

Transcription of Oral History Interview with
MICHAEL D. REAGAN

June 15, 1998

This oral history interview is being conducted on Monday, June 15, 1998, with Professor Emeritus Michael D. Reagan of Political Science who joined the UCR faculty in 1964.

My name is Jan Erickson. I work in Chancellor Raymond L. Orbach's office. He is the eighth chief administrative officer of the Riverside campus.

Erickson: Professor Reagan, let's begin, please, by your telling us about your mother and father, where you were born and any brothers and sisters you have.

Reagan: Well, I was born in Manhattan, 3/12/27. My father was a New York architect and my mother was the boss' secretary in the first office he worked in New York. I had one brother five years older who died about four or five years ago.

Erickson: What kind of architecture did your father do—buildings?

Reagan: He liked to do institutional architecture best. He was a very strong Catholic, and what he wanted to do was Catholic churches. He got to do two of them eventually in small towns in Connecticut. He did a lot of hospital work, things like that in New York. He did either the inside or outside—I can't remember—of the Department of Commerce building in Washington.

Erickson: Ooo, really.

Reagan: When I was three, we moved out of the city up to Connecticut, and he was a commuter for the next thirty or forty years and a solo practitioner. He wasn't much of a businessman, but I am told by his colleagues that he was an excellent designer.

Erickson: Sometimes it's hard to work both of those together.

Reagan: Yes.

Erickson: Where did you go to school?

Reagan: I went to public schools in Westport, Connecticut. Small town and small schools. I think there were just 350 in the whole high school. It was an excellent school. One of the things I liked about that school system—in the ninth grade, in the English class, you could take a separate English class that consisted of doing a newspaper, a weekly newspaper, which consisted of a page in the local paper. We used a journalism textbook and that sort of thing.

And in the high school, there was an extremely good English Lit teacher. I think she could have been a professor some place, so some of us got the advantage of an extremely good writing and reading training.

Erickson: What kinds of things did you like to write about?

Reagan: Well, I never did imaginative writing or fiction. I did a lot of repertorial kind of thing. I started a newspaper with another kid when we were in junior high school.

Erickson: Gosh.

Reagan: We both had printing presses, small platen presses. Every two weeks, we put out a little four page newspaper, four by six inches foldout. And I remember, so that we could go into school in the morning with fresh news, we saved part of the front page, and I would go to ... say a basketball game at night and rush home to get special permission from my parents to

Reagan: stay up late. So, I would rush home and write up the story and set it in type along with my friend, and the next morning we showed up with last night's basketball game on our front page.

(laughter)

Erickson: That is great.

Reagan: I really enjoyed that sort of thing. I did the college newspaper, too. College was Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. I entered there in 1943 as a civilian. The college was a then-almost all Navy 12 program, which was around-the-clock—a pre-officer training thing, around the calendar. So, I finished the first two and a half years in college in twenty months or eighteen months, something like that. Then I went into the Marine Corps and came back a little bit slower to get through the rest of it.

Erickson: Oh, goodness. That's quite a rigorous schedule. Why did you choose to do that so quickly?

Reagan: There wasn't any choice. That's the way it was; they were on the Navy schedule.

Erickson: I see.

Reagan: And that was fine. I was always in a hurry anyway as a kid. I wanted to get through everything.

Erickson: What did you study there?

Reagan: I majored in Economics. They didn't have a Political Science major at that time. It was good, basic microeconomics. The newer macro stuff, I don't think they did much with. But a major there was ... it was such a traditional Jesuit curriculum—a major was eighteen hours out of 120 semester hours. So, it wasn't a very big major, but it was good background.

Erickson: Uh huh. So, you are an east coast person.

Reagan: Very east coast.

Erickson: Oh, I was going to get you to California, but ...you were in the military first?

Reagan: Well, when I first got out of college, after thinking about ten different careers, I decided I had always been interested in publishing. So, I wanted to get a job in New York book publishing—not the easiest thing to do. You should be a graduate of one of the seven sister colleges to begin with and ready to do it free, if necessary.

Erickson: Really?

Reagan: And that's still true today. At any rate, my publishing career was for a few months with a magazine, a trade journal called The Casualty Insurer down on Wall Street. I'm glad I had this experience. I can say I was a commuter who took the Lexington Avenue subway down to Wall Street from Grand Central Station. I did that for a few months.

Erickson: Great.

Reagan: Then, after sending out a hundred letters to book publishers, I finally got an entrée into book publishing as a Dictaphone typist for the treasurer of G. P. Putnam Sons. They still used these old dictagraph wax cylinders on their dictating machines.

Erickson: No kidding.

Reagan: Yes. They may have been behind the times.

Erickson: When would this have been, Mike?

Reagan: This was ... I graduated from college in 1948, so this was '48 to '50. After a few months at Putnam's it worked the way I wanted it to. They were associated with Coward McCann, which I think is now defunct, and John Day, and I got a job as an editorial assistant with Coward McCann, which is what I was aiming for. I did that for a while, and then a fellow who

Reagan: was editor of Putnam's bought another publisher, David McKay Company of Philadelphia, moved it to New York, and he was looking for staff to start up. I went with him and that was great because we did everything, a very small firm. I would write advertising copy or something like that in the morning and then go down and pack books in the afternoon.

Erickson: Oh, no kidding.

Reagan: I would do layouts for books, just everything.

Erickson: What a great experience. You did learn it all then.

Reagan: Yes, yes. Then in between while I was at college, I went into the Marine Corps in '46 and had ten months in north China courtesy of the Marine Corps, which is another great experience.

Erickson: Was it?

Reagan: The war was over by the time I got there, which made it a better experience. But that was great because I was on leave for four or five days and was stationed in Tientsin on the north side, a port city, and by train went up to Peking and spent four days visiting the Forbidden City. I haven't been around the world at all, but if you give me one more trip, I'd probably go back there. It was fabulous.

Erickson: Really. How nice.

Reagan: It's one of the seven wonders of the world, the museums and everything in that Forbidden City.

And then moving back up again, by 1950 came the Korean War, and I was in the inactive Reserves of the Marine Corps, so I got called back in. So, in '50 and '51, I was back in. I didn't get any farther away than Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, but ...

Erickson: That's ok.

(laughter)

Reagan: And then I came out to work for Oxford University Press as an assistant to the sales manager. It got so interested in reading Oxford's books instead of shilling them, I decided to go to graduate school. So, I had a delay from '48 when I got out of college till '53 when I decided to go to graduate school, which I did at Princeton in politics. They call it politics rather than political science.

Erickson: And what had changed your mind to get you from economics to political science?

Reagan: That's pretty simple. I am not math...what's the word... I am mathematically challenged.

(laughter)

Erickson: I can relate to that.

Reagan: And in economics, if you don't start out with calculus, you can't begin to do anything else. I discovered that after I was out of college when I investigated going to Columbia and found that calculus was a prerequisite to everything. Well, it was the only course that I almost failed in college! And my real interest was public affairs. My original reason for economics was that in the late thirties it was an entrée into the New Deal into positions in Washington, the Civil Service. They had a social science exam at that time, and a Master's in economics was a great entrée. But it was Public Affairs as such that interested me, more than economics or political science, as a discipline. I have always been rather nondisciplinary in my orientation. Princeton would let me in to do graduate work without having had a major in political science. They took a chance, so that's where I went. It was good.

Erickson: Oh, I am sure it was. Did you love Princeton?

Reagan: Oh, yes. It's good. The graduate class was seven or eight students a year in poly sci and, at least at that time, even the senior faculty really did a lot of teaching at all levels. They were good faculty; they weren't as modern as some others. Harvard and Yale had more quantitative political scientists than Princeton. For me that was fine. I didn't want that anyway!

(laughter)

I went there not knowing what I would do with it, I just knew I was interested in Public Affairs. I have never been very sophisticated about planning my own career, which happily has worked out ok. In graduate work, of course, you end up with a Political Science Ph.D., you teach or you starve. There are not a whole lot of other opportunities really.

So, I went into teaching. I finished my coursework and my general exams, and while I was writing the dissertation, I taught at Williams College for four years, then back at Princeton one year as a Visiting Assistant Professor. I replaced my Ph.D. Chairman while he was on leave for a year. And then up to Syracuse, which was '61 to '64.

That was when I got a call from Arthur Turner at UCR. I had to look up where this place was. It was on the stationery—University of California at Riverside. I mean, that was a time when multi-campus universities were still pretty new in the early sixties. It was news to me that there was a University of California Berkeley and UCLA—these were the same system? What was that?

Erickson: Well, isn't New York much the same though?

Reagan: Yes, even more so. They have four main campuses that we would call UC level, and they have about thirty of what we would call state college campuses. Yes, New York is much the same.

Erickson: You hadn't heard about Riverside, California?

