

## Ralph Prator, Track 5

Tape 3, Side A

JB: This might be a defective tape. Anyway, to finish what we were saying about the small college in the Sylvan Orange Grove, which is what she had in mind.

RP: Well, our community relations were not too good in the very early years, for obvious reasons. First of all, the campus developed so quickly. And the number of bulldozers and the uprooting of trees in this sort of thing that went on, was very distressing to a number of our neighbors. And pervading wind that comes from sort of north to south. Blew this dust off the campus into their swimming pools, and so I had a number of the neighbors have called on me, too complained about what a disruptive influence this was. But the final thing that really kind of pleased me, when I explained to them that we were to accommodate a large number of people who might not otherwise come in terms of students, and also that what a magnificent place this could be in time with the collegiate atmosphere that is so relevant to any elite community. That these little nuisance of time might very well be sort of tolerated, and the interesting thing was they all agreed. This probably makes good sense, and so we didn't have any real trouble. We had some people who wanted to put one of the streets through the campus against miss Plummer Street, through the campus, and we had a terrific battle with the member of the city council over this issue. Explain that this would bisect campus just completely destroy us and a fight came down to a kind of a kind of confrontation, that we were forced attending Charles Luckman from the board of trustees. Who was a excellent negotiator, of course. But in one of these, one of his visits with the councilman, he explained very sharply that when it came to priorities, the State had priority over the local community. And he for one would see to it that all states influence was brought to bear on resolving this issue, in favor of the campus, that suit person better back off on this Plumber Street business and the conversation was quite heated for the time, but they did finally exceed the fact that if they're going to put Plumber Street through, it had to go underground. And so, I think that it's probably a dead issue at the time, but then it was a very live issue, and he had, the council had a lot of support because a number of people who commuted you see. Thought this was a ready avenue for commuting, and now that the campus is sort of integrated and settled, those kinds of problems don't come up because the people recognize the importance of the institutions, not only to the community itself, but to the state as a whole. Then this was not an evident factor, you see. So we had a lot of these kinds of problems. For instance, Leo Wilson spent a great deal of his time going to meetings of agencies that were speculating about moving in close to the campus, for example, cocktail lounges, and obviously, already well-planned of why can't he move in. Well, one of a kind of

interesting I had noticed here, they had to have hearings, ahead of time. And so they were all sorts of roses resorted to keep these hearings out of the press. If they could possibly keep them out of the press, we wouldn't learn about them. So I suggest to Leo that maybe one of the things he should do is go to, I think, was the Methodists Church, they had a very active women's club. And why don't you go to the business club, and see if they won't go to this meeting with you, or you're instead engagement, but they were glad to go in. They were influential, so we had a lot of these kinds of problems; you see that a person would never think would come under these circumstances. But because of the novelty of the time and the place and kind of institution we had these sort of thing that were sorted different, and nice to reflect on, but very troublesome with the time.

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JB: It's rather like trying to find the batteries of fresh country.

RP: Yes.

JB: Where everything is malleable information.

RP: That's true. That's very true, but it was a very exciting experience. I'll have to say that part, exciting time for a lot of us. And as I say, we were blessed with excellent colleagues.

JB: You know, I think you're pleased you did it.

RP: Oh yes, as a matter of fact, I am. I'm quite pleased about it, for two reasons. One, it was a good climax to the experience that I had, for one thing. I had a marvelous experience in Bakersfield, and a marvelous experience with the University of Colorado and this was kind of a climax too a very happy time in college administration, which is well worth wild.

JB: As I look back on these were sold years?

RP: They were.

JB: How were the administrators?

RP: Well they were very difficult years, John. See we had, as I mentioned the outset, you have in the early times where it was difficult to draw faculty, and when you grew young ones, you sometimes got a large number of militant faculty, who are difficult to manage, managing is the term to use. Then you had the sixties, of course, with the tremendous turmoil to us, a part of it. Then you had the very accelerated growth of campuses like Cal State Northridge and Fullerton, Long Beach, where money was such a tremendous factor. You had to get it, and you had to get it now. And it was not always readably

available. So it's a contentious thing among the intuitions who were fighting for these funds to get enough to do the kind of job that was necessary, so they're not easy times. But as Emerson, I guess, who said, anytime is a good time if you make the most of it. So that's what a number of people had to do.

JB: Is there more that we've missed?

RP: I don't think so, so far as I'm concerned we've run the gambit maybe several times over.

[END OF INTERVIEW]