

PRESERVING MEMORY: NEWARK AND RUTGERS
IN THE 1960'S AND 1970'S

An Interview with

MORRIS ROTH

Conducted by

Gilbert Cohen

August 1, 1991

INTERVIEW: Morris Roth

INTERVIEWER: Gilbert Cohen

DATES: August 1, 1991

GILBERT COHEN: Okay. It is August 1, 1991. This is Gil Cohen, and I'm speaking with Morris Roth in his home in Clark, New Jersey. [Break in recording] We're back. Mr. Roth was the Public Information officer—director of Public Information—at Rutgers-Newark from 1968 to 1974 and then moved to New Brunswick. If you could give a brief resume of your career at Rutgers background, that might be helpful to start off with.

MORRIS ROTH: Okay. Basically I come out of a news background. I used to be a reporter for the *Newark News*. Then I worked also for the *Daily Journal* in Elizabeth. Essentially I was a news writer. Had a fairly extensive journalism background that goes actually across the country, from one end to the other, but there's no need to go into all of that. When I started working for Rutgers, which was I think around October or November of 1968, just prior to that I was in public relations for the Insurance Information Institute which is a very important public relations operation for the property casualty business in this country. While I was still working there, I was making contacts to leave the job. I wasn't happy; it wasn't happy with me at the Triple-I. And I was looking for a job that was more attuned to my own feelings about things. And I coincidentally made a call to Arnie Zucker among the various people I called. And Arnie has been state relations representative for Rutgers for some 20, 25 years or more. And he knew me as a former reporter. And he told me there was a job opening in Newark, and I should get in touch with George Holstein, which I did. George was the number one public information person and Mason Gross's PR man essentially in New Brunswick.

I was hired pretty quickly, as soon as George realized I was available. But he also had an assignment for me to do before I even left my job. And that was, while I was in New York—I was working in Manhattan—to make contact with a fundraiser who at the time was laying plans for the Engelhard Building. The Engelhard Building of course, as we know, became the Graduate School of Administration—Business Administration; and then from there became the Graduate School of Business Management, which it presently is. But I was right in on the ground floor of the funding, the organization of that funding, and then publicizing that funding through the Charles Engelhard Family. When I got into—when I got to Newark, probably one of my first five jobs was to publicize a press conference for announcing a gift by Engelhard of one and a quarter million dollars, half of which—the amount of which would become matching funds. There would be an equal amount of matching funds; namely, two and a half million dollars if—the balance would be made up from alumni, corporate associates, people in Newark, people with an interest in the City of Newark on the corporate level who kicked in another million and a quarter. So it was two and a half million for the school. And that's how the school got started. So I got involved with that while I was not even at Rutgers. I was in New York. I was asked to stop in and speak to this fundraising man. And I did. And that really got my feet a little wet; because a couple of weeks after that, I joined the Newark staff.

COHEN: Was this a new position that was created?

ROTH: No. When I joined as director of public information, they had gone through at least two or three other public relations directors for whatever combination of reasons. And I heard a few stories. I don't know if you want to get into that.

COHEN: Mm-hmm.

ROTH: But none of them wanted that job after a while. It was a tough job. You really had to be interested in doing that work. I'd come to that job with an underlying commitment that very few people, I'm sure...in fact I don't know of anybody, even since, because I know those people who've held that job since. And I held it longer than anybody. Six years was longer than anybody held that job. I don't know of anybody since, even after me, who's held it for six years.

COHEN: Why was it tough?

ROTH: Well, I guess it was tough on several levels. One, it was very difficult to publicize directly from the Newark campus. Why? Simply because there was only basically only one media outlet, and that was the *Newark Star-Ledger*—or the *Star-Ledger* in Newark. After you put together a story and you've got the *Star-Ledger* to accept it, you were almost dead after that. There was no other places to go with the story. Occasionally you'd get a story that the *New York Times* might be interested in. Occasionally you might get something that some of the radio—you had contacts with all these people, but they really weren't interested. They weren't interested in routine—so-called routine—news out of Newark, at Rutgers-Newark. They weren't interested in new programs unless it was a particularly exciting program. I can remember there was one program that all the media jumped on, and that was created by one of the assistant deans. And that was to bring high school students into Rutgers-Newark. They were able to get some credit toward an undergraduate degree. I forget exactly what that program was.

COHEN: Do you have any idea of the year?

ROTH: That goes back to about '71, something like that. But that was kind of an interesting program. It was like a pre-college program, and it enabled high school students to get some college background. They would actually take a course or two, a college course, and they would credit toward a degree-granting program if they came into Rutgers after they graduated high school.

COHEN: What happened to that program, do you recall?

ROTH: I don't know what happened to that program.

COHEN: Do you remember the name of the professor who headed it up?

ROTH: I'm trying to think of it.

COHEN: The department?

ROTH: I don't know why Manspeizer comes to mind. I think Manspeizer at that time, not only was he a geology professor, but he became some kind of an associate dean in admissions. Either admissions or.... I think it was Manspeizer. I may be wrong, but that's—for some reason I thought it was Warren. And we had good publicity on that one. We had a lot of papers now. We just could not generate—there weren't enough stories. I say that with the exception of the crisis period when I joined the university, when Conklin Hall was taken over. At that point we probably had more press than any university in the metropolitan area. We had television, we had radio, we had all the print media. I was involved with all kinds of media for hours and hours. And I was doing that like a four- to six-month period, from I think the spring of '69, when they first took over the building,

COHEN: February of '69, yes.

ROTH: February...alright. February '69. And that lasted for about four months or so after they established a program that was loosely referred to as open admissions, which it never was. But it was a program that allowed a lot of Newarkers to come to Rutgers-Newark.

COHEN: How did you handle the publicity around and after the takeover of Conklin Hall?

ROTH: Well, it really wasn't all that difficult. Protests were going on. Demands had been issued. In fact I remember.... I'll take you back to the afternoon when this thing broke. It may have been February as you say. I can't recall the specific month. I thought it was spring, but I guess it was earlier than that.

COHEN: Right.

