

## W. Phillips Shively

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**Interview with W. Phillips Shively**

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

**Interviewed on July 5, 1994  
University of Minnesota Campus**

W. Phillips Shively           - WPS  
Clarke A. Chambers         - CAC

CAC: I am interviewing W. Phillips Shively of the Political Science Department. I'm Clarke Chambers, the chief interviewer for this series. The date is July 5. The recording is being made in 833 Social Science.

Phil, why don't you start out by saying something about your early interest in political science, your graduate work, your teaching at Oregon, Yale, and then your coming to Minnesota.

WPS: Actually, I was an English major as an undergraduate and [President] John Kennedy got me very excited in politics. I spent a junior year in Germany and read all the American papers I could while I was there, naturally, and just read and delighted in John Kennedy's press conferences, which seemed very exciting to me. I came back determined to join the State Department and change the direction of American foreign policy. So, I switched over to political science. I had completed my English major—it was easier than changing majors—but switched for graduate school. I concluded by the end of my graduate studies that (a) the State Department is a pretty stodgy place—it was very difficult to change—and (b) that I just really liked what I was doing in political science; so, I continued with that. My speciality in political science evolved to be statistical study of elections, especially historical elections, and with a stronger emphasis on Europe than the U. S. When I ended up here, my teaching actually ended up being in European politics, although I could have gone either way at that point.

CAC: A lot of your published scholarship would suggest that you were interested in the methodological components of the . . .

WPS: Especially aggregate data analysis.

CAC: How would one stumble onto that?

WPS: I got interested in that mainly because my thesis topic was . . . I initially started out trying to chart the development of the class cleavage in Western European societies over the nineteenth century. I wanted to see how that had developed, how the class conflict had developed electorally. Obviously, I was working then with aggregate data and I didn't stumble on the problem, the problem sort of slugged me. Off and on, I've spent all of my career working on that problem then. I have a book coming out now with Chicago Press, done jointly with Chris[topher] Aiken at the University of Michigan, which I hope is my last work in this area. It's not the last word but I think it's the last I'll do on it.

CAC: But there's something in the internal to the profession that would force political scientists and other social scientists toward a more focused concern with method in the 1970s than would have been true in an earlier generation?

WPS: Yes, I think so and also there was a terrific ferment in political science at that time.

CAC: A methodological or a political?

WPS: More methodological, although it had political overtones but I'm not sure exactly what those were. Actually, I myself was quite radical politically at that time. I stood on a Vietnam War peace vigil line in Chapel Hill and I was in on some of the demonstrations which tried to open public accommodations in North Carolina at that time. But methodologically, probably, the quantitative methodology which I gravitated to, if anything, was associated with more middle of the road politics, which in a political science context would be more conservative.

CAC: Would this be true of departments elsewhere than Minnesota that the new techniques that made available in the 1960s, the new methods, shifted priorities for graduate study, for example, and from one's own scholarship?

WPS: I think so, although political science was just in great ferment, I think, partly because in the pre-war period there had been a real clear paradigm which was constitutional historical—explanation. If you asked Woodrow Wilson, for instance, why the British prime minister is so powerful, Woodrow Wilson would have said, "It's because the British prime minister has the power to have the parliament dissolved and that the members have to run again." He would not have said, "It's because the British prime minister is chief within his party or her party and has all these incentives that they can lay on the members, such as, whether or not you're ever going to become a junior minister." The rise of Hitler, I think, just knocked all of that into a cocked-hat because the Weimar Constitution was seen as the ideal constitution of the age. Political scientists in the United States in the 1920s and 1930s thought that was the best constitution around and look what it produced. Political scientists realized that we had to look beyond constitutions and legal rules to explain politics because, here, the best rules there were had produced a monster. So in the 1950s, there was this great this great ferment in which we were borrowing from all disciplines, anthropology, psychology, sociology, law, and borrowing all methods, psychoanalysis, statistical analysis, econometrics; and it was just a wonderful, heady

time to be in the field. Phil Converse called it then *waiting for Newton complex*. We were all waiting for [Sir Isaac] Newton to show up. It was very exciting.

CAC: You hit this excitement yourself as a graduate student?

WPS: Yes. I didn't really expect it. In my undergraduate preparation, I had done a special reading course with a guy named Sid Wise at F & M, Franklin and Marshall College, where I was an undergraduate, to prepare me for graduate school. It was all very traditional material that he gave me, except he gave me one little set of readings edited by somebody named Charlesworth on the behavioral revolution in political science. Mulford Sibley even had contributed to it. He was very much against the behavioral movement. I told Sid that I'd found that idea intriguing; so, when I was thinking about graduate schools to apply to, he said one place I might apply was North Carolina because they were doing interesting behavioral stuff there. Most of the places I applied were quite traditional. Cornell, for instance, was the place he really thought I should go.

CAC: So, the trauma of the 1930s in real historical terms doesn't really make itself felt on the internal structure of political science departments . . .

WPS: Until the early 1960s. Right. There were relatively few behavioral departments at that time. The only reason I ended up at the one I did was, it was the only one that gave me money; so, I went down to Chapel Hill because they gave me money. Otherwise, I'd have probably gone to Cornell under Sid's guidance and gotten a very traditional political science training.

CAC: Do you have a sense that this excitement has leveled out now?

WPS: Oh, yes. Oh, I think so.

CAC: And is that because, if you haven't found Newton, you have found a kind of consensus or how to get along with different [unclear]?

WPS: Yes, I think also partly we've discovered in trying them out, the various limitations of all these different methods that we were gleefully grabbing and running with . . . discovered that econometrics embodies lots of assumptions and you have to be careful about those assumptions . . . discovered that psychoanalysis can go whacko. It's just a sort of a maturing, I think. I think the field grew wonderfully out of this. It's now very diverse. In our department, for instance, we have John Sullivan, who is really more a psychologist than anything else. We have Terry Ball, and Mary Dietz, and Jim Farr who really would belong in a philosophy department. We have people like John Freeman who have one foot in the Economics Department. I have a little bit of a foot in the History Department myself and it's wonderful.

CAC: There are no strategic battles within the department for new courses?

WPS: Not big ones. There's creative tension always but it's a very collegial department; so, I don't think you get much of that.

CAC: You finished your graduate work in the mid-late 1960s . . . 1966, 1967?

WPS: Yes.

CAC: Then went to Oregon and that at once to Yale?

WPS: Yes.

CAC: What I'm leading up to is why you came to Minnesota. Can you say something about Oregon and Yale?

WPS: My first choice—they offered me a job—was the University of Alberta.

CAC: Ah.

WPS: The reason I wanted to go there was I liked a fellow there, Christian Bye, who was there. I had also looked at the map and saw that Alberta stopped fifty miles north of Edmonton . . .

CAC: [laughter]

WPS: . . . and I thought that that looked like a neat place to live. [laughter] But my draft board told me that if I went to teach in Canada, they would put me in a uniform immediately and I decided I would just as soon go with the deferment. In fact, I had already resolved that if they ever were about to put me in uniform, I was going to Canada, period! but since I could stay in the states and not get into uniform, I decided that was easier. So, I picked Oregon. I also had an offer from Michigan State, which looked intriguing. At Oregon, there were some very exciting people; it was really an interesting group, very unusual people . . . a guy named Bob Ager who was just half nuts. I went to work half time in a center that he ran and half time teaching in the department. I was very happy there. If there was ferment going on in the country, the University of Oregon was one of the most fermenting departments.

CAC: Heavens. And as a graduate student, you knew that?

WPS: Yes.

CAC: You were well informed.

WPS: It was well to the left politically also, which at that point I found very compatible; although, it wasn't a requirement I had.

CAC: Was Bill Williams teaching history there then?

WPS: You know, I don't know.

CAC: Okay.

WPS: I was only there a year so I didn't get to meet that many people outside political science. Jim Davies was doing wonderful exotic stuff on political psychology and theory of revolutions. Bob Ager was doing community power studies. A guy named John Arbell had just gone there was doing very interesting stuff on game theory.

CAC: Besides, Eugene is a nice place for family.

WPS: Eugene is a wonderful place for family. I could see snow covered mountains out of my office window.

CAC: And you stayed but a year?

WPS: I stayed about a year. Barbara and I were living in a wonderful house—and Helen was born there—vacated by a full professor on leave. It backed onto a wooded park of about fifty acres. We had something blooming in our yard every month of the year.

CAC: Sure.

WPS: Joe Lapolimbara called me from Yale and asked if I would go out and interview for a job there. At that time, Yale was clearly—there wasn't even a rival—the best political science department in the world.

CAC: How large a department was it?

WPS: Maybe, thirty people, thirty-five . . . I'm not sure.

CAC: That's more than Minnesota is.

WPS: Yes, oh yes. Most of their departments have more now than Minnesota does. Bob Dahl was at the peak of his work . . . Bob Lane, Lindblom . . . it was just a superb department. There was no rival and it wasn't a lagged thing. It wasn't some decrepit department which was best. It was clearly the best and there was just no way I could turn down the idea of going there and seeing what I could get out of being there. After I'd been there six months, I went and told Bob Lane that although I had a five-year contract as an assistant professor, I was leaving. I said that I couldn't stand the place. New Haven was a terrible place for my family to live.

CAC: I see.

WPS: I'd actually taken a pay cut to go there—and left this wonderful town of Eugene—in order to get intellectual stimulation. I wasn't getting it. People were spread all over the place. In some ways looking back on it, I got more than I thought I did. I audited Jerry Kramer's advance data analysis seminar and got a lot out of that.

CAC: But the culture of this great department did not encourage the continued process of your own learning?

WPS: No. I wasn't getting what I wanted out of it intellectually.

CAC: Isn't that interesting?

WPS: We didn't like the town, which was the pits. There was no reason for me to stay around as long as I wasn't getting what I wanted.

CAC: Why would a great department not have facilities or will to socialize or exchange [unclear]?

WPS: It was partly that they didn't have a building that they could all be in together. I was with good people. I shared a little tiny building with Doug Ray, Isaac Kramnik and Sid Terro, all of whom went on to very interesting careers. It was very fortunate, in many ways, that I didn't want to stay at Yale because most of my colleagues as assistant professors did want to stay and got into bloody battles for tenure. Since I simply decided early on that I didn't want to, I had a very nice relaxed time there for a few years until I left. Then, I came out here.

CAC: Okay. Did you have choices other than at Minnesota when you . . .

WPS: No, not really. I wasn't in any rush about leaving. I told Bob that I would leave but I said, "Look, I'm on a five-year contract and I'm sure you guys would probably renew me beyond that so I'm not going to rush out but I want to find a good place and go."

CAC: What attracted you to Minnesota then?

WPS: Actually, I almost didn't interview out here. I had gone up to Dartmouth College for a year on leave to study mathematics—as much to get away from New Haven as for anything else. We were up in Hanover and liked it very much. I looked at the map and I saw that there were a million people in this metropolitan area and we already disliked New Haven so much, I almost decided that this wasn't worth coming out to interview for. I didn't know much about the department at that time; although, I knew it had a good general reputation.

CAC: But you knew all about the internal structure at Oregon and Yale?

WPS: Yes. Minnesota has never been a department of stars.

CAC: I see.

WPS: It's a first rate department but it's not a department of super stars. I knew vaguely of [Robert] Holt and [John] Turner out here. I'd sort of heard that they had a good book on methodology and comparative politics but I hadn't read it.

CAC: Of course, they were just getting underway at that time.

WPS: Uh, yes.

CAC: I mean, they are well established but . . .

WPS: They were pretty well established. And I knew of Frank Sorauf's work. I had read a fair amount of stuff by Frank and I'd seen Bill Flannigan at a panel. Other than that, I didn't know anything about the department.

CAC: So, what kind of a department did you find when you got here in 1971?

