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Wittson, M.D., Cecil L.

University of Nebraska Medical Center

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This is an interview with Cecil L. Wittson, Chancellor Emeritus, University of Nebraska Medical Center. I am Bernice Hetzner, Emeritus Professor of Library Science. This is December 6, 1979.

HETZNER: Dr. Wittson, you grew up in South Carolina; you went to school there. You spent some time in New York and in the Navy. How did it happen that someone, who had spent most of his life on the east coast, ended up in the prairies of Nebraska?

WITTSON: Back in 1949 I was approached to consider a position on the faculty here. I was fulltime in psychiatry. I assume that Bob Wigton, Sr., must have suggested my name. I have known him in the Navy, World War II. And then Chancellor Gustavson called me one day and asked me would I stop by and see him when I was, if I passed through, which I did.

HETZNER: You were going through Omaha on a trip to some place?

WITTSON: Oh, yes. At that point I was making periodic trips to San Diego to consult in research to the Surgeon General of the Navy and was making periodic trips out west, so I stopped by. And Chancellor Gustavson, as you may know was a biochemist, and was one of the co-developers of synthetic estrogens.

HETZNER: I don't think that is generally known.

WITTSON: No, I don't think so; but he really was and I knew Gustavson and to my surprise he knew me because I wrote one of the early clinical
papers on the use of the, then new, synthetic estrogens; and in any case, Dr. Gustavson came down and the Dean who's name I cannot remember now, - - -

HETZNER Harold Lueth.

WITTSON Harold Lueth, yea (laughter) and it was like that. I made another trip out with that faculty. During World War II I had an opportunity to be on the cutting edge of some new developments in psychiatry. I had gone back to New York and I realized New York was such a large place that you couldn't possibly move it.

HETZNER You mean the metropolitan area?

WITTSON The State of New York. In the first place you couldn't know the key people because there were too many of them and they changed and it was just too large a place, and I was impressed by the people in Nebraska. Not just the medical profession but the people in town that I had met. Nebraska was still a frontier; the people in Nebraska were pioneers still in spirit, and the health system in the state was so low you couldn't do it any damage. (Laughter) You could only do it good. And also that the medical college was a weak school and that if you got something started in psychiatry, there wouldn't be enough strength in the college to beat you down as it was at Cornell and Columbia.

HETZNER You weren't afraid that there wasn't enough strength to hold you up?
WITTSON: No, I was young and confident that the support of the kinds of people I sensed were in Nebraska, that you could go ahead and develop it and you wouldn't get swallowed up in very strong intra-campus politics. And there was such a great need in this state to do something that I thought this was a good place to come.

HETZNER: Well, certainly, the climate that year on the campus was not the best because, when the Dean left shortly after that, and as I understand the Psychiatric Unit at Douglas County Hospital was in trouble. Was it in trouble then?

WITTSON: Yes, it was in serious trouble. It had never gotten airborne. Had an almost (with due to respect Goodwill) it had Goodwill furniture and equipment. It had no faculty to speak of except it depended, like the rest of the school, on volunteer faculty. It had one man in Hastings who came down. He was normally in charge, Sandritter (Gilbert Lee) but he wasn't able to give much time and it really didn't amount to anything.

HETZNER: He just came in on a parttime basis?

WITTSON: Yea, yea. He wasn't here much. The budget: they had no budget. I found out how much money they had. The total budget from the University part came from one grant, an undergraduate teaching grant, and the total budget was less than what I was making in New york at the time.
HETZNER: You certainly were a pioneer.

WITTSON: Well, I was just young and felt there wasn't anything you couldn't do if you tried hard.

HETZNER: Do you think that the psychiatrists in Omaha, and I'm particularly thinking about Dr. A. E. Bennett who had gone...

WITTSON: He had just left.

HETZNER: Yes, but he'd left, as I understand it, because of disagreement with some other people in the profession.

WITTSON: Yes, that's right.

HETZNER: Do you think that turmoil had anything to do with the situation at Douglas County?

WITTSON: Well, you see, it was just physically located in Douglas County. The space was actually rented. There was resentment and there was no idea that the University... that the Medical College, would develop a strong department and there was a clash a little over a year after I got here with a man out in practice. It was a very severe clash.

HETZNER: Was that before or after Douglas County gave notice to the University?

WITTSON: After. And after I had gotten the promise for the first quarter of
a million for the building. I had asked if they'd fund $150 thousand for the building.

HETZNER You received the promise of the money for the new psychiatric unit. Did that create problems?

WITTSON Well, then, they realized it was going too strong.

HETZNER Yes. And then they began to show resistance?

WITTSON Yes, and I insisted that I become chairman of the department, and I think they then realized that it wouldn't be run by the firm... the department. Then there was a resentment from the man over at Creighton. I used to get calls at home from several, they will be nameless. The man would get too much under his belt, a few drinks, and call me and threaten me actually.

HETZNER Oh, really.

WITTSON It wasn't fair for a man to bring into Omaha someone who was trained as I had been, and they hadn't had the opportunity to have that training. Those were a couple men on the Creighton faculty, and one of them later turned out to be sick.

HETZNER Yes, yes.
But there were two of them that would call me periodically.

Were they both in the same office?

They were both in Omaha. (Laughter.)

All right.

Then, there was some resentment, as far as psychiatry, from two of the state hospital superintendents. One of them had gone so far, and I have somewhere in my files of copy, having printed an academic type of catalog in which he was going to develop an institute of psychiatry outstate. And I didn't know about that and he fought me as far as he could. It is one of the stories I still don't want to tell in full but anyway --

You must have had a tenacious --

Yet, I wish, you ought to have that here. I secured a copy... It was actually printed in the curriculum.

That should go into our files.

Yea, but I don't know ... I looked for it a few months ago. I've had several moves and I don't know, I may have thrown it away.
HETZNER  Was it connected with that sanitarium in Lincoln?

WITTSON  No, no. He actually — Royal was a supporter. The story actually has nothing to do with this but you can tell I'm —

I went to the Pacific and my orders were in code except a couple things. One was, relieve, among other duties, relieve Commander Royal, of the submarine. The rest was in code because I went out as a physician that never had a psychiatrist for the fleet in the Pacific. And that included taking over the submarine forces too. I never got there; for a variety of reasons I never got to relieve him. But he stayed around about four or five months after he had gotten his orders back to the States, and it was because that fellow "Wittson" never relieved him. When I was certain of the position here, one evening there was a dinner at the Omaha Club and I met Royal for the first time. Suddenly, it dawned on him and it dawned on me who we each were. He yelled all the way across the room to his wife, Polly I think is her name, "Here's that son of a bitch, Wittson, that didn't relieve me."

(Laughter) Incidentally, his daughter is now married to the President-elect of the American Psychiatric Association.

No, Royal was a supporter of the school and of psychiatry, developments in psychiatry, strongly supportive. We got good support out of the two principal psychiatrists in Lincoln at that time, who were Royal and Bob Stein, and Bob Stein was a very strong supporter of the Medical College and of the Psychiatric Unit, and Bob Stein had more influence than Royal, statewise.
HETZNER We have heard his name more than we have Royal.

WITTSON Yes. Well, he was active in those days. He's, I think Bob is even older than I am. (Laughter) We're about the same age, but Bob was active at that point and on state medical politics as well as Lancaster County because it was important to us because we had no real support out of the Lincoln Campus. There were some other doctors that through Bob Stein I got to meet who were very important in the state -- Lincoln doctors.

HETZNER Well, in view of all this, how's it come about that you were able to swing the deal for the building?

WITTSON Well, it was about 3:30 or a quarter to four one afternoon, someone downtown called me and asked if I'd seen the afternoon World-Herald. And I said, no, and they said well you better. That afternoon, then I saw the article that the County Commissioners had notifying the University of a meeting that noon that we had to clear out of the County. So, the next day, I remember it was raining like the devil, we got Lottie's little Plymouth, had some mud tires/snow tires -- it was mud tires then -- Avis Scholder, who played a key part in this, a very strong person, and a man that has never been fully appreciated on this campus, I don't think, Mr. Saxon --

HETZNER Oh, yes.
He was a well ~

Reuben Saxon.

He was a professional engineer; he was a dedicated and capable, hard working man and a man with a good deal of foresight that was one reason he wasn't appreciated because he was thinking ahead of most of the people here.

Well, anyway, Mr. Saxon and Avis Scholder and I got in Lottie's little car and we went all over the city looking for a building that might be suitable, and we could find nothing.

The man who was very helpful to me when I first came here and continued to be for many years was Dale Clark --

W. Dale Clark.

-- who was very interested in mental health although I opposed him -- or would not go along with him . . . on his pet project.

What was his pet project?

It was to develop a state association of mental health, and I opposed that because at that time it was mostly a lay organization. A lot of, well, a good many of the members were active in the association in lieu
of taking psychiatric treatment.

HETZNER Oh!

WITTSON This was nationally. So they never got one going. In fact when an organizer came into this state I met him at the old Fontenelle Hotel and told him he'd better get out of town. Bob Wigton was with me, because this would have swung psychiatry away from medicine. But anyway, Dale Clark advised me and I didn't know the people in the state, and I thought I'd better get out more in the state and meet some of the key people but I didn't want the people, the newspaper headline people, but the real powers. He identified them for me, whom to see and whom not to see.

And then got up -- which I think you ought to have here -- I can't find it — quickly got up a mimeographed little book called the black book — put a black cover on it purposely. You know, one of these notebook papers that you fold in and you put the things in.

HETZNER Oh, yes, you clip them in.