ROTH: It may have been earlier. It probably was earlier. But anyway, we were in an Administrative Council meeting; it was in the afternoon like three o'clock. And in comes.... Malcolm Talbott ran the meetings, and the meeting was on for about 10, 15 minutes when suddenly the door opened up. We always had a closed door to these meetings so we got work done without interruptions. And in comes marching two or three—well, a whole.... I shouldn't say two or three. There was a whole maybe 10, 15 young black students, male, female. And I remember leading this group—I don't remember his name, but he was the president of the Black Organization of Students, the BOS. And I remember Vickie Donaldson. She was very active throughout the takeover of the buildings and through the period in which the black students wanted a larger admission of black students, and they wanted a certain number of people discharged. And the demands were all cited on a sheet of paper, a couple of sheets of paper. And I remember Malcolm looking at the sheet and discussing it a little bit, excusing us that were all sitting around the table for this meeting. And the meeting, you know, suddenly just died there, and suddenly the matter of business was this student demands. And I think Talbott said, "Well, we'll pick this up, you know, after the meeting." Or something like that. I forget whether the meeting just disbanded or whether he began dealing with...or he didn't start dealing with until sometime after the meeting was over.

COHEN: Was this right before the takeover?

ROTH: This was before the takeover. This had to be probably several days. But the takeover was being threatened, was threatened, I think, at that meeting. They weren't just going to issue demands; they were going to take some specific action. They ran a pretty intelligent operation. They never tipped their hands as to exactly what they were going to do. But they let us know that something more was forthcoming here. And in fact it did, you know, pretty much what they indicated would happen. And in fact did happen. Now when that development occurred, the media was after us right away. That didn't take any time at all before the word got to the *Star-Ledger* and to other papers. And to the wire services which were in Newark. I forgot to mention the wire services. They were always available for us for publicity. They very rarely used anything we did because they dealt with principally some of the bigger stories. They certainly were running stories. And I remember the AP reporter who came down. They ran many stories on the takeover of the building and the whole crisis of the black student protest. They were on campus every day. We didn't have to give them anything. They were there. They would talk to the students. Occasionally we could arrange [for them] to talk to Malcolm Talbott or some other administrator. We were turning out some press releases. So that's how we kept the media informed as to what was going on.

COHEN: Did you have any direct contact with any of the students who were involved, the leaders of the takeover.

ROTH: Yes, I was involved with just about all of them. That is, I and my staff—and an important person on my staff at the time was Delora Jones. She was a member of the staff. There was a side matter I can't discuss about that was isn't exactly too great. But we had like a two-man staff: It was Delora and myself at the time. And we were close to the protest leaders. Delora was probably closer than I was, a lot closer. But I wasn't shy. I stayed in touch. I attended meetings, I attended those they allowed. They used to hold meetings at the campus center. Before it became the Robeson Campus Center, it was just the campus center. And they would hold meetings. If they didn't want you to attend a meeting, they'd tell you not to attend. If you attended, they just wouldn't let you in or they'd stop the meeting. So you know you played by the rules. You'd go when you could. You didn't go when you can't or you shouldn't go. And so we kept in touch. We had phone numbers. They called us, we called them. I called them. Joe Browne, of course, was the leader. My recollection—maybe I'm wrong on that—but my recollection is that Joe Browne was not the president of the Black Organization of Students. Another fellow was president. But Joe was *the* principal organizer and the leader of the protest movement. He worked with another guy. And there were several others that handled publicity and what have you. But I was in touch with them regularly.

COHEN: Could you describe at least the people that you remember best from that period, people in the Black Organization of Students? Their personalities and the impressions they made on you.

ROTH: Okay. Yes, okay. Joe Browne. Let's start with Joe Browne. I'll go to four people. Joe Browne was a leader born for his task. You know he was running a protest for black students. He spoke well. He had the respect of his own group. He had the respect of faculty. He had the respect of administration. He probably was a little older than the average student on campus, and

maybe that's why he commanded as much respect from the student group. But he was a well-spoken individual. He had a lot of personal charisma. He was quite articulate. And he could get right to the point, you know. He didn't beat around the point. If he had something to say, he would say it. I remember an NBC reporter who interviewed him. And he walked away, and he said something to the effect "to the manor born." He said, "This guy spoke like he was a prince."

COHEN: The NBC reporter said that?

ROTH: The NBC reporter. He was so taken by this guy after he'd interviewed him for about two, three minutes. Or maybe five minutes. He just walked away with his mouth wide open, unsuspecting that he would meet someone of that caliber leading a campus protest movement. But that's, you know, typically that is how people felt about Joe Browne. A young guy who could take good care of himself. Vickie Donaldson was another person whom I remember. She was the kind of person who could run a meeting; that was very important. She could organize a meeting, run a meeting, plan a program, plan the next day's activities. She was very much a part of the planning group that was running the protest. There was hardly anything that was done without Vickie Donaldson having a say in the matter. Very bright student. I understand she wound up going to Rutgers Law School and has since become a lawyer. I think she even got on the board of education in Newark. She's had somewhat of a successful—probably more than just somewhat—she's had a very successful career in adult life because I've seen her name in the paper, and she's been close to the mayor. She's been close to educators. She wasn't just a firebrand—and she was that—but she was willing to put in the time. She was the kind of person whom you would normally admire watching a group of people planning something. She was smart and she was one to admire; that's all I can say.

There was another interesting guy who was there. I used to refer to him as their minister of propaganda. I can't think of his name, but he wound up working for Shapiro, the county—he became his PR man. Or at least one of his top spokespeople. And I cannot think of his name. Great guy. As a matter of fact I had Shapiro and that guy down here to my temple here in Clark in the seventies when Shapiro was running—just before he was running for governor. Just before he ran for governor. I know the guy. I can't think of the guy's name. But he used to handle publicity for the organization. And they had a steady stream of statements to make, press releases. And, you know, often we had to deal with the demands and questions that they were raising because the reporters would ask us, well, how do you—what do you say to this, and what do you say to that? But the university at that time...this matter had become so controversial that Mason Gross came down, Bob Oates came down who was head of the police department. There were some very, very bitter and very scary moments during this takeover. I think that for me there were two major frightening moments at which things could have really gotten out of hand. And that was one night when they had a bonfire right in the plaza, oh, about 20 feet from Dana Library.

COHEN: During the occupation?

ROTH: It was during the occupation. This was such a bad night that Newark mounted police, on horseback, mounted the stairway. And you know what it takes to come up the stairway. They mounted the stairway [laughs], and they came on campus, mounted police on horseback.

Fantastic! It was amazing. Anyway, the fire department was there that night. It was a huge bonfire. We didn't know whether the intent was to burn the place down or not. And the interesting thing about the bonfire, in my recollection anyway, is it wasn't kicked off by the black students. During this whole protest period of the black student movement, there were like two protests going on simultaneously. The black students...the white students who organized guerilla theater and who were very militant, they tried to take part with the black students in their protest. The black students, from what I can gather, and I was never privy to any of their conversations, but they didn't really want any part of them. They felt they could take care of themselves very nicely. So I think this bonfire was actually set up, was created by white students. And I think the black students themselves were disturbed because they felt like the protest was being taken out of their hands. That's my recollection of that evening, and I was there. Part of my job, incidentally, during this whole period, I put in untold numbers of hours. I mean if I tell you, Gil, that many a night I'd go home one or two o'clock in the morning, take my word for it.