Reagan: No.

(laughter)

Reagan: It turns out I wasn't alone. It is one of the things I hope they have solved. The way enrollment is going now, someone must finally have solved that! How do you get Riverside known, even in California to high school students?

Erickson: Right. That's true.

Reagan: We used to just bat our heads over that. Obviously, it's happening now.

Erickson: Right. We are up to about 10,000.

Reagan: Right.

Erickson: Oh, you said Arthur Turner called you on the telephone.

Reagan: I guess he sent me a letter and then talked on the phone, and then I came out for a visit in ...I guess it was April of '64. It looked fine to me; they ok'd me, and I came on board.

Erickson: What did he ask you to do? What was the position?

Reagan: They were then on the semester system. It would be two courses a semester and at least half my load would be graduate work. I was hired specifically...They had a Master's in International Relations, which a fellow named Dave McClellan, who went on to Ohio some years later, started but they didn't have a doctoral program.

They were trying to get all the doctoral programs going, so I came to start that. I had been Director of the Master of Public Administration at Syracuse for a couple of years so I had a little administrative background. Much of my teaching was at the graduate level. I did more undergraduate level teaching after I went into administration and came back out. I did more undergraduate teaching toward the end of my career.

Erickson: Uh huh. Who was the Chairman of the department when you came?

Reagan: Arthur Turner was Chairman.

Erickson: Was he also the Divisional Dean?

Reagan: By then they had changed that, so he was just chairman then.

Erickson: I see.

Reagan: Hank Carney was here, of course. And Dave McClellan in International. Frank Way, Public Law, whom you know I am sure. There was a Charles Elliott, a grandson of President Elliott of Harvard, who didn't make it here.

(chuckle)

Erickson: Oh.

Reagan: And a couple of other people whose names I can't remember. But Carney, Way and McClellan and Arthur were the mainstays of the department then.

Erickson: So there were about seven or eight of you then.

Reagan: Yes. And Mortie Schwartz in Russian stuff is gone. He's in the State Department now.

Erickson: Um.

Reagan: Yes, seven or eight people, I guess.

Erickson: What was it that attracted you to UCR?

Reagan: Uh...I was ready to "go west, young man." I was just interested. Anything new always kind of intrigues me. The only time I had ever been on the west coast before was when I came out on a troop train in 1945 to ship out of San Diego

from having been at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. I got one view of those palm trees and all the rest of it and I was hooked.

Erickson: Ah ... sunshine ...

(laughter)

Reagan: And the campus looked so nice, and it was small. I went to a small high school. Holy Cross was a small college. I think it still is pretty small, but then I think it was only 800. Now it's 2500 or something. And Princeton is the smallest of the major Ivy League schools by far. At that time, I think they had 2000 undergraduate and 800 graduate students, so most of my education was in small places.

I was a strong liberal arts believer. I read all the books about the liberal arts that were coming out right after the war, so it all sounded great.

Erickson: In '64, the campus had been established as a general campus.

Reagan: Actually, it became a general campus by order of The Regents. I guess it was 1948. Isn't that the 50th anniversary we just celebrated?

Erickson: Well, it became a liberal arts college first in '48. And then in '49, the Governor signed the legislation.

Reagan: Actually, the liberal arts college didn't start until 1953. They had the ag part before that.

Erickson: Yes.

So, what was established here in '64 when you came?

Reagan: Well, we had the ag campus, and the two were so separate that never the 'twain should meet at that time. There has been some integration since then. But that was up there on the hill and we were down here in the flats, so we had the liberal arts college. And we had the Department of Education, no School of Education. And that was the only professional school.

Reagan: Ivan Hinderaker became Chancellor in '64, and he had Tom Jenkin as his Vice Chancellor. They were brought here to build a big-time general campus. It didn't work out that way for Ivan when our enrollment took a nosedive a few years later.

But he did start on the School of Education and the Graduate School of Administration as it was then called. He really bootstrapped that very cleverly. He couldn't get positions systemwide, or he couldn't get enough to build the faculty with its own positions. So he created a bunch of 50/50 positions: sociologists, who did Organization Theory; there was a political scientist, who did Public Administration, and so on and so forth. By putting together half positions, he got enough faculty.

The first Dean was Stahlr Edmonds who was Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance, and he moved over from that to become Dean of the Graduate School of Administration.

Erickson: So, he had to be very creative.

Reagan: Very creative, yes. And the School of Education got off to a good start, and apparently it has done well ever since. It has a very good reputation.

Erickson: Were you married by this point, Mike?

Reagan: Yes. I was married twice. My first marriage was to the Sales Manager's secretary David McKay when I was there in 1950. We were married in 1951. We have three children: my daughter Debbie, who is a CPA in the East Bay and is now in training to switch careers to a Master of Library Science, which is what she wanted to do when she graduated from UCR in 1968 or '78. It was Prop 13 year and the bottom fell out of all the things she was interested in doing in the public sector.

And then I have a son Kevin who does geographic information systems at MWD, the Metropolitan Water District, in LA.

Reagan: I have a younger son Tim who is with Boeing in Seattle. Those are the children by the first marriage. That marriage ended in '69 and I met Celeste in the fall of '69. One of your questions is "How did you and your wife meet?" I met Celeste at a Parents Without Partners dance here in Riverside. I went one night and that was it!

Erickson: Oh, how nice.

Reagan: We hooked together right away. We were both in our forties then, so we did not have any children of our own together. Celeste had a daughter by her first marriage, who is a Psychologist in Santa Barbara mental health. So, that's the family.

Erickson: That sounds nice.
Was it an easy transition for you when you came here? Did you find housing that you wanted? And schools, were they ...

Reagan: Yes. Riverside was a smaller place then. The Superintendent of Schools was Ray Berry, who later was on our faculty.

Erickson: Oh, yes.

Reagan: And just as a new citizen in town, my then-wife and I were able to go down and make an appointment with Ray Berry to discuss the various elementary schools. I don't think many people do that today in Riverside. We had wanted an integrated situation, and we got a house on Chicago Avenue, and just a block away across a blank field was Emerson School, which is about 50/50 in composition. So, my kids went there, and then to the old Uni Junior High. So, we are Eastsiders.

Erickson: Oh, I see.

Reagan: No, the transition was easy. I think I moved around something like seven or eight times in my first ten years out of college, so moving again was no big deal to me.

Erickson: And what did the campus look like in the early '60s. How many buildings were down here?

Reagan: Well, this one.

Erickson: Hinderaker.

Reagan: Watkins Hall and the original part of the library. I think the newer part of the library was being built about then or right after I came. There was the phy sci building. Not much else. There is a lot more new than was old then. And there were 3,000 students then, I think. 3,500 maybe. So, it was small and I liked that.

Erickson: Oh, yes, that's very appealing.

Reagan: We were taking in, when we started the Graduate Program, ten or fifteen students who were pretty good ones right from the beginning of the program.

Erickson: And how did you do that? Did you help with the recruiting?

Reagan: Uh. You know, I don't think we had to do an awful lot. It happened. I guess there was a strong demand at that time for graduate work. We did some flyers and I phoned or wrote to people I knew or knew of, other poly sci department heads to promote it some. But on the whole, as I recall, we didn't have to work very hard at it. And we got some good ones. There were (and it may still be true) a number of good students who were not particularly well off who wanted to go to a local graduate school if they could.

So, if you drew from the immediate area just as the undergraduates did, we were able to get one that ... you know, there wasn't nearly the graduate student support thirty years ago that there is today. So, if they didn't manage to get one of the few (support), they were looking for something close to home and in state to save the amount of tuition costs. So I think those things helped us.

Reagan: And then we right away, as we turned them out, had a good placement record. There were not so many to place as at, say Berkeley, so we did better. They might have forty to place and we might have four, so we could work harder on each one.

(chuckle)

Erickson: Sure. And you physically were located in Watkins?

Reagan: Actually the first year or two I was here, I was in the Humanities Building, the original Humanities Building. Two or three years later, we moved to Watkins.

Erickson: You talked about the number of faculty, eight or so. How did you hold your meetings? Did you have agendas?

Reagan: Yes. I think we ran a by-the-book kind of meeting. Arthur was certainly a by-the-book kind of person. After I had been here one or two years, I think, we hired Chuck Adrian from Michigan State, and he came in as Chairman.

Erickson: Isn't that unusual?

Reagan: Yes, but it happens. In fact, that's what my department is doing right now. They have just hired a chairman from outside, from Colorado I think. I don't pretend to know what the situation is today, but at the time, next to Arthur, I was the most senior person in the department because I was hired as a full. And there weren't many other fulls in the department. Frank Way was still an assistant professor when I came. Hank Carney was an assistant professor. And I, for various personal reasons, was not ready to become a chair right away.

