just stumbles into destruction.

CAC: Roger Moe is your representative?

RD: No. No, nearby.

CAC: He's nearby.

RD: I wish I could give you some insight, but I don't have any insights. It's interesting . . . sitting here and looking out this eighth floor window . . . it's kind of a moving experience for me to see it all out there. I don't recognize much of it.

CAC: The move to the West Bank itself occurred after you left us.

RD: If I lean over here, I can certainly see the top of the Student Union where I used to a sandwich man before I got drafted.

CAC: You can see that lovely new art gallery.

RD: Oh, yes? Oh, I thought it was something they were working on. I see, that's it.

CAC: [laughter]

RD: Suddenly, I recognize it now. That, of course, is something else where the university has problems and that is, a desire not to be behind times in anything—including the pursuit of folly.

CAC: Every building we built was behind the times, including the one we're sitting in here. We moved over here in the mid 1960s. It was known once as a high-rise basement and that's the way I've always felt about it. It's just very psychologically constraining. So, that's really a breath of fresh air to be ahead. It's the only time we've been ahead of the times architecturally, right?

RD: Yes, except that I'm so dubious about much of modern architecture. Most modern architecture [unclear] has been stifling because it never got away from the past far enough. There are ways of getting away from the past and not denying the past. London is the perfect example of a place that has no buildings of any height that are worth admiring and New York [unclear]. They have a few there that are worth admiring, I think, but there are an awful lot that aren't.

What I meant by that is simply that there's going to be some loss of respect for an institution that drops its great humanities requirement. I have talked, in my lifetime, to a great many people I knew well who had no intellectual pretensions at all and who marveled at Voltaire, and [Fyodor] Dostoevsky, and [Leo Nikolayevich] Tolstoy and were proud to have read them because they took the humanities course.

CAC: Or [Ralph Waldo] Emerson and [Walt] Whitman?

RD: Yes, but, after all, [Richard] Leppert says that he finds Patsy Cline has more to say than Emerson. He took several classes from me at Moorhead State. I didn't know he was going to become . . .

CAC: Let me put it to you this way: the change in the humanities program came from the faculty and not from any administration?

RD: I know. It came from a faculty that is full of people who are terribly modern, but not very scholarly and who are acting upon some premises that one can understand and one can even defend one having but one ought not to act on. I mean, the people excluded is a continuing

tragedy in this country—the excluded peoples—and to define them as the others is perfectly understandable; but, to go on from there and to decide that a work need not be great because greatness is impossible to define and that it need not say anything well but have a little aesthetic dimension or resonate in your reflections is not the answer to including people. That's another act of exclusion. I look at the sixteen names in Black Studies out here—I was really amazed to see that many people—and I think about a person in Hispanic Studies who was a great star down here as a student, and came to Moorhead State, and who described us in a local publication as racist—which we may be but not by any description he gave. He was a vicious, mean-spirited person who set out to make his class angry and reactive. I got this from a couple of students, who are so [unclear] politically correct that I shudder to speak in front of them, who told me that he was dreadful. That's the sort of thing . . .

CAC: These are [unclear].

RD: I live in a country full of victims. I don't believe in victimization; I believe in empowerment. I'm an old-timer in that. In my work that I'm now considering doing, Retreat from Excellence: the Decline of Education in Minnesota in the 1980s and 1990s . . . [laughter] I'm not really working on it. It's just my famous Chapter 7. When I get mad at somebody, I say, "You're going in Chapter 7."

CAC: Seriously, are you working on this? You come to Wilson Library.

RD: I keep throwing some things in a file from time to time on this.

CAC: Oh, but this is the important book or extended essay is really what it is.

RD: That's really what it is. I have to be careful about riding hobby horses—or, maybe, I don't.

CAC: No! No! No! Now, is the time.

RD: My favorite character in all of literature is Samuel Johnson who knew his way around a hobby horse better than anybody I ever saw. [laughter]

CAC: Now, that you're retired and in vigorous and better health, now is the time to go to it.

RD: Ah, if I can just get away from other things I'm doing. I've become a scholar.

CAC: You have to write a book on Dassel . . . that's all right.

RD: Yes, that's right.

CAC: Except you're going to beat me to my book on Blue Earth.

RD: You know who wrote a book on his home township . . . John Tunheim [*Scandinavian Saga: Pioneering in Newfolden, Marshall County, Minnesota - 1885-1905*].

CAC: I don't know that.

RD: He's the man that [Senator Paul] Wellstone just picked to nominate for the federal court. He's Humphrey's [Hubert H. Humphrey III] deputy.

CAC: And he's written a township history?

RD: That's what I was told. I talked him, and he sent me a copy of it, and it's really the Swedish immigrants in the township.

CAC: That's all right.

RD: There weren't anybody but Swedes living there. I'm glad to see a man going to the federal court who at least thought it worthwhile getting together the stories and facts about his township.

CAC: Are there others doing this kind of local history?

RD: On townships . . . no. Townships don't lend themselves to this kind of . . .

CAC: I mean local history as you and I are kind of thinking of it.

RD: Whether there is anybody doing it with any kind of intellectual context [unclear]—I claim that for myself— . . .

CAC: I do.

RD: You, of course, you have the greatest one in the world . . . in this country anyway. I don't know.

CAC: I'm just gathering wool now that maybe it might be fun to get four or five of us, and have extended chapters, and write a book on five different localities.

RD: Yes.

CAC: I suspect they'd all be outstate, which would be fine.

RD: There have been things like that . . . not of that sort exactly. One knows a lot of biography where each of the biographies, short ones, tend to cast some sort of light on a central theme. I can't even think of an example, [unclear] examples. I've got to do my biography of [unclear], my son's biography, which I'm adding to.

CAC: I don't know what that means.

RD: I thought I had told you. I'm sorry. I'm not thinking of [unclear] name. [laughter] That won't drop far. It won't hit anything when you drop it. He is the first settler in Clay County, in a way . . . perhaps, the first settler.

CAC: Your son worked on this?

RD: The family hired him when he was a lawyer in town, and not doing much, to do write the biography, which he did.

CAC: Oh, what fun.

RD: It was a pretty good biography. He had, of course, fifty years of journals. The journals weren't much, but there's no journal that you can't get something out of. The old man had written a lot of letters. He died in 1913. He arrived in 1859. As soon as it was done, the granddaughter said, "Oh, we want this to be published by somebody." I said, "Get it published by the Clay County Historical Society. You'll have to pay for it, but it's well worth their . . ." "No, no. I want the Minnesota Historical Society to publish it." I brought it down to Jean Brookins and she agreed to send it out. They said, what was later said by the North Dakota Institute of Regional Studies, that this is essentially a history that the family would enjoy. He is not in himself terribly important though he was involved in important things; but, it would be publishable if a context were developed . . . the history of agriculture in the Red River Valley, the Farmers Alliance Party, that sort of thing.

CAC: Ahhh.

RD: My son, by this time, had moved to Venezuela without a book anywhere near him that he could use; so, I said, "I'll do your research assistant thing."

CAC: Oh, how interesting.

RD: I can't stop. It is so fascinating.

CAC: Ohhh, isn't it though?

RD: You realize how long it's been since I did my dissertation and no systematic research since then.

CAC: Yes, it's exhilarating!

RD: It's like that little cookie in [unclear] where if he'd eaten them all instead of thinking about the path . . . Yes, and I keep finding out things and making connections that nobody else has ever realized.

CAC: Bravo.

RD: Then, of course, I spend an inordinate amount of time chasing down a very small fact. That's defensible if you're going to use it because you've got to be right; but, if you're going to ignore it, then it really doesn't pay, does it?

CAC: I have the same complaint, Roland. Many of these tapes are being transcribed and, then, I'm thrown back to be the most primitive research assistant trying to find out how to spell all those damned names.

RD: Oh, yes.

CAC: You've thrown out twenty-five names that I will not be able to spell. I'll have to send them to you.

RD: Yes, okay.

CAC: This might be a good place to say, "So long for now" on the tape. We've come back to a point of shared enthusiasm. There was a low point in our conversation, trying to look at the University of Minnesota and higher education generally and that's not a happy topic these days. You were very happy when you were a undergraduate and graduate. There's real enthusiasm.

RD: Yes, I can't deny that.

CAC: Then, we kind of slipped away into a trough, right? Now, we're ending on a shared enthusiasm, so let's quit.

[End of Tape 2, Side 2]

[End of the Interview]

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