COHEN: I believe you! I believe you!

ROTH: I mean I've never since that period did I ever work like that for Rutgers. I mean I came in seven-thirty—it was very late, seven to seven-thirty in the morning, and I was there 'til ten, eleven, twelve o'clock at night. I usually had to check out with my boss in New Brunswick before I went home to bed. And I would call George Holstein in New Brunswick at home often very late at night.

COHEN: Now we're saying 1969, February, was when the takeover was, I believe, for those three days. But how long did this period of stress continue?

ROTH: Well, there was a—did you say it was three days that they occupied the building?

COHEN: I believe it was 21, 22, 23. I think they came out the morning of the 24th, if I remember my dates.

ROTH: Yes. I've totally forgotten that.

COHEN: But you remembered everything else. [Laughs]

ROTH: Well, I forgot how many days they occupied the building, okay?

COHEN: Okay.

ROTH: But yet I remember—I forgot one other, I have to mention one other thing. The fire on the plaza was a night I'll never forget. I think it was an equally important moment during the protest that took place in front of Conklin on University Avenue. And the thing to understand about this protest was they had most of the black students in support of their protest. But aside from this small white militant group, many of whom were Italian, most of the white student body were opposed to this. And there was a very vigilant Italian group that came out of North Newark, the North Newark area. They felt very strongly that their education was being interrupted. Although I think for some of these guys, it was nothing more than an opportunity probably to—

nothing more than to express their own racism. They were appalled by what the black students were doing to *their* campus. You know. I guess it was their campus, the white Italian campus. It was close to North Newark. There was a great affiliation between the Newark campus and the North Ward. But anyway, one afternoon a group of them, after threatening to break into the building, they got a hold of a utility pole. I don't know, something had happened to one of the telephone poles in the neighborhood there, and it was lying right near the building. And about six or eight of them got on this pole, and they were going to use that as a—I don't know what the term is. They were going to ram right through the front Conklin door with this utility pole. Now you've got to remember the black students kept those doors locked with chains. It was chained down, as I recall. May have been roped down, but I think it was chained down. And they were going to smash right through.

And at the scene at the time was a very lovely Catholic chaplain. I don't know if he was part of the university staff or part of the dean of student's office. Or he was just a chaplain that the Catholic students visited, you know, who served the students' needs, their religious needs on campus. But he was telling the students to stop what they were doing. He knew what they were about to do, and he pleaded with them. I was right there. He pleaded with them. And they insisted that they were going to go through that door. And this guy, this priest, was very courageous. He walked right in front of the door, and he told them: "If you're going to break this door, you'll have to strike me first." He stood in front of that door, in front of these guys holding this huge battering ram, and he said, "Put it down. You don't do it this way." And they made one lunge, but they never struck him. They probably feigned a lunge to maybe try to see what he would do. But he stayed there, and they put it down. They put it down and walked away. So that was the other moment. And that moment was captured by a number of newsmen because by the time that was developing—that was going on several hours—the Italian students protesting the black students' actions. And they were holding their own rallies, and they were doing their own thing, and the news people were appraised of it; they were down, the reporters were down there, photographers down there. That picture appeared in the *Star-Ledger* and in other papers on the front pages showing the priest with his hands up.

COHEN: It was a picture.

ROTH: Yes. That was in the paper.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: I think we got a lot of television after that, you know. TV would call, and I would talk to them. Malcolm Talbott would talk to them. Marv Greenberg would talk to them. You asked me how long the tension was up. There was a long period of tension after the students left the building because the students had something in mind. When they broke into our administrative council meeting, they had a list of demands, as I told you. It was like 15 or 20 of them. And they wanted a response for every one of their demands. The university complied with a couple of their demands pretty quickly. They wanted the two top admissions officers fired. The university didn't comply with that totally, but they did remove them from Newark. They brought them into New Brunswick. One guy was Bob—it can't be Bob See, but Bob something like that.

COHEN: It was Miller and Swab, I know.

ROTH: Swab. It was Bob Swab. Bob Swab and...right. And Jonathan Miller; Miller was a young heavy-set guy.

COHEN: Those were the names.

ROTH: You're exactly right. It was Swab, who was the chief person, and they wanted them out of there.

COHEN: What were your impressions of them and how they handled the situation?

ROTH: Well, they were really—they were in a pathetic situation. I would not have wanted to be in their spot. As far as I could see, they were doing a good job. Okay, the word “good” has to be placed in quotes. They were doing a good job in terms of what they were intended to do as admissions officers. I saw nothing that they did which was improper. But the kinds of demands and the kinds of concerns the black students had—and I guess in the black community as well, because the black students were always, they always came on campus with a number of community people. There was a close relationship between the community of Newark and those black students. The black students thought of themselves as a spearheading group of role models that would make probably many more of the city college graduates. They wanted to go to college. They wanted to go to school. They saw in Bob Swab, and Miller—they saw people that were stopping that activity. Of course there's such a thing as SAT's. There's such a thing as checking your high school transcript: what class you graduated in. There's a whole series of things that make an admissions officer decide whom to bring in. By and large, the Black Organization of Students wanted all that scrapped. They weren't interested in any of that. They wanted heads. They wanted students; they wanted black students. And I guess I would be [Break in recording]

COHEN: We're back.

ROTH: Yes. I would have to say that the Black Organization of Students were essentially concerned with their own welfare. I think they allowed the Puerto Rican students to kind of pony with them, kind of come in with them. You know they wouldn't be like white students joining them. That was what they didn't want any part of. But they had sympathy, understanding; they realized that the Hispanic student wasn't getting what they considered a fair shake in terms of Hispanic students attending Rutgers-Newark. So they allowed them to come along. But essentially they were out to achieve ends for themselves. So when they presented these demands and then they put it into force by the take over of the buildings, and which they finally walked out of the building. Probably that happened I'm sure with a lot of talk between Malcolm Talbott and community leaders. Malcolm had very close access to the whole community structure of Newark, and he could call on the top leadership there. And I know, I recollect, that there were times when community people came to the campus while the building was being taken over. And they felt that, you know, the black students may have had a good, a worthy issue, but they realized they were going about it totally in a wrong way. And they were causing probably more animosity against the blacks than anything else. So they were, I guess, willing to talk to the black

students, namely the black community. And I think that was part of the reason why the students left after three days. I think there was a lot of heat put on them by their own people. I know heavily involved throughout this was Gus Henningburg [sp]. And of course anyone who knows Gus Henningburg has got to know one of the, for me—I've had long relations with him over the years—he's one of the smartest, nicest—one of the best people I've ever met in my life. Okay. That's how I rate Gus Henningburg. And he became very much a part of this process of negotiating.