So Tom Jenkin and I talked about it, and they hired Chuck. They hired him, interestingly...I think a lot of these things happened in academia. Ivan knew Chuck Adrian. They both went to the University of Minnesota for graduate work, I believe. So, Ivan called up Chuck at Michigan State in the winter one time to talk about something to do with the

Reagan: American Political Science Association and remarked something about the good weather, this sort of thing. Chuck said something like, “Gee Audrey would sure like to be out there playing golf.” Boy, Ivan latched on to that!

(laughter)

Reagan: We got Chuck, because Audrey wanted to play golf year ‘round! (more laughter)

Erickson: Well, the process was much simpler, was it not?

Reagan: Oh, yes. There was no affirmative action. There was no nationwide formal searching. The American Political Science Assn. didn’t have a separate recruiting mechanism, and so on. I think one of the very best things that has happened to universities and colleges is the requirement of honest searching on a nationwide basis that came about through affirmative action.

Whatever the pros and cons of particular forms that AA has sometimes taken, it undoubtedly has made a big difference in the ability of people who are very good but they didn’t go to one of the five top-name colleges or universities to get into the pool. And certainly for women and minorities. I think it has been more successful for women than it has for minorities simply on the basis of the numbers there to draw versus the available slot.

It made all the difference in the world. I remember one time when a UC campus, that shall be nameless, chairman wrote a letter many years ago. They were seeking a new person, and he wrote to colleagues and said, “This person must come from one of the four following universities. We won’t consider anybody else.” He would be fired on the spot today if he said that.

Erickson: Let’s talk about the balance that you maintained when you were a professor. You were obliged then under the policy for UC to make a commitment to research, teaching and public service.

Reagan: This has never been a problem for me because my very first love is writing, I think. I came into teaching sort of accidentally, because that's what you do with this degree. But I enjoyed teaching, and if you go by the student stuff, which we probably shouldn't do quite so much as we do these days, I was successful. I wasn't a Chancellor's award teacher, but I was better than the average, and I enjoyed it and enough of the students did. But doing the balance was ok by me.

I think I was very lucky. I have always managed to teach things I was working on, one way or another. In the upper division courses, you can often ... Well, in my last few years, I was writing health policy stuff, so I taught a course on health policy. When I was writing on government and business, I taught courses on government regulations, etc. So, I learned to put the two together.

That is one of the things I have always advised my graduate students—work toward that kind of thing. It makes life easier if you are not split 180° between what you teach and what you research.

I didn't do much community or public service most of the time. Ivan chaired a local ... I can't remember the name now ... There was a 1960s, early '70s kind of improve-the-inner-cities kind of thing, a nationwide thing with a local chapter, and Ivan chaired the local chapter. I was part of that group that never did very much for a while.

And I was on the city's environmental protection commission for two or three years. Chuck Adrian was before me, Ron Loveridge was after me. Political Science had a lock on it.

(laughter)

Other than that, my service was on campus rather than in the community at large. I served on most of the Senate committees, and I realized right away that the Academic Senate

- Reagan: really means something in the UC system, which it hadn't meant at the other places I had been to.
- Erickson: The other places didn't have anything like the Shared Governance that UC does?
- Reagan: No. Now, of course, I was "junior" at the other places, although I became Associate Professor while I was still at Syracuse. They had an AAUP chapter that was active in terms of salary concerns primarily, but I don't think there was much shared governance. Deans decided most everything. Williams is so small that the president decided everything. When I was there James Phiney Baxter, a good American historian, was the long-term president, and we did things the way Phiney wanted them, that's it!
- Erickson: You were talking about your public service here in Riverside. You said you served on an environmental committee.
- Reagan: Yes.
- Erickson: Do you remember what the concerns of the city were at that point? And when would that have been, too.
- Reagan: This must have been around 1970-1975, so it was quite a while back, and I honestly can't remember very much. I think our concerns then were the commercial developments and what impact they would have on aesthetic concerns in the city, things like that. It was not a great big thing, I guess. It must have been right after environment became the big issue—Earth Day was 1972, the first one.
- Erickson: Was it?
- Reagan: So I think the city probably started this environmental commission around then. I don't have a whole lot to say about it, because I don't remember very much.

On the campus, I was very much interested in all the Senate stuff. Indeed, my second semester, I became Chairman of the

Reagan: Senate Library Committee. Dave McClellan, who was a member of my department and very active in the Senate immediately started seeing where he could get me in. So, my second year I went on what was then the Budget Committee, now the Academic Personnel Committee.

Erickson: Oh, uh huh.

Reagan: That was wonderful. There is no better way to get to know a campus than to serve on that for appointments and promotions. The other people on it were Jim Kendrick, who later became the Vice President for Ag, George Zentmyer was on it at that time—some of the very strongest people, particularly from ag section and the sciences. That's how I got to meet people. The most valuable thing about the Academic Senate is not what it does in governance—maybe it is sometimes, but most times what it is valuable for is getting members of the faculty to rub elbows with faculty outside their own discipline, because that is a terrible problem, and the Academic Senate committees are all spread around the campus.

Erickson: Why don't you talk a little about how the academic process—that's called CAP, am I correct? Why don't you talk about how that works.

Reagan: Well, I assume that it works pretty much the same way now and that nobody's doing anything different. That's the way it worked when I was familiar with it ...

One of the things distinctive here is we were one of, we may not be the only one, but not more than a couple of them, who had devised a point system. We wanted to try to make it slightly less subjective than it inherently is. It was devised before I came on that committee—four points for research, four points for teaching and two for university or public service, and you needed 5.5 to get a positive on your advancement. We would argue long and hard over ... “Well, we gave this guy a 3.0 on teaching, and his record compared to this guy who got a 2.5 ... , “ that sort of thing.

Reagan: We really did a lot, and we used that point system to give a point to many of our comparisons on faculty who were up for advancements and so on.

They gave us a simpler process when I was on that committee than it is today because this was before a department had to send forward three files, its top three candidates rather than just the top one at that time, before affirmative action, which must have complicated the process. It is a committee that had one ag, one physical science, one social science, one humanities and what the fifth one is, I don't remember, but it has always represented every intellectual area of the campus.

The amazing thing is that we do learn to understand enough of each other's area to be able talk about a case that would really only be known in detail by one out of the five people sitting at the table. One person would always be assigned the lead on a case, usually the person was familiar with that area. I don't read much theoretical physics in my spare time, and they don't read much poly sci,

(laughter)

but it's a very interesting process. It has, of course, its political side to it, but it was never too bad. There would be concerns about ... You get to the end of the year and take a look before you hand everything out as to ... "Well, did we give six accelerations here and six decelerations there. What are we doing? What kind of hell is going to break lose when that comes out?" You sort of re-look at some of the things you do. An important part of the process on the interplay between the faculty and the Chancellor's office... You tell me any time I get too verbose. I could go on for hours.

Erickson: No. I've not ever talked with anybody else about this, so I am interested.

Reagan: Well, the Senate/Administration relationship is interesting. An Academic Personnel case starts in the department. The Chairman writes a letter giving what the vote of the faculty in the department is. He can write a separate letter with his own separate opinion if he wants to. There are some rules about that, but I don't remember them now. Then it goes to the Dean. The Dean looks over all the stuff from the department and writes his letter pro or con. Then it goes to the Budget Committee, and if it's a promotion or an appointment but not a merit increase, an ad hoc committee is appointed of three members to look at the case. And then finally it goes to what is now CAP or the Budget Committee. So, it goes through quite a number of levels of review, and it amounts to a lot of paperwork.

After it goes through the Budget Committee, the recommendation of the Budget Committee would go to the Academic Vice Chancellor, which was Tom Jenkin and then Carlo Golino and then Van Perkins, myself and then Carl Bovell and then ... gosh ... they came thick and furious after that. Anyway, after the Budget Committee gave its recommendations to the Academic Vice Chancellor, then that person (we were small enough then so that I think almost all promotion cases would be talked about by the Vice Chancellor with the Chancellor. I suspect more of it gets delegated today, but I don't really know. (Ray Orbach has an awful lot of energy, maybe he stays in the middle of all of them even today).

But if there is a disagreement at that point and the Academic Vice Chancellor ... I remember doing this when I was VC. I went to a meeting of the Budget Committee and I had two or three folders and I might say, "These are fine and we agree on all these, but I've got these two today which I really have a hard time accepting your recommendation. I have read what your reasoning is. Let me tell you what mine is."

I can pick one case (without a name obviously). This fellow is not doing the most earthshaking research in the world. On the other hand, at the age of 62, he has gone into an entirely new

Reagan: field and given up the easy publication of what he has been doing in the past, and he has already got a couple of papers in this new field. I think we need to reward someone, who at that stage of his career, is willing to take chances and start something new. And he generally has a strong record.” This was to Step VI, which is one of the major steps, so it was a question of whether they would accept it with the reasoning I gave them and change their own mind?

On the end, one of the things we looked at closely after going through all those iterations, on how many cases is there a final disagreement between the Chancellor and the Budget Committee. A couple of times Chancellors have come close to a vote of censure if they have overturned too many of what the Budget Committee recommended.

Erickson: What would be that number?

Reagan: It seems to me that the rule of thumb was that it better not be more than 3 % of the cases. Merit increases are easier; they weren't a point of bone of contention so much as appointments and promotions. I guess most often the faculty would recommend somebody be promoted and the Chancellor would say no. There were cases in both directions, and I can't honestly remember what the balance was. When the Chancellor did a final override, that is reported in the annual spring meeting of the Academic Senate. There was discussion on the floor at least a couple of times during the time I was on active duty, I believe, that the Chancellor was skating on thin ice. Ivan never got an actual vote of censure, but there were times there were some discussions in the background. So, that's within the totality of academic governance, and I think that's probably the most important part of it.

Curriculum is the thing that faculty have absolute authority over, so in a way that's maybe more important. Yes, because there you have the case where Ivan wanted to start when our enrollment problem was so great. He wanted to start a Bachelor's in Business Administration, and we had a Senate vote and it got turned down by three or four votes, maybe more

Reagan: than that. He came back the second year and really by beating the bushes, he got it through by one or two votes, and it became an instant success as a major since Berkeley was, I think, the only other campus that had a business major in the liberal arts program at that time. But the fact that the faculty could turn down a major that the Chancellor was counting on to increase enrollment for his campus...that is an extraordinary degree of faculty governance, and I don't know whether any place else has it that strongly.

Usually curriculum doesn't create such big fusses. The other big one was the Bio Med program. There the fuss was probably less on the campus than it was at the state legislature and The Regents over whether we want to spend this money at Riverside doing that kind of thing. I should think that everyone associated with that is probably patting himself on the back now because one of the things the state insisted on was that, "We want you to turn out family practice physicians." That was something no pre med wanted to do and med schools didn't approve of it and so on. I mean there were specialists, that sort of thing. Nowadays, if you turn out family practice, you are way up there!

(laughter)

So, the academic personnel part of these promotion cases and the balance between the administration and the faculty was a very, very important part of the game.

And then I served on some other interesting committees. We had a committee on long-range academic planning. I don't know if that exists now or not. We spent one whole year... meeting after meeting after meeting discussing whether we were going to enlarge the library by building one larger library or building satellite libraries around the campus. Right after we spent a year doing that enrollment collapses, and we weren't talking about building any library!

But the Senate committees were a fun thing. So many of the people became good friends outside the department.

Erickson: What were the circumstances that took you from full-time professor to administrative work?

Reagan: Uh ... Jim Earley was Dean. By then we had four colleges. I don't remember if we had that when I first came here or if it was later. When we thought we were going to grow, Ivan decided that one of the problems that Berkeley and some of the others were having was that they were too big. There was not a human scale for the students, so if we had liberal arts in four colleges instead of one, it would be on a smaller scale. So, even if you had twenty thousand students, you only have three or four in each college.

So, we had a social behavioral sciences, humanities, biological sciences and physical sciences. Jim Earley, in Economics, was Dean of the Social and Behavioral Sciences. Jim retired in 1973. I had become department chair about 1970, and then Carl Golino asked me to also head a social science research unit, Social Behavioral Science Research ... something like that it was called. I was actually between department chair and research unit. I was about 2/3 administrative for a year or two, and then I threw my hat in the ring when Jim decided to leave the deanship. And I almost didn't make it because the faculty search committee named four candidates including one member of the search committee.

Erickson: Oh, interesting.

Reagan: But my name was not on the list. Carl or Ivan went back to them and asked them to please redo this and get Reagan's name on the list. They didn't care where they placed it, but they just wanted it on the list. So, that's how I got into that. So, I was Dean of Social Science from '73 to '75.

Erickson: Will you talk about how that process worked for your actually becoming the Dean?

Reagan: The search committee?

Erickson: Um hmm.

Reagan: Yes. The Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs appoints a search committee and at that time with four colleges, I believe that there was one member from each of the departments in that college (or close to it) and one of those becomes chair. I don't recall whether the chair's appointment was by the Vice Chancellor or from within the group. Then they just think about it and come up with names of their own and then ask a list of people to come in for oral interviews. I guess there were five or six of us who did that. And then the Vice Chancellor and Chancellor make a decision.

Erickson: I see.

Reagan: Not terribly complicated. Now then, I don't think we did a national search. That's another thing—today, you wouldn't think of making such an appointment without it.

End of Side A on tape 1

One reason we did not do national searches in every case was simply because if you hire someone, you have to use an FTE to get that person a faculty position, and we didn't have an FTE that we could spare sometimes. So, it had to be an internal search in order to save the position. That's how tight we were on positions in the 70s.

Erickson: And it was all tied to enrollment?

Reagan: Yes, absolutely tied to enrollment. See our real trouble came because ... I forget the exact year ... University Hall has its own trajectory of enrollment increase and so they budgeted us one year for 6,700 students and we ended up with 6,200. That's about fifty faculty difference and that's what killed us. We then had to get rid of fifty faculty somehow. Well, we've never fired anybody, we never let anybody go, but we did it by attrition. But if you do it by attrition, you create problems for the next

Reagan: decade or more, because if four people leave from ... I don't know if it was English or History, but one of the big departments ... lost four or five just because of the accidents of people who happen to leave. So they had gaping holes in the curriculum and no way to fill it. You can't move around a tenured faculty or even a tenured-track faculty from one discipline to another, so if you take your losses where they occur, you get some very lopsided departments. That's been a real problem.

Erickson: You can't move from one department to another even if you were qualified?

Reagan: Oh, yes. That doesn't happen very often. Roger Ransom is now in History from Economics, because he is an economic historian. He did not find his disciplinary department, shall we say completely congenial for a while there, and moved to History. It can happen. In fact in my own department in sort of the other direction, Ron Chilcote left us to go to Economics because he did find it congenial.

Erickson: Oh, interesting.

Reagan: Yes, some years back.

Erickson: But it's just not typical.

Reagan: Right.

Erickson: How long were you Dean?

Reagan: Well, Social and Behavioral Science was 1973 to '75 and then Humanities and Social Sciences, it was then-called but also included Fine Arts. So, from '75 to November 18, 1978, when I became the Vice Chancellor.

Erickson: And how did that happen?

Reagan: Well, it's a story, too. Van Perkins, that's the other Vice Chancellor's name I couldn't remember.

Erickson: Sure.

Reagan: Van wanted to leave administration to get back to his department, and I was happy deaning, but the thought crossed my mind that maybe The Vice Chancellor (position) would be interesting, too. But I did not put my name in originally. Apparently, the Chancellor had already made a decision and was close to announcing it except, I guess he hadn't yet talked to that individual although he had made up his own mind.

Oh, I've got to back up. Now we have an Executive Vice Chancellor. I don't know what we do for Academic Personnel. Do we have an Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Personnel?

Erickson: It was all combined after Jack Vickery retired into one EVC position.

Reagan: Right. When Van was Vice Chancellor, Marv Nachman became Vice Chancellor of Academic Personnel. It was a full Vice Chancellor position at that time. So Academic Personnel was on one side and all the organizational things were on the other side. And the title then wasn't EVC, it was The Vice Chancellor. Other Vice Chancellors were Vice Chancellor for this, Vice Chancellor for that, but the top dog was The Vice Chancellor. And he was designated as the Acting Chancellor whenever the Chancellor was not on the campus.

When I was Dean, I went over to pay Marv a call—he was then Vice Chancellor of Academic Personnel—to say, “Look, I have decided, Marv, I am going to put my name in for Vice Chancellor.” And Marv was maybe a little bit surprised. I hadn't done anything. Months had elapsed on the search. And he said, “Well, I think you are too late, Mike, ‘cause the Chancellor has already made a decision.” I said I would go down and talk to Ivan anyway. It turned out he had picked ... oh, what was the guy's name. He was in agriculture. (pause) I have what they call “senior moments” about names!

(laughter)

Reagan: He later went up to University Hall in agriculture, too, with Jim Kendrick. Very strong guy—Lowell Lewis. Apparently Ivan had picked Lowell. I don't know whether it was ever publicly announced. I don't think it got that far because Lowell turned it down. And apparently, he must have turned it down just before I came into Ivan's office and said, "I think I'll throw my hat into the ring."

Erickson: Fortuitous.

Reagan: Yes. So Ivan said, "I am interested in your candidacy. Let me do some campus soundings." So, he went to all the department chairmen in all the colleges and got soundings. From Bio Ag, it essentially came down to, "We don't know much about him, but we don't know anything against him." And the other parts were positive, so I got it. The first couple of years, I was The Vice Chancellor; Marv was Academic Personnel, so I didn't directly handle Academic Personnel then. When Tomás came in, after one year, he decided to get rid of the Academic Personnel VC, and so he just consolidated them both into my office, so the last year or two I did that.

Erickson: What happened to Marv Nachman?

Reagan: He went back to his department. He became particularly active in the Senate, and he was the Chair of the Senate two terms. I think he is still active in the Senate as a retiree.

Erickson: So, when did Tomás Rivera come?

Reagan: Fall of '79. Yes, because I went up to the fourth floor... The reason I remember November 18 is because we were supposed to make the transition at the change of term in January, and all of a sudden Van calls me up and says, "Look, I am leaving tomorrow and you are going to start." It was Friday and he said I was going to start on Monday!

(laughter)

Reagan: I said, “Oh?” So, I did. And then I had a problem of who was going to succeed me as Dean. I had picked Dave Warren as my Associate Dean for Student Affairs. I talked with Ivan in several different conversations about the Deanship and looked at various possibilities. I can’t remember anything about the search. I guess we did have probably an internal search for the same reasons, but all I really remember is we decided on Dave. And that worked out.

Erickson: Well, what were some of the challenges that you faced? Or what also were some of the things you looked forward to changing in that position?

Reagan: Well, I am not a sophisticated administrator. I think Dave Warren, who is a psychologist and never took a public administration course in his life and so on ... I have the impression that Dave is a lot more knowledgeable about the role of a Vice Chancellor than I ever was. For one thing it’s a bigger campus, and you’ve got to run things a little differently than when we were 3,500 or 5,000 students.

Erickson: We should say on the tape that Dave Warren is now the Executive Vice Chancellor.

Reagan: It’s probably a confession, but it was less “What is it that I am dying to do to change the way the campus operates, so therefore, I should be the Vice Chancellor so I can do it. Well, being Dean has been interesting. Maybe being Vice Chancellor will be interesting, too.” And that’s as far as it went.

Erickson: Oh, just taking the challenges as they come.

Reagan: Yes. The challenge was still the one that Van Perkins had grappled with: namely, the fall off in enrollment, these positions being taken away from us, and various trips to University Hall to say, “Please don’t cut our budget any more than you have already cut it.” I mean, they were terrible times.

Erickson: And University Hall was what is now Office of the President.

Reagan: Right. Gosh, it was Bill Fetter from San Diego, a physicist, who was Vice President for Academic stuff most of the time I was involved in administration. Dave Saxon was President. At least he was the President I got to know well. And Ivan was such a nice guy. He would send his VC up to sub for him at Council of Chancellors meetings sometimes even when he could perfectly well have gone himself. It was just so you had the experience. He was so thoughtful about anything like that.

But it was interesting to learn how the other campuses operated. If you skip San Francisco med campus, the eight campuses are as diverse as they could be within a framework that's got a policy manual a yard long and is maybe the most bureaucratized university in the country, certainly far more than the three or four others I have been associated with. And yet, somehow the impact of individuals on a campus is great enough so that they really operate very differently.

And there is a Council of Vice Chancellors as well as the Chancellors. Those are extremely interesting, because we would talk about enrollment problems, talk about faculty recruitment, the standards for recruitment, budget problems, external relations, everything. You ran the gamut at those meetings. They were very interesting to me.

Within the campus, as between Dean and Vice Chancellor, I do have one definite feeling. I enjoyed the deaning more than I did the other. You are closer to the academic action. I am sort of an inside dopester, I guess in a way, but I could not ... some Deans and Vice Chancellors operate very well without getting themselves much into the details. And I suppose in the administration, you shouldn't get too much in the details beyond your own level.

But I wanted to know everything about everything I was dealing with. It's just sort of a habit, and so as Dean I could do that. I could go and talk not just to the chairman, I could go and visit the whole faculty of each department—sometimes en

Reagan: masse and in a few cases of problems, I wanted to get to know each of them individually before having to make some decisions about whether it was worth putting more resources there or not—that sort of thing.

I had ideas of things I wanted to do at the Dean's level. I started academic minors on this campus, I set up the first set of rules to legitimize internships so they weren't just hokey things where you got paid for nothing. Ron Loveridge, in my own department, established the most legitimate internship the campus has had in terms of what the kids had to do, the papers they had to write, the readings they had to do besides being in somebody's office. Some of the others on campus are rather loose.

So, as Dean ... I guess I am a bureaucrat, 'cause I set up a set of rules for that, I set up a system for academic minors because we were, in the seventies, in the period when colleges were getting rid of any fixed requirements—let it all hang out, let the students do what they want to do. A lot of times the students were lost. They knew what they wanted to major in, but they had no idea beyond that. So, a lot of courses were being chosen on the basis that they were eight o'clock on Tuesday or 10 o'clock on Wednesday. So, I thought academic minors might be helpful to that.

Well, it never caught on as much as I think they should have, because if you do a minor in Environmental Studies or a minor in Marxist Studies or in the Arts or whatever, then you can coalesce on a theme and yet have a variety that will still meet distribution requirements. I still think it's a great idea.

So, there were some things like that I found I could do as a Dean, and I could work closely with the departments and be very much involved in academic personnel. We were small enough I could get to know each one of the faculty individually, and when the cases came across the desk, they weren't just names. I really knew something about them and knew the ins and outs of the departments.

Reagan: When I moved to the next level, as I said ... a lot of interesting things there: getting to see the systemwide thing from another viewpoint; working ... well, I already sat in the Vice Chancellor's Council of Deans meetings for several years ...

Erickson: Oh, I was going to ask you about that, too.

Reagan: Yes.

Erickson: How did that work when you were Dean?

Reagan: Well, we had a weekly meeting, I think it was. There was Mack Dugger, myself and ... I'm not going to take time to remember all the other names right now ... but the Deans of the four colleges, and then the two colleges later on, and the Dean of Education Irv Balow and Starhl Edmunds of GSA. These would last an hour or two hours once a week, always resource oriented more than anything else, the divvying up of the pot among the colleges, both the FTE and the money pot.

The FTE was the more important because a lot of support money is based on how many faculty you've got. So, you worry about your faculty numbers first.

We all got along together, but beneath the surface, of course, was considerable rivalry for resources. Mack Dugger, it's easy and clear to say, was the smartest and most tenacious among the Deans. Mack really played that game well and hard. He always played it fairly. Mack is a gentleman from the old school, I think. But, boy, he could be tough.

Erickson: Umm.

(chuckle)

Reagan: We came into loggerheads a couple of times when he was Dean and I was VC, 'cause I did a couple of things that he didn't like. One of them I regret to this day where I should have

Reagan: informed him before doing it, and it took a while before he forgave me for that. In general, we got along well.

The Council of Deans talked about the resource questions. It was sort of a sounding board for the Vice Chancellor. If there were some things you were worried about and there aren't that many people you can talk about them with publicly, so the Council of Deans was a safe group. You can count on them to keep it in their vests.

Erickson: Did you also meet individually with the Vice Chancellor then?

Reagan: Yes. I think we had a system of regular 10:00 a.m. Wednesday kind of things. So often, everything seemed to be urgent, you know. You would have a list of the unimportant things and when it was big enough, you made an appointment for a couple of hours.

Erickson: Umm. And how about when you were a Vice Chancellor? Did you interact with the Chancellor?

Reagan: Well, there are two interactions there: one was Ivan from '79 – '80 and then '80 – '82, I guess. I forget exactly when I came back to my department ... with Tomás, because they are very different people. Tomás came here directly from the University of Texas, El Paso, and so he was not familiar with the UC system.

With Ivan, he knew how to delegate probably better than I did, and he was an advisor to Marv Nachman and me, that's really what it came down to.

Erickson: Interesting.

Reagan: He had an overall theme that he wanted the campus to grow, but by that time it was clear that it wasn't going to do much of it while he was still Chancellor, but he set a tone on the campus' relations with its students. I think he must be the most undergraduate-oriented Chancellor any campus has ever had in this university. You know, I still love the story that when all

Reagan: the riots were going on in the Cambodia spring and all that sort of thing. And here at UCR, yes, the students marched on the fourth floor (of the administration building), and they got in the hallways there, and Ivan served them coffee and donuts.

Erickson: That's a great story.

Reagan: Yes.

Erickson: It really says a lot about him.

Reagan: When Van Perkins was The Vice Chancellor, technically Marv's position was under his. When I became the Vice Chancellor, the Administrative Assistant, Thelma Otto, brought me a chart that Marv had given her showing "here's the Vice Chancellor, here's the Vice Chancellor for Academic Personnel and here are some other minor offices like Summer Session" that the academic personnel person did to fill out the job in a way. And she said, "Is this ok as an organizational form?" Again, showing how naive I am about these things, I glanced at it and said, "It looks ok to me." I didn't know then that I was giving up the authority Van Perkins had had over the other Vice Chancellor.

Erickson: She didn't explain that?

Reagan: She was being, I think, properly self effacing as an assistant. And yet in a way, it doesn't fit. You know Thelma, don't you?

Erickson: No, I don't. Actually, David Warren has suggested that I interview her.

Reagan: Yes, she is campus history, good institutional history. Thelma is an extraordinarily effective person, knowledgeable, she knew the faculty very well. She was just popular with them. They'd drop by her office to say hello if they were on the fourth floor and so forth.

She had her own ideas about certain things, sometimes rather strong ideas, but she wouldn't usually volunteer them. It took

Reagan: me a while to learn to ask her for her opinion about things. I mean, she's a woman who could have been anything. I don't know what her original background was, but she could have done anything. She was a very bright person and absolutely devoted to the campus.

Well, anyway, the first year with Ivan still here, he had a delicate situation in that he had his Academic Vice Chancellor split into two pieces, and what did he do about those. One was supposed to be senior in some senses and not in others. So, what he did was arrange a weekly meeting where the three of us sat down together, and that worked fine. I could go see Ivan about things I needed to talk about separately, organizational matters and so on that weren't in Marv's ball park, and I assume Marv did some of the same. Because he was VC for Academic Personnel, he did all this business of the promotion cases with the Chancellor that year.

Ivan, that year also, did something that's interesting in terms of these Chancellor/Senate relationships on appointments. We had some very effective teachers who never did the amount of scholarly publications that their Budget Committee colleagues would have wanted them to do, so they would get turned down for promotions. These were some Assistant Professors.

His final year as Chancellor, Ivan promoted at least three, maybe four, over the almost-dead body of the Academic Senate. It was the year of the teacher, and these were outstanding teachers, but they weren't going to do a whole lot of publication. Ivan apparently said to himself in his last year, "I believe in teaching for undergraduates. They are doing a great job. Let's reward them." And he could get away with it in his last year. If it hadn't been his last year, he might have been in trouble over it.

(laughter)

Then Ivan retired. I guess it was the end of that first year, I think it was just one year ... he was 63 then and could have stayed on longer, but he had been Chancellor for fifteen years

Reagan: and it had been a hard time, much of it, and he was getting a lot of unearned flack from the faculty by then, I think.

Erickson: Over what kinds of things?

Reagan: (pause) It's not that I hesitate over what to say...I can't remember what they were.

Turn it off a second while I think.

(recorder was turned off)

I think he had some problems with the sciences. Some part of agriculture was very upset over putting together the Natural and Agricultural Sciences College. They wanted to retain the separate Ag Sciences administrative arrangement, and there was really a very hard time over that. And he got flack from both sides. The liberal arts scientists didn't want to be associated with the ag scientists. I know of some faculty who won't go to the University Club today because it's known as the Ag Faculty Club. Some of it was that bad, not very many, thank God.

Erickson: That took him a number of years, didn't it ... that transition?

Reagan: Yes. It had to happen over a period of time. And we went through two different formats of it. We had a Bio Ag College for a short time, and then we had the bigger CNAS when you added the physical sciences to it, which gave them another group to gripe being associated with agriculture. You know many of the strongest faculty this campus has ever had have been in agriculture—George Zentmyer ... and just a whole bunch of them have been very strong. But there is very little understanding on either side. And I was doing a little writing then about the government and sciences. One of my books is called, (pause) Science and the Federal Patron.

(laughter)

I ought to be able to remember the title of my own book! In the process of doing that, I wrote a paper, for example, on basic and

Reagan: applied science and had it published in Science magazine. The guys in agriculture really liked that because I said, “I don’t really see much difference between the two.” Applied science can be just as good as basic science, and they thought that was great, because they were always getting zonked by pure science people. So, that was one big problem Ivan had. He was getting flack about that.

I think there were faculty who felt he wasn’t doing enough for graduate studies, that he was maybe paying too much attention to undergraduate, though I think that. I won’t swear to that as much as the other.

And then there was a peculiarity. A couple of faculty said, “Well, look. If we have administrative evaluations of the faculty, let’s have faculty evaluations of the administrators.” And so for two years, we had anonymous evaluations of the Chancellor and the Vice Chancellors ... I don’t think it went down to the Deans. I think it was just the fourth floor ... by the faculty. Anonymous evaluations by the faculty resulted in exactly what you would expect—a venting of spleen all over the place. That helped turn Ivan off and helped him decide it was time to move on. He has lived for this campus. I mean he still comes up.

Erickson: I know, it is wonderful.

Reagan: Incidentally, is he ill or anything, because he didn’t show up at that fiftieth CUC thing?

Erickson: No, no he is doing very well. Just one week ago, I interviewed him and Birk as well. It’s a wonderful tape. They are both doing very well. It’s just that they decided not to venture out on the freeways. They’ve stopped coming to Riverside.

Reagan: Oh, oh. I’m glad that’s the reason.

Erickson: Yes. They are doing just fine.

Reagan: I haven’t seen them in a couple of years now.

Reagan: Then, to go back to the administrative thing on the fourth floor. When Tomás came in, I didn't realize as quickly as maybe I should have just how much orientation he would need. I didn't know anything about the University of Texas, but I got a clue fairly quickly when he said, "Well, we have this enrollment problem. If we had say fifty positions that we could move around to where we needed them, just keep them in lectureships to where nobody could earn tenure, then we would have a lot more flexibility." Well, I could just see the explosion in the Academic Senate. So, I had to say, "I don't think that's going to work, Tomás."

There would be a number of things like that, and he had ... well he eventually got rid of the Academic Personnel VCship because he didn't see any reason why there had to be ... In fact, at one point, he almost had a revolt among his own cabinet, because at one point he came into a Cabinet meeting and proposed that Frank Bailey, who was then Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance, which included non academic personnel take over academic personnel, too. I am amazed that Marv hasn't come down from the sky yet after hearing that. And the thing is, Tomás hadn't forewarned any of us, including myself as The Vice Chancellor that he was going to talk about this. That was a little bit difficult.

Over time, there were just a number of things where you couldn't count that what you had worked out with the Chancellor were really going to stick. I want to be careful about how I say this because I have the greatest respect for Tomás. He was a great guy, and he was doing some things for this campus in his outreach to the community that needed to be done, and he was the first one who really could do it. But he did not have, to put it bluntly, a UC sense of administrative proprieties.

Some of it was just unfamiliarity with things. You know, every memo you write that's going to be dealt with by Dave Warren or some other Vice Chancellor or Assistant Vice Chancellor is addressed to the Chancellor, and then it is sent to the person

Reagan: who is really going to deal with it. Tomás would have everything addressed to the Chancellor on the envelope sent to him, and he would try to deal with all of it. He was getting himself into things that Chancellors don't deal with. And, I don't know, I should have been braver about going down and saying, "Tomás, this just doesn't" ... But I was respectful of the Chancellor, after all. I probably could have helped him more if I had been a little more frank about ... "You know, you can do this in Texas, but you can't do this here ..." I think I could have helped him.

Erickson: Umm. In retrospect.

Reagan: Yes. By then I had already discovered, as I already said, that I liked Deaning better than I did VCing. Between that and some things where I got overruled without a discussion of it, I decided I would go back to my department.

As comparing Dean and VC, one other thing. I told you how much I liked the Deaning because it was close to the academic action in terms of people and programs and so on. It really interested me. But once you become the VC, then the way I see it is you are resource oriented more than program oriented. Other people bring their programs and say, "Get me some resources." And you go to University Hall and try to get them. Between University Hall and the Deans on the other side, you don't see the Chairmen that much, or the Deans are going to get mad at you if you do.

(chuckle)

And just focusing on the resources, the resource game for some people is a fascinating game, but for me the hands-on program development game was more interesting. So, that's why I preferred the deanship.

Did I ever have an ambition to be a Chancellor?

I can't honestly say that it never crossed my mind, but it didn't very often because I never saw myself as an outside person. I

Reagan: could never do the kind of thing that Orbach does. It just wouldn't have suited me that much, and it wouldn't have suited either of my wives that much. We just weren't that much public-kind of people. So deaning was probably the best for me.

Erickson: What would you say were the most and the least rewarding aspects of your academic life?

Reagan: The wide range of an academic institution and the opportunity, particularly through the deaning and through Academic Senate committees to become acquainted with all these other disciplines. I am a sponge of information, I guess, and so I have a great time on the Internet these days...

Erickson: Oh, yes.

Reagan: Search engines. For instance, when I knew I was going to become Dean of Social and Behavioral Sciences, I think it was the Social Science Research Council had published a five-volume set of profiles of each of the major social sciences: poly sci, econ, psych, soc and anthro. I devoured those before I took office, so I could right away begin to talk the language of those departments when we met with those Chairs. I enjoyed that sort of thing a great deal, and there just wasn't anything in the world that there wasn't somebody to talk about it. If I read a good novel, there was some guy in Current American Literature I could talk to about it. It's just the breadth of things that were stimulating in an academic setting, and it would be very hard to match any place else, I think.

I enjoyed lots of different things. You know I spent a little time in the publishing business and half that time was in administration rather than editorial stuff. I enjoyed that, and I still read the business page every day as well as other parts of the newspaper. I have written critically about American business many times, but I have always been fascinated by organizations of any kind and what makes them work, what makes them tick. And so to be part of academic institutions and

Reagan: have an opportunity to see how they tick or help make them tick, that's been great for me.

And then one of the best things about academic life is that I could be interested in things like that and participate in them and have a firm financial base as a teacher and then have an opportunity to write on the side. It's very hard even today to make a living as a writer and do nothing else. One out of ten thousand who try ever do it, and I was never conceited enough to think I was ever going to do it. To be an academic at a research university who gets to write as well as to teach—that's wonderful!

(laughter)

Those are some of the most interesting things about it. Now, what's least satisfying... This may be a gut thing in me, but I have been disappointed from day one at the narrowness of academic faculty departments, the boundaries of the discipline, and I have had hundreds of conversations and arguments over the years. The great majority of academics, and I understand the position, believe in the discipline. That's the way you advance knowledge. You have to concentrate on one small area in order to advance knowledge to the next stage. If you start doing multi-interdisciplinary things and so on, if you start focusing on problems rather than the discipline, then it may solve some problem, but you ... Maybe you are going to save the world, but that doesn't matter, because you are not going to advance knowledge. And I wasn't in it for knowledge as such, I was interested in Public Affairs, and on the campus I could see all sorts of opportunities for people to get together from different intellectual areas. It always frustrated me that it was so hard to get them to see that they could do it.

For instance, one program when I was Dean... one of the many careers I was always interested in but never went into was the law. We had a guy in Philosophy who was also a lawyer and a philosopher, Wynslade was his name, (not here for some years now) and he was interested in ... we had a course called "Law

Reagan: and Society” and there was a time in the seventies when that was a theme on a lot of campuses.

We had Frank Way from my department who did Public Law. I forget, there was at least one other real connection.

Oh, yes, in Anthropology, Alan Beals had an interest in law and the society. One of the guys came to me with an idea, could we put together some sort of Law and Society program?

That was something I liked, so we put together this thing. We had Poly Sci, Anthro, Sociology, Philosophy and something else, and I wrote a National Endowment on Humanities grant and got almost \$180,000 to underwrite three years of curriculum development in an interdisciplinary way. Now that I loved. That was a lot of fun and was interesting to the students, and I think at least one course may have survived all these years from it.

My own writing is not really ... I can't say this outloud to some of my colleagues or I would never get promoted...is not really thoroughly academic or scholarly writing. I am a person who believes that it is as important to explain what academic research develops to the non-academic public as it is to develop that knowledge in the first place. So, that makes me a publicizer, a popularizer and several unspeakable things in the eyes of some faculty.

(laughter)

I have heard stories from economist friends that Kenneth Galbraith, a name that almost everyone has heard of at one time or another. He was put down by other Economists at Harvard faculty because he would write for the New York Times Magazine.

Well, I did that a couple of times, too. I mean, you can't do that! Well, I did what I wanted anyway, enjoyed it and got stuff published, so I have nothing to complain about really, but I was disappointed always because I thought the campuses

Reagan: should be more connected with the real world than we tended to be. So, that's one of the reasons I still do Op Eds in the local paper, things like that.

Erickson: As I read yesterday.

(chuckle)

In fact, I'd like to get into your area of research ... I should finish what I was saying. There was an Op Ed piece on health care yesterday, in particular the subject of Viagra, that you wrote about. You have had a range of interests within your area of research, haven't you, from the time you started. Would you talk about that?

Reagan: Yes. Actually in the early 60s, I wrote a piece in a poly sci journal about public policy and political science arguing that political science always was concerned with how did people become the government? You had interest groups and parties and elections and public opinion and all that, so we always form on how do you form a government.

But we didn't do as much as we might with what does the government do once it is formed—that is the output of the government, which we call public policy. In particular, I argued in that piece that political science had for many years talked about the influence of politics on public policy, and I thought I had figured out some ways in which there is a reciprocal relationship—that politics itself, the way we go about it is affected by the nature of the problems, the social problems we are dealing with in public policy areas.

So, I wrote this paper saying that there is a reciprocal relationship here, and at least in one study of the history of poly sci, I was credited with one of the early pieces that helped create the field of public policy. I say that, not so much to brag although I may be doing that ...

Erickson: Oh, that's all right.

Reagan: as just to say that if I had to define my area of interest, it is public policy broadly speaking. Now with me that could mean foreign policy and international affairs but does not, for me. I have always been domestically oriented both personally and in my research stuff, except for things like Britain's national health service. But I have been interested in anything in domestic policy. I was an Economics major as we have said and have been interested in economic policy, relationships with government and business, so that's been a major area for me. My first book was The Managed Economy.

I have been interested in all the social services areas—social service administration, welfare administration, welfare policy. If I just think of the files... I am an inveterate clipper of the newspapers. Everyday I must spend half an hour just clipping the New York Times and the LA Times. Just thinking of my files, I have now a whole bunch of files on health policy because that's where I have been concentrating the last few years, but I still have active files labeled "children and family policy, welfare reform, urban policy, affirmative action, ethnic relationships, immigration"—just policy areas. And I still collect stuff on those and you never can tell when you are going to find something useful, and part of it is it's just interesting.

So, as an academic area of writing, I began, as I say with a book called The Managed Economy and then during Nixon's ... that was '63 and the next book was '72 ... called The New Federalism which had to do with more ... Nixon was President and he developed something he called The New Federalism which was to devolve things and put the onus back on the states to do everything.

I was a strong proponent of national government leadership, at least at policy. My general theme is that you can have the states administer things but you'd better have some policy control centrally to make sure that national values are attained in what the states do. So, I wrote this book, and I will admit that all my writing even hopefully academically sound, most of it does have a value point to it. I never hide that, so I wrote The New Federalism as a critique of this Nixon theme because he was

Reagan: saying we can put everything back on the states. And my book, a very short one, was saying here are some problems with that and here's why we need to have a strong central government.

Then I sort of fortuitously got into science relationships with government. I was then teaching at Syracuse, and Steve Bailey, who was then the Dean ... something ran across his desk, and I was teaching a course called "Science and Government" then. He said, "Mike, this might be of interest to you." It was the old Atomic Energy Commission, now the Department of Energy or whatever. It had scads of money in those days and had at the behest of some professor of the history of science at Yale created a summer institute at the Oak Ridge establishment at Tennessee at Oak Ridge National Lab called "Humanistic Discussions in Science," and I applied for that and was one of thirty faculty from about fifteen different disciplines who got picked in the summer of '64 to spend eight weeks at Oak Ridge.

In the mornings, we went to lectures and it was absolutely wonderful because there wasn't a single thing that I could ever use in a course. I could just enjoy it. The first lectures were by a mathematician named Oscar Oboe, using a base 60 numbering system as the Babylonians had done. We moved on and got into Medieval Science and this, that and the other thing. We had one week about modern science and nuclear energy and so on. In the afternoons, you could go swimming or whatever, enjoy yourself and take the family with you in the barracks quarters there. You could go to the labs and interview scientists there. I got very interested in that, so that led to my somewhat-switch in field but still national policy.

So, I wrote a book called Science and the Federal Patron about relationships of Federal science support and then sort of ... because my most long range interest has always been relating to the economics sphere...the other books were trade books, not text books. And then I finally did a textbook at the behest of Little Brown called Regulation, the Politics of Policy Regulation. It was government regulation of business.

Reagan: One of the things that was going on then in regulation of business and science related—one thing sort of leads to another and these came together in health care because it was becoming a big industry and stuff was starting to appear about that. It's also an area of science, and I sort of put those together and got interested in that.

From a teaching viewpoint, we had the Bio Med program and we had a lot of Pre Med majors. Each department was scrounging for courses that would attract students, so if we had a course on the economics of politics of health policy, it might attract some pre meds, so I started teaching the course.

I found there wasn't any book that would do quite what I wanted. No teacher ever thinks there is a book that's quite what he could do, so that lead to in finally 1992 to a book with an overly optimistic title Curing the Crisis, subtitled Options for America's Health Care or something like that.

The one I am finishing now which will be out in about a year, I think, is less optimistically titled, my working title is Dilemmas of U.S. Health Care.

(laughter)

So, it's all public policy but it is different areas of public policy that I have always been interested in. Public policy is something unlike ... well, nuclear physics can get on the front page of the New York Times sometimes as they discovered that neutrinos have mass last week. I don't know what it means, but there is a big article about it.

But if you are in public policy, obviously you have more opportunities to do writings that more of the public can absorb than if you are in some very esoteric scientific field. So, I have been able to indulge both my academic interests and my more evolving interests in public policy.

End of Tape 1

Reagan: In at least my part of the social sciences, I think it is still true there isn't much apprenticeship in the sense that the lab science has. We don't have labs, and I would try to use the graduate student now and then, particularly one at the dissertation stage to do something that related to an area I was working on, because I knew then I would know what advice I could give and so on, better than if they picked something I know nothing about. But I never really had students working on my research projects in that usual lab science sense.

The one major involvement with a graduate student was with one ... The New Federalism, which I published in '72 and I did the second edition in 1981. I was Vice Chancellor while I was writing the second one, and there was one part of it that needed a particular chapter on the urban policies, which is not an area of specialty for me, and I had just had a graduate student for whom that was his dissertation. I knew he was very good. I forget whether he was still here or by then had moved on to start teaching at Chico State. So, that was a joint authored second edition of that book. But that is the most involvement of that kind I have had with graduate students. I did have a good share of the Ph.D. candidates in my department and so I supervised a number of dissertations. One of the pleasures of my academic career has been very good relationships I have had with those graduate students.

Erickson: Oh, good.

Reagan: And three or four of them I still keep in touch with now. So that part has been very good.

Erickson: Good.
My question was going to be, "Do you continue your research," but obviously you do.

Reagan: Yes.

Erickson: Is it more rewarding now that you are retired and you can devote more time ...

Reagan: Yes, it's easier to do. You don't have to split yourself into as many pieces. No question, that's easier. And also, given Celeste's condition, my wife's condition, I have to do a certain amount ... I am a house husband ... for shopping and stuff like that, too. I find now that the combination of working on a writing project ... I try to do writing in the mornings as much as I can, but obviously you make appointments when you have to make them.

And then my major involvement outside these days is the Riverside Public Library, as you know. That has become a very major involvement for me, much more than I thought it would be when I signed on.

Erickson: How did you get into that?

Reagan: I saw a little notice, a paragraph in The Press-Enterprise saying there are openings on the following boards and commissions. One of them was the Library. One of the duties of the VC is to supervise the campus libraries, so ... I have always been a library-oriented person with my book publishing history and all the rest. So, that seemed like a natural, and so I called up to find out what does it do. Well, it meets an hour and a half once a month—nothing to that. I can do that. And I joined and immediately found myself fascinated by the problems it was having. Judith Auth is a great manager and a wonderful person to relate to, so I has been great and a lot of fun.

Erickson: Great.

Reagan: You know, we went through separating the city from the county system over the last couple of years, and I was able, I think, to be helpful in that process on the board. And then the Eastside Cybrary connection has been a pet project of mine on the board. It just seems like a natural follow on now as a retirement activity. But, you know, when people say "retirement" once in a while now ... We have one member of our library board who

Reagan: will say, and this has to come from the one who is always missing meetings, “Well, you can do all these extra things, Mike, ‘cause you are retired.”

Erickson: Ohhh.

Reagan: I am about to start saying, “Look, I am half retired. The job for a UC faculty member is teaching and research, about 50/50, and I am still researching. So I am half retired.

But when you say, you know, continue your research... there I have to file a small demur to the extent that what I am trying to do now is to do, I think, a synthesis of original work in health policy. That is, medical doctors and biomedical scientists and a lot of economists now are focusing on that field. Most of the Md.’s and Biomedes do the clinical trial part of research, but that’s not so much a policy stuff. But there are things, for instance, the pros and cons of managed care. There is a lot of research about that.

One of the chapters of my new book is the “Pros and Cons.” There are really things to be said on both sides. My niche in writing is to take stuff that’s normally in separate little pieces and try to put them together, synthesize them in a whole that is one readable thing that a broader audience can relate to. If that can be given the title “research,” which some people probably would not, then I am still doing research. I am still doing writing that relates to research.

Erickson: What year did you retire, Mike?

Reagan: June 30, 1991.

Erickson: Was that a VERIP?

Reagan: Yes, it was the first round. I would have retired within two years anyway, but that speeded it along.

Erickson: It was an incentive.

Reagan: Yes.

Erickson: Well, how do you feel about the campus today? You still come to campus? Do you do your research mostly at home or do you come here?

Reagan: I do the research mostly at home in the age of the Internet. You know, the Melvyl system, the other UC databases you can get on the computer. Probably 75% ... I mean, I not only can use the computer to draw up a bibliography on a new topic in about two minutes instead of four hours or days thumbing through things in the library. Having looked them up, I can then get printout full text for probably three quarters of them. So, I can do a great deal of work at home. Otherwise, I wouldn't be able to do it these days.

I had gotten my first computer in 1986 and began to do my writing at home after my last class. I would get home early in the afternoon and do some writing then. But when I got a modern computer, i.e. one with a modem and Internet connection two and a half years ago ... If I hadn't done that when Westview asked me to do another book, I probably would have said no, but having that I realized how much I could do from home.

Erickson: The world is available.

Reagan: Yes.
So, I come to the campus ... gosh, I probably average once every two weeks now. For a while it was less than that, but the things that I can't get full text out I make a list of and then I come over and go to the library and look them up in the journals. I go to my department about once every three months to pick up the little bit of mail that accidentally dribbled there, because I try to get all the mail shifted to home. But since there are only one or two people I know in the department any more, I don't have that much to do.

I have lunch one day a week with four or five different fellows from other departments on the campus. But not on campus.

Reagan: We don't have lunch on campus. So, I keep up some connections. And obviously I devour everything that's printed locally about the campus.

I have a sort of mixed feeling honestly, because as I have indicated throughout this, I am a small-campus person, and I am not dying for us to go to 28,000 students. That would not please me greatly. I know what it means to a UC campus, and I know particularly in the sciences my colleagues have been saying from the beginning, "I can't really do the best work I should be able to myself if I don't have anybody else to talk to." And that would mean another physicist, it means another person in sub, sub, sub specialty that I share. It's terribly important to have someone who's really working in the same sub area as yourself. I think every discipline feels it some, but the hard sciences feel it the most, and so the bigger campus means more the likelihood that you would have someone to relate to in your own department.

And larger departments tend to be the more prestigious departments. You are likely to have more name stars if you've got a large department just by accident.

But I am pleased that apparently in this study which I haven't yet read (but as a matter of fact, I am going to try to pick it up today at the library) the book that the Chancellor carries around with him out of Johns Hopkins Press last year that UCR is the prototype of the new research university. Even though we don't have huge departments, we are apparently having a very good rate of faculty publication and so on. I like going by that per capita way of looking at it rather than the mass.

Of UC campuses, I certainly like UCR the best, because ... Santa Cruz would dispute this claim probably, I don't know whether effectively or not, but we are more undergraduate oriented, I think, than most of the other campuses, and that's good in my book. I have never been an active alumnus of my own college, Holy Cross, but it is a good liberal arts college, remains that and has a better reputation now than thirty years ago. I hate to say this ... forty ...

(laughter)

Reagan: this last week they held my fiftieth graduation anniversary!

Erickson: Is that right? Oh, my.

Reagan: I can't imagine. But at any rate, I never did anything as an alumnus. In the last five or six years, I found myself sending one hundred bucks a year just because they are a liberal arts college and that's what they are going to remain. And, by God, we need liberal arts colleges!

Erickson: We need to support that.

Reagan: Yes, we need to support that. So, I have a mixed feeling about the campus growing. I think my ideal campus would probably be eight or nine thousand students, about where we are now. That's enough to support graduate departments, graduate work, research units and have at least some diversity on the faculty without being humongous. That's about where I come out.

Erickson: Is there anything else that we didn't cover that you'd like to talk about?

Reagan: I don't think I jotted down anything else, Jan.
No, I think I have taken more than enough of your time.

Erickson: This has been so interesting and so many different topics covered that haven't been before. And I thank you very much.

Reagan: I do have, I think I can say, a good institutional memory.

Erickson: You do.

Reagan: And if there are other parts, you know, along the way where you want to check, "Hey, can you remember anything about this particular thing?" Give me a try. I'd always be glad to. I'd enjoy that.

Erickson: All right, thank you very much.

Reagan: Good.

End of Interview