WPS: What I liked and what really convinced me easily to come out was that it was a department that . . . First of all, I was very impressed on my interview with the calibre of the questions people asked about my work. It was clearly a sharp group of people. They were collegial. If Yale was less than the sum of its parts, Minnesota was more than the sum of its parts and that was the kind of place I liked. Oregon had been like that also.

CAC: Reflecting on that, why do you think this department had that spirit of collegiality?

WPS: I have no idea. They would say that it was an historic event that had brought them all together this way . . .

CAC: You mean, a lot of chance?

WPS: A lot of chance, although it was that also a process . . . that John Turner, Bob Holt, and Frank Sorauf had been young turks together . . .

CAC: I see.

WPS: . . . and had overcome the old regime of Lloyd Short.

CAC: Ah.

WPS: And also, they said—I shouldn't quote them on this because they wouldn't put it as bluntly as this—had basically seized control of the graduate program from people who had been maintaining a mediocre program . . . had set up a requirement that we would have limited



admissions rather than wide open admissions, and that all our graduate students would take only 8000-level seminars, and this would be a tight, good graduate program.

CAC: Who was chair of the department at that time?

WPS: Charles McLaughlin.

CAC: He's the one who carried through what the young turks wanted?

WPS: Yes. They saw him as somebody who had been of the older generation but had seen, not just the writing on the wall, but the opportunity written on the wall, and had gone with the young turks, and had facilitated this revolution. I think it was probably a revolution and a good one. The department was the first department in the university to establish a position of director of graduate studies, for instance. They tried to make it a very structured program in which the department put a lot of resources; and I think we still see it that way, even though very few of the people who carried through that revolution are still active in the department . . . I guess Bob Holt and Frank Sorauf are. We still pride ourselves on that program. We put a lot into it. The thing that I've liked most about this department for twenty years is that the students are better than the faculty and that the students we send out probably are making more of a mark on the profession . . . I mean this is a good faculty but our students are terrific.

CAC: But that began in the early 1970s?

WPS: Yes. It had begun before I came; so, it began in the late 1960s. Our reputation around the country is that we have better value added than almost any other department in the country.

CAC: [laughter] That's a good way of putting it.

WPS: We're tough to get into. It's a very difficult department to get into but graduate students when they come out—if you really are educated . . . We require more work of them than most places do. We really devote resources to them, a lot of time; and our students are out there making their mark and changing the field of political science in lots of different areas. It's fun.

CAC: It's always a risk for an interview to become a conversation but it's a risk sometimes worth taking. We had a revolution in 1970-1971 and part of it was to call down Frank Sorauf to a full department meeting to describe the new constitutional system that Political Science had put in place; and with that model, I think it took one month to put in place many . . . at least superficially, it took us awhile to learn how to live with it.

WPS: Yes, the culture has to develop along with it and that, I'm sure, is the case in Political Science as well.

CAC: Part of this—as I know the history of other departments including History—is not only an admissions policy and a program for graduate instruction, etcetera, but also an openness in internal governance. Now, were you aware of that? Did it seem strange to you coming from Yale and/or Oregon or did they have some of this?

WPS: No, actually, Oregon was even more wildly open than Minnesota.

CAC: I see.

WPS: At Oregon, there was a department meeting every Wednesday afternoon at two-thirty, which went on as long as necessary. It often went till eight or nine o'clock in the evening. I had found that a little excessive. I sort of liked the fact that at Yale, I didn't really have to do much because I could do my work. I was ambivalent about the openness of this department—I still am. I think there are real advantages but I think there are costs. I would have probably, if I'd gone to and done my career at a different place, done more scholarly work than I've done; although, I'm very pleased with my scholarly work. On balance, I think I'm more pleased being a more balanced person, and having had an active public career, and really enjoyed teaching, and developed my teaching, and developed, I think, some first rate scholarly work. But I think this department tends to produce people like that and that's why, as I say, it's not a department of stars but it's a department which has a collectivity. It just has a great reputation in political science but as a team, not as for the individuals so much.

CAC: That's an interesting commentary. When first you were here in the 1970s—I gather you were feeling your way—your first engagement beyond the department was for the Graduate School Fellowship Committee, which is in the mid 1970s to the early 1980s.

WPS: Yes.

CAC: You were on that a long time and became acting chair for a long time?

WPS: Yes.

CAC: So, tell me about that.

WPS: I got into that because I also had been made director of graduate studies quite early here. In my second year here, they asked me to be director of graduate studies and though I'd come with tenure, it was still a little odd to do that. I gather there was some tension about who they were going to name and this unknown person who had dropped in on them seemed to solve some problems for the chair; so, I became director of graduate studies. One thing I did was, I wrote a rather brash letter to May Brodbeck complaining about how the graduate fellowships were being administered . . .

CAC: These are all university fellowships?

WPS: It was a new program. May had gotten a grant from the Bush Foundation and it was the first time the university had ever had graduate fellowships to offer. It was set up really in a perverse way. They set up three-year fellowships and they allowed each department to nominate somebody for these fellowships. There were about fifteen or twenty of them available. You nominated somebody, and our department nominated, and got a fellowship; we offered that fellowship to somebody coming in. That's not too surprising, this was our best applicant. We usually do about 50 percent success on all of our applicants, and our best applicant had lots of offers from various places, and you know, some you win, some you don't . . . we happened to not get that person; so, what the Graduate School did then was had a second round of competitions around late May. By then, of course, all the good departments had finished with their recruitment. The bulk of these fellowships then ended up going to places like the social work department in Duluth, places that have walk-ins all the time. It was just a perverse result, and I wrote, and I just complained about this.

CAC: But an unintended result?

WPS: An unintended result. I complained about this. May then asked me if I would like to serve on the Graduate Fellowship Committee. [laughter] It was my first lesson in the dangers of opening your mouth.

CAC: You were never in the army? That's a . . . don't volunteer.

WPS: Yes. I had gotten quite engaged in lots of policy matters. I just sort of enjoy this stuff. I had jumped into the department with both feet and enjoyed it.

CAC: Good.

WPS: So, I was on the Fellowship Committee and was then made chair. I enjoyed very much working with that committee and working out a new way of doing things, which ended up continuing, more or less, into the present. We developed a system—working with Warren Ibele as dean and Ed Foster was associate dean by that point—in which we first of all decided that graduate students were not really well served by a three-year fellowship anyway, that those who had these long fellowships ended up being sort of out of touch with the other graduate students, which is where you do most of your learning and that they'd really do better if they got some experience as TAs [teaching assistants] and were sort of thrown into the bullpens. We could also expand the number of fellowships by doing this and make them more of a recruitment device; so, we set up a thing where the three-year fellowship was a one-year of fellowship and then a two-year pledge from departments that they would offer 50 percent TA-ship for the second and third year. It's still a very attractive package . . . but we could give three times as many of them. We also convinced the dean—and the dean took some convincing on this—to start over-offering. Offer twice as many as you were planning to.

CAC: That would seem risky.

WPS: It was risky but the beauty of this was that at the same time we were doing this, we set up the dissertation fellowship. The dissertation fellowships, which were done competitively among all graduate students . . .

CAC: Out of the same pot?

WPS: The same money, the same finance pot. Since those didn't have to be done in March for recruitment purposes, you could wait till May to do those and so you could see how you had done. The moment of conviction for Warren came when he said, "Oh! you're going to use these dissertations fellowships as your surge tank." And we said, "Yes." If you've had too many people accept the first-year fellowships, you don't give as many dissertation fellowships. If you didn't have as many as you hoped accept the first-year fellowships, you'd get more dissertation fellowships; so, you never went to alternates, you never went back to another round with the first round so all of those could be used very effectively for recruitment. You offered twice as many as you hoped to land. We expanded this to where it was like 150 of these fellowships you could offer hoping to land 75, which would be one-year things and then you had money still left for the dissertation year fellowships. It was a beautiful design and it worked out very nicely.

CAC: It was implemented quickly and worked quickly?

WPS: Well, it took us a couple of years . . . partly to work out for ourselves how we wanted to do this and, partly, to convince the dean to go along with it. He really didn't like this idea of over-extending for awhile but once he saw it, he liked it a lot. It took a couple of years till we got the thing changed.

CAC: Competing departments then were encouraged to set up a similar program of fellowships, two years of teaching assistantship?

WPS: What do you mean by competing departments?

CAC: Within graduate fellowship committees where there are representatives from different departments, we are all honest brokers but one looks out for . . .

WPS: Oh! We actually made a condition that any department which nominated somebody for our one-year entry fellowship had to make a promise of a second to third year of TA-ship. That was simply part of the agreement; so, it wasn't that departments competed in that way. We said, "This is how you get one of these fellowships to offer."

CAC: But that's the best way—I'm making an editorial comment now—to get departments to establish a policy which would appear to be in the best interests of all departments.

WPS: Oh, yes. Oh, yes, exactly. The thing worked well and, oddly enough, of all the various things I've done around here, I think that may be the one that I'm almost proudest of.

CAC: Well, certainly it's most long lasting.

WPS: It's long lasting, and it rationalized something, and it [unclear].

CAC: Now, you were chairman from 1981 to 1984 and then in the mid 1980s, you begin—your whole vita doesn't show this—to serve on the Policy Planning and Budget Committee of the college, right?

WPS: Yes.

CAC: If memory serves me correctly, it is at this time that the retrenchments are becoming more serious?

WPS: Right.

CAC: Did you have them as chair a bit earlier?

WPS: Oh, we must have had . . .

CAC: You don't remember the pain of those early retrenchments?

WPS: I don't think we retrenched too heavily when I was chair. My biggest challenge when I was chair was that 1.5 key members simultaneously had offers elsewhere. That was very tricky because they were all looking over their shoulder at each other. I went to Fred [Lukermann] and Roger [Benjamin] in fact and I said, "Look, we've got a real problem." Frank Sorauf was offered a named endowed chair at the University of Wisconsin, which was obviously very attractive to him. John Sullivan had a major couple of offers . . . Gary Wynia, [Raymond] Bud Duvall, and Roger Benjamin. It was very tricky and also the department was going through a bad patch then. It was just beginning and it would really flower into a big problem under my successor, Virginia Gray. There was a younger generation coming along who felt that we were not sufficiently helpful to them in their research work.—and they were right. As chair, I could see where the future of our department was standing; it was standing in this young group. They first organized themselves in what they called the CRAP group . . . Computer Researchers Agitating for . . . something, I forget what it was.

CAC: [laughter]

WPS: It was all of the best young scholars in the department, about a half a dozen of them. They were resented by some of the older members of the department who were also very good scholars.

CAC: Sure.

WPS: People like Frank[Sorauf], for instance, saw these as a pretty brash group; and they were brash and they were very unskillful politically. I just tried to really work with them and bring them along but it was tricky. A couple of members of that group were these people who were getting offers. In fact, my first inkling of problems there were from my friend Joe Lapolimbara at Yale who called me and said, "Phil! why are your two best young scholars going around the country saying they're unhappy at Minnesota and want a job offer?" I knew I had problems. That was probably more of a problem for me than the retrenchment.

CAC: So, how did you finesse that problem?

WPS: Well, basically, I just tried to make myself the advocate of this group as much as I could. We changed a number of rules in the department about research support, for instance . . . sort of the way things had always been done. It had been a very collegial department where if you needed a manuscript typed, you went and hired somebody to type it for you outside the university and paid for it yourself. Well, that's not a good way to treat good scholars. You want to help people do their work not make them have a burden. The older generation, people like Hal Chase, and so on, had been very generous people who had never minded doing that kind of thing. They had little trouble understanding that younger people resented this. Basically, I just tried to get things changed to accommodate this group because I thought they were right. I thought we were out of step with other departments around the country.

CAC: It was also a time in which college monies were not large to meet offers from outside.

WPS: Well, actually, Fred and Roger were very accommodating to us. I found it a problem because one of these people would come in with an offer and . . .

CAC: Now, when you say "Fred and Roger," it's Fred Lukermann . . .

WPS: Fred Lukermann, the dean of the college and Roger Benjamin who was then associate dean. They were almost too accommodating to us because they made it too easy for us to get money and as chair, this gave me a real problem.

CAC: Because your internal salaries were skewed?

WPS: Internal salaries were skewed but also we needed a set of brakes and we didn't have it. For instance, at one point when I think it was Bud Duvall had an offer, Brian Job who is a very sensible fellow agitated within our department that we should not only ask the college to match but to over match this offer. I said, "You're nuts. The deans will never do that." And they said that's what they wanted, and so I took it to the deans, and the deans did it! I was so happy, frankly, when Gary Wynia—my dear friend Gary Wynia—had an offer from Carleton College for an endowed chair there. I was so happy that I could get the department to go along with me in not quite matching the offer, just because we needed this to establish some sanity within the department. The CRAP group, for instance . . . one thing I resented with Fred was that the

CRAP group went to Fred and asked him for computers; and without asking me about it as chair of the department, he said, "Sure" and he gave them all computers. This made it very difficult for me to handle the emerging conflicts in the department. I was riding kind of a tiger here. I sort of approved of the tiger; so, I didn't resent it too much and I sort of enjoyed it actually. One thing, when I had all of these job offers, I went to the dean and I said, "Look, we have a real problem here. This is a first rate department but there are a lot of tensions emerging and we've also got a lot of first rate people . . ." These people were all of them on the verge of leaving. I don't think they were faking it. John Sullivan was saying, "If all of the rest of these guys go, I'm stuck here." They were all making their decision at about the same time. I went to Fred and Roger and I said, "You've got to do something . . . we have these things. You've also got to do something for the department. What I'm proposing to you . . ." And they went along with this. I thought it was very creative. I thought it was a very good idea. I said, "Give us a research pot of about \$40,000 of research support money. Out of that, I will make sure that I satisfy all of these five guys in ways that keep them but I'm also going to keep money out to help other members of the department so that everybody in the department benefits at the same time from this rather than this being something that these stars are getting help." And they went along with it. They had me go over to Ken Keller and lobby him on behalf of the department because they needed to get money from Central [Administration] for it. I went over—I knew Ken pretty well by that time—and I had a big confab with him in which I pointed out to him that our department had gotten 8 percent of all the money that NSF [National Science Foundation] had given to political science nationally over the preceding five years. I really went with my homework. He was very skeptical but he coughed up the money. We established this fund and I used a fair chunk of that fund, for instance, to help Earl Shaw who was not a distinguished scholar go down to North Carolina and do field work on the senatorial campaign there in which Jesse Helms first got elected. I used it to help a lot of the not strongest members of the department succeed. It was a good solution. I argued they should try to do that for every department in the college but they never did it for any others. I think by now, college administrations are looking very askance at that fund and I don't know how long it will last.

CAC: You're describing a college . . .

WPS: This is the kind of thing I like. It was fun being creative about this sort of thing.

CAC: But you're describing a college at Central Administration at that time that was responsive but short on . . .

WPS: Short of cash.

CAC: . . . applying policy and initiating policy on a general college level?

WPS: Yes. If you could make a really good case with them, you could go in. I felt I was pretty good at making those cases and I always felt that Fred and Roger were very supportive of our department—and I don't think it was mainly Roger. Roger, in fact, was very pessimistic

about this. I wrote a letter to Fred in which I put my position as chair on the line—it was the only time I did this as chair—and I said, “This is too critical. The department really is in a crisis bind. I can’t continue as chair if we can’t get help from the college in this case.” I remember having lunch—it wasn’t a matter of Roger as political scientist doing this for us—with Roger at which he told me that I would not get what I was after. He said, “It was a great letter but we don’t have the money. I don’t see it.”

CAC: Isn’t this part of what’s emerging in the early 1980s generally across the university of trying to maintain high quality programs and Political Science, well represented, could be seen as a high quality [unclear]?

WPS: We certainly made the argument.

CAC: And you had a good data base to go with.

WPS: Yes. I think we were good. We were sort of a triple threat department. It’s a good teaching department, a very good research department, and I think we generally contributed a fair amount around the university.

CAC: But it leaves college-wide and university-wide, the problem of maintaining quality in disciplines that are central to the liberal arts, for example . . .

WPS: I don’t think we’ve done very well.

CAC: . . . which are not being supported . . .

WPS: Yes.

CAC: I mean that general strategy runs that risk.

WPS: Yes. I argued on the College Budget Committee, I remember—I only served there a year or two because I became chair of the Senate Finance Committee and resigned the college committee . . . I think that was why I did it—making the argument one year with Fred there that we should take the positions, I think we had about a dozen positions, and we should use about half of them to replace people who had left but we should reserve about half. I said we should concentrate those on a couple targets of opportunity and the two I argued for were statistics, which I said was on the verge of being a nationally leading department and a few positions could pull them in, and the other was the English Department. I said that, with the English Department, what you should do is hold all their vacancies for a couple of years, add to that about five vacancies taken generally from the college, and bring in an outside chair with about eight or nine hirings available to that chair, and try to get that department turned around.



CAC: Now, in what setting did you make these recommendations through . . . was it Policy Planning and Budget Committee?

WPS: This was in the Policy . . . the Budget Committee.

CAC: And what kind of response would you have from other chairs to that suggestion?

WPS: Marcia Eaton thought that was a terrific idea, and she and I pushed it, and nobody else liked it much, and the deans didn't like it much; so, it never went any place.

CAC: But that response was spurred by the budgetary problems that are becoming more acute in the mid 1980s?

WPS: It was clear. They were not able to replace all vacancies as they became open.

CAC: This kind of leads to your involvement in a very massive way from 1984, 1987, 1989, 1990, the late decade of the 1980s . . . you served on various senate committees, Faculty Affairs, for example . . . the Finance Committee but probably most importantly Consultative Committee. You did that as being an elected senator?

WPS: Yes.

CAC: And you were elected senator for a long time?

WPS: For a long, long time, yes.

CAC: Why don't we talk a bit about the inter-relationships of these different senate committees, and how they function, and what issues they were facing, and was there a liaison between one and another?—you were on quite a few of these different ones—and then come into focus on the Consultative Committee particularly.

WPS: Backing up . . . if I could say how I got involved in all of these . . .

CAC: Please.

WPS: It's actually sort of chance. I'd been very active in our department—I don't want to take forever on this—and done a lot of governance stuff within the department, not much outside except for the Graduate Fellowship Committee. I was very involved in the late 1970s editing a major journal in political science, *The American Journal of Political Science*, which is probably the second ranked, or tied for second ranked, journal.

CAC: That wasn't produced here . . . that journal?

WPS: Yes.

CAC: It was?

WPS: We contracted with the University of Texas [unclear] but it was edited here. I was the managing editor of it. It rotates around. It's about a three-year term.

CAC: I see.

WPS: That was almost my full time job for the late 1970s. I remember that I was about half way through that term when Fred Lukermann walked in one day and he said, "Phil, what do you think about this union business?" I said, "Well, I'm really appalled at the idea of having a faculty union. I think it would be the death knell for the place. I think it's all we need." This place is on the margins as it is, I thought. [laughter] So, he said, "I think we should do something about this." I said, "Sure, what?" He said, "Would you be willing to co-chair something with me on this?" I'd barely known Fred at that point.

CAC: Was he a dean at that time?

WPS: No, this was before he was dean.

CAC: Okay. All right. It would seem [unclear] inappropriate for a dean.

WPS: No, no. He was just a faculty member in Geography. It was maybe 1977, I forget. Frank was dean of the college. I said, "Sure." And so we started on this goddamned campaign, which took forever and got very involved, and after we'd won that . . . One of the arguments we had made was that—I'm [unclear] but I'll get back to the [unclear] . . .

CAC: No, no that is fine.

WPS: One of the arguments we had made was that you didn't need to have the structure of collective bargaining in order to have an active faculty voice. We had used, for instance, the experience of Wisconsin that has a faculty lobbyist. So, after we'd won, the union people said to us, "Well, you've won. Now, you guys are in charge. Now, deliver."

CAC: But now there were two unions?

WPS: Yes, the AAUP [American Association of University Professors] and the UMEA [University of Minnesota Education Association] were both contestants [unclear].

CAC: And the group you lead was the [unclear].

WPS: The Faculty Governance Caucus was for no rep. So, after we had won, several of us sort of felt it incumbent up on us . . . First of all, we hadn't felt that the university was headed in the right direction. We didn't like the Magrath Administration a whole lot but having won on this argument, we felt we had to deliver and so we formed the University of Minnesota Faculty Association, which was a lobbying organization. We formed a pact, and Rick Purple was the first president of that, and then I sort of worked with him, and then I became president after him.

CAC: Rick Purple has done a long work in the AAUP.

WPS: Yes. But he was strongly opposed to unionization as well.

CAC: Yes.

WPS: I got really involved in university policy. I was sort of the first real active lobbyist for that group; and we hired Tom Berg from downtown, a DFL lawyer, as our counsel, a wonderful guy, and he taught me how to lobby. So, I became a lobbyist and through that I got quite involved in university policy making and that sort of got me into these committees.

CAC: What was your relationship to university lobbyists for Morrill Hall?

WPS: Initially, Stan Kegler was very standoffish. In fact, he assigned one of his assistants to be liaison to us and it was clear to me after our first meeting that his assistant's role was to keep an eye on us to make sure we didn't do anything really damaging or dumb. Stan didn't like this idea much at all.

CAC: Did Magrath? It seems to me there would be great resistance. The university speaks with one name and a faculty group . . .

WPS: Oh, yes. Peter initially didn't like the idea but he would never have said so to us, of course.

CAC: You say, "Of course."

WPS: Peter didn't like to say things to people that involved conflict or offense.

CAC: I see.

WPS: And also it's very hard for a president of the university to say to a group of faculty, "I disapprove of what you're doing. I don't like it. You scare the shit out of me and I don't think that this is a good idea at all." [laughter] He was much more diplomatic. He didn't express any particular enthusiasm, as I recall; and Kegler never exactly said that he didn't like what we were doing but it was real clear. Once, I was over there as a lobbyist, Kegler kept very distant from me until he discovered . . .

CAC: Now, how could you gain access to the appropriate committees . . . I mean, this is the first time you come in?

WPS: This is a very open place. Tom Berg knew all the chairs of the committees. He had been a legislator.

CAC: When you say "This is an open place," you mean the Minnesota State Legislature?

WPS: Yes, the legislature is a very open place. Tom took me around the first summer. I mean, this was really an adventure . . . jumping into this thing. I knew nothing about lobbying but we'd said that you could lobby without being a union and so we were going to lobby. And it was Tom Scott's suggestion that we hire Tom Berg and it was a wonderful idea. Tom just took me in hand.

[End of Tape 1, Side 1]

[Tape 1, Side 2]

WPS: He made appointments with each member of each of the relevant committees. I remember my first meeting with Lynn Carlson, for instance, who has been many years chair of the House appropriation division on higher education. We went into Lynn's office. We ran into Lynn in the hall. He was eating an ice cream cone and he was in his shirt sleeves. We went in and just chatted for one-half hour or forty-five minutes. Lynn introduced me to his staff people. Everybody was very interested in having this representative of the university faculty. Tom and I made a big point that this was a voluntary membership group of several hundred university faculty, which it was. We had had a very generous response from university faculty to our solicitation for membership, that we were interested in coming around, that we weren't trying to put down the university administration in any way, that we were going to work with them, that we were in contact with the university administration but we were an independent voice, and that we represented the university faculty. Tom even made appointments for the Senate and House leadership, with Roger Moe and [Harry] "Tex" Sieben. He knew these people well and was able to get the appointments.

CAC: Sure.

WPS: Then Tom sort of turned me loose, "Because," he said, "you don't want to spend"—I think we paid him \$100 an hour; he gave us sort of a cheap rate—"this kind of money. You call me whenever you have a question." Occasionally, for very key events—for instance, when friends of the majority leader, Roger Moe, had a fund raiser where all the key people were going to be there—Tom would come over with me and we would work the fund raiser together but most fund raisers, I went by myself. I watched Tom and I learned how to do things by watching Tom; so, I didn't really use him very often. He cost us about \$5000 a year and was so worth it.

CAC: This organization never gave money to legislative candidates?

WPS: Oh, yes.

CAC: Oh, it did.

WPS: We formed a political action committee, also.

CAC: All right. Separate from the . . .

WPS: Separate . . . it has to be legally separate but with interlocking directorate. I was president of both.

CAC: Okay.

WPS: We gave money to candidates. We sent a questionnaire out to potential candidates. I think that's still done . . . they still do this . . . send a questionnaire out to potential candidates. On the basis of questionnaires, we would form committees wherever there were faculty living in the districts. One thing we did—it was the first time the university had ever done this—was we went through the faculty lists, and where faculty lived, and matched faculty up with legislative districts. I can't believe the university had never done this! A terrific, potential legislative resource . . . except that the university can't really lobby in that direct a way but the faculty could independently and we did. This was what got Stan Kegler to working very closely with me, and we ended up having a very warm, close working relationship, and I grew to respect him and like him a lot. It was when he realized that there were some legislators I could reach that he couldn't reach. Specifically, there was one legislator who would, anytime we wanted to, ask a question for us in a House Committee hearing; and that's very handy to have and particularly Stan often would have things he wanted asked. You can change the whole direction of a . . . What you do is, you go and watch the damn things, and you'll sit there for hours, and hours, and hours, and it seems like the worst damned waste of time, except you're waiting to sort of strike up a casual conversation with one of the legislators at break, or something like that. Stan was really involved in much more detailed stuff than we were. We had a very limited agenda. We were basically lobbying for the university budget as a whole, for graduate student fellowships, for the library, and for faculty salaries, what we regarded as the core of the academic processes of the university. Stan had all sorts of stuff he was . . .

CAC: You had to inform yourself very deeply on the . . . ?

WPS: On the budget.

CAC: Yes.

WPS: This is when I learned to know university budgets. Stan learned that we could get questions asked. He didn't have anybody on the House committee that he could get, that he was in such a close relationship that he could plant a question but he learned that we could and so he would ask me to plant questions with this particular person, which I did and this person obliged. From then on, Stan and I had a good working relationship.

CAC: He would ask questions of Stan Kegler on the stand as . . . ?

WPS: Yes . . . or that he would ask a factual question of the chair of the committee which only Stan could answer and so the chair would then, of course, say, "Well, is there a university representative here who could answer that question?"

CAC: I see.

WPS: We got a good enough relationship going toward the end of when I was working as a lobbyist that if Stan was out of the room and, say, the House committee was operating and something would come up that affected the university, Lynn would say, "I'm looking for university representatives here. Professor Shively, could you tell us about this?" and usually I couldn't but I'd say, "No, I can't, Mr. Chair. I don't know the answer to that but I will find out for you." What I'd do then is call Stan's office. It was a very good relationship. We never asked for anything that was not on the university budget request.

CAC: Now, you were doing this solo except for Tom Berg?

WPS: Yes, except that there were—and this was very nice—two positions . . . one of which the Consultative Committee had set up kind of at the argument of the Faculty Governance caucus. The Consultative Committee had gotten the university administration to agree to fund a half time person to represent the Consultative Committee. Ken Keller, in fact, had been the first representative. That existed before we ever had the UMFA [University of Minnesota Faculty Association].

CAC: I see. So, there really were two faculty . . . ?

WPS: Two faculty over there.

CAC: One kind of semi-official?

WPS: One semi-official working for the Consultative Committee and one representing this membership group. The membership group could do political things that the Consultative Committee could never do; such as, give money to candidates.

CAC: Yes.

WPS: We worked as a team. Peter Robinson was the Consultative Committee representative over there when I went over as UMFA. Potentially, this could have been a real rivalry but, in fact, we just worked as a wonderful team. We were company for each other. We could share each others' griefs.

CAC: How did you educate yourself . . . you and Peter . . . to the complications of things you had to know? Presumably, Peter had to know more than you did? The UMFA had a limited agenda?

WPS: Well, not really. We found it just worked well. Basically, we just became a pair of people and I don't think the legislators could even tell which one was doing what.

CAC: But it meant that both of you had to do an awful lot of homework?

WPS: We had to do an awful lot of homework. Gradually, over time, we worked out a system which generally has been in place—although, this year it's broken down—where the UMFA president would serve for two years and then would serve two years for the Consultative Committee. One thing that the Consultative Committee could do was they had more budget. They could give you some time off. They could give you an expense account. I served two years as lobbyist for the UMFA . . .

CAC: You had to do this on your own time?

WPS: On my own time, absolutely all my own time and I was chair of the department at the same time. I still remember teaching an eight o'clock five-day a week class over here, hopping on the 16-A bus and going down to the Capital and spending all day over there, coming back. Basically, I'd come in on the weekend and do the department's business. It was an incredible year.

CAC: This put a crimp in your own scholarship?

WPS: Yes. I had to do no scholarship.

CAC: Yes.

WPS: After I'd served two years on UMFA, I got appointed to the Consultative Committee position which gave me some release time.

CAC: You got elected?

WPS: No, that was an appointed thing. The Consultative Committee is an elected committee but they appoint somebody to do this lobbying position. This year, for instance, the Consultative Committee appointed Morrie . . . somebody from the Humphrey School to do this. Craig Swan

has been elected to be the president of the UMFA. Generally, we've worked it that after two years as UMFA president, that person can go on then and be appointed by the Consultative Committee and can train in the new UMFA president because you work together. When I was Consultative Committee representative, I also tried to help out the UMFA rep as much as I could with my expense account. But the UMFA person could do some other things that I couldn't do, such as, keep these membership groups and so on.

CAC: That's a story that is very difficult to untangle.

WPS: That's a long story.

CAC: No, it's a long story but it's difficult to untangle. I've read it from the outside.

WPS: That's what sort of got me into the university committee business . . . that was because I knew a lot about budgets, I think, and because I think maybe I'd been a good chair . . . an active one . . . I'd certainly screamed at the deans a lot. I think that's how I got appointed, for instance, to the Policy and Budget Committee, and then to the Senate Finance Committee, and things like that.

CAC: This may lead us up to the central problem of Commitment to Focus, which is really a retrenchment and reallocation strategy. Lead me into that story. This comes in the mid 1980s and already Ken Keller is active in these various capacities—and I want to come back to Mr. Keller more generally. What was your perception, in 1985 for example, of how knowing and how detailed a strategy there was at the university level for retrenchment and reallocation?—which really means really means Commitment to Focus under different terms.

WPS: Yes.

CAC: I'm looking for an evolution, the development of that line.

WPS: Some of this I was seeing from the outside because I was not so active in university policy making but some of my colleagues were pretty active in university policy making . . . people like Frank Sorauf . . .

CAC: In the early 1980s?

WPS: In the early 1980s, yes.

CAC: Then you plug in really in the mid 1980s?

WPS: I plug in sort of mid 1980s. I sort of gotten into in through this lobbying business because that had gotten me very in touch with the university budget. For instance, when I was serving as Consultative Committee representative, liaison to the legislature, Deon Stofman, who



was chair of the Senate Finance Committee at that time here at the university, asked me to sit in with the committee because I could share with them what was happening at the legislature and I could also then learn by watching their deliberations how the university budget was evolving. It was a very handy thing. I was sort of, from my lobbying activities, getting plugged in there. I had the impression that there was not a clear general strategy for retrenchment and reallocation at the university; although, there were a couple of moods and one strong dominant theme of all of the various retrenchments. Although this was never uncontested . . .

CAC: Excuse me. This was a mood not a mode?

WPS: Yes. Yes, a mood not a mode. I guess actually, theme is a better word than mood.

CAC: Okay.

WPS: There was a recurrent theme, which was by no means uncontested, which was put forward strongly by a lot of people who often were associated with faculty governance, by the way . . . people like Ken Keller who at that point was not yet in an administrative position. There was a strong theme that one thing that had to be done in retrenchment and reallocation was to protect those programs we had that were already strong.

CAC: And high quality and a strength in that sense?

WPS: Yes. One argument which was often made was it was just so much cheaper and easier to maintain quality once you already had it than to try to build it where you didn't have it.

CAC: That's an observation you would agree with?

WPS: I'd agree with that, yes, certainly. It's just hard to change departments for better or for worse. If you have a good department, it's hard to make it bad and if you have a bad department, it's hard to make it good. You want to try to make sure that you're not doing things that turn a good department bad. Probably, it doesn't take big investments to do that. There was also a lot of talk about trying to figure out what the central things of the university were and strengthen them.

CAC: Criterion of centrality.

WPS: Centrality, yes. The criterion was centrality. Of course, every part of the university figures it's central. I think Ken Keller was one person, for instance, who had put those themes forward strongly. He had, I think, been active on various planning committees and so on. He had been chair of the Consultative Committee, I think, at about the time that the union election was going on, for instance. He'd had a long history of faculty governance. Sometime there, there was a search for the academic vice-presidency and I know that a lot of people who had been of this sort of group with which I sort of identified—people who sort of were for quality

. . . strongly centered on, incidentally, CLA [College of Liberal Arts] and IT [Institute of Technology], I think—were pushing Ken for the academic vice-presidency. I don't know this firsthand at all but I heard from many people that Peter really preferred Al . . .

CAC: Linck from St. Paul

WPS: . . . for this position. The Search Committee came up with a short list that did not include Al Linck and included Ken Keller. My understanding—I was really quite removed from this but I just heard from people—was that the committee had been operating very strategically to try to force Peter's hand to appoint Ken to be academic vice-president.

CAC: I think at that time, Al Linck had a kind of inside track because he was acting vice-president.

WPS: Yes, he was the acting vice-president and it was odd for him not to be on a short list as acting. Ken ended up as academic vice-president and he was a strong, active vice-president. I think he was a superb one. Some of the things he did, for instance, were establish the Bush Sabbatical Program for faculty and he supported strong R&R [Retrenchment and Reallocation]. Part of the battle was just how much R&R there should be, whether you should have the minimal amount of moving money around that was needed to meet the cuts that were needed.

CAC: To interrupt here . . . what is your sense . . . I think there's a real structure of having a strategy at the level of Central Administration and then trying to get the colleges, which enjoy a good deal of autonomy, to execute such a strong or flexible policy. What is your sense of that?

WPS: I think that's always difficult. I think that Central Administration has always had a great deal of difficulty making distinctions among colleges. It shows up especially at salary division time each year. Each year, almost every year I've been here, Central Administration has said, "We have," let's say 5.6 percent, "raise money to distribute for faculty raises. We want everybody to make tough decisions, and to give this on a strictly merit basis, and we're giving every college 5.6 percent."

CAC: [laughter]

WPS: The colleges then—or at least the college with which I'm familiar—says, "We're giving this money to the departments, and we're giving it differentially, and we're going to watch, and we want to make sure that people make tough decisions; and we're going to vary the amount of raise money that goes to departments by one quarter of a percent, up and down, but we're going to watch and you guys be tough!" And then at the department level, presumably, tough decisions do or don't get made.

CAC: There's no incentive, finally, where the decisions are really made in the departments to go along with that program?

WPS: No, anymore than there are incentives for the deans really to go along with Central's admonitions to be tough.

CAC: So, what sanctions are there in the vice-president's office, or the deans' offices, to do that?

WPS: Very few. There's no reason why the vice-president's office couldn't give colleges differential amounts of raise money based on whatever criterion of excellence they choose to come up with but they've never done it to my knowledge. There are strong counter forces to being discriminating within the university, very strong counter forces, and they're very political.

CAC: Including departments, and programs, and colleges whose mission would perceive to be central but not at the moment of high quality?

WPS: Yes.

CAC: I mean, they can make a pretty good argument?

WPS: Yes, they can make a good argument. My own reading of this university, based on a number of years' experience, is that this is one of the most politically in-ridden universities in the country.

CAC: In-ridden . . . but what do you mean?

WPS: That the politics of the state extend deeply into the internal structure of the university partly because it is such an open political system in the state. It's very responsive to interest groups and organized groups. Many parts of the university have an organized support group outside of the university . . . in fact most parts of the university have such an organized support group outside the university.

CAC: One thinks of the Medical School, for example, or Agriculture . . .

WPS: The Medical School. The College of Agriculture. The Law School. The Business School. The College of Education.

CAC: Now, do they all send representatives and do they have their own lobbyists?

WPS: The Medical School has its own full time lobbyist and the College of Agriculture has its own full time lobbyist at the legislature. But I'm thinking of even more finely tuned things, such as the Vocational Technical Education program within the College of Education, which has a very well organized set of alumni, very well organized sets of supporters around the state.

CAC: They have constituents . . . I mean, as one has doctors, lawyers, businessmen, farmers.

WPS: Yes. But it gets very fine tuned. It gets down to the high school principles of the state supporting the educational administration program in the College of Education . . . the Bar Association supporting the Law School.

CAC: And these groups having direct access to the legislature?

WPS: Direct access to the legislature and to the board of trustees, the board of regents.

CAC: Ah.

WPS: And they will phone the president directly. I remember, for instance, having a conversation with Peter Magrath in which he said that in a particular budget that he was sending up, the university was asking for a large number of new positions for the Dental School. This was because one of the members of the board of the regents had said that he would not vote for the proposed budget on behalf of the board of regents unless the university asked for a couple score new positions for the Dental School. Well, this makes it very difficult for the president to lead the University of Minnesota. I once gave a talk to a local eating club which I titled *The Graveyard of Presidents* and it was my characterization of the university's decision making. I'll give you an example. Several years ago, they asked me to go down to Illinois to be dean of Arts and Sciences there and I had a number of long conversations with the provost at the Champaign-Urbana campus, Bob Berdahl. Bob told me that if I became dean there, I would find that one thing that I'd really miss was that I would not be allowed to lobby the legislature on behalf of my college the way you can in Minnesota. I said, "Well, I really do sort of resent that if I'm the only dean who is so constrained. Do you mean that you can pull your other deans in?" He said, "Yes. I'll tell you a story." I forget whether I've ever told you this story or not?

CAC: [laughter] Not for posterity.

WPS: He said, "This year in the legislative request, somehow there appeared an item of several million dollars for the College of Agriculture. I called the dean of the College of the Agriculture in and I said, 'I'm surprised that you're letting the legislature set your priorities for you.' The dean reacted with surprise. I said, 'You realize if you get this amount, \$7-, \$8-, \$10- million, I'll have to cut your budget by the corresponding amount so that we're in balance.'" He said that within two weeks the item had mysteriously dropped out of our budget. But you know, the president of the university here could not do that. If the president of the university tried to do that to a dean, the president would be comed down on very hard—it depends on which dean. The president could do that to the dean of the College of Liberal Arts. He could probably do it to the dean of IT. I'm sure that the president could not do that to the dean of a Health Sciences college, or to an Agricultural College, or to the Business School, or to others. The president could not, for instance, turn down the proffered new building for the Business School, I'm sure. I don't have that from the president; it's just my analysis. So many parts of this university have support groups outside the university which can press the president and I think this is one reason

why we have a superb set of professional schools and why we have a rather weak academic core in CLA, IT, and Biology.

CAC: Ah.

WPS: Because the other groups are easier to organize and this legislature and this board of regents are very open to pressure from organized groups. This is why I say that this is a very politics ridden university. It's not politics ridden ideologically but it's sort of interest groups and budgets. I think the Central Administration has relatively little capacity to lead the university.

CAC: You compel me then to ask you to clarify a bit about how the regents play into this. You mentioned it in one sentence but what is your perception then of the way the regents interact with the legislature and with the president of the university, etcetera?

WPS: Most regents don't interact a lot with the legislature and I rather wish they interacted more than they do. They do regard themselves as representatives of the people of Minnesota directing the affairs of the university and I think quite properly so. The regents simply vary a whole lot in how they define that role then of representative. As a political scientist, I, and as an historian, you, know that the role of representative allows itself to be interpreted in lots of ways.

CAC: Or depending upon how much time they have to commit to doing . . .

WPS: But some regents regard themselves as representing the interests of the entire state in maintaining the university. Others regard themselves as representatives of a particular part . . . labor, agriculture, students, the congressional district they come from, whatever. Some regents, sometimes, have a special interest in some particular thing . . . their profession, for instance. So, it really varies. In general, I have great respect for the board of regents and for regents I've known but I think that some of them regard themselves as special representatives.

CAC: And Crookston over Waseca?

WPS: Sometimes, not so specifically, and oddly enough, some representatives who have represented the districts that have those campuses have risen above that. Very often, there have been ones who feel that they represent the interests of agriculture as a whole in the state or a particular campus . . . Duluth, whatever.

CAC: What is your sense of the relationship of some regents then to faculty persons who are visible, like yourself or anyone you is on the Consultative Committee and chairing? Is there a communication there . . . has there been?

WPS: Oh, yes. I thought there was a fair amount of communication with the board of regents when I was on the Consultative Committee.

CAC: That takes place in what setting . . . whose initiative . . . how does that work?

WPS: If it works at all well, it works on an individual basis. There were several regents, some of whom I'd known before I became active . . . One regent I'd gotten to know when I was a lobbyist because I ran into him over at the legislature a good deal. This was Stan Sahlstrom—he was not lobbying as a regent—when he was provost of Crookston and he was at the legislature a lot on behalf of the Crookston campus.

CAC: Sure.

WPS: At the University of Illinois, the only people from the Champaign-Urbana campus who are allowed to go to Springfield are the chancellor and the provost of the campus. There is a rule against anybody else from that campus going to Springfield. Stan was a very honorable and good person there. He was simply doing his job the way the job is defined at Minnesota. I knew him, and got to know David Lebedoff quite well, and there were others whom I thought I had good relationship with and could talk to a lot. In a formal sense, there is not a very good basis for a relationship between faculty and the Consultative Committee and that's been a kind of bone of contention.

CAC: Can the Consultative Committee ask a regent to come to a meeting?

WPS: Oh, yes. I told you about that paper I gave called *The Graveyard of Presidents*. I got that term from a consultant we brought in to talk to us about our relationships with governance in general but also our relationship with the board of regents. When Ellen Berscheid, my predecessor and chair of the Consultative Committee, was chair, she initiated—and then I carried forward as chair—an attempt on our part to get the board of regents to give us more formal representation. There are two student representatives on each of the board of regents' committees—non-voting—and there are also two non-voting representatives to the board of regents itself who sit at all meetings as members of the board of regents, although they're non-voting. There's also a formal elected student representative, a member of the board of regents. The faculty have no representation with the board of regents and we argued they should have some sort of non-voting representation on the committees.

CAC: Have a right to the floor if not the right to vote?

WPS: Right. Exactly. None of the regents liked that idea at all. They did not want us to be sitting there as part of their activities. We brought in some consultants, including a couple of very distinguished students of higher education, administration, and the sociology of higher education. The consultants word to us was, "You really shouldn't do this because the president of the university already has so little authority within the university. You don't want to undercut the president by having your own line to the board of regents."

CAC: Heavens.

WPS: "You should really try to get other groups out of the business of going to the board. You should let the president speak for you" and we decided he was right. So, we withdrew our request at that point. Ever since then, I've had the feeling that the Consultative Committee should try not to allow direct access of the board of regents to us . . . reversing.

CAC: I understand.

WPS: Sometimes since then, boards have tried to establish direct lines to the Consultative Committee and the Consultative Committee has somewhat resisted that because we've argued that the president should represent the faculty and students to the board. So, we don't have much formal linkage. My own informal personal linkage when I was on the Consultative Committee was very good, partly because I established a very close relationship with David Lebedoff—who I think was a superb chair of the board—and partly because he and I were thrown together the year I was Consultative Committee chair. Part of his two-year term as chair of the board was the year in which Ken Keller's presidency disintegrated and several of Ken's vice-presidents had to leave or left.

CAC: Yes.

WPS: There was a real vacuum and David and I ended up doing a lot of representing the university publicly—David much more than I but I also, a fair amount. David and I consulted very closely during all of that as to what was going on, how we could handle things. When David was going to name an acting president, for instance, he called me on behalf of the Consultative Committee to talk to me about possibilities. I don't think it's surprising but the circumstances of that year were such that David and I were thrown together a lot and I think developed a strong mutual respect.

CAC: I'd like to come back to that year but what we've been talking about the last twenty minutes or so is really process and structure and these are extraordinarily important as political scientists and historians would know. I'd like to again focus on the subject; that is, the necessity—beginning in the mid 1970s and then more acutely in the mid 1980s and late 1980s—for retrenchment and reallocation. Federal funds are running out for research.

WPS: Actually through that period, federal funds were probably still increasing pretty rapidly.

CAC: Your sense is . . .

WPS: That's my sense. I'm no expert on it. If I were to guess, I would guess that.

CAC: I thought there was a constriction . . .

WPS: Oh, there was a . . . where the rest of the university had to bail out a bunch of soft [unclear].

CAC: This is the mid 1980s, you see.

WPS: That's right. I stand corrected. The big expansion of the mid to late 1960s and early 1970s had stopped and we were into contraction.

CAC: Well, stability and [unclear].

WPS: Stability and maybe some contraction.

CAC: And then contraction because the same thing would be true of legislative appropriations. It isn't sudden, and dramatic, and catastrophic but seems to be both [unclear] are going down.

WPS: Yes.

CAC: Having in mind then the mid 1980s when you were serving on these various committees, let's come back to the forces that led up to the Campbell Committee and the early efforts of Mr. Keller to get a Commitment to Focus. This bring us into the late 1980s. Okay?

WPS: When I begin to [unclear]. I think there were several strands there. One . . . Bob Holt I think was then . . . I'm sure he was dean of Graduate School even before . . . I know he was under Peter and then continuing with Ken.

CAC: Yes.

WPS: Bob had been very concerned in the late 1980s when there was another evaluation of graduate programs, national and by reputation. Far more graduate programs in the University of Minnesota slid in national rankings than increased. I saw his figures. I think there were two or three or four evaluated programs which increased, about a half of a dozen which stayed where they were, and half the programs dropped in rankings. This sort of fit with what he, and Ken Keller, and others, and I had been arguing, that there was a slow slippage in the academic quality of the core of the university and that something needed to be done about that. That was where a lot of the push was coming for retrenchment and reallocation, both for maintaining quality where you had it and for turning around some slippage where you had it . . . for instance, in English Department which in the 1950s had been one of the best in the country and clearly was not one of the best in the country at this point.

CAC: You sight administrative officers who have to be responsible for this but how widely felt do you think this observation was? Certainly, English knew it?



WPS: Yes. I think it was widely felt. Actually a bunch of these academic officers, like Bob Holt, before they become academic officers have been . . .

CAC: Chairs.

WPS: Well, and very vocal in the university senate, and otherwise, about this. A lot of them came out of that anti-union group.

CAC: Ah.

WPS: A lot of the argument of the anti-union group had been the reason that I was appalled at the idea of having a union. I thought it would be very difficult to argue for or fight for greater academic quality at the university if you had union [unclear] groups.

CAC: You bet.

WPS: That anti-union group first of all provided a hell of a lot of administrators. Some of my friends in the union movement noted gleefully Craig Swan, Fred Lukermann, Ken Keller, Bob Holt. [laughter] It was a fairly straight forward movement of people who in the late 1970s were concerned about the direction of the university in terms of quality and at that time were in the anti-union group and then were in administrative positions [unclear].

CAC: These folks are coming from high quality departments?

WPS: Yes. Incidentally, I know where the voting strength was in the union election . . . You couldn't predict it by people's salaries. You couldn't predict it by rank. The one thing that really predicted where you got support or didn't get support was the quality of the academic programs—with the one major exception that on the St. Paul campus, everybody was much more anti-union. There was a special St. Paul effect but otherwise it was quality programs who were against unionization and weak programs were for it, with very few exceptions. Psychology was one of the few exceptions. There was a lot of continuity in this from faculty governance into administration. Then there was another strand that developed in the 1980s and that was coming from state government. Rudy Perpich, when he returned as governor, was very concerned about the improvement of the business competitiveness of the state of Minnesota and he had several strands to that but one important part was he thought that higher education in the state had to contribute better to commerce and business than it did. Partly, that meant being more open to commerce and business but part of it meant being better higher education. He was quite enlightened on this, I think. He argued for what he called the *brain powers*, making Minnesota what he called the *brain power state*.

CAC: But including agri-business?

WPS: Including agri-business. Oh, yes, in all ways. He wanted this to be a fine university. A number of businessmen in the Twin Cities area, in technical areas, computer industries and so on, had also become concerned and formed what they called The High-Tech Council, which lobbied on behalf of mainly the technical parts of the university. In fact, the first contact I had with them, they came to us very upset in our lobbying because we were lobbying for faculty salaries in general and they couldn't believe that we were supportive of the IT faculty as well. They thought we were going to be lobbying against IT because I was from CLA.

CAC: Right.

WPS: After I convinced them that we were lobbying on behalf of the university as a whole, we became allies. But initially, they came to us, and were trying to get us to swear off, and get out of the business. So, there were some outside forces pushing at the same time. Ken Keller, when he was just in faculty governance . . . before he ever had an administrative role, as lobbyist for the Consultative Committee, he got the legislature to give us back 2 percent of the money that they were holding of indirect cost recovery off our research budgets. That was meant to support going after national research money. It was one of the very first glimmerings of this sort of alliance of faculty within the university who were concerned about the quality of the core academic programs and of people outside in the legislature and elsewhere who were concerned about the competitiveness of Minnesota business and saw a strong university as necessary for that. So, I think those strands sort of came together . . .

CAC: Good.

WPS: . . . frankly, in Ken Keller's presidency, and Rudy Perpich's governorship, and Gus Donhowe as revenue commissioner for Rudy Perpich.

CAC: Yes.

WPS: I attended the press conference—I had just come off my lobbying at this point . . . I forget what hat I had on at that point . . . I might have been chair of the Senate Finance Committee and member of Consultative Committee, I think I was—that Rudy Perpich held over at the Campus Club to announce that he was going to offer a real good budget for the university and Gus Donhowe got up and he spoke, and he said, "But we're not going to offer this money without strings attached. We're only going to offer this money if the university commits itself to focus its activities and develops a plan for us"—within I think it was six weeks, some short period of time to do this. Ken Keller was at that point acting president. Peter had resigned, and had left, and Ken had been named acting president, and they were searching for a president. The chair of the board of regents, I remember, got up at this press conference and thanked the governor. This was Lauris Krenik, a very fine guy. He got up and said, "We thank you, Governor, for this. We really like what you're proposing but I don't know with all the governance structure at a university and so on, it's going to be awfully hard for us to come up with a plan in that amount of time." And Ken, as acting president, got up and he said, "I think that we already have plans

enough in place, and we can probably pull those together, and develop a plan for you of the sort that you want, that focuses our activities." That plan was then called Commitment to Focus. Ken drew up that plan as acting president.

CAC: So, the words were there from the [unclear] Ken Keller but they were in the air for five, six, seven, eight years?

WPS: Yes. And they were coming sort of independently from state government and from within here.

CAC: I understand.

WPS: It's really interesting to see how that all built up into this massive tragic crescendo . . . not tragic.

CAC: During this interim period, from the fall extending into the late winter when Mr. Keller was acting president, what role were you playing? Were you in that [unclear]?

WPS: I'm trying to think what I was at that point. I'm trying to think . . .

CAC: By now, were you privy to any of the search procedures then?

WPS: I knew all about what was going on in the search, yes. I had a number of friends on the Search Committee. John Howe was chairing it. I remember, I wrote a letter to the Search Committee which, David Lebedoff told me, figured strongly among the regents on the Search Committee. Years later, he sort of teased me about this. I wrote a letter urging them to name Ken as president. I said in there that like most academics I decided on the one hand but on the other argument was a good way to proceed and I said that I know that Ken has often seemed arrogant in the past but in my dealings with him in the last year of two—I think he was a superb president and I think he was a superb academic vice-president—I've not found this to be the case at all. I gave some instances of where he'd been very open on some things. I said also, "In the past, I might have faulted him on some of his appointments." I named a couple of appointments he'd made recently that I thought had been particularly good. I remember Mary Bilek was one of them. David told me that one of the regents picked up this letter and was waving it around and the Search Committee saying, "See, even Phil Shively says he's arrogant." [laughter] So, I must have had a lot of dealings with the regents and Ken at that point but I'm a little blurry, frankly, as to exactly what hats I had on.

CAC: The chronology can be cleared with the record. Once he is appointed, however, it is he who appoints the Campbell Committee . . . so-called?

WPS: Yes.

CAC: Then you become a member of that?

WPS: Ken appointed the Campbell Committee after he appointed Roger as provost . . .

CAC: Roger Benjamin?

WPS: Roger Benjamin . . . because it was Roger's idea, and Ken—by all accounts, including Roger's . . . I think maybe even Ken told me this—was rather skeptical about this business of setting up a blue ribbon committee to do the planning for the university.

CAC: Ken wanted to keep it closer to his own chest?

WPS: And keep more control of it.

CAC: You're [unclear] that Roger Benjamin wanted a larger . . .

WPS: Roger really wanted this. This was what Roger had done at Pittsburgh, and Roger argued that this was how it should be done, and Ken said, "Yes, go ahead."

CAC: Tell us about the dynamics on that committee. You sat very intensively for four or five months?

WPS: Yes. Ellen Berscheid was chair of the Consultative Committee and I was vice-chair that year . . . I guess I was vice-chair . . . I was on the committee . . . I was the chair designate anyway. The Consultative Committee were asked to name the members of that blue ribbon committee.

CAC: I see.

WPS: We were asked by Roger and Ken to . . . I think we sent names to them and then they negotiated back and forth with us. So, we named a committee. I, as the incoming Consultative Committee chair, sat as part of the committee ex officio. It was a hell of a good committee, as I recall, and we met very intensively. It was just a good committee. We were given a directive—and I think this was a mistake—by Roger to bring in a revenue neutral proposal; that is, we were supposed to identify needs of the university, propose things to be done for them economically but we had to propose an equal number of cuts so that the whole thing ended up revenue neutral.

CAC: Why is that a mistake?

WPS: I think it was a mistake because first of all I'm not sure it's a good idea to propose cuts in a very public way. You shouldn't ever make hypothetical cuts because you do half the internal damage of the cut just by proposing it. That's the point. And also, David Lebedoff, at least,

later argued that if we had come up with a list of the needs, the gain might have been made something other than zero sum. Now, I don't know if it was a mistake or not. It sounded like good management at the time. I think you come in and you're responsible. You don't just give pie in the sky. You give the cuts with it. I don't claim to have thought at the time it was a mistake.

CAC: Yes.

WPS: At the time, I thought it sounded good. Looking back on it, I'm not sure it wasn't a mistake; although, it might be that . . .

CAC: Mr. Keller must have gone along with it?

WPS: Yes. Oh, yes, he did. Looking back on it, I think you might have also not been able to get real energy behind the changes if you hadn't made the cuts; so, maybe it was necessary to do. But we did get into a hell of a lot of . . .

[End of Tape 1, Side 1]

[Tape 2, Side 1]

WPS: There are three things that might not be so obvious . . . one of which is that fairly early in the process, Bob Holt figured very importantly in the deliberations of that committee.

CAC: What he a member of the committee?

WPS: No, we invited him as a . . .

CAC: Expert witness?

WPS: Expert witness and the reason he could figure so importantly was he, as graduate dean, was the only person who really was in close touch with the academic quality of all parts of the university. We relied a good deal on his evaluation of the quality of the various programs of the university.

CAC: Your meetings were in [unclear], however?

WPS: Yes. They were long meetings, all summer. We spent a lot of time. We went over all parts of the university very carefully but Bob's evaluations figured importantly in it.

CAC: Okay.

WPS: By my lights, I think his evaluations were quite accurate, by all sorts of ancillary evidence since.

CAC: I'm going to interpose for the historian later on that Mr. Benjamin is a political scientist . . .

WPS: [laughter]

CAC: Mr. Shively, and Mr. Holt, and so forth are.

WPS: So many people . . .

CAC: I'm not suggesting self interest.

WPS: [laughter]

CAC: Or perhaps, it speaks of the quality?

WPS: Or something. So, that's one thing to note. Another is that a key decision that was made very early on—I can't remember exactly how we came to this—was that a basic problem of the university was that . . . What we all sort of decided was the academic core was weak and by that we meant, CLA, IT, College of Biological Sciences.

CAC: The basic academic disciplines?

WPS: And the basic sciences within the Medical School—as compared with the clinical side.

CAC: I understand.

WPS: If you were looking at this university, this university has much better professional schools than most universities do.

CAC: Most [unclear] state universities?

WPS: Relative to its academic aspects.

CAC: Okay.

WPS: This is a university that is developed very much through its professional schools as compared with its academic departments. Early on that committee decided that the main thing that needed to be done for the university was to strengthen that academic core. That showed up in all sorts of ways. It wasn't just budgetary matters. We recommended all sorts of things, such as, the establishment of a vice-president for Arts, Sciences, and Engineering so that there would

be representation for that part of the university in Central Administration along with the Health Sciences and Agricultural.

CAC: I see an echo of that in Mr. Hasselmo's suggestions this very spring and summer.

WPS: Yes. I don't think that this stopped with the end of Ken's presidency, by the way. That's why I don't regard this entirely as a tragedy; although, I think it's a personal tragedy for Ken. I think that the process as a whole has continued and has actually had some effect; although, maybe less than some might hope but it's been a continuing theme and process.

The third thing of interest about that committee is that we worked for a very long time on what needed to be done. The cuts really got identified in the last day or two in a very emotional, very difficult, very hard, couple of days. To bring in the report to Roger Benjamin, we had to bring it in revenue neutral. We had decided what the needs were. Deciding what to cut was really difficult and it almost seemed to me like what I'd seen at the legislature where they spend six or eight weeks talking about the needs and the budget really doesn't get made until about 3:00 A.M. of the last day or in bargaining in the European community, which always seemed to operate that way to me. It was that kind of thing. Big decisions, such as the decision to recommend eliminating the Dental School and the Vet-Med School, were made in the last day. They were not made without information. We had obviously evaluated and studied all of those programs.

CAC: But this committee is operating without the immediate pressure that you spoke of earlier of these constituent groups?

WPS: Yes. This committee is not operating with that. We did have liaison with Roger.

CAC: Did they have any advanced sense that Vet-Medicine was . . .

WPS: Yes.

CAC: I see. I should think this would have been seen at once as a real difficult political . . .

WPS: I'm not sure it was. I'm not sure it was.

CAC: Okay.

WPS: Chuck Campbell, when we had reached our conclusions as to what we should recommend, adjourned us for a day and asked Ed Foster, who was there as liaison from Roger, to call Roger and tell Roger what we were going to recommend and report back to us the next day before we made a recommendation because Chuck . . .

CAC: That's appropriate.

WPS: . . . very wisely and appropriately, I think, did not want us to load Roger and Ken with a recommendation that embarrassed them or they did not want. Ed reported back that Roger was very enthusiastic about the proposals.

CAC: That meant that he didn't see the pressures that would come from these constituent groups and through the regents?

WPS: All I know is that Ed said that Roger was delighted with what we had done. Now, it might be that he didn't see the pressures or it might be that he saw the pressures and thought that they were worth it.

CAC: Worth the cost.

WPS: That would be up to Roger . . .

CAC: We have no idea whether Mr. Keller saw this in advance?

WPS: Don't know.

CAC: Okay.

WPS: I know that the committee had very explicitly liaised with Roger on that. So, those are the sort of interesting things that you might not get from the record.

CAC: I'm playing the game of a TV reporter here because I have a quotation from you in the late summer . . .

WPS: [laughter]

CAC: . . . to the press saying that this plan was a change on the margins and did not constitute a revolution.

WPS: Well, I think that's true.

CAC: Okay. It seems pretty explosive.

WPS: Well, it was explosive. Actually, the truth is . . . although, with what I now know because I know more now—I've learned more about Wisconsin and Iowa from some other stuff I've been doing and so on—I think actually what we should have recommended was that Minnesota, and Wisconsin, and Iowa get together and divide up the task of Dental Education and Vet-Medicine, either that it be located here and fees paid here or . . . but I would still recommend that if you couldn't work out a regional thing, that it would have made sense to close the operations here. I still would stand by that. It would have cost less to send our students to



Iowa and to Wisconsin to have them trained and have the state pay the costs of all Minnesota students who wanted that training to go there. We have a better dental program than either of those places and I think there would be an argument between Iowa State and us on Vet-Med. What we really should have recommended was the regional thing but as a fall back, I would still say, "Close these" and I would have put that in the recommendation. What was to be done for the academic core is only a first step, even if everything that was recommended were done—and actually just about everything that was recommended was done.

CAC: Well, MacPhail is closed. KUOM [radio] is closed.

WPS: Yes. The Arts, Science, and Engineering vice-president was established. The internal R&R got changed somewhat but the money moving into IT and CLA all moved. It's almost all there now.

CAC: And Vo-Tech in Education stayed.

WPS: They stayed. That was the very first thing . . . there was a member of the board of regents who had a special relationship to the Vo-Tech Education program, for instance . . . Before anything happened on dentistry, or Veterinary Medicine, or anything else about the Campbell Committee Report, there was a special statement by the board of regents . . . I forget how it worked . . . Anyhow, that was a political thing.

CAC: The mission of General College has been shaved back?

WPS: Yes.

CAC: These were all central parts of the Campbell . . . ?

WPS: Yes. I think most of the Campbell Committee recommendations were followed except for the closing of the Dental School and the Vet-Med School and then other things weren't done but I think if everything in the Campbell Committee Report had been done . . . everything . . .

CAC: I understand.

WPS: . . . and done in the next year or two rather than spread out over five to eight years, I think still it would have been a change on the margins of the university. The University of Minnesota would have been much of what it already was but it would have shifted direction a little bit. If it had continued shifting in those same directions over twenty years, it would have been a revolutionary change. But I was also probably trying to play down the revolutionary-ness of this at that point also. [laughter] But I still would stand by the statement.

CAC: Okay. Some would suggest that it wasn't this instant alone by any means that began to undercut what Mr. Keller was trying to do but that it was one factor that caused a stir, that subverted in some degree the authority he had. Would you agree with that?

WPS: Yes, I would agree with that. I think that the way it came out and the way in which it was handled was very unfortunate, including what our committee did.

CAC: Yes, I understand.

WPS: Our committee did exactly what we were asked to do and I think we came up with the right . . . I stand by that report.

CAC: Yes.

WPS: This is why I say in retrospect it may have been a mistake to say that we should come in zero sum, revenue neutral. My impression is that people in the administration did not see how controversial this would be, that they just didn't see it. The first person I heard from associated with Central Administration saying that this is real hot was Dick Sauer, the academic vice-president, who said he'd been out in towns in Minnesota and that the reaction to this was just a real prairie fire.

CAC: Of course, he had good access apart from the St. Paul campus around the state.

WPS: Exactly. This was the first I heard, within Central Administration, anybody saying this looked like trouble. There was a week or two after we had sent the report to Ken before it was made public that the university could have planned a public relation strategy, or whatever, and I don't think there was a sense of concern.

CAC: That's interesting.

WPS: There was no effort to develop a way of presenting this publicly, for instance . . . none that I could see. Now, I wasn't privy to everything by any means.

CAC: It may be a logical next line, and not a long one, to get your sense . . . if you have any insights on the troubles that Mr. Keller subsequently had that are not available elsewhere. Do you have something to add to what clearly is in the public record?

WPS: Incidentally, just backing up, I can tell you that I myself was quite naive about how much political trouble this Campbell Committee Report would be.

CAC: Okay.

WPS: I thought of the proposal to close the Dental School as a first negotiating step on our behalf, which would not necessarily lead to it closing but could lead to finding the money elsewhere or to cutting the budget there sharply. I didn't see how big that reaction would be so I certainly can't blame other people for not seeing it.

As far as Ken's fall as president, I don't know how much I'm privy to that others would not have had. I can't think of what I would know that would not be known.

CAC: To back up chronologically, there has to be an inside story on the last days, last months, of Mr. Magrath and you were active in late Magrath as well as early Keller?

WPS: Well, you know I was not very active in late Magrath. In fact, I think late Magrath—I can't remember these things very clearly—I don't think I'd been lobbying yet at that point but I might have been . . . I must have been because I had been a lobbyist as chair and I don't think I was any longer chair at that point. Do you remember when Peter stepped down? I know I was lobbying because I lobbied with Peter. Peter went over with me sometimes.

CAC: It was 1985 or 1986.

WPS: I can tell you how inactive I had been in general university things because Peter called me and asked me to chair the Search Committee for a planning vice-president to replace Nils [Hasselmo] who had left to go to Arizona. I agreed to chair that search, and we had that search, and at the time I did that, I don't think I'd been very active in other stuff. I remember we reported to Peter, and he resigned a week later, and never appointed anybody. I was sort of annoyed because Ken Keller, who was academic vice-president, was going all over the place bad-mouthing what our committee had done because he thought we'd come in with bad recommendations. I was telling people that if the bastard wants to do his own search, he should do his own search and not waste our time. [laughter] I was really annoyed that he was doing it. I heard from many people about how he was going around . . . We had recommended Jerry Cline who I thought would have been a good choice and Rama Murthy who I think would have been a good choice and a couple of other people. I thought it was not a bad list. I was pissed at Ken.

CAC: Maybe, we can move into the kind of final episode, theme, here . . . let's start with your reflections on the student body. You came in 1971 and now it's 1994. Do you get any sense of undergraduate, graduate students changing in their skills or their engagement, etcetera?

WPS: You know, one the things I liked when I came here was I liked the students a lot better than the Yale students. The average ability was obviously not as high as the average availability of the Yale students but the brightest students here were as good as the brightest at Yale. The Yale students seemed to be manipulative in a way that I never saw here. I sort of liked the students here.

CAC: It's *Minnesota nice*.

WPS: They were a little naive. When they came into the class, they were either coming in because it was a requirement they had to fulfill, or because they were interested in the material, or because they'd heard you were a good teacher and came because of that but they didn't try to twist you around the way that Yale students did. I've always liked these students here and I continue to. I don't think I see big differences in ability except that they can't spell as well as they could then.

CAC: Okay.

WPS: I think that they're less optimistic than they were when I came . . . 1971 was a pretty nice time.

CAC: It was beginning to turn sour . . . but yes.

WPS: I just think that students are having to work harder at their part time jobs now than they did then. Life is a little harder for them. I think they are a little more cynical and a little more pessimistic about what's going to happen to them and I don't think this is *Generation X*, I think this was true in the mid 1980s as compared with the early 1970s when I came. But by and large, I would say they haven't changed that much, in fact, for all that and all that, they're much the same sort of students now as they were then, quite a range of abilities and of motivations but I've always figured that it was their business what their motivations were. If they just want to get through it, they're adults and they know what they're doing.

CAC: You suggested earlier that this twenty-five year period, starting in the late 1960s and perhaps earlier—you were quoting the dean of the Graduate School, Robert Holt, your friend and colleague—that there's been a decline in quality of the University of Minnesota over this twenty-five or thirty year period and you were agreeing with that?

WPS: Inasmuch as I can tell.

CAC: Sure. To what factors, forces, conditions do you ascribe this erosion?

WPS: Money and management . . . that doesn't help much. The area I knew best is CLA and, of course, it's self serving to talk on behalf of CLA but when I was chair of our department, for instance, I went down to the University of Indiana at Bloomington as a member of the site visit to evaluate their Political Science Department. I was very impressed with something they did there which was, they had—what we've now tried to institute here but not very successfully—a required course for all students in their junior year. It would be a class of twenty students taught by a regular faculty member which just concentrated on those students writing a paper through several drafts and doing a good job of it. There was no common area of substance. The papers were on all different subjects and it was just on how to write, taught by a regular senior faculty

member. I came back, and I thought that is terrific, and let's look at doing that. I looked at what we had and we just didn't have the resources to do that. Then, I looked back and there were thirty three—I still remember the numbers—faculty at Indiana teaching 200 majors. We had at that point about 450 majors and twenty some faculty members. So, I went over to Fred with blood in my eye and I said, "Look at this!" and he said, "Yes!" Then he pulled out the figures and the ratios were like that for every department in the college.

CAC: This is some squeezed inside to do this task?

WPS: Yes. I think that our department, for instance . . .

CAC: Economics did not?

WPS: No, Economics did not. History did. Our department decided we really could not and I think given the size of the faculty and the number of students, I think we really could not. I think what you would have had to squeeze would have been too much. Our department generally is around the bottom of the top ten in the national rankings. There is no other department in the top ten that has as few faculty as we do.

CAC: How do you explain the lack of resources, just to stick with that for a moment?

WPS: I think it is what I said earlier . . . the division of political power within the university. The one area—at least according to Bob Holt and I think he's probably right in this—in which the university is especially well endowed with personnel is in Biology and that's because the Medical School has biologists and Agriculture has biologists. I think that our professional schools are well staffed and rank generally quite well. The legislature mandated a work load study by the university a few years ago, by all of higher education . . . HECB [Higher Education Coordinating Board] ran this. Dave Berg, the statistician of the university, and I were the two university representatives to this committee. We looked and we tried to make the case that the University of Minnesota had a worse student/faculty ratio than other universities in the Big Ten. The only part of the university for which it turned out that you could make that case was CLA.

CAC: Ah.

WPS: In CLA you could make that case. It has the worst student/faculty ratio of any university in the Big Ten. I think that tells in terms of academic quality. It's very hard for the English Department to remain a leading university scholarly program in English when it's been cut quite a lot in terms of the size of faculty through this period of retrenchment. When I was asked to be dean of Arts and Sciences at Illinois—these numbers are approximate but they're in the right area—the college of which I was asked to be dean had 850 faculty and 15,000 students. At the same time that I was asked to be dean there, the College of Liberal Arts at Minnesota had 450 faculty and 17,000 students. I think that's a very simple answer as to why the slide in quality. I still think that the academic core of this university has been starved for support. I think the

reason for that is the political structure of the state. This is one of the state governments which is the most responsive to interests groups, special interests, of any state in the country and the reason is that it's very open. The very virtues of the state . . .

CAC: Yes, yes.

WPS: . . . make it very much an interest group system and the university has developed accordingly. I may be wrong in that but that's my analysis. I am quite sure that the reason why Political Science struggles to remain in the top ten academically—the last time we ranked, we were tied for tenth . . . we very well could fall out of the magic ten next time—is that we have to make every single position count like mad because we're competing with departments like Michigan, and Yale, and Harvard which have departments half again the size of ours or twice the size of ours.

CAC: But including comparable departments within the Big Ten . . . I mean, if one adds Yale and Harvard then that's never a . . . ?

WPS: No. But including Illinois, which we're much better . . .

CAC: That's what I want.

WPS: . . . Illinois is bigger than we are but we're better than they are, for instance. [unclear] the size, which is a direct result of money, is one big problem. Then I also think that it's been very difficult for Central Administrations to lead this university because I think that we have very weak presidents, structurally.

CAC: So, there's a structural problem?

WPS: Yes.

CAC: But there's also a managerial problem? That was your second [unclear].

WPS: I also think that, frankly, that just in terms of leadership material—it's a rule of thumb I have—that faculties get the staff and the leadership that fits them. High quality faculties around this university generally tend to have what are also widely regarded as the best sets of secretarial staff in the university.

CAC: [laughter]

WPS: The Medical Science, the Chem-Engineering, History, and so on have superb secretarial staffs. Some of the weaker programs, English, the Languages, and so on, it's not as good. I don't know what the chemistry is that does that; but I also think that universities pick . . . they both recruit and are accepted by central administrators of a calibre that fits the calibre of the

university and this is a university which is struggling near the top of the second rank of university's university. For instance, Bob Berdahl—who I thought was just superb as provost at Illinois and if I'd gone there, his presence there would have been one of the reasons I went there—was in the provost search here when we chose Roger [Benjamin] to be provost and he withdrew from the search here in order to take the Illinois job but he told me that it was an easy choice. He was being blunt with me. He said that Illinois was just a better university. I was very impressed with the calibre of the administrators I dealt with there as compared with the calibre of administrators here and there's some people here that I think have been just terrific. I think if I were to look at another place like, say, the University of Nebraska, I would be impressed. When I've gone on site visits to some other schools, I've been impressed with how much better the administrators are here than there, if they are weaker schools than this.

CAC: So, the potential that Mr. Keller brought to the job was really a freak?

WPS: No! Keller had, after all, come up through the system here, too. We had groomed Ken Keller to be a first rate president.

CAC: But he was going to break out of the mold that you're suggesting?

WPS: Yes, he was going to break out of that mold and I don't want to mis-characterize that mold. I think that the University of Illinois has much better administrators than we do. But I think the University of Illinois is one of the three best public universities in the world . . . the others being Michigan and Berkeley. When I say that we are a struggling leader of the second rank, I think that's a very honorable position for the university of a state that has only 4 million people in it.

CAC: Okay.

WPS: This is an over-achieving university but it still is not a University of Michigan, or a Berkeley, or a University of Illinois. If a person's reach should always exceed his grasp, I'm looking for how this could be a first . . . one of the very best universities in the world.

CAC: Well, there's a good Victorian aphorism.

WPS: Yes. Well, Tennyson's *Ulysses* has always been one of my favorite poems. So, relative to that standard of aspiration, one problem we have is the money, one problem is the structural problem of getting good leadership, and one is the quality of the leaders. Basically, we have a lot of very good people here but they're not the very best people in the country and that's what I'd like to see us have.

CAC: The historian of the future, looking back upon the 1980s . . . particularly in the early 1990s, will need to address the tempest, the tumult, that swirls a bit around the political correct.

Do you want to comment on your perception of political correctness at this university and more broadly than that?

WPS: I don't think this university is especially politically correct; although, it's often tagged with being. I think that academic life is filled with political correctness but it was filled with political correctness when I was in graduate school. I think that academics are one of the last really parochial social strata sneering at other groups and feeling they can get away with it. I think the groups we sneer at are . . . Well, I've often heard my colleagues—not in my department so much but elsewhere—talk about Joe Six-pack and how Joe Six-pack wouldn't be able to really understand university policy. It's permissible to talk about red-necks. Chris Aiken, my co-author, says when he was teaching at the University of Chicago, he was sitting at a dinner party and the members of the dinner party were talking about the American working class and how the American working class reacts to things. He asked how many at the table knew . . . I like names all the time . . . it's a well-known country singer . . . the guy who sang "I'm just an Oke from Fenokee" and nobody at the table recognized the name and he said, "Well, I'm not about to sit at this table and discuss the American working class with a bunch of people who never heard of . . . Merle Haggard." Maybe, it wasn't Merle Haggard but it's the same.

CAC: Yes. But you don't think we've been politically correct on issues of race, and gender, and so forth?

WPS: Oh, I think the items on which we're politically correct have changed.

CAC: Ah.

WPS: But I think there have always been groups about whom we've watched our language and I think that's silly because I don't think academics should watch their language or should feel they need to watch their language. I'm trying to think what the proper targets were when I was in . . . For instance, when I was coming out of graduate school, I think academics thought twice about defending administration policy in Vietnam. It was just a different set of issues.

CAC: I remember Hal Chase here from your department defending it with such . . .

WPS: He caught bloody hell for it sometimes.

CAC: Then, however, my sense is . . . gained the respect at least, if not the agreement, of a large number of faculty for his integrity and his willingness to go to Vietnam.

WPS: I think that's true. I think that's true. You have somebody like Ian Maitland in our Business School now gaining respect from people. He's not Hal Chase. Hal Chase was a remarkable man. I think generally on campuses at that time, people sort of held back from expressing view like Hal's, specially young and untenured faculty probably held back from expressing views like Hal's. I think even at that time, people were sensitive on race. The terms



were different. You spoke of Negroes but you had been very careful to be very balanced in anything you said about Negroes and probably worried about the impact of what you said. I remember once still how embarrassed I was at having said something disparagingly about Polacks—I was just shocked at myself—to a good friend of mine, Jim Klonowski—who took umbrage. [laughter] And he was absolutely right and I was shocked at the fact that I could sit there and say something about Polacks. This was when I was in my first year of teaching at the University of Oregon but I was echoing the sort of thing that young academics could say and did say. I would never have said something about niggers to somebody at that time. Still, looking back, I'm embarrassed recalling it.

CAC: Yes. Several interviews I did five or six years ago, however, made clear from their own careers in higher education the real resistance to persons of Jewish background as late as the 1960s.

WPS: Oh, yes. I think there has been real resistance as late as fairly well into my career to women . . . I don't think there is now but until fairly recently.

CAC: When did the change in point come in your department, in Political Science . . . I mean, Affirmative Action? We all came to it either by directive or . . .

WPS: I think when I came here in 1972, this department was hiring quite straightforwardly as regarding gender and race. But in 1971, when I was on leave at Dartmouth, I still remember one of the members of the Dartmouth department telling me that they had declined to interview two graduate students that I had taught at Yale, both of whom I thought were good. He told me, "In the first case, we didn't interview so and so because she's a woman and we didn't interview so and so because he's not married" and that was 1971.

CAC: Do you think this was a painful process for the University of Minnesota to come to terms with an authentic open search for new positions?

WPS: The problem is, I think there are departments now where we don't have authentic open searches and I think that it is on political grounds in some cases; although, I have this more by hearsay than other things and also from students telling me how they're treated in classes.

CAC: Yes.

WPS: But there are a number of departments where feminism, for instance, which had to fight to win openness, has closed down certain departments. I think there are a few. But I think there were just as many departments closed the other way, as I say, when I was coming along or closed on left/right issues, or whatever. That's why I say I don't think it's new and I don't think we're more so than other places. I think that academics are given to dogma and they're given to organizing themselves politically on behalf of their dogma, which I've always found strange.

So, I think it's a problem but I don't think it's a bigger problem here than elsewhere and I don't think it's a new problem.

CAC: We'll probably think of things to talk about once I shut down the machine and we can always come back if you have an inspiration of something that is really important. Why don't we end on a more upbeat note and a less reflective one, which is to say, your perception of Mr. Hasselmo. You were asked to serve as a special assistant or counsel. Why don't you tell that story?

WPS: I have actually worked for Nils on a special basis a couple times now. The first time was a few years ago when he asked me to serve him for a summer when he was developing his program. It was shortly after he had come in as president. He had just named Gus Donhowe as finance vice-president and they wanted to work together to develop a program for the university. He asked me to help him in thinking that through some. What I did was I operated partly as a speech writer, partly as an idea person, partly to go around and get ideas from people. I got together several groups of faculty to sit down with him from what we regarded as successful, triple-threat departments—teaching, research, and service—and asked them how you got a department to be like that. So, we did a lot of things like that. I worked on two major speeches for him that year but they really both involved working out with him what his policies were. One was the State of the University Speech which he gave that fall. He, and I, and others worked—that speech got passed around in Central Administration a lot—on what his program was going to be for the next few years. The other was a major speech by him on the state of higher education in Minnesota generally, and what was wrong with it, and how it needed to be changed and we developed that. Gus Donhowe worked a lot on those things . . . Kathy O'Brien, deans, Jean Allen, Bob Holt. I sort of coordinated among all those people and I also did the actual drafting with Nils.

CAC: Now, do you have a sense that he's used other faculty in this fashion?

WPS: They've used other faculty in this way and I think it's a neat idea, bringing people in, not so much with Nils personally. I don't think he's done that with anybody else but Tom Scott, for instance, has gone over and worked part time with Jim Infante. Other people have taken on more specific projects but I think they've done this a few times. I also then worked this last year on a special project with Anne Peterson, the research vice-president, to try to develop closer collaboration with the University of Wisconsin and the University of Iowa.

CAC: Yes.

WPS: At one point in the fall when Nils was bringing together the U-2000 Plan, he felt the need to have some sort of conceptual writing . . . actually the way he put it was, he told Kathy O'Brien he wanted to bring Phil over to be a sparring partner, which I had thought was nice. He asked if I could work for him a little bit in the fall and he asked Anne to just sort of [unclear] me over to him for a couple of months. Through October and early November, I worked with

him on speech writing there and worked with him on a major speech by which he presented U-2000 to the faculty but also working out his ideas on it, and so on. I have just great affection for him and great respect. It's a job I would never touch with a [unclear].

CAC: Do you have any last thoughts this morning? We've been at it nearly two and one-half hours. It's gone very quickly for me.

WPS: Yes. As I tell my students, for the person who is talking, the time always passes quickly because you like to hear yourself talk but if it passed quickly for you, then that's fine.

CAC: It confirms, as some of the early ones I've done have confirmed, that oral history cannot be relied upon entirely by the historian of the future to write this story of 1950 to 2000 but it gives a sense that historians would neglect . . .

WPS: It's very interesting. There are things that I've told you that nobody would ever find someplace else I think but I'm also surprised at how muddled I've been, not remembering; so you need the written documents to keep straight. I'm surprised at how much difficulty I've had putting together the relative timing of different things.

CAC: That's something else that the printed record and the manuscript records demonstrate.

WPS: Yes. It's interesting.

CAC: This was an extraordinary . . . and you get a judgment, an evaluation, with leading questions that open up. Well, thank you very much.

WPS: This was fun. Thanks.

[End of Tape 2, Side 1]

[End of the Interview]

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