There was a long negotiating process. After the building was freed, after the students left, a negotiating process began. The university would not negotiate with the students while they occupied the building, and they knew that. And that was out. Malcolm Talbott, Mason Gross, nobody in charge of Rutgers University was going to negotiate with the students while the occupation took place. And I guess maybe that was also part of the reason why they left the building, because they realized that if they were going to accomplish anything...after all they had a set of demands, they had things to accomplish. They weren't just there for a joyride. This wasn't just an hysterical protest. This was part and parcel, I'm sure—and at this point I could mention that—of the '67 riots; because time and time again during the protest movement, this was said by the black student protesters, by a Joe Browne, by a Vickie Donaldson, by the others, that this was merely a continuation of what was happening in the '67 riots. They wanted a place for themselves in the sun in Newark. And they weren't getting it. And that had at least be a piece of the reason for the Newark riots, the political structure with Addonizio, and certainly an Italian group. It wasn't the blacks. The blacks with Gibson didn't come in until later. This takeover of the buildings and this issuance of demands by the black students was another piece of the action of the black—you know they might even call it a revolution. It didn't get to that extent. But they were making...this was a water—what's the expression?

COHEN: Watershed?

ROTH: This was a watershed, exactly. This for the blacks was a watershed. They were—they turned on the city during the riots, and they were turning on the educators and the school. And they wanted in; that was their message: We want in. So there was a long period of negotiation that went on. And a lot of the negotiation was going on at the law school. The law school became the center for negotiations. I don't recall how long the negotiations went on. But I remember the night—it was a very important night; it was a night that on the positive side was the counterpart to the fire on the plaza and the attempt to smash down the Conklin doors. This was the positive side. It was a group of black leaders led by Gus Henningburg. A very important person through all of this that I have yet to mention was Bob Curvin. Bob Curvin was probably *the* most important person—adult—that played a role in the period of the black protest; because there was hardly a thing the students did that they didn't consult Bob on. Bob was their advisor. He was the Black Organization of Students advisor. They leaned on him heavily from day to day on how they were going to plan their tactics, on what they were going to do, how they were going to bargain with the university. Bob was their liaison with the university. And Bob was a very tough individual himself. I've known Bob, and I've known him...well, I got caught up with Bob on another matter which I might mention to you. But it also dealt with the black student protest; it was during, I guess, still part of this period. But anyway, Bob was a very important person.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: And he helped negotiate those demands. And I think at this long meeting at which Mason Gross—I think he spent the entire day, and I put him on television; I remember that. I remember the—he was NBC; I think it must have been NBC because they came down regularly wanted to interview him, I remember that. This was in my office.

COHEN: Wanted to interview Gross?

ROTH: Interview Mason Gross. He was president at the time. And Gross was very much concerned about all of this. In fact he became a very integral part of the settlement of this, and I'll move you to that point.

COHEN: By all means.

ROTH: And I'll move you to that point in a few minutes. But I remember in the afternoon, he was down there, and I think he then left. But he was interviewed, and he was on television that afternoon. And then later on he came by while the negotiation was going on, and I think it was Talbott, and it was Henningburg, and it was Willard Heckel [sp]; it was a whole group of people that were participating. I don't know to what extent Marv Greenberg was a part of it, but Marv would have to tell you. But I remember that all took place in Ackerson Hall, and I was down there. I was down there, I remember, with Bob Braun and some of the other reporters. And I kept, you know, went around. Whenever I had something to tell them, which wasn't too much, I would tell them. That night the protest in a sense was broken. Because we, the university, had—verbally I think at that point—had said that they would be agreeing.... They had already dealt with a few of the issues because on the issue of Bob Swab and Miller, they took them out of Rutgers-Newark and brought in a couple of people from New Brunswick to serve as interim people. Lincoln Lawrence became a very prominent person at that point in admissions. And there was a black gal—I can't think of her name—who is still down there I believe. She was in one of the dean's offices. But Lincoln, I guess principally, took over from Bob Swab. I think that's the way things went. So there were a few things that the university was doing immediately after they presented the demands. One of the demands was to get rid of Swab and Miller. So they took care of that demand. And there were other demands that they were listening to.

But there were several key demands that I think involved expenditure of moneys that the university wasn't prepared to agree to. But by the time they got down to that night, I think most of the demands were handled. Not all of them, but most of them. And my recollection is they really didn't give them—they didn't sign off on anything. Because the university was agreeing to things, but I don't think they signed off on anything. I guess eventually they did that. Now I'm trying to think, because I wound up putting together a press release that I remember I ran over to Malcolm—to Mason Gross—with. I remember it was a Saturday morning. I went over to 1245 River Road where Mason Gross lived. And I remember him standing in his bathrobe at eight-thirty in the morning. And I had put together a press release which attempted to itemize the demands and the university's response. And I had to have Mason Gross sign off on it. In other words they had agreed to certain demands, I think, this Friday evening—I think it was a Friday evening—a certain set of demands. And the meeting kind of broke up at that point. The

negotiators left, you know. And I guess they left with the understanding that it was pretty much settled. And maybe there was something that was signed off on some sheet of paper. I don't recall that. But what I do clearly remember is that I was assigned to put together a press release that dealt with all the demands and dealt with all the university's responses to them. I brought that over to Mason Gross. He read it over. He pretty much accepted everything that I—with some slight revisions because I don't think I had to retype it or anything like that. And I wound up presenting that to the *Star-Ledger* that morning I think, and calling up the wires and calling up the *Targum*. And I then presented—I gave everybody as much of what I had as possible. I was there for I don't know how many hours. You know it was an all-day kind of thing.

And that's how the story broke, I think, in the Sunday papers, although it may have been the Monday papers; I have for some reason...was it Sunday morning that I saw him and not Saturday morning? I have a question in my own mind. I thought it was Saturday morning; it could have been a Sunday morning. I think the story actually ran in Monday's papers. That's what I remember. So they were holding meetings that Friday night. They probably were holding continuing meetings Saturday. And that's when the agreements were coming to a head. Yes, that went on for like two days. And then I put together my press release, and it was Sunday morning that I went around to the papers and started giving out the press release.

COHEN: Oh, the press release that you're talking about came out after the students left the hall?

ROTH: Oh, this was long, long.... See, we have three days the students take over the building.

COHEN: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

ROTH: It was probably during that following week. Okay? I don't know. It probably was. It probably was during that following week when negotiations were beginning to.... First of all they have to organize the negotiating committee, who was going to represent. Initially I don't think Heningburg was involved. But then he had to be brought in because nothing could really be done with.... They felt that he had a close relationship both with the university and the students, and the students respected him. Of course Bob Curvin was there throughout. But without Heningburg this would have never—this would never have been resolved. He was the key to resolving that issue.

COHEN: The issue of the occupation of Conklin Hall, was that—

ROTH: No, the issue of the demands.

COHEN: The demands. How was the withdrawal from Conklin Hall negotiated?

ROTH: I don't know how that—

COHEN: According to your recollection.

ROTH: Yes. I think they just decided, and they let us know that they were leaving. I don't know that—I know there were a lot of threats being made at the time. You know I'd open up the

newspaper. Citizens had gone down to the police department and they'd demanded action from the police. They wanted the police to come on campus and open up the building. They had no right to take over—this was their building as well as the black students' building. It was the Italian building, it was the Jewish building, although Jews were really...they were back, they played a role maybe among the militants. They certainly weren't taking any anti-black stand during this period. It was mostly Italians, but there were other students. You know Greek students, Polish students, you know. There was a lot of nastiness in the papers, a lot of nastiness on radio and on television as people were being interviewed. Incidentally, during the same period, I met Peter Arnett. Oh, Peter Arnett came to my office.

COHEN: He was covering....

ROTH: He was a freelancer covering the takeover. He came into my office one afternoon while the building was occupied. And I gave him a layout of what the hell had happened. I gave him a whole replay of what had happened. And he was doing freelance at the time, and that was a story in the paper, the paper the next day, by Peter Arnett on the Rutgers takeover. We landed in *Time Magazine* on the inside pages, I think, where the editor signs his name or something. There was a whole picture. You know one of the interesting things of the takeover of the building was that they ran out the window, out the top floor of Conklin, they ran a flag. Now what the hell did that flag say? I forget what it said, but there was a big word on it.

COHEN: "Liberation Hall" perhaps?

ROTH: That sounds right to me, "Liberation Hall." Right. And that showed up in *Time Magazine*.

COHEN: *Time Magazine*. [Break in recording] Conklin you think was....

ROTH: "Liberation Hall." Probably that following week negotiations were going on. What precipitated the students leaving the building, I can't recollect. I may have known at the time. Looking back at it now, I can't. I do know a lot of pressure on the students to leave the building. A lot of harassment going on. A lot of negative comments in the press, on radio. There were demands by the police to take over the campus, step in and take over. I don't know that that was ever—I really don't know to what extent they were able to, the white students were able to get the ears of the police department. But I wasn't surprised that the takeover finally came to an end. But of course that was still just the beginning of the problem because the demands became the next item of business. And in fact the students were saying, if you don't fulfill the demands, we don't come out of the building. But they did anyway.

COHEN: Yes. You mentioned before a possible document that was signed. This comes up in the archives. To the best of your recollection, was there a document signed by either Gross or the administration agreeing to certain demands?

ROTH: That's a good question because for some reason I'm certain there was a document that was put together. Whether that was signed, I just don't know. I just don't know. Did you say that document wound up in the archives?

COHEN: No. I'm saying because of what I had been reading in the archives, is that claims were made, I think, on the part of the representatives of the Black Organizations of Students that a document was signed. And at least in my research....

ROTH: Did they say that the university was reneging on certain demands?

COHEN: Well, that's what comes out in the *Observer*, I believe, and in some of the archival records. And to make a long story short, I've never seen that item.

ROTH: It had to be from that document that I put together, my press release. Okay? Now, I just don't recall that.... For some reason I have a feeling that it wasn't signed.

COHEN: Mm-hmm.

ROTH: I have that feeling, that it wasn't signed.

COHEN: You brought the press release to Mason Gross, you're saying. He looked it over, okayed it.

ROTH: Yes.

COHEN: And then it was just issued.

ROTH: And then I issued it.

COHEN: As a press release. As a document to be signed or....

ROTH: No, no, no. In other words, my recollection—and I have a very faint recollection—I remember the press release. I do not recall sitting over the document and taking notes. But for some reason I recall a document being prepared—or at least I remember hearing that night, Friday night, they were preparing this document. No, it's not ready yet, you know. They're stuck on this point or that point. A document I'm certain was prepared. I have some—there's some question in my mind whether that document was ever signed. And I think that may have been a bone of contention and a matter of discussion. I don't recall. I just don't recall.

COHEN: At this negotiating meeting attended by Gus Heningburg and Bob Curvin and others, that included Mason Gross....

ROTH: Yes, he came in and out.

COHEN: Malcolm Talbott, Willard Heckel.

ROTH: And there were others, you know.

COHEN: Okay. Were there any of the black students at that meeting?

ROTH: Oh, I'm sure that there were. But I wasn't.... You see for one thing, I was never at any of the negotiating sessions. Those people who were interested in what was going on were kept.... If you go into the law school in Ackerson Hall, there's like a lobby there—or there was a lobby at the time. And that's where we all hung out. The negotiations were going on in various deans' offices beyond the lobby. And I saw people going in and out of doors leading to offices. And that's where these things were going on. And more black students—I can't say for sure, but I can't imagine that they weren't because they were so involved with everything that was going on. I cannot imagine that the leadership of the BOS was not there.

COHEN: Well, after the takeover of Conklin Hall, what other episodes on campus having to do with the black activism—let's start with black activism—that you recall.

ROTH: Well, essentially after the demands were met or dealt with, there was still, as I recall, a residue of unhappiness. For whatever combination of reasons, the BOS didn't feel that they got everything that they wanted. There were a couple of demands that were outright—Mason Gross said no, that others said no. And I can't recall exactly what they were. Probably important to the—I think they were related somehow.... Oh, I think I know what they were related to. Oh, wait up. I wanted to lead to something else, and I don't know. I think it related to what the administration could negotiate and what it couldn't negotiate. For example, as you well know, Gil, an administration can't ever negotiate a faculty matter. They can never negotiate matters that the faculty have total domain over. And I think there were certain.... Like, for example, they wanted X number of black professors. They wanted X number of maybe Puerto Rican professors. This was totally out of the province of Mason Gross and Malcolm Talbott. They couldn't assign a number. First of all, the budget was an issue. And more important than the budget, was that each faculty department had sovereignty onto itself. They appointed their own faculty. I think that was an issue that couldn't be resolved.

COHEN: How about the admissions standards question, number of students?

ROTH: Okay. The admissions standards were moved to another aspect, were moved into another area. Following—and I don't have total recollection here either. It could have been Friday night, that Friday night/Saturday night negotiation session, when Mason Gross, and Mason Gross essentially, was putting together a new concept of enrollment for the three major campuses of Rutgers.

COHEN: And this was after Conklin Hall was vacated.

ROTH: This was after...yes. I'm suggesting that this took place.... If we're saying that Conklin Hall was vacated let's say a Tuesday or a Wednesday....

COHEN: Thursday morning, I think, unless....

ROTH: Okay. I'm talking about the negotiation sessions that followed thereafter.

COHEN: Followed thereafter.

ROTH: At the law school. I'm referring to Mason Gross who played a material role in ironing out those negotiations. And then, as I recall, even more important than my press release on the demands of the students was this new concept that Mason Gross had introduced for admissions for the university. I don't know what the first name of it was. But some of its subsequent names became Academic Foundations. Jim Ramsey became—he wasn't the first head, it was a woman; I remember her, she was the first head of this group, but then it didn't work out too well while she was in charge. And then he, who was an excellent administrator, he took charge of that and made it work. But a scheme was put together; it was like a page document. It was put together by Mason Gross; he authored it. It was his document. And he probably was, as the president of the university, the only one who could get away with promulgating anything like this. But on the basis of his statement, the university now would accept any—my recollection was—any student that graduated from Newark, New Brunswick, and Camden high schools, so that it was not limited to black students—that's my recollection—any high school graduate. I don't think there were any criteria other than being a graduate and going through a paper-processing period with admissions officers who I guess were entitled to look at some of your records. But they were more or less given carte blanche to enter Rutgers-Newark. And immediately, probably the day we announced that, which was probably part of my press release, it then became the most important story for Rutgers-Newark for the next six months. So important that it led off...it was the lead story on the front page of the *Wall Street Journal*.

COHEN: The program.... I think what you're referring to is the Urban University.

ROTH: Urban University, exactly.

COHEN: Did you say that Gross authored that report?

ROTH: Oh, he authored that.

COHEN: How do you know that?

ROTH: Because I was there. That night is when he...well, that's what we announced. We announced that in the press release of the demands of the Black Organization of Students. That became one of the principal things that we addressed in our press release. And we had to because it was a new development, it was a totally new development. So the Urban University—Gross offered that one. And interestingly, he authored it. It had its chief effect on the Newark campus because we had the largest number of potential high school graduates out of Newark. And we wound up, you know, with...it represented the whole university, but we mostly had to answer for it.

COHEN: Now, do you recall after that, after the Conklin Hall incident, the board of governors of the university promulgating the Urban University? What was the relationship?

ROTH: That's an excellent question. As one who has covered the board of governors now in New Brunswick for 17, 18 years, that's an extremely good question. Cut the machine because I want to take a glass of water. [Break in recording]

COHEN: We're back.

ROTH: You know I'm sure the board of governors had to pass a resolution announcing and supporting and promulgating the Urban University program that was announced initially by Mason Gross. But I was not in New Brunswick. I was not brought into New Brunswick to write any.... What we usually do is write fact sheets on resolutions the board is contemplating. It so happened that what was happening in New Brunswick at the time that we announced the Urban University program is that there were materials being generated out of New Brunswick to explain the Urban University program. Because suddenly we had to explain this to the world! We were the Rutgers which was recognized nationally as a significant university for over 200 years, where it was very difficult...I know myself when I got out of high school, the last place I would go to was Rutgers to get admitted because I knew how tough the standards were. Suddenly it seemed like the walls of standards were coming down. And so they were grinding out material in New Brunswick to explain this to the world. You know brochures and this and that. And I remember who—it was Josée Steinbock who became assistant vice president for Public Information. And I know she was doing a lot of the basic work.

COHEN: What was her name again?

ROTH: Josée Steinbock. Heavy-set gal. Everybody knew Josée. She retired about three years ago. But anyway, suddenly I found myself with a lot of media who I had.... [End of Tape #1]

COHEN: We are back. Wall Street I think was the last word.

ROTH: Yes. Okay. I remember one afternoon meeting with a *Wall Street Journal* reporter and trying to explain to him what the Urban University program was all about. And whenever.... The most sensitive part of that whole program.... See, we could say that it wasn't just going to serve the black students or was going to serve the white students. It was nonsectarian. It was any student who graduated Newark schools and New Brunswick schools and Camden schools. And Mason Gross tied that specifically to the fact that we owned holdings, property, in each of these cities that were nontaxable. So we were taking a tax base away from the budget process of these cities. And this was a way in which we were giving back to the cities what they were giving us. You know which had a bit of, you know, sense and reason to it. But the one thing that we had to—the toughest thing that we had to explain was how you were going to maintain standards of new students coming into the university. And we tried to.... The way it was given to me to explain, because I had also had some briefings because I was talking to administrators, how to explain this to.... You know we have it down on paper that we're going to introduce this new program. But we don't go into the nitty-gritty of explaining how we maintain the standards, and how do we keep the standards from undermining the rest of the institution? We're talking about— We're not just talking about Rutgers-Newark. We're talking about Rutgers College and Douglass College and this and that.

We're talking about the whole educational structure of the university, a very healthy educational structure that many thought was being jeopardized by this new system. And we were advised to explain that although a student had a right to apply to Rutgers-Newark, that wasn't the

be-all and end-all of his admissions. His application was merely an application. He then would be examined and his records would be examined by the admissions officer. There would be a whole set of remedial.... The Urban University program became essentially a tutorial program, so that students were given exams, admittance exams, and where they were weak in certain areas, this was going to be corrected by the Urban University program. Needless to say, that explanation didn't fly. This is what we told them. We told the reporters. And we were saying that remember, it's not what the student knows when he comes in; it's what he knows when he leaves a class. As long as he is accountable to maintain a certain grade, to get a certain grade average to continue in school, then the responsibility/accountability was still in his court. I'm afraid personally that, from my association with the media, it was very skeptically received. That's the best I can say. But nonetheless, we carried on like that.

And there must have been some kind of a transition with that whole program when Gross left and Bloustein took over. Remember we're talking about the period of '69 when this program took effect. And maybe it didn't even take effect in '69. It may have taken effect—it probably took effect in September of '69. The negotiations were still going on in the spring of '69. It probably did take effect, and they were preparing materials. They must have taken effect in the fall of '69. By '70, I think, maybe like 18 months later, Gross got ill. It wasn't too much later.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: Because Bloustein took over I think in late '71. Now wait a minute. It was in the middle—it was about the middle of '70. I think it was like June or something like that of '71.

COHEN: My notes aree...I don't have the exact date.

ROTH: Okay. So we're talking about an 18-month period. So I think that program kind of flew by the seat of its pants. I know in Newark, for example, we ran a white administrator, and that wasn't going too well. And I think we wound up—I think we contracted, I think we did a private contractor in a hurry with one administrator, and that didn't work out. You know we replaced that one with staff people. Jim Ramsey had to be the one who succeeded and took over that program in Newark. And then that program was further revised and probably upgraded when Ed Bloustein came in.

COHEN: Do you have any recollection of any negotiations with the students or with the people in the community about the whole question of admissions standards?

ROTH: I know that...I guess I should say the non-black, I guess whites, Italians—Italians were very prominent in that area so I keep thinking of Italians. I think essentially there was a lot of opposition to it. I don't know about the negotiations. All I know about it is voiced opposition. Of course it was issued by Mason Gross. Now Mason Gross had an enormous—obviously he was the only one at the university that could have announced anything like this. I mean this man was held in such high regard. He was the guy who walked on water at the university. [Laughter] That's how they held him. They held him as some kind of an unnatural kind of person—supernatural kind of person. So that if Mason Gross, the philosopher—and that's what every academic and everyone who knew Mason Gross, he was the philosopher; he was Rutgers

philosopher—if he says this is good, that this is the way we should go, how are you going to argue with Mason Gross? So, you know, it flew on his wings.

COHEN: Why was he held in such high regard? I remember him very well; maybe I'd seen him a couple of times. But you...which I haven't heard before.

ROTH: Mason Gross, he had a very admiring stature. He was tall and broad and civil and gracious and wise and fine. He was one to admire. This man was a walking admiration society. You took one look at him, and you saw something special. He wasn't Morris Roth, and he wasn't Gil Cohen. He was who is that guy walking? He was something special. He was on television. He was a quiz master. He knew everything about everything. He could rap the Vietnam War and do it in such a way that the biggest patriot would have trouble supporting it.

COHEN: You heard him do something like that?

ROTH: Well, Mason Gross was caught up in that very interesting squabble over a professor on the Vietnam War.

COHEN: You mean Genovese [sp]?

ROTH: Genovese. He told Governor Hughes, he wasn't going to do anything to have Genovese fired. If it was necessary—I don't know that it was because Hughes in his own way was a man of tremendous intellect and intellectual quality. But, you know, they fought a gubernatorial election over a professor whom Mason Gross came to support. He went public to support him. No, he was not going to be fired. Yes, he was going to have his say. If he thinks we're on the wrong side of the war and the Viet-Cong are going to win, that's his business. He wasn't going to—and he could do it with élan, with style, with rationality and dignity. You had to listen to the man when he spoke. That all by itself gives you a piece of.... I know when Mason Gross came, that was the first time I met him, when he came in the middle of this squabble.

COHEN: Oh.

ROTH: In the middle of this protest. And then he realized that somebody.... One guy says, Hey, can you get him before the camera? Can you get him set up? We want to ask him a few questions. I could see right away when I walked up to him, and I didn't know the guy from a hole. I said, "Dr. Gross, I'm in charge of PR here, and the network wants to put you on." He said, "Alright. How do I look?" You know he wanted to make sure his tie was...so I fixed his tie and brushed his lapel a little bit. And he says, "yea, I think that'll..."

COHEN: What was the substance of that interview, do you recall?

ROTH: Just what was happening.

COHEN: What was happening during the takeover?

ROTH: You know the students, did they have any rights, you know? And he could—see, he could lend sympathetic support to the students' actions without saying that, without saying at the same time that occupying the building is confiscating public property illegally. In other words, he can say to the world—the students went overboard here. They had a message to deliver, but they went about it the wrong way. It's not proper to occupy a building, and they'll be coming out of there one way or another. And, you know, just on that note alone, there was no question they were going to come out of there one way or the other. When I said earlier that there must have been conversations between the administration and the police, I wasn't privy to any of this.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: But I was privy to enough because I was close to every development. I was on top of everything. And I knew there were discussions along the lines of how do we get them out of here?

COHEN: With the police?

ROTH: How do we get them out of there, you know? Possibly.

COHEN: Oh, you don't know for sure.

ROTH: No, I don't know for sure.

COHEN: That's right, you were not privy.

ROTH: I was not privy to that, no. But I knew what the pressures were. I knew what was going on. I was around all the time. I participated in a lot of discussions. I don't know, maybe they would have taken the students to court and enforced it with sheriff's officers. Breaking down... though. I don't know. All I know is that was not going to go on much longer. Action was going to be taken. Gross was not going to tolerate it. Because Gross was already getting heat by the legislators. What the hell is that Gross doing? That commie who allows Genovese to teach at—you know what is that commie doing? What is he doing now? And he was getting a lot of heat from the rightwing in the state.

COHEN: Was that heat appearing in the press?

ROTH: Oh, sure! Yes, he was getting heat.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: I've forgotten really now what his response was or how he dealt with that. But I know that it was on—I'm glad it never came to that sort of thing.

COHEN: I think everybody would. [Laughs]

ROTH: Interestingly on that point, I could say this: The top leadership of the BOS were pretty much a together organization. They were not made up of violent people. They were militant in the sense that they had something to accomplish here. But these weren't the kind of people who would cause bloodshed, who would cause violence. They really weren't, particularly the president. Nice guy. Became an attorney. He joined the—I think at one time I spoke to him, he was a deputy attorney-general. He was a very courageous guy, a young courageous guy.

COHEN: Whose president?

ROTH: The president of BOS.

COHEN: ...

ROTH: This was all going on. I told you there were like two people: There was the president and this guy Joe Browne.

COHEN: You probably mean Harrison Snell.

ROTH: Exactly. Harrison Snell.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: That's exactly who I mean. I think Snell became a deputy attorney-general. There was also another good guy here, the student organization president at that time: Carl Wyhopen [sp].

COHEN: Yes, very familiar.

ROTH: Wonderful, wonderful guy. Sympathetic with the students. Knew just what to say. He wasn't a loudmouth. He was a brilliant student. He was a brilliant student leader. You know that was important during this time. If you had some hothead running essentially the white student organization, there could have been incidences. But he wasn't anything like that. He was a clear-headed, strong-willed, decent—I run into him every so often. We always have the warmest regards for each other. We always conversed about what was going on. He is a deputy attorney-general.

COHEN: Yes, I met him at a reunion that they had ...he's one of the people I liked to see.

ROTH: He's worth seeing, he's worth talking to. He was right in the middle of a lot of these things.

COHEN: I wanted to ask you: During the negotiations, do you recollect Bessie Nelms Hill was a member of the board of governors. Do you recall her involvement in the negotiations in any way?

ROTH: I think she did play a role. I think she was brought in. She may have come out of Newark—Newark or Plainfield. But she was down there, yes. She played a role because I think that was brought up when Hill Center was named after her.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: And I think—at dedication I was there. I handled the dedication. I think words were said to that effect. And I sort of recollect that she somehow was involved. I remember that Saturday afternoon now in Malcolm Talbott's office on this thing, after the negotiations were all squared away. And I think he had called her to speak to her.

COHEN: You've given some pretty graphic detail on Mason Gross's role in the negotiations and the outcome of the takeover of Conklin and the whole question....

ROTH: We've totally bypassed Malcolm.

COHEN: And I wanted to get into that.

ROTH: I'm not...and that's unfair, that's unfair...

COHEN: What was his function?

ROTH: Of course it was to him that the initial demands were submitted. So he had to deal with all the students, all the student leaders right from the word go. And he dealt with them from day to day. He used to come in.... He spoke. Maybe they were beginning to negotiate in a sense, informally, during these meetings. And of course he had the respect of a large number of people. He had the respect of the community, and so the community was in touch with him. And I'm talking about black leadership. He may have been—and I don't know if he did or not—he probably was responsible for getting Gus Heningburg into the negotiations. And once again, without Gus Heningburg I don't think it would have ever been squared away. He was the principal negotiator because he had friends on both sides. And I think Talbott brought him into the negotiating process. So Talbott undoubtedly played a very important role because he was there from day to day while this was all going on. I remember Mason Gross only came down, as I recall, that one day. He wasn't down there every day. He was down there that Friday.

COHEN: After the occupation—after the students vacated.

ROTH: Vacated and while they were doing their principal negotiating.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: Because he was the one that wound up announcing the urban education program. And in a sense handed the hot potato to Malcolm because Malcolm had to then put it into force. It was Malcolm who had to organize it on the Newark campus.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: So in terms of that particular protest time, Malcolm, you know, must have held numerous, countless meetings with students.

COHEN: How would you assess Malcolm Talbott's overall effectiveness as the vice president, while he was vice president, from 1965 to 1972. And he was also acting dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

ROTH: Well, Malcolm had a lot of friends on campus, and he had a number of enemies. Unlike Mason Gross—I hate to...to make any comparisons between Mason Gross and anybody else; it's so unfair, they shouldn't even be said in the same breath—let's just talk about Malcolm Talbott. Talbott had immense energy, immense gifts, admired by a lot of people. But he had, particularly on campus, he had enemies. He was not, I guess to say it in the negative, he may have had a number of friends in the faculty; but I guess it would be fair to say, though, large numbers of the faculty just didn't care for Malcolm.

COHEN: Why?

ROTH: I guess perhaps he didn't strike a strong image. He was a bright guy, he was a good guy. I think.... Well, they also probably hated that he didn't go to bat for them enough. Now Malcolm—you have to understand Malcolm's position on that campus. He was in charge of the campus, but he still had his bosses, and they were in New Brunswick. I had bosses, and they were in New Brunswick. I had a tough time of it. That's why eventually I was forced to leave. When Malcolm left, I was forced to leave. Malcolm probably was selected by someone in New Brunswick, perhaps Mason Gross, to be the vice president of the Newark campus. I don't know. Marv Greenberg would know. When I came there, he was vice president, and that's all I know. But I think he also was a creature of New Brunswick. And if you know the Newark campus well, and I'm sure you do, there's a...well, they have, and maybe justifiably so, they have a weak—they consider themselves second-class citizens. They do not consider themselves really Rutgers University. They're always the Newark campus of Rutgers University. For whatever combination of reasons—and that can go back to the fact that Rutgers College was the first Rutgers school and everything else is an appendage. And that Rutgers-Newark was a campus before it became Rutgers. It was a group of schools unaffiliated with Rutgers. I think the faculty thought that Malcolm didn't stand up strongly enough for them. I know there was a whole period.... Who was the chairman of the chemistry—was the chairman of the Chemistry Department?

COHEN: Former chairman?

ROTH: Former chairman. He lives in West Orange or something like that. He was the guy that made the biggest push for the chemistry building.

COHEN: Probably Gilbert Panson.

ROTH: Exactly.

COHEN: Who was acting dean of the college.

ROTH: Exactly. It was Gil Panson.

COHEN: What were you saying about him?

ROTH: When Gil was there, and Gil was very active, Gil led protest movements against the New Brunswick campus! There were rallies on the Newark campus against New Brunswick. I was placed in the embarrassing situation of trying to explain this to the media. I had to talk about one campus telling another campus that they're a bunch of S.O.B.'s.

COHEN: These rallies were organized....

ROTH: It turned out the biggest rally was in New Brunswick. The whole student body of Newark took over, practically took over, the Brower Commons plaza area one spring. And they were rallying against New Brunswick.

COHEN: What was that, what was the grievance?

ROTH: And complained ... Nope, not enough money. Not enough taxation without representation. That sort of thing. Second-class citizenship. You treat us like poor nephews. You don't give us—no equality, no parity, no equality.

COHEN: And you say that Gilbert Panson had a role in this ...

ROTH: Oh, he led that rally.

COHEN: What, in these demonstrations?

ROTH: In these demonstrations. He led those demonstrations. He would pack practically the second floor in Robeson Center, before even Robeson Center, the campus center. And, you know, just howling away at New Brunswick. They were bitter days.

COHEN: Did you say better or bitter?

ROTH: No, bitter. They were very bitter days. In a situation like that, it would be very difficult for anybody, and Malcolm Talbott was a gentle man. You know he wasn't the bruiser type. He wasn't the kind of guy who, you know, can lead an attack against New Brunswick. That's what they wanted. I think probably if the faculty had that, then maybe they would have looked at Malcolm a little differently. I think they looked at Malcolm as somebody who took orders. And maybe in a sense that's what he did do. And they didn't want a leader like that. Eventually, when Malcolm left, there was a whole reorganization under Bