Jerome Richfield, Track 6

Tape 5 begins.

JB: We're back.

00:00 JR: He said something to me as he walked away, about—then someone would be subsidizing Philosophy. And I said, so instead you got Philosophy subsidizing somebody else, probably basketball. I mean, that's—that was shitty of me to say something like that, but I was mad. I mean no one sat around and discussed, Is Philosophy important enough to give it a smaller class? Is Philosophy harder or easier to teach than some other—I would argue that you could justify having a larger introductory History class. Students that had been studying History in high school, and elsewhere, for a long time, a lot of it is common sense reading, whereas Philosophy is not. I've never seen a student yet who could read even something as simple as Descartes and come away with any concept to what the hell he's up to and why. So that, the need for a good deal of interaction between the faculty and the student is much greater in Philosophy than in most other subjects. So, if Philosophy is thought to be important enough to be a requirement for every student in general education, then provisions need to be made for it to be taught effectively, otherwise it's ridiculous. When you have fifty or more students, the only thing you can teach them is who said "*cogito ergo sum"* but not what the hell it means and why it has any importance. Well, the first time they had a revision to GE, I just—I—I didn't object when Philosophy was pulled out. I didn't raise—and I could have, I was in the statewide senate when Mitch Marcus and the faculty EPC [Educational Policies Committee] and the faculty senate came up with pulling Philosophy out, and I thought that was fine cause I said the department agreed that the—they would rather teach these classes effectively than to build up a big FTE and do badly. The Philosophy department is the only one that voluntarily gave up its own MA cause the students learn as good as they wanted the courses to be.

JB: Is that why?

JR: Mmhm!

JB: My understanding was that demand had simply shrunk past the point of—

JR: No.

JB: That's not the case?

JR: I wanna give it up.

JB: Hmm!

JR: They never had a big graduate thing, but they had enough students, as many as some others. No, they gave it up voluntarily because the students weren't good enough. So anyhow,

that has to do with budget crunch. Now, this—I said there were two—that was one factor, was the way our campus sort of allowed itself, without struggling until Suzuki came, to be on the bottom of the list in terms of the amount of support it got. The second thing, and Cleary in the SEG [Senior Executive Group] meetings where the budget would be divided, he treated each of the three Vice-Presidents there as if they were his kids. And, everything was to be share and share alike. That group was unwilling to face the question of whether academic affairs should have any priorities over student affairs or building new grounds. So, if Mininberg would say, Hey I need money for A, B, and C, and Peckham would say, And I need it for C, D, and E, and Suzuki would say, Yeah, well, we need some more for F, G, and H, he would parcel it out to achieve consensus, to minimize the grumbling so everyone would be good, not in terms of what the educational needs are. Cleary doesn't know from educational needs. When, at a time when the union representatives on the educational policy committee were making things like Freshman seminars for the History department, I mean it was those guys, who invented some of this stuff, who were the first ones to try to engineer the budget in their favor with the use of the C-classifications. And of course, Litwin, who was making deals with Linglass at the time, I'll support this if you support that, and stuff like that. Well, they were making curriculum for the employees, it was to keep Broesamle here, and so on. Well, that's worthy in itself, but that—those were the wrong instruments to use. I went to Cleary and I said, Why do you rubber-stamp whatever comes from EPC? I said, That's the most important thing that goes on in the campus, is whatever the curriculum is. I said, You know, they're making curriculum not for the students, but for the employees in this institution. Cleary said to me, Well, if I were to reject what a faculty committee recommended, I would expect you to be the first one to complain. Let's be honest, he remembers me as the chair of the senate. I said, That's very flattering but I'm not asking you to reject things. You can raise questions. And if EPC has defined an answer to put on paper, then some of the things they're doing won't get done. I said, for example, when they pass a course in backpacking, let's say, and give it three units, EPC should be asked to answer the question, "How did you decide that this course is at a collegiate level, rather than a secondary school level? And on what basis did you decide that it should earn three units, rather than two, or four?" What can answer that? And when it's decided that History should have freshman seminars, when a better justification can be found in some other things, I would make the argument for philosophy, I would make the argument for anthropology, and so on, EPC should be forced to answer that. Then, when you see what the answers are, you can decide whether you have a problem or not. Cleary said to me, Look, I subscribe to the AAUP principle that curriculum is the business of the faculty. I said, Jim, it says business—curriculum is the business of the faculty, and administration should intervene in rare instances and for compo—compelling reasons. I said, We have never done it, so we meet the rare instance thing, and I believe we've got compelling reasons. And he said, Well, I—I think it should be up to faculty. Okay. I then went to Benson and said, Look, Cleary won't intervene. I—I said to Cleary, You know, Dean's council can give you questions that they'd like to see answered to some of this stuff, you don't have to deal with it personally, but we can raise these questions under your name. No, he wouldn't hear of it. In other words, he was saying, No matter what they do, it's their business, not mine. Now that's not educational leadership. When I went to Benson and I said, Cleary won't have anything to do with EPC, how about you raising some of these questions? You're in a position to do it. He said, Oh, don't ask me to go to EPC and argue with

faculty about curriculum. He said, I'm a golfer! Now, John, I was nice enough not to say what crossed my mind, is "Why didn't you think of that when you applied for this job?" I didn't say that. And of course, when he wanted Business to get the public administration program instead of the political science department, he went to EPC to argue for it, Benson did. And so on.

JB: That one I recall, like, all the way. That's one of my disasters that I remember with extreme vividness. Can we pick up some—some loose ends? What are—what are to me, loose ends. Things I can't compute, I guess—I simply can't put them together in a number of cases. This is back in the minutes of the general faculty. And the special emergency meeting June of 1965 with you presiding. "And the president of the college, in replying to the previous resolution, expresses hope that all members of the general faculty will work to reestablish unity on campus, express faith in the integrity of Deans Woodress, Silvers and Fleming and indicated he had not accepted their resignations."

JR: Now that's when the Ford committee found him in violation of academic freedom.

JB: What happened there? What was going on? I got newspaper accounts, it's June. And I can't set the context.

10:00

JR: Oh boy. I was up to my neck in that, but if you think I remember enough details to be very helpful—This whole story begins with Ted Carpenter. Did you know him?

JB: I didn't know Carpenter, but I know of Carpenter. And I knew he and Woodress clashed.

JR: Carpenter was really a fantastic, creative, productive, imaginative, intelligent, first rate guy. He had a major flaw or two. He personally—he got to be one of my close personal friends. His view of Anthropology was peculiar, and he was chair of Anthropology. And he believed that traditional anthropological graduate work was beside the point. And he really rejected talk about having a Ph.D. as a qualification of employment, for him it was a disqualification. So, he didn't want these standard anthropologists around. And he had more interest in films and in primitive art than he did in other aspects of anthropology, but he certainly was learned and he was well-known. When he was at Toronto before he came here, he was a pretty public figure there. And worked on T.V. shows, and the editor of the—a major intellectual academic journal, and he had some good publications, he had been hired by the state of Israel to build an Arctic collection for them, of ivory, polar bears, all kinds of stuff. He knew a lot about African primitive art, that's where my interest began, and that's where I first got some good pieces, through his advice and his help, and some of his pieces. He'd go away for the summer and he'd give me a Northwest Indian mask and I'd figure, let's see, where shall I hang that, and he'd say, Take care of that its worth ten thousand dollars, so I wouldn't hang it, I'd put it away in a drawer somewhere, you know? Well, Ted got into fights, naturally, with administration. Even Oviatt who loved him as a fellow Canadian and everything else found Ted hard to deal with. And, you know, Bob Lamb was Woodress's Associate Dean, I think, and Lamb had no patience for all this creative, moviemaking, funny, kind of Anthropology, it's not what he understood it to be. Nor did they like—Carpenter had a way of misleading you, and the English language helps because

our syntax doesn't make any distinction between a forecast, a prophecy, a prediction, and a promise. Well, I hire you and I say, You'll be a full professor in two years! When two years comes you'll come back to me and say, You said I'd be a two—full professor and I'm not, and I'm gonna sue you! I said, Wait a minute, I was only predicting and I'm wrong. (Broesamle laughs) No, you promised me! Well, the language doesn't carry it, does it. Well, Ted was great for making statements like that. I think the specific instance—there were a bunch of things, it was not a single thing, but the way he got tangled up with Woodress, he saw a bumper sticker that said, "fuck communism" and he thought that combination of ideas was fantastic. That the kind of people who were really the Red-baiters in the world of the kind like Jesse Helms who would never say "fuck" and so on, and he just was delighted with that bumper sticker, and he put it up on his b-–bulletin board. Woodress made the mistake, in my opinion, of writing to him and instead of saying, "Please remove the sign as many students and the public and this and it'll create more trouble than it's worth, and I would appreciate it if you would take it down." Woodress used himself as a criterion and said, "I find your sign anathema and to be
15:00 distasteful" and so on. To which Ted would say, "Fuck you!" And I think that's what happened. So, I don't remember how he got punished or what Woodress's reaction was or maybe—I don't know. I don't remember how the Ford committee got appointed. Now here's crazy old Joe walking around with thirty thousand chips on his shoulder, and that committee did an investigation of the relations between Ted and his department and members of his department and the administration of Woodress and Lamb, and so on. And they came out, and they—they broadened the definition of academic freedom, too. I mean, technically, I think, they were wrong. Woodress did absolutely nothing that would have any chilling effect on anything Ted wanted to say in class. But since the sign, "Fuck communism" had nothing to do with his teachings, nor did he try to use it that way, I don't think it had anything to do with academic freedom. You don't have academic freedom to hang up a picture of a nude Marilyn Monroe just cause you like it, academic freedom doesn't say it's okay to do that. Academic freedom says no one can interfere with your sincere belief in what you should teach. But it doesn't say you can entertain yourself any way you like just cause you're a professor. That was sort of the kind of issue that was involved. Well, there was to be this general faculty meeting called, in which the question was, I guess the Ford committee reported to the senate, and the general faculty took over what the senate was to do, and it—as it can, and it was either through approve or recommend whether or not the Ford committee report should be implemented or approved or whatnot. It was my first meeting as Faculty President. I had just been appointed now in the summertime or whatever, and we'd fill the auditorium. And the camera's right up there on the stage with me, and oh my god. (Broeseamle laughs) Now, people like Oviatt and Charlie Kaplan and others, Mitch Marcus, knowing that Crazy Ted and Crazy Jerry were close friends, figured, Boy, they're really going to get a beating, and that I was going to exploit the situation and wreck the whole place cause that's probably what Ted would've liked. I didn't do anything of the kind. I declared it a personnel matter, and an executive session of the faculty as a whole, and I dismissed the camera man. And the news people, and they all had to leave. I don't know where I got the balls from, I—when you're up there and you're suddenly in a pivotal position, you realize, Hey, I'm important and I'm gonna do something important, so you do the right thing. And I had no interest in harming the institution. And contrary to appearances that people like to have of the Red Dean and all that shit, I really cared more about the institution than most of

those people did. At any rate, I remember Mitch got up and came down and he made some motion that was approved, I don't recall the contents of that. But the meeting went off fine, and it did the right thing, there was no academic freedom so there was violations, so there—you know, Woodress and Lamb stating their positions and that's how it got resolved. But Charlie Kaplan was beside himself, he came up in these—after the meeting, C'mon let me buy you a beer. Del Oviatt and Hazel came over to my house that night to congratulate me, they were so amazed and pleased that I protected the institution instead of destroying it. I know I said of Oviatt that, if I had to take a canoe trip, I'd just as soon take one with Del as anyone else, he was an interesting personality and he could be a lot of fun. When it came to education, I thought he belonged on horseback riding from one provincial school from Canada
20:00 to another making sure they had chalk and so on. And he said of me, Well, there's nothing wrong with Richfield except that his bombs fall too close.

JB: Good lord. (laughs) That a rich metaphorical exchange.

JR: That's a hard life, I mean—

JB: There's the issue of the 1966 proposed constitution which proposes that administrators be excluded from the faculty senate, and which was proposed by Fred McMahon, and which fails, do you recall anything about that?

JR: Yeah. What year, '66?

JB: '66.

JR: Oh that's not the one that started the senate, is it.

JB: Well, it says February 17th, '66 is the meeting when it goes down, so we're just out of '65. You're welcome to look at this if you'd like to.

JR: See, I—I remembered the arguments when the senate was established. And I remembered––I argued for a pure faculty senate at that time.

JB: Did others join you?

JR: Huh?

JB: Did others join you? I know Harry feels that would've been a far better thing to have had administrators off of it, and the faculty just led, with this notion of administrator faculty harmony.

JR: Yeah. Oviatt argued, and he bought me, cause I then voted with him, he said, Look. Don't exclude the people who make policy here. Don't exclude the people who have to implement policy. He said, The people who make the policy and the people who implement it should work

together. He said, Now, you as faculty will make the policy and we as administrators will only implement it, that's all. I thought, Oh, yeah? Okay, fine, I'll buy that. And I voted for that. But then soon it became clear that the senate could make policies only with the things it was allowed to consider. It never got asked a single budgetary question, they were never—faculty was never allowed to do anything with the budget, or even to make a recommendation, or anything about it. There were all kinds of things that went on in the university and it was a matter of what Prator and Oviatt saw fit to allow the executive committee to put on the agenda. The first year the faculty began to get upset and grumbled about this. And, they voted––there was a guy in Biology named Jim Peters, did you know him?

JB: Mmhm. I didn't know him, but his name pops up.

JR: He was a herpetologist; he was a tough character and a good guy. And he used to come over and we'd—we'd meet at my house before an executive committee and to look over the stuff and we played good cop bad cop. He was a better bad cop than I was, so he was really tough. And the point is, when it was appropriate, he'd ask for something far out, you know, knowing that I would come in with something more reasonable and that would give me a better chance of getting it. Or, if it was money—he would ask for five hundred thousand and I would ask for two hundred thousand and got a better chance of getting a hundred and fifty when we met with and gotten anything, That didn't work bad. And the faculty reelected us, and we went again, and we got a lot—we got so goddamn many things ironed out and done in executive committee, I remember Ellison Keanes on, that was before he left, I think. Anyway, but there weren't too many issues to come before the senate. Then Jim Peters left, went to the Smithsonian I think, and then got cancer and died. What—what were we talking about—

JB: We were talking about e—

JR: Oh, the constitution.

JB: This is simply a—

JR:'66. If this came up again, I don't remember anything about it.

JB: Sounds like the faculty is recognizing on a more—on a broader level it's been had, or they just made a mistake, or this whole thing was a mistake.

25:00

JR: Well you know, on this more recent attempt, I brought to Dean's council a resolution that the Deans asked Cleary to take them out of the senate. And then we had a lunch about it, and invited Cleary to the lunch. And we made the arguments, he saw that I had a—the Dean's council with me, and we left him to pay the bill, which he complained about. Well, he told me to write it up. And I wrote it up and I sent it to him and he simply said, Well, this is inconsistent with my sense of shared governance. A hypocritical crummy remark, he shares governance, he lets the faculty do what he doesn't give a shit about—whatever he cares about, they seldom get to deal with. But it's interesting that his own administrators would say, Let's get out of the

senate. It's better to have a pure faculty voice. We're perceived as voting in a bloc, which we don't do, I never voted with, you know, O'Donnell and Lindglass(??) for chrissake. I know the times when Bianchi didn't either, and there wasn't—there was plenty of mixture. But faculty cherished the idea that the administration caucused—which we never did—and voted in a bloc, which we seldom, if ever, did. And I saw this as an impediment, we alienated and separated ourselves by the fact that most of us would—I sat in the back because it was hard for me to walk up—that was a pretty steep incline in the engineering auditorium. That's my great leadership, I sat in the back and everybody followed–(Broesamle laughs)–but I sat there cause I didn't want to walk up and down the aisle.

JB: So they all wound up sitting back there.

JR: So we wound up sitting back and that became the administrative row and it wasn't functional. And I thought it was better for stupid Cleary if we had a second group. The senate passes something and he wants the Dean's council advice, now you've gotta separate group if he wants to play one group off against another. Which is a great ol' administrative trick cause that's what administrators love is a new committee so they have a better chance of finding one that will recommend what they want and take that one against the others that don't.

JB: If you're really deft at that, you don't have to be deft at handling things, playing one group off against another.

JR: But, you know, rejecting this, even though a majority of the faculty, not two thirds, but a majority, did vote for it to get us out. Well, he shouldn't have done that and the—and—as usual, the reason he gave was pathetic.

JB: One of the things that, uh—

JR: I think what he really meant his—he was afraid that it would give the appearance to the public and the Chancellor's office that he wasn't holding shared governance together, which in fact he wasn't.

JB: Soviets.

JR: It would be a symbol of that.

JB: And the image of that is terribly, terribly important. Are you ready for another one of the—

JR: No no, no.

JB: There are seconds away—Well, something's gonna happen—

JR: Well I don't want to get your table wet—

JB; Well, this table is indestructible.

JR: Is this Formica?

JB: Yeah.

JR: Oh, wow.

JB: This was designed to cope with teenagers. And—and it survived them.

JR: I don't remember how far Fred got and I don't remember this being an issue at that time. I don't know who voted on it and what happened with anything.

JB: Went right down, just like watching a comet appear and disappear.

JR: I think what happened, I think I went right from the faculty presidency into being a member of the statewide senate, in which case I wasn't paying too much attention to what our own senate did.

JB: That may cause problems if we run up against another issue I want to raise with you and I want to throw this tape over before we do it because it's blinking at me—

[END OF TRACK 6]