WITTSON And I borrowed from the experience I had had in the Navy. People did not understand psychiatry, had no reason to, so I thought if I was to push these statewide leaders I had to get some quick way to tell the potentiality. During the World War II there was a constant running fight between the Army and the Navy on a number of things but one was on personnel, and it was the Commission of Manpower, the National
Commission of Manpower and there was always a fight. So I, every week, I sent the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery at their request, a very brief case summary, a paragraph case summary, disguised for the individual and where he was from, of the worst cases of new recruits that we had gotten in and we called it the Stinko List. (Laughter) So that people from the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery could read and then say to members of Manpower Commission, knowing that several of them had sons that were in the Navy or that age, is this the type of person you would like to have your son serve with. They were real stinkers. So, what I did was take the 25 consecutive cases admitted to the Psychiatric Unit, disguised their origin and their names and gave a paragraph description of the case. And that apparently had its effect because for the first time some of these people, the Dale Clarks and the Al Gordons and the Roman Hruskas, who by the way was crucial in getting this thing going. I'd say of all the individuals he was most important in those early days.

HETZNER I suspected that because he was on the program, the dedication of NPI.

WITTSO I don't remember that. Well, then I started beating the bushes and enlisted Roman Hruska's assistance and key people in various parts of the state, U. S. Senate and a woman outstate -- a United States Senator -- Eva Bowring, and then I think it was misunderstood because our advisory for family health, the senator, State Senator from Hastings, Dick Marvel. He was hot and cold, I never knew what. When it comes down to things for the Medical College, we wouldn't have this if it hadn't been for
Dick Marvel. And that isn't known and I don't know if Dick would admit it now, but he rolled up his sleeves and did some things — I'll get into it later — the key part he played.

HETZNER Did Terry Carpenter?

WITTSON Terry Carpenter, as you know, was a very unusual but erratic person. One of the first people I saw outstate was Terry Carpenter and I had already established a base in Scottsbluff.

HETZNER Well, I didn't know. Was it before the building was developed?

WITTSON Uh huh. It was one of the first things I did. To out to Scottsbluff. I remember going down to the railroad station, "Is there a train to Scottsbluff? Yes. What time does it leave, 9:30 at night or whenever it was. What time does it get to Scottsbluff? We don't know." (Laughter) That's variable.

HETZNER Particularly in the winter time.

WITTSON Yes, it was variable. I established this clinic. At first out in the Methodist Hospital; then in St. Mary's Hospital. I saw it done while I was in South Carolina and New York. The people out in the western part of the state became industrial part of South Carolina, and the same things was true in upper New York State, particularly that part of New York State near Canada, and the state wasn't doing much for them.
So, how are you going to get a program going when a third of the state is not involved. So I went out there and established a medical center, those trips out there so I made most of them myself. Ran a clinic heavy two weeks.

HETZNER

Every two weeks to Scottsbluff . . that took a lot of time and endurance.

WITTSON

Yea, I went out on the train. But anyway in doing what we established later on became helpful to the Medical Center as a whole. But how did we get this -- well, then, we had this unusual which is still I think the only act of its sort in the United States, Roman Hruska played a very important part in getting -- a bill which established the Psychiatric Institute as a joint facility of the Board of Control, as it was then called, and the University of Nebraska. It stated that the University of Nebraska, who had the Psychiatric Institute, and its department of psychiatry, and the Board of Control shall, not may, shall join hands and being a lawyer's wife you know the difference between may and shall. That became very critical in developing this thing.

HETZNER

Now, was Roman Hruska in the U. S. Senate then?

WITTSON

No, he was a County Commissioner, but he and, what's the fellow's name -- not Voight -- who was the Welfare . . .

HETZNER

Vogt (Philip H.).
Something similar, something like that, who at that time, he thought it was going to be County and when the University got really involved, he began fighting the University Hospital anyway because of the budget. But Roman Hruska stuck with us all the way through, and always was for the University, for the Medical Center. I don't think his part was ever fully recognized by the people on the campus.

They probably didn't pay much attention to him until he won a term in Congress?

That's right, but anyway, I am going to cut this a little short. They first approved, the Board of Control and the Board of Regents, we asked if we could have a -- because the year before I got here the Board of Control had had a team of experts, consultants come in to survey the state and they had just received the report. This was another thing I knew about and that there was needed immediately a new 1,800 bed hospital in the suburbs of Omaha, which would give the state 4 hospitals, add 1,800 beds --

1,800 beds?

Yes, so I told these key leaders of the communities and the University, Board of Control people and the legislative leaders, particularly Dick Marvel who knew something about psychiatry, and he wanted to have a good understanding -- Dick did -- and he got more involved in whatever got him involved in -- that if they would give the University a 100 bed
hospital on the campus, to be operated primarily by the University, as far as the clinical program, by the University, cooperate with the state, that they wouldn't have to build the 1,800 bed hospital, projecting the cost over 10 years. In fact they would be able to drop one of the other hospitals and reduce the census by at least 50 percent. So over a 10 year period the cost of construction of the Psychiatric Institute and its operation would be less than the money they would save.

HETZNER  Less than the money they would spend on the 1,800 bed —

WITTSON  1,800 bed plus every increasing and we turned it around where conditions would be more than the resident population and there would be no waiting list. And for some reason or another they believed me. (Laughter) I don't know what would have happened if it hadn't come about in ten years, but I said ten years from today and of course this is what happened because we began reducing the population of the State Hospitals in Nebraska long before the tranquilizers came in. Incidentally, that waiting list I screened it myself. There was some 750 people on the waiting list and a significant proportion of them didn't need to come in because they had already been buried — they were dead.

HETZNER  Actually?

WITTSON  Yes. They'd just been kept there. It's like dead people get the ball
tickets -- season tickets (laughter). Yes, they'd just been kept. Nobody cleaned the list. Well, any case we then got up the -- we got the Department of Health into Hill-Burton. Verne Pangborn is another person. He was in charge Hill-Burton program. I got it up to a half million. Finally, to a million dollars but we needed a million and a half; in fact, we needed more. Designed on one side of it (this is a little more detailed), a children's division and incidentally, an Omaha Senator presented this idea to the Legislature.

(Tape 1, Side B)

He said, "We've got a crazy doctor here, a psychiatrist from New York state, and he must be crazy. He has the audacity to tell the Legislature the state needed a children's psychiatric institute and that children were crazy, and he didn't know that the man was involved with child psychiatry. (Laughter) So he could hardly wait to get his uncle off the phone before he called me at home. Laughed like hell and said I thought you ought to know this right away. I said, yea because I'm meeting some key legislature men tomorrow morning. Well, at any rate, on one side one wing was the children; the other side was geriatrics. Mary Prince, the great and a strong supporter, was then chairman of the Board of Control. They were going to put up a third of a million. She was all for something for the children. Dr. Gustavson was all for something for geriatrics, there was nothing; and the two of them, he beat the desk, we can't and I said finally that if we don't get that extra half a million, the children's section has
to go or the geriatrics. I said which is it. Gus said it will not
be geriatrics, we have to have it. Mary started crying so I got both
of them. Now other strong support came from the World-Herald. And
that's before Dale Clark was involved with the World-Herald; he was
then Chairman of the Board of Omaha National.

HETZNER  Bill Clark?

WITTSON  Dale Clark. He was not connected with the World-Herald that point.
And from some of the outstate papers; the one at Hastings, the one
at Scottsbluff, and from -- well anyway, that's how we got it.
While I'm talking about it, finally we got the thing up to a million
and a half and we were short. We had a patio, you know that thing.
Have you ever heard that story?

HETZNER  About the Gestalt Therapy?

WITTSON  Para-Gestalt therapy area. I realized that neither the Board of
Control or the University would have listened to or have anything
to do with the patio. So I told John Latenser and Frank Latenser that
it must be that word patio doesn't go with our idea just as this air
conditioning bit, and so give me those prints with that word left off.
I said we'll have to call it something else. I don't know what. So
Chancellor Hardin asked me at a Board of Regents meeting was the
Psychiatric Institute through the financing. And I said no; and I said
we haven't got money for the Para-Gestalt Therapy area. Without a
smile or anything, he said, you mean you're going to try to operate
a university psychiatric facility and have no para-Gestalt area. He
said, gentlemen, they said okay. It wasn't much money, only $45,000.
(Laughter) Well, anyway, that's how that came about.

The other thing that should be mentioned is that I presented the
budget. In those days I had to present the budget for the Psychiatric
Institute.

HETZNER  At the Board of Regents?

WITTSON  No, at the Legislature. I represented the Board of Control and
the Board of Regents but at the Legislature. And there was nobody
in that hearing, nobody from the Board of Control, nobody from the
University, nobody — the public, about four or five newspaper
reporters. And they said one more thing and recessed. Have you
ever heard this story?

HETZNER  No.

WITTSON  There had never been any money appropriated by the Legislature for
the University or anybody else for any research in human disease.
In fact very few states would have done it; New York was, California
was, and Michigan was. They said, what's that. And I said, you
remember about a year ago the Governor called in a special session
because there was a new disease, a hog disease, and you didn't wait
because one out of every 25 hogs in Nebraska and Iowa was dying of this disease. Nobody knew exactly what it was and you didn't wait for Iowa and you didn't wait for the Federal government. You met and quickly appropriated a significant sum of money and within the year the problem was solved; not only for Nebraska but for Iowa and the rest of the country. Now there is a human disease that affects one out of ten people, a mental disease. Money for hogs; why not human beings. The professor laughed and the chairman says how much do you want and I told him $25,000 a year and he said are you sure that will be enough. And I said yes; I don't want to have more money than we can use. He called me out in the corridor and said that if you ever pull that one again I will break your neck. (Laughter) So that's how we got the first money for research appropriated by the Legislature and we had that when we opened the Institute. However, I went on to explain to them that this was seed money.

HETZNER

Now, wasn't this the first time that at least the University had ever taken or received any Hill-Burton money? It wasn't the first Hill-Burton money in the state.

WITTSON

Oh, no, the money had been going all over the state.

HETZNER

That caused some resentment, too. Weren't there people around that --

WITTSON

Well, the first time I asked to talk about getting grants to the Board of Control, they almost ran me out of the state. That was
tainted money.

HETZNER That was dirty money.

WITTSON And you remember the University turned down Rockefeller money way back. You knew that?

HETZNER I had heard that.

WITTSON Because it was tainted money and that money really was used to establish, it is my understanding, the Iowa Medical School and they turned down, and then they turned down the Joslyn money. And it was my understanding, I never confirmed this, that the University finally accepted some Rockefeller money but they wouldn't put the money on the campus. The building was across the street, the theater, the old one with the columns. Couldn't go on the campus. You ought to confirm this because I just heard that but never got it from anybody that really knew. But they would not accept and you know we still, I still, going around the country, run into some groups that won't accept Federal money. Well, the state of Arizona, Maricopa County, when they needed it they wouldn't accept any Federal money for the support of their psychiatric department. That's the Maricopa General Hospital. Made it easier to design. (Laughter) They were quite right; they said we can, by not accepting that, we can build it for less money, for less of our money, which is true, because the Eppley Cancer, the radiology section, I had told the Regents that I would not ask for state money. Found
myself $65,000 short. Of course, the Hill-Burton people came along with their mouths watering wanting to get in; $65,000 he claimed. We kept books on that, Rich Schripsema. It actually cost us money because we were taking in things; we had to change the orders and what not.

HETZNER  All the rules and regulations.

WITTSON  Yea, and then rather incompetent people sticking their nose in just to justify their salaries. Well, anyway, that was done. Not only that, later on it had its effect on campus. Let's get back to the Medical School during that period of five years.

HETZNER  From '50 to '55.

WITTSON  '50 to '55. During that period of time we changed Deans, as you know. There was developing shock; division between the medical school and the doctors in practice in Omaha. That was partly brought on by the attitude of the General -- I completely block out his name --

HETZNER  Lueth

WITTSON  His attitude was . . . he treated everybody as if they were Private 2/C and he was the General. Lueth was ruthless; but he did it. You know, he was not a General, I say General; I didn't know any Admirals like him in the Navy. He was just . . .
HETZNER Isn't it true the men on the faculty went to Lincoln and said we
can't get along with this man?

WITTSON I assume so. I never knew that personally; I wasn't involved
because, remember, I was the first fulltime man and then they brought
that obstetrician in and there were problems with him, you know.

HETZNER O'Dell. "Digger" O'Dell.

WITTSON I don't know whether -- I'll say this much. I told my people that, as
much as there should be a relationship to psychiatry, under no conditions
have anything to do with O'Dell. He had certain personality problems.
Well, while this was growing, this town-gown thing and getting sharper,
part of it was ridiculous. There was, and I don't know if anybody
brought this out or not, it was never written, never said explicitly
that there was a little misunderstanding, several of the oldtime men
on the faculty that we could bring in fulltime people but they were not
to be department chairman. Now this is understandable when you put
yourself back to that time. This school had always been run by and many
schools were, the one I went to, primarily by voluntary faculty, who
did for the most part a good job as far as they could. There were a
few notorious exceptions. But for the most part they did a pretty good
job and they did this without any pay they got was the prestige but many
of them it was their real love of teaching and of young people, their
love of the profession. Put yourself in the position of those people,
and a Dean like Lueth, then bring in a man, a second fulltime man, a
clinical man who turned out to be a mistake. Then you bring in a man replacing him, like Roy Holly, who had many of the characteristics of Lueth, with little regard of the feelings of other people. So the importance of considering other people that you just don't get from the chairman rank . . . So that was all understandable. Then the fact that this was a stepchild of the Lincoln Campus and it was.

HETZNER     Chances also that if we brought in these full-time people, they probably were younger than, with less experience —

WITTSON     They had experience, a lot of paper qualifications, many but not all.

HETZNER     So, didn't they all come in as assistants? Vice chairman?

WITTSON     Most were vice chairman but assistants. Some of them weren't very strong individuals, rather would not call names and there was no way of retracting them. The University still actually being stopped, I mean the Medical Center, the budget as you know for the library, the budget for the peanuts. I felt that I could not depend on the University for anything significant and so began to build up the department budget.

HETZNER     With grant funds?

WITTSON     Yes. The State Legislature. Actually, by the time, five years after the Institute opened, the budget for the department of psychiatry was more than the rest of the school.
HETZNER Which didn't help relations any.

WITTSON Well, there's divided opinion but not sharply divided out-state about the medical school. There was a feeling, but part of that feeling was against the school and part of it against the loyal opposition which worked for the advantage of the school. The feeling that certain people who will be nameless, were using the school primarily for their own advantage and this was somewhat true. I could but won't name names.

HETZNER Some place along here the Legislature was convinced to put in this 1/4 mill levy for capital improvements.

WITTSON And that was primarily the work of Lowell Dunn. There were others involved but Lowell Dunn had a big hand in it, and he's somebody that shouldn't be forgotten.

HETZNER Then it was my understanding, that (I'm getting this a little out of chronological order) but when the faculty here couldn't decide on what to do with this money . . .

WITTSON Had a building committee.

HETZNER They had a building committee and they finally got into such a hassle that they someway, money I was told, ended up building the dentistry school.

WITTSON No. That's not true. No, not money that was earmarked for here.
They did get money. As far as I know that was not true. We didn't have, I've forgotten how long a quarter of a million levy lasted.

HETZNER  It only lasted about five years. I can check that.

WITTSON  Dentistry may have come out of that but it wasn't money earmarked for here. There was actually a feeling of: 1/ That the faculty couldn't really decide what they wanted and many of them didn't want anything.

HETZNER  The size of the hospital; where it is to go.

WITTSON  And so forth. All during that time, if they haven't been made available to you, you ought to have the records. I think now using semi-confidence you can get them. The various presentation reports. I can just assume but I think you ought to bring it out and you ought to have them. During this time the budget was so meager, the University Hospital which was then a charity hospital (of course that was prior to medicare and medicaid), was required almost total support so that the hospital did take too much of the meager budget it can get. And I remember shortly after I came here I saw an annual report of the hospital. But it was less than $5 a day for patients.

HETZNER  I remember when they asked the counties to reimburse at the amount of $4 a day.

WITTSON  I'll get into that later. That's the counties, you see, but there
were many counties that didn't reimburse and insurance companies which I'll get into later, some of the problems. But any case, the budget was made up and medicine was beginning to evolve, medicine in general, very rapidly during the '50's, with the impetus of World War II, its effect on medicine and the fact that science had developed so rapidly that tools that medicine needed and didn't know it were now becoming available very rapidly. You know medicine couldn't have gone ahead until science made its spurt ahead which was again the impetus of World War II. A great many things come out of developments, have come out of major wars.

HETZNER
Developments that were necessary and will push through because --

WITTSON
Well, of course, not only for medicine, for the professions, for industry. Maybe one of the reasons is that during every major war that we always had the percent of male increases above the female. Did you know that?

HETZNER
I've heard that. (Laughter)

WITTSON
During this time now, to bring you from '55 on up to the early '60's, during that time we began to add a few clinical fulltime faculty. Most of them were at, I mean there were more at the Psychiatric Institute than the University Medical Center; the early part I say '55, '56, '57; but we began to add them throughout various departments and then began to fill in a little bit in the basic sciences, not much but a few,
to adjust to what the budget was now. And when we talk about the Medical School we shouldn't forget the School of Nursing.

HETZNER That's right, that's right.

WITTSON Now, the School of Nursing was an old fashioned school, still using student nurses as chief labor --

HETZNER And treating them like second class citizens.

WITTSON Treating them as handi-maids, and the rest of the nursing staff was treated in the same way. I suppose partly my experience in the Navy colored my attitude towards nursing. The Navy had very superior nurses and you know one reason why?

HETZNER Because they liked the uniforms.

WITTSON Yes. Eleanor Roosevelt, out of her own pocket, did you know that, had a French designer who designed the Navy uniform. She went to her husband and he thought it was a lot of foolishness and he was very busy, wouldn't authorize, the Navy wouldn't authorize any money so she said the hang with you and paid the designer herself. (Laughter) So, we had a great bunch of nurses. Incidentally, we did not have a single pregnancy; now whether they were moral or modern I don't know. (Laughter) But it wasn't one of the problems we had. I say there may have been a few but I never heard of them and I was in a position to. But they took on duties and responsibilities that were far beyond
what I had seen at Charleston, Southside Hospital on Long Island, and did it very capably and held their own as officers, so I was convinced that something had to be done about the nursing school, but Miss Kyle was a nice person but she looked backwards instead of forward. Well, anyway, I'm getting ahead of myself in a way, at the Institute we developed our own nursing faculty; had the first Ph.D. nurse on campus, and --

HETZNER Miss Muller, Dr. Muller?

WITTSON Dr. Muller and what's his name that's still over there, our pediatrician who died. She's still over there. (Dr. Marjorie Hook Gedgoud) Well, anyway, we had about three. Well, the school was then getting at the very serious problems of accreditation; that's why I think you ought to read the accreditation reports. The Psychiatric Institute had, by 1960, established not only a national but international reputation. I don't think it was generally known but the State Department had five psychiatric facilities on their approval list and this was one of them. In 1962 or 1963 I saw in Germany and England they listed all the University Departments of Psychiatry, they listed this as one of America's outstanding psychiatric facilities. I saw this because it had its effect later on.

I'm going to jump now to 1963. I think that's the date that the school was given sort of final notice of a year to do something or be disqualified.

HETZNER Going to lose their Class A?
WITTSON: There's no Class A. There is only one class. Either accredited —

HETZNER: Either in or out.

WITTSON: Either in or out, and Cliff Hardin said if you lose the accreditation I will advise the Regents and the Legislature to cut the school off. We just can't have it, you see. There was a committee formed to select the new Dean; I was on that committee. One day Cliff Hardin said if they agreed you should be dean, would you accept? I said I don't think so. Because by that time I had set the Institute up so that it pretty much ran itself including when I was in Europe for three months and I knew all the problems.

HETZNER: You had a good staff.

WITTSON: I had a good staff; it was well established, well financed and had not held down in contrast to other facilities like Harvard, Cornell; the Federal budget was never over 50%, 60%, and turned down more. One of the things it helped me as much as anything else in the city was an important man of the city was in Washington walking around a corridor in the capital. The Director of one of the institutes, Oh, Cecil, I had tried to call you and they told me you were out of town; Congress has just appropriated an amount of money and earmarked a million dollars for the Nebraska Psychiatric Institute. And I said what for, and he told me the program was. I said no, sorry, thank you very much but we can't accept the money. I said it will go down, the swamp us in the wrong direction. It is not our primary concern. We are a treatment center, we were doing research but thank you very much.
It was the poorest state, the smallest university hospital that had been built in many years, perhaps ever been built. So this article, academic reason was, strongly believed that (1) we should train practicing physicians primarily and if we did happen to train a few ... 

HETZNER  Specialists.

WITTSON  Oh, no, I approve of specialists training but if we happened to do a few researchists who care less about their patients but their research was to be fine, but that wouldn't be a primary aim as it is in one of the West Coast universities, who don't care if anybody they graduate ever practices medicine. That we had to increase our specialty training as well as make general practice more attractive, but these people that we turned out as doctors shouldn't have their training entirely in a university hospital. Of course that isn't real life, therefore if you didn't give the university sufficient beds, they would have to use community hospitals, and the other reason was that I dealt with the Legislature with enough of a realist that there was no way in the world you could support Dr. Roy Holly's type of hospital, it was too big. We couldn't get that money. At that time the University Hospital finances required 83% subsidy and even if you brought it down to 50% subsidy, there was no way you could get that kind, or expect that kind of financial support from a state the size of Nebraska. Furthermore, you would further irritate practicing physicians because you would have to be strongly competitive. But that wasn't the primary reason. It was hopeful that we could overcome this thing -- I want to get back to one
of the things that caused us a very serious split — the town and gown split — and this was the way that Roy Holly, who was then on the Lincoln administrative staff . . . My memory is that one night at the end of a pretty long Executive Faculty meeting (we used to always meet at night) when it was close to 11 o'clock, and Roy said, "I'm going to present to you the plans for the development of the campus." Just like that. He had these boards with the line drawings and the elevations and said, "This is your new hospital" — 425 beds or whatever it was, and 50 beds across the street. As far as I know he had never consulted anybody on this campus, certainly nothing officially had come before the Executive Faculty. He held the things up and quickly put them back in the case. I don't think there was a soul there who wasn't as mad as hell. I was, and I was as mad as anybody on the voluntary faculty. It was ridiculous. It was just grandiose and it could never have been accomplished. Well, anyway, and further, there was organized group wrote the letter that was called, have you seen it?

HETZNER The loyal opposition?

WITTSON Yes. It was all understandable and I think if I had to vote myself, I might have favored more them than I did the administration here. Obviously we had to overcome again — we had a starvation budget for the medical school and the nursing school, and not the University Hospital; we had in fact a fulltime faculty that was inadequate quantitatively and qualitatively; we had the town and gown problem; we had an old—
fashioned hospital with inadequate management; an out-of-date curriculum and no real capability to improve it in many of the departments; and the accreditation problem a serious one coming on. If you, and somewhere though they may have thrown it out now, but I had a campus plan that was quickly draw up and on that I had a parking garage, a round one a la the two of them in Chicago, and on top of that a faculty club.

HETZNER I remember that.

WITTSON Now that was put down there. I knew, but I didn't tell anybody that if you put that parking garage, of course I had gone over it and written it, was a terribly inefficient for a plan and also the minimum diameter would have put it from the middle of Unit III to the middle of Children's Hospital -- there wasn't room to put it there. But I felt myself and I still feel that this campus needs a faculty-student club. That was done partly to show my feelings for unifying the faculty, both volunteer and . . . A small thing that was done deliberately as a symbolic thing were those steps going down the bank; that was done as a symbolic thing because remember Clarkson Hospital had come out here on property that we had purchased but really had never worked out.

HETZNER What were you going to do?

WITTSON Well, they were here but they were entirely separate at that time. I skipped something else -- Children's Hospital, which is a critical one. Another problem was bringing Clarkson into better relationship and it wasn't all Clarkson's fault, but the fault of the school and some of the people here. The Children's Hospital was an acute problem and takes some discussion itself. The accreditation committee came and
they raised all of these issues. I presented the plan and they said how are you going to get the money, and fortunately I had worked with a couple of the deans who were on that review, so they said we don't really believe you can but we know Cecil and we're going to give him a year to do it, and that's what they did.

This is what Rena Boyle said. You showed her a plan and six months later you came back and showed her how much had been done and she said the man really can do it.

Yes. And then the program too which was equally important in my mind and the mind of the accreditation committee, and that was to develop the faculty. They said how are you going to overcome this town and gown thing and where are you going to get the money to build. I said we will and they took me at my word. And, in overcoming some of the faculty things, I said a lot was on, they had a lot on their side. One of the reasons I thought we were not getting along with Clarkson was that some of the people we had in key positions here were naughts. Well, if they were the University head of this or that department, they ought to be the best people in town. They weren't. They weren't people I'd go to personally for care in this or that area, and we didn't any others so we had very little to offer Clarkson. And then the attitude of some towards Clarkson which was the attitude of some at Clarkson. But to overcome some of this, the other was that we did not have, at the time when I became Dean, we had no Department of Pathology; there wasn't anything, just no department. We had a number of total -- we had one person in Radiology, I don't know if you remember him -- full-time man?
HETZNER: St. Aubins. Yes, I remember him.

WITTSON: He had his problems. So we had to get rid of him and we had nobody. Pediatrics was in terrible shape, the physical facility, and we didn't have faculty. But we had no neurosurgeon, and neurosurgeons wouldn't come. They were on the faculty but they wouldn't come. Well, I went to Howard Hunt for aid to Radiology -- he gave up an extremely busy and profitable practice of medicine to take over. McWhorter, who I will never forget -- this is how it had to be accomplished in the six week period before they could go ahead. McWhorter gave up a lot to come, and very little promise -- I couldn't even promise a salary really. And we had some strong chairmen -- McFadden, very loyal, fulltime, and Warren Pearse, of course.

HETZNER: Musselman.

WITTSON: Yes, Jim was a nice fellow and Jim did a good job at that time. Then what I did was to appoint a committee to wide-brush the future of the center and the medical college -- its programs and policies, etc. -- and they included Charlie McLaughlin and Long, and I turned over to them the budget, the books, and gave them (the C.P.A.), Rich Schripsema to interpret anything they wanted; they could study them. I did the same thing for the Executive Committee of the state medical society and asked them to recommend. Well, Charlie McLaughlin and Long became -- they saw the problems and they were both bright and broad-view people; they heavily supported the program. And of course I had the inside people, and then the state medical Executive Committee, some of the people like Rudy Sievers, Dan Nye, and a couple Lincoln men, they were
in strong support. And frankly they began to play, some of the outstate people and some of these people against some of the little, obnoxious people in town. So they got sort of isolated, very much like they’re trying to do with Tehran right now. Isolate them -- don’t pay any attention to them. So then we had the problem of developing and putting into -- of translating the program into a physical facility, and then getting financial support. You may know I have been on various councils in Washington; I have been on one of the construction councils. I knew that there would be money during that fiscal year for new programs; physical construction programs, and unlikely to be the next year. There would be money, but it was almost a circus, in that so many of the schools had come up with plans but had been unable to get the finances and so that money was lapsing. We had to get in on this next coming-up cycle or it may be years. We had no money and this was in May, early May. One morning early I met the Chancellor, Cliff Hardin, in his office; I didn’t have an appointment when he came in and I told him what I had in mind, a program that the clinical facilities, in general, would be on this side of 42nd Street and would cross the street for others. I told him the timing problem. He said who do you want? You’re a close friend of the Latensers who have done so much work there. They are personal friends. He said they’re too old. He said we’ll be going on for years and he said either Frank or John or both will be dead or retired. We just can’t consider them. He said who do you want? I said well, the only two firms capable at the time ... they were not as large as they are now, were HDR and Daly. I said HDR has gotten involved somewhat in the clinical -- they did the gradiose plan for Holly so they know at least some of the
problems. Let's see if we can save the hospital for them and for the basic science building, Leo Daly. He said all right; come on, follow me, you drive too damn slow. He got in his car and I got in mine, and he said let's go to Omaha and stop by and see Chuck Durham. He had his secretary call Chuck up, so we went in to Chuck and told him the problem. Chuck was then -- had only done Methodist Hospital. So he said can you pull in people from your other offices, and can you do it? I said the time was less than two months. He said yes. And then we went on over and saw Leo Daly to do the basic science building. I'll bring in my San Francisco office people who can get it done if they can get me the program. I said we'll have the program. So anyway, you, Harry McFadden and McWhorter did the basic science planning. Warren Pearse, Rich Schripsema, with chairmen from the other departments -- they were the committee. Of course I appointed this committee of five -- you know the principle is that if you want ... the faculty comes up with something and you want to kill it, you tell the faculty this is a very important problem, a very important issue, and every department of the University should be involved. So you appoint a committee of something like 15 or 16 people. Then a year later you call the chairman in (of that committee) and say where's that report? What report? We never even had a quorum for a meeting -- hadn't done anything, see. Now if you want something to be slowed down, you appoint a committee of more than seven and have it as a cross section, but if you want it done, so we really had the three committees, one for the basic science, one for the hospital, and the library. And I put two very strong men on the hospital committee, Rich Schripsema
and Warren Pearse, and then McFadden and McWhorter who did a marvelous job. As the library developed, we just put it on top. And so Daly and HDR rolled up their sleeves and we had to get the stuff into Washington, the applications, by noon on X date. Incidentally, during that time I figured, having done a lot of site visits, that if I had an application at least two inches thick, it would impress the site visitors who wouldn't read it because they seldom read it until they get on the plane. There wouldn't be time to read it so I had a 1,000-page application. These memorandums from these people came in to me and I welded them together the best I could. I never saw it after I did the rough dictation. Pete Boughn, who put himself through USC, did you know this, as a proofreader for TIME magazine -- one mistake and they get another proofreader -- so he proofread it and did a good job. I got it that afternoon but still HDR undertook printing all of the plans, but we had to color them for certain requirements, so many research rooms, etc. Cliff kept . . . he was as nervous as a mother hen, at 5 o'clock, when are you leaving? I said I'm leaving on the 11 o'clock plane. When are the plans going to be ready? We had to take 60 copies and I said they promised them by 8 o'clock tonight. What? Well, it turned out they rushed them down, HDR, to the plane. Larry Hawthorne and I took them down. Cliff called, you don't mean the two of you are going down there together. Yes. No, no, no, suppose the plane goes down. Cliff's interest here was interesting. So anyway, we
got down there and we didn't want the 60 copies to be put in with the luggage because the luggage might get lost so we took them aboard against regulations, and I told this poor little stewardess that we were transferring a large amount of money down to the Federal Reserve. She put it right down where I could see it. By that time the plane was ready to take off so we got it down there and got it in. Whew, some time. In order to get that, we had to show that we had the money. This became a very critical problem. The Legislature wasn't going to appropriate that amount of money in one whack so I talked to them in Washington and had come up with the solution if the thing was worded, and I can't give you the exact wording, so that it implied that the money would be coming. And yet it couldn't take the chance gamble of an unconstitutional appropriation. I got together with Dick Marvel and Dick is the one who came up with the actual wording which Joe Soshnik approved. I don't remember the exact wording but it was worded very cleverly, the appropriation, so that the federal boys would be able to accept it as a total package because some states could do it, you see, but this state couldn't. So they just didn't bother to look into our accounts. But it was worded so very few people recognized, even those that voted on it and it wasn't explained to them; again, that's why I say Dick Marvel probably wouldn't want, of course that was not the sort of thing Dick Marvel does. But he enlisted the aid of Carpenter. Now, this is what I wasn't going to tell you. One of our other problems was that we did not have real control down here for the budget and it's possible, I can't say it really happened,
it's possible that at times and they got short of money they didn't redirect some of the money, which they had a legal right to do. This question came up in the Legislature and I was asked by the legislative committee, and I told them I had no occasions to list them one way or the other. I was sufficiently evasive so that Carpenter, who really is a very bright guy, he caught something of my facial expression or something and followed me out. He said, if I could get the budget for the medical school earmarked, would that help you? He said I caught you evading the words there and he said I will not involve you because I know that it will do more harm, and I think I can get Dick to go along with me and so our budget became earmarked.

HETZNER And that was when the library budget was pulled out of the general and put --

WITTSON That's how it came about. But that story has never been told and Carpenter was at his best. He said I know I can't involve you. I'm not going to ask the Regents because I know what they'll say. As far as you know, you don't know how it happened. He did it and he got Dick Marvel to help him and a few others. I've forgotten the others. Well, that made it possible for the federal government to assist with the $15 million. Incidentally, there have been several articles and they have apparently gotten confused on the business office and when some of these buildings went up, etc. This article that came out that this Chancellor had nothing to do with, was all wrong. What they did
there that is quite incorrect, was several of the buildings they said came up during Sparks' time, were already dedicated. Now what the business office did in getting dates was the date the final payment was made, and sometimes it was years afterwards when an argument over whether that change order should have been paid by the contractor. But Rich Schripsema had to make a report to NIH, a post-construction assessment, and if you look in that you will find, and you could xerox these, these are the, it doesn't include the, everything, it doesn't include the Eppley Science Center. I haven't got a copy of that.

HETZNER I can get a copy of it.

WITTSON Well now this was taken from in here; you can have this. I don't have a copy of this. Well I just thought those things ought to be straightened out. Now we did manage to get up the budget; we managed to get enough people that we could begin to get in some requests and get in some grants for the budget increase. One of the things that isn't known is how I happened to be president, from dean to president.

HETZNER Well, let's hear your story on that. I have an impression but I don't whether --

WITTSON What's your impression?

HETZNER Well, this happened about the time that UNO, the University of Omaha, became UNO. The University agreed that they would keep a president at UNO, so -

WITTSON The meeting occurred at my house and Cliff Hardin and Joe Soshnik (end of tape -- reverse side)

University of Omaha Board of Regents at that time. They called and
asked if they could come over to see him along with some of the
other regents of the University and they were in deep and increasing
financial trouble. Joe Soshnik and I cooled our heels for almost
two hours; we didn't know what was up. We speculated what this might
be because we knew that Omaha University was in trouble. These people
left and during that meeting Cliff agreed that he would use his
influence to, he had more influence than subsequent chancellors have
had, and so he discussed it briefly with Joe and me and said well,
yes, they'll become a campus so they'll have to be a separate campus,
Omaha will have to have a separate campus. I said wait a minute now;
you don't mean the medical center will be a part of the West Dodge
High, and I used the words West Dodge High. No matter what we were
able to do here, your mother institution has a lot to do with your
accreditation, for example.

HETZNER  Sure.

WITTSON  I said no way could this be part of it. Joe agreed; Cliff thought a
few minutes; all right, but they're going to have a president. Whoever
heads this campus has got to be a president too, the same title as the
president there. Otherwise they will be unequal; they've got to be on
an equal basis to the other two campuses, a separate campus on an equal
basis. Right then and there it was settled because he was able to carry
the Regents and that's how it occurred. So then I became president and
dean, and the reason why I stayed dean for two years was that any
money I got I wanted to put into new faculty or new programs of some
sort, and Mrs. Classen was a very, very capable person, and
Pete Boughn permitted me to stay in contact with people anyway; the more assistants you have the further away you get from the people doing the work. That's how it came about.

I didn't know the details.

Those are the details. Another thing that we haven't talked about is Children's Hospital. The department of pediatrics was weak; the department of pediatrics had facilities that should have been shut down by the fire marshal and the health department. Children's Hospital came on this campus with the idea that it would be the pediatric teaching arm of the medical school. They were given a 100-year lease; it was a very carefully drawn contract between the Board of Regents and the Board of Directors of Children's Hospital which stated explicitly (and Creighton had no rights in this) but over the period of time it became shared with Creighton.

Can you tell us why it became necessary or why it was expedient to share it with Creighton?

It just crept in.

Pressure from the local people?

I don't know; it just crept in. Primarily I think the school here was at fault. Well, in the files I summarize this whole thing; it began to be a bitter argument. Cliff was very helpful in it and we had it almost settled. I held back the final plans of the hospital excluding pediatrics until the last possible minute because we hoped that that would be it. Children's Hospital was running a deficit of about $345,000
a year, in my memory. They were running a yearly deficit. Cliff and I made an offer to the Children's Hospital that we'd close down pediatrics in University Hospital, take the money that had been going there and give that to them. We couldn't give the state money but we would pay them, as it were, for the use of teaching beds, help them out of their deficit to the amount of our pediatrics budget. There would be developed an additional contract to implement the existing one whereby Children's Hospital would maintain clinical control and the operation of the hospital and the University would maintain the academic programs. The then president of Children's Hospital, a new man came in who was with [N. Murray Longworth] life insurance, Mutual of Omaha, I've forgotten his name, but he agreed and sort of twisted the arm of their attorney, then he had a coronary and died. We couldn't even get to first base when Walker came in, and a small group of pediatricians, they were a vocal group with not even a majority in numbers. So we had to go ahead. The first thing we did was we needed pediatrics so much that they did everything else the accreditation group would not have accredited us if we hadn't done something about pediatrics. So that is why pediatrics is in Unit III and not in the new construction because it had to be underway.

HETZNER

To remodel the area above the library.

WITTSON

Yes, to remodel that area; that's the reason it's there. We waited and waited to try to get some sort of agreement; we didn't give up, by the way, with Children's after that. A couple of times we almost had it. R. D. Saxon had planned the steam tunnels and all so there could be a pedestrian tunnel. Maybe you ought to get that letter or memorandum I sent to Children's Hospital; of course that whole thing
is summarized in that memorandum. I do have a copy of that somewhere because I made a copy of it and sent it to Vanselow. Now, other developments. It was about this time the Psychiatric Institute got to the point where they could start taking on research but didn't have any real research space. The building had been designed in separate wings so I got an anonymous gift, two floors of research room, and then had John and Frank Latenser design the third floor which was to be for retarded and other handicapped children. Incidentally, this is the first university medical school to have its own facilities for the mentally retarded.

HETZNER

There were some people who advised you to stay away from this mental retardation picture?

WITSON

Yes, at that time. I went to a very prestigious and very affluent foundation in New York; I vaguely knew the executive director who had been in the Navy and he let me talk to his whole staff and a couple of his trustees. I outlined what we wanted to do and they went into executive session, called me in and offered me a large sum of money for general research but nothing for retardation. I got so mad; I was quixotic and turned down their money, stormed out and never spoke to the guy after that. Seeing him at meetings, I've never spoken to him. So I went on; I had an appointment the next day at the two Institutes, the Institute of Mental Health and the Institute of Neurology in Bethesda. Having been on their various committees, they assembled their chief people and gave me two hours to present the program, which I did, and then broke up for lunch. One of the directors who'd had lunch with me said,
Cecil, we can't. I said do you really mean it. He said we did spend two hours of our time _______. You're not trying to bring the retarded into the Institute, you'll ruin it! He later waved the flag for retardation when as a candidate he came here. I got no money but Cliff continued to support me. Well, anyway, I forgot to tell Cliff or the Board of Regents about that third floor. I had the plans. Gretchen Swanson Pullen had been down to the Institute; I took her on a tour of the facility; she was all for it but her brothers were never in town together. Finally one day in the morning I got a call from either Gretchen or their secretary and both of them were down here and would be in for about an hour-and-a-half before one of them would leave. It was the first time I ever drove 60 miles an hour on Dodge Street. The Regents were meeting up in the conference room in Unit I, you know that conference room on top; they were in session. Then I remembered I hadn't told the Regents anything about this. So I went down and met with them; they called Gretchen, and they said, O.K., have the money, what are you going to call it? I'll just say Swanson Pavilion; that seemed to be what they wanted, you know. So they said all right, you can have it. So I came back and called Cliff out of the meeting and told him, so they had about five resolutions passed approving my seeking the money, approving it, and hiring the architect, approving the plans because I showed them the plans.

After it was all done.

Yes, so that's how that came about. Then the next thing, my own clinical interest, shifted about 1955-56 from schizophrenia _________ to
handicapped children, for two reasons. (1) I had seen how little was being done; the other was that psychiatric diagnoses had become so inadequate. During that decade it was popular to say that diagnoses don't count. I shifted my own interests and another development that occurred on the campus was the three children's facilities, Meyer, Munroe and Lord. That's a story in itself, how that came about.

HETZNER

I don't know how that --

WITTSON

You ought to know the story on that. Again, the key person in that was Lowell Dunn, among other people. Al Gordon, who also is responsible for my getting the addition to Psych Institute. Now the way that came about is a little bit of a -- I needed this research thing, so I went to the World-Herald; I don't know if it was Pete Boughn or Hollis Limprecht, and I said how about chumming the water for me. You know what that means when you're fishing. They said what? I said well, could you run a series of seven consecutive stories on psychiatric research, on research and psychiatric research explaining what is needed to be done, what is being done, what the potentialities are, and they said well, tell me a little about it and I did. They said sure, that'd make a good series. So they chummed the water for me, I sat back, and about the middle of the next week after the last article, Al Gordon called me. He said are you going to be in Saturday? I said yes, so he came down and he says, tell me more about research, medical research in general and psychiatric. And so for three hours we discussed it. The next Tuesday he called me and said a couple of people want to meet with us; I've got some prospective donors for you but it has to be
anonymous. He said, can you meet with them and in half-an-hour tell them what we discussed over the three hours; I've told them but they want to hear it from you. And so they made this anonymous gift, these three men, and then the Swansons made theirs. That's how it came about, but Al Gordon played a tremendous part in things, not only Meyer. We got the Meyer -- you see, Lord was already in existence. You remember Lord was founded --

HETZNER It was over at Field Club School originally.

WITTSON From Florence.

HETZNER Well, I don't remember that.

WITTSON Not Lord. No, I mean Munroe.

HETZNER In Benson.

WITTSON It was a small operation over at the Field Club. Well, we got a publicity program going and had a radiothon for my program. I had that fellow who was a detective talking for us, and way back then a popular name on a radio program. Well, anyway, I'll never forget about one o'clock in the morning this stenographer came and said she wanted to make a contribution to cerebral palsy, that's what we called it, and she said, my mother is 68 years old and is just divorced, a different kind of palsy, but we took her money. Well, I had that plus a little bit of other money, and we had a promise from Hill-Burton if we could get the matching money. But we were about three hundred and some-odd thousand, I've forgotten, short.

Al Gordon and Frank Latenser had approached Mrs. Meyer, Sr., for she hadn't made up her mind. We didn't know this, but we had to know the next day. So Al volunteered to go over and see Mrs. Meyer. He went over to Chicago, saw her, and got this thing postponed until the last
thing on the agenda. And just as there was about 10 minutes, this was very dramatic, left, Al Gordon walks in with Mrs. Meyer and he says this is Mrs. Louis Meyer and she has something to say. She said I understand, I don't know if this is the exact figure, that you're $350,000 short. She said you know my husband got his start right here . . .

HETZNER

Isn't that great.

WITTSON

But we had about 10 minutes left. So that's how that came about.

Well, those three units didn't work out for a number of reasons quite as we anticipated because Munroe and Meyer which was then planned had almost no staff capacity; we had a budget of less than $80,000 a year, every bit of it coming from the Meyer family, the operating budget, an insignificant budget. I was research and training director of the Meyer Center. I remember the Board of Regents -- I mean at a Board of Directors meeting, they asked why aren't we doing very well? We need staff. You don't have the budget. What kind of budget? At least a half-million dollars. When the University took it over. They just gave it to the University to avoid bankruptcy. Also it could start operating again with no profit to anybody, but I decided to continue to have a lay board, which they still have today. And then for a while, the only way we can make a success is to bring in the best possible person in the United States, and the person I thought of was Paul Pearson. At that time Bob Kugel, the dean, called, so we got Paul to leave his Special Assistant to the Surgeon-General and new president ___________________ California conference.
Paul came out and in a few short years took off the overload. One of the best programs of its kind in the United States, one of the most complete and best quality programs in the U.S. Has a budget close to $3 million. Isn't that something.

But very little of it from this University, but from a variety of sources. But a very excellent program known all over the country -- no one better outside and inside. Now the other thing was Eppley, and I wasn't avoiding Eppley, Eppley, again, a number of people gave that idea to Cliff. Eppley people gave him a kind deal that might have been a building plus an operating budget that started low, peaked, and then came down. One of the commands I had when I became dean was to do something about Eppley. Henry Lemon is a fine fellow but was no manager and not a basics science researcher. And the money was already given, it was the only money he had, was from Eppley and was to go ten years. So I had to find somebody. So I passed the word around the country. I had served on a U.S. Senate committee with two of the primary cancer researchers in the United States, so they called me about the same time I got a couple of other calls about Phil Shubik. I'd heard of Phil Shubik but didn't know him; I knew of the medical school there was in trouble. The only decent building they had was the one that Phil was in, had to get a building, had no money. Well, anyway, I contacted Phil; he had already been contacted by others. He never told me but there was the Mayo Foundation; I knew they were recruiting him. And they are very, very paternalistic up there; if you're on the
faculty up there, you are told don't bother to look for a house, we have a house for you.

HETZNER They tell you when to go on a vacation and where to go.

WITTSON Where, and the time. Wednesday evenings you have dinner here and on Fridays you appear there; very paternalistic, and they give you, take care of your family's needs, they are very generous in their health care and all that sort of stuff. If you're a senior member or chairman, on December 20th or something they'd split the pot so that they can remain non-profit. They actually do that so they have no profits at the end of the year; they split that up among the senior members.

HETZNER Well, I had heard something to this effect from a librarian up there.

WITTSON So I went to see Phil because I wanted to see this things, his place. I saw his operation and met some of his people, saw the kind of equipment he had; had him come over here, took completely a non-paternalistic attitude. When he asked me about housing here, I said I'm not a realtor, I haven't the slightest damn idea. I went through the agony of buying a house, two houses in Omaha, I'm satisfied, and mentioned the real estate companies I'd contacted. And along that line, what sort of programs do you have for families? For families? We have nothing. And then, well, this was pretty meager for me. He needed this additional building. So he came back, brought some of his key people with him, brought his wife with him. He's back looking, now what about this building, it doesn't have enough room. Other places they're offering me so many square feet. So I told him Peter Kiewit and two other people who I had served over several years when I asked anything had been
professional advisors, medical persons in particular. Well, Board of Directors meeting, and I called him, told him Shubik was in town and could he have lunch with me at the Omaha Club. meeting, the Board of Regents meeting and he asked the kind of questions that only Peter Kiewit could ask. He's sharp as an attorney. But anyway, they agreed to give two million dollars because they knew the problems I'd have.

HETZNER Something about the steel; you'd have to buy the steel.

WITTSON No, this was long before they had the steel strike. We hadn't gotten the whole thing financed for that time. I decided something had to be done about the North Building and then we really needed something for Continuing Education; a couple people in Washington and we used that money first as matching money to do the North Building. They said well, let's talk to our lawyers. They finally said yes, you can. But meantime we had run into this steel shortage and escalation of costs ... construction costs. Also, Phil and his staff were getting restless. Where's my building? But I saw the steel going up, and the two Latenser seniors had been out, and the daughter, one of the daughters had been married with the Latenser firm even though they were out, they didn't give me any other choice. And they didn't have, they never had their own engineering, they're way behind on that respect. Well, I talked to Nes and I talked to George Miller, and the only place it could go, it had to go with Eppley, is where it is. Well, by that time we had found that the fault from across the corner, did you know that the fault runs across? So, Phil was getting quite restive and I guess some other people were after him, and he had brought over some 25 people and
a million or so in equipment, so we told George to go ahead and excavate the hole. Well, that became, and that set there for a whole year. One of the Eppley men put up a sign one day, the Eppley Hole of Science. Then they got worried, and we did too, that it would fill up with water and affect the foundation of the existing Eppley building so there are cracks there that we put plaster of Paris over. Anyway, we got the other money but in the meantime the price of steel had gone up, and I knew I couldn't get any more money. So I said to George, what about buying the steel now? Their engineer from Kansas City who did this frame, has already finished it, we know what the frame is and we can order it. Yes, if the working drawing are done. So we ordered the steel; I signed for it. Well, at Kansas City, the steel company down there, fabricated the steel and a year went by. The steel was sitting down there; I had no money to pay them because I read the fine print and it was that the Eppley people were only to pay us as they were certified the work had been done and they wouldn't consider that as work done, so I was caught with close to a half-million dollars of steel. About that time, that was just Woody Varner became President. He had a fit and he'd call me every other day about it. Well, at that time there was a shortage of money, do you remember? And the smaller operators couldn't get any money, the banks didn't have it to loan, so I found out that -- furthermore, this little steel manufacturer and fabricator in Kansas City couldn't get any further credit because he had depended on a bank; he couldn't get a bank loan.

HETZNER And he had done this work and hadn't been paid for it?
WITTSON Hadn't been paid for it. So through a friend in banking here who had a friend in Kansas City in a big bank

(end of tape #2 -- some text lost)
... we sat down. Cunningham said (this is the way politics go), Cunningham said you've got another little matter here, held up by the majority. He said, O.K., I know how to release this; it is a drop in a bucket; it's really needed. He said I can guarantee that I am sure that it will be supported my side of the aisle, on whatever it was, they didn't mention what it was. And so it came out of committee and went on the floor, then was held up by the Bureau of the Budget, who could see no point in it and the Association of American Medical Colleges wouldn't support it. There were too few schools involved. So then you couldn't get to the President, it was too little a matter. I ran into one of the White House people I knew and told him about it. He said if you get a chance, talk with the Chief of Staff, see if you can't ask the President to tell the Bureau of the Budget to go on with it.

HETZNER Is that Larry Myers? Larry O'Brien of the White House staff?

WITTSON I believe it was. I think so. Then as a coincidence I told Cliff Hardin, who kept in touch, and this is the story, not Cliff, but one of these people at the Orange Bowl, one of the White House people came up and wanted tickets down there; this happened to be the -- and word got to Cliff who said yes, I've got a few tickets, let me talk to the young man. He told him about the library and shortly thereafter
the money was released.

HETZNER  How about that?

WITTSON  So, you've got to support the football team.

HETZNER  I'm down there every time.

WITTSON  Well, this is the story I heard. I'm going to ask Cliff about it sometime. It may have been somebody on the staff; it sounds more like the kind of thing Budig would have done, although Cliff was capable of it but it sounds more like Gene Budig.

HETZNER  Well, when the funds were finally released, Wayne State was the first one to be funded. We were the second; there was only 24 hours difference.

WITTSON  Didn't we get the largest one?

HETZNER  We had the first application in but they announced for Wayne State first and the librarian told me that you were the one who shook the money loose. We were all sitting around here with our plans and everything and waiting for the funds and that because Nebraska was instrumental in getting this ball rolling, they made the first grant to Wayne State and secondly to Nebraska.

WITTSON  There was another person I saw, another person I went to. I had been on the Senate Appropriations Committee as a consultant; I saw this gal, a secretary, and asked her and also a couple senators, but it was better that it come from her, named Margaret something, she's still down in the building. She was a secretary from Boston; she was secretary to the sub-committee but that was, had been aired from there; probably has about the air better than an attractive young woman to me, probably /60 now. But any rate, that and I don't think I even saw Roman on it because it
was held up in a House committee. But Cunningham, now he helped on some other things too.

We were struggling with the Regional Library too, at that time, and I said well, we couldn't handle the Regional Library unless we had the new building, and they said oh, you're going to get the new building but they wouldn't say when.

Oh, it was just being held up. All that was fun, but at the same time we had to remember developing the faculty. And recruiting wasn't easy. That's fun.

Recruiting for the library was just practically nil because of the physical facilities.

But even after when we got the thing on the plans, you know the thing there was to get them out here and I knew part of the recruiting effort was more so. If I asked somebody from New York to consider the job here, they'd say where is Omaha. So I'd invite them out as visiting lecturers, and many of them came out here we didn't offer it to some of them. You know, they just couldn't.

wasn't there but this is what we did. Also I found that the opinion of the faculty wives on what you should offer. Obviously there was no better criteria, they couldn't tell you why. If you have them out socially ask Lottie and others, what about so-and-so? Well, what's wrong with it? And they were usually right. Well, he's out here for a free trip. And I found out Mayo does the same thing. Howard Rome told me he always goes around the next morning, somebody they were considering, and ask the wives what do you think of someone.
Well, I always said that in the army, the fellows look pretty much alike because they were in the uniform but if you could see their wives, you got an idea what kind of background they had.

Yes

Well, I have a whole list here. What do we have here?

My gosh, I'm past one of them by two hours.

Well, we shouldn't do that. This has been a most interesting conversation and I'm sure that all the scholars who come after us and want to know how this campus developed will find the information that we'll have stored here in the library of great importance to any study.

We haven't touched on some things deliberately; for instance, they have never found out in Lincoln how I acquired the property across the street.

Maybe we should schedule another session.

No, that was all done legally.

Oh, I'm sure it was done legally but -

Most of it was done without the prior knowledge of the Regent.

Well, and I understand that you ran into some difficulty when you started some of the construction here by not taking out building permits with the city.

As a matter of fact, I didn't even know that. I knew there was a problem on the height of the building; we had to clear that, but I didn't know the other.

Well, the city inspection department here, here, you are building buildings out there and there's no local permit. A Lincoln senator.

We don't need it.
We don't need it.

I really didn't pay much attention to that. We didn't have to have a permit from the city.

Apparently legally you didn't have to. I understand that later the college would take out a permit but wouldn't pay the fee.

One thing that the city policy has just solved this past year is the sewer going down Dewey Street needed to be enlarged, way back there, 12 years ago, but they never got the money to do it. Year after year we blocked the extending Dewey down to Saddle Creek which meant they had to take a lot of property to extend it so they could go off at an angle. I heard about it one morning and it was coming up the next day in the Council meeting so I got hold of Frank Latenser about 2 o'clock in the afternoon. Frank, we've got to block this thing. So we sat down; I don't know who suggested/, but anyway we decided the only way we could block it was to come out in the next morning edition of the World-Herald showing this new building, it was coming up in the next morning edition of the World-Herald showing this new building, I forget what we called it. So Frank, I said, draw it up; now Frank was an artist which not all architects are. He drew this elevation, got it over to the World-Herald and they printed this story as he wrote it showing this new building which was right at the end of Dewey. And so the thing didn't fly in Council. And of course there's no place at all, just this elevation, and I don't remember what we called it, probably called it Children's Research or something of that sort, something we wouldn't dare do. Oh, Frank was a great fellow.
Reba Benschoter is one of the reasons why there's recognition of the Nebraska Psychiatric Institute. The Institute was the first hospital of any kind to have internal television. The term, telecommunications, was coined in the use of television by the Institute and became very well-known throughout the country. The Psych Institute and Reba Benschoter were pioneers in the medical use of television and other long-distance communications. In other words, telecommunications, and Reba is very well-known still throughout the country, and doing a remarkable job. You know, the two-way television conference was evolved here. Reba contributed tremendously to the programs there, and I think, to the programs of the campus.

She still is, with her training programs.

Yes. I mentioned Lowell Dunn. I mention him again, and there is another key thing that did not get discussed that I would like to discuss. But Lowell Dunn was a very unique fellow, a very capable guy. He probably should have been in research all his life. Here he had to finance without any grant, Lowell Dunn developed the first telephone transmission of electrocardiography, a cardiogram, and I personally can vouch for it because Kansas was working on it, and other places, and they had grants; Lowell didn't and a lot of it was done in his basement. But one night through some foreman down at Northwestern Bell who got in touch with a foreman in New York Bell, and while we were sure that it would go from here to New York, we hadn't tried it, didn't have the money to try it. Of course we had
used, we had sent it over the old Walnut exchange, and anything on the old Walnut exchange could go anywhere in the United States, it was so poor before they remodeled. So one night about, after midnight, I think it was about 2 o'clock this time, 1 o'clock New York time, we transmitted from here to New York and back, and that was really the first transmission of EKG, a long-distance transmission.

HETZNER

Well, I thought about that because I have been asked to be on an advisory board for a library that they are calling Medical Martyrs. These people who do not become recognized for the contribution they have made; I haven't made up my mind whether I'll accept this appointment because I don't know too much about this group in Wichita, Kansas. I can't tell you the name of it.

WITTSON

Well, the other thing that I don't know how we didn't get into because it is very important to the development of this campus and the school. This is the program for general practitioners and primary medicine. This is the first school to have a fulltime professor of General Practice anyway; this was a most remarkable guy; he was dedicated and one of the biggest factors in the development of this school; this was Fay Smith. And practically, one of my gripes is not being able to get the school to do anything in recognition of Fay Smith, and they're making a mistake because there is a lot of support still flying outstate. Now Fay Smith, you know, was an unusual chap who lived in a small town in the very western part of the state; he dressed as if he bought his clothes in Brooks but he didn't, but anyway, he made a nice appearance, personable.

HETZNER

Everybody liked him.
He was head of the Masons, president of the state medical, and Fay gave up a very nice life and a very profitable practice to come here. I always say Fay he was recruited primarily between halves of football games at Lincoln, and I would needle him every time I saw him about coming here and starting a program in general practice. Finally he said, well, I'll talk to you and finally one Saturday morning he called and said I'm in town and I'll be through at 11 o'clock, my wife and I'll come around and have lunch. They ended up having lunch and dinner and over an empty bottle of Scotch at 11 o'clock at night he accepted the position.

He was a great guy.

I made it contingent upon his attending the next meeting of the Royal Association of General Practitioners, professors of general practice. And then I told him after he got here that he had two colleagues in the world, one in Scotland at the University of Edinburgh and one in Ankara, Turkey. But the man from Ankara wouldn't be able to make it, but I wanted him to attend the meeting in Edinburgh. Of course, that was —

Isn't that great.

I then was under some pressure to put him in Medicine, some people thought he ought to be in this and that department but I made the decision that he shouldn't be in any department because then he would be shelved but attached him to the Dean's Office which was one of the luckiest things I ever did. One of the things that held down this school was the attitude of all the private insurance companies. It wasn't just this school, but they would not pay the insurance premiums
for patients who came into university hospitals.

HETZNER

What was their justification for that?

WITTON

Well, they were getting by with it. Finally there was a big suit against a midwestern health insurance company by one of the California universities in Los Angeles and also by a patient who had paid his premiums for years. And the courts gave him the amount, the school the amount that they claimed but also, what is it the attorneys call it when the state doesn't have its punitive damaged program, harm done, isn't it generally, you know, there's a word for it. But anyway, it was awarded. We still couldn't get Mutual of Omaha and Physicians Mutual, they wouldn't pay.

HETZNER

Run by doctors.

WITTON

Yes, run by doctors. Finally I met with the chairman of the board. And Blue Cross-Blue Shield wouldn't. Fay was a trustee of Blue Cross-Blue Shield; he twisted their arms in many meetings. But anyway, they started so then I went to Mutual and about that time that California suit, I didn't tell them anything about it that I knew was on the market, and decided not to threaten but said I knew they were heavily supporting Creighton, which was fine. To make a long story short, it was primarily Fay who swung that around, with Rich Schripsema, who gave him the figures. Rich was another valuable contributor to the whole development. We would never have gotten that grant ready without Rich with other things. But that was a very difficult thing to turn around, and finally turning the image, which hasn't been completely done yet, of the school. But when we took over, Rich said it was an 82% or 83% subsidized hospital. When I left it was 80% self-supporting, and that 20%, by the way, I don't know what it is now, but Rich analyzed
this for me. At that time a good 3/4 of that 20%, or 60% of that 20%, went as subsidy of the average Nebraskan who came here, the average Nebraskan at that time being somebody with about $7200 yearly income, a family of four, and we subsidized them by not charging full amount and giving them three years to pay. And that took this 60% of the subsidy; then there's X% for, what in any business you have, and that is on the people who just don't pay their bills. Then there was subsidy of certain programs related to medical education. Now one of the things that when we had that 83% when I started, there was no Medicaid and Medicare. But we were running into problems of getting Medicaid repayments and that was handled by Fay and Rich Schripsema. Well, then, Fay was so well accepted by the faculty and held his own pretty well in rounds, they couldn't say that ignorant general practitioner because he was a really good doctor.

HETZNER Oh yes, his patients all just -

WITTSON He got accepted so then we had a department, it was the first department. You know Fay, the day he died, I was called up to Lincoln. I had a 4 o'clock lecture and I asked Fay to take it, which he was capable of taking over in / . What this had to do with it, I don't know, but he was unusually tense, and there was no reason to me, he'd done it before. That evening he went home and told his wife he had a headache and thought he'd take a walk, which was unusual because of all things that Fay was, he wasn't an athlete, and he had the stroke that night. I don't know whether but I always wondered if I hadn't asked him to take that lecture. But he was concerned about a stroke, according to his wife,
because three members of his family at age whatever it was, 50 or 55, had had strokes, and when he passed that birthday he came in and said let's go out and have a drink to celebrate I passed it.

HETZNER
He made it that far.

WITSON
Well, Fay is somebody forgotten, and the last thing I want to do/is get some recognition for Fay. I brought it up to Rigby and he said no, there are too many people we could give it to. I wrote a long letter explaining that part he played, the other things Fay did; he helped heal this breach between, and he sealed the relationship with outstate and completed it here in town. So what I'd like to do is something, a picture, a bronze --

HETZNER
Why don't we ask Dr. McGoogan to work on it, particularly if we want it in the library.

WITSON
In the library or in the family practice area. You know the sort of thing they have, the profile on relief. But I think something ought to be done; we could get some support from Rudy Sievers, Dan Nye, and others outstate. This is historically important because he is the one that started it in the first place. Oh, was I criticized by my colleagues around the country when I appointed him professor.

HETZNER
Well, I suppose so. There's another person that we haven't mentioned and that's Mary Jo Henn.

WITSON
Another person who hasn't been mentioned who quietly played a very important part certainly in the national and world reputation of this place. I still think he is one of the brightest people here on the campus, and that is Robert Ellingson, Bob Ellingson. In Europe, in a 9
country tour, I found that spontaneously on a medical campus, they'd say, oh, you're from Omaha, do you know Bob Ellingson? And I suspect that nationally he's one of the most respected people, along with Phil Shubik, that we have here.

HETZNER: He certainly did function very well on the RNL advisory committee, the regional library committee.

WITTSON: Well, Bob's a very bright fellow, a very sound fellow, a very steady and moderate, entirely intellectual, and does have this international reputation.

HETZNER: I knew that because I think he is still active as an editor of several journals.

WITTSON: And president of several organizations. I know in Washington he is extremely well thought of. One other thing about the Institute. Did you know that the program for the Institute was developed back in 1951? It is the first building designed for community psychiatry; in fact, when we made the building it was designed and all elements of what is now community psychiatry were included in the design of that building so that when NIH went to Congress with the idea of community mental health centers and explained what was meant by it, they used the Psychiatric Institute as an example, one of the ten examples of modern psychiatric buildings, and it is in the APA book on psychiatric architecture. But it was the first, that program was approximately 12 to 15 years ahead of the national program, and the program of training general practitioners in psychiatry was the first
program and anticipated the national program by almost a decade. And we used alcohol, do you know why? How are you going to test, validate an effective program? Well, if you trained them in alcohol, the guy was either on the wagon. You've got to have good objective evidence. But one of the funny things that happened was that we forgot in the initial curriculum to include anything on one of the most common conditions that's caused mostly by alcohol that comes under general hospital, and that's delirium tremens. Didn't have it in at all. Didn't have it/there at all?

No. That was like when I was taking by boards in neurology. The guy asked me, basic neurology, the causes of convulsions. For about ten minutes I listed causes, and he said haven't you left out one? I said if I have, I don't know it. He said how about epilepsy?

A common error, you skipped right over it.

My main connective with that is Thaddeus Krush. And the first person full-time for research direction was Jackson Smith, a character.

Yes, I thought about him too.

He was a character.

Oh, he was a delight to know.

Talk about recruiting, Thaddeus. People would ask him why did you leave Harvard, why did you leave Boston to come to Omaha. He said, well, I rode up from Lincoln with Cecil and Jackson Smith; I was sitting in the back and I couldn't understand what they were saying, they mumbled so. I came out to Omaha to find out what they were talking about.
HETZNER: What they were talking about, huh? Didn't Jackson Smith have -- where did he come from?

WITTSON: He came here from Baylor, so he's really Oklahoma and Texas. And the other thing -- Bob Ellingson's the first person in research, even before he came out here.

HETZNER: He came from Chicago, didn't he?

WITTSON: Evanston. Northwestern. He's probably been on the faculty right now longer than anybody on the full-time active faculty; there isn't anybody else that long, is there? I hadn't thought about that.

HETZNER: I can't think of anybody unless he grew up here, like --

WITTSON: No, I'm talking about full-time faculty. Wait a minute.

HETZNER: Like McFadden.

WITTSON: McFadden, yes. He's almost as long as McFadden.

HETZNER: Yes, just about, because I can remember when Ellingson came and I can remember when McFadden was still in his residency. That means I've been here longer than any of the rest of them.

WITTSON: I didn't trust my memory so I tried to bring together a little data, I didn't have the time, but I have the dates which I had to try and find out when some of these people came.

HETZNER: Well, I can always find out that.

WITTSON: I had her call in over at the Institute; I had trouble on -- Jackson Smith came in 1955, about the time we opened the Institute, and left in
'59. Delbert Messner. Do you remember Delbert?

HETZNER Oh yes. I used to run into him once in a while. Messner, wasn't it, at the American Hospital Association.

WITTSON Yes, he works for the American Hospital Association; I haven't seen or heard from him lately. Delbert was a great help. Hal Martin, too, in the Institute; you see I stole him from Mayo and then Mayo, after he was here four years, stole him back.

HETZNER I don't remember him.

WITTSON He was in charge of in-patient service over there and Mayo took him back to run their in-patient service, which is in very excellent condition. There are things left out, but we could go on and on. Some stories I'd rather not tell.

HETZNER There are a lot of people that made an interesting contribution. One of them I think of was Tony Semerad, remember Tony?

WITTSON Yes, I remember Tony.

HETZNER Yes, there were things Tony could do and things that Tony knew that the rest of us --

WITTSON Did you ever get anything from Mrs. Classen?

HETZNER No, I haven't but I think that I should talk to her.

WITTSON I don't know anybody in the position like that who better filled the position.

HETZNER She was great.

WITTSON She knew most of the faculty; if they had something, they'd go to Mrs.
And you could trust her to never say the wrong thing or to reveal something that shouldn't be talked about.

No. And she never played on her friendship with me or tried to influence me; her friendship was something. She'd tell me what she'd learned straightforward; she is a great person. I was lucky with Mrs. Classen and Joan Martin. I believe she called Lottie the other day, called the house, when she'd just heard I was sick last. She runs that department down in Texas. Two of the people I've had here as visitor recruited Joan at the same time; are chairman of the department at UCLA and chairman of the department at Oklahoma, who is now chairman of the department at UCLA. And they both -- you know the university never paid well. She was close to the highest paid secretary, including Cliff's. The university still, Oklahoma doubled whatever I was paying. She came to me, I advised her. She was having a recent divorce -- I didn't want to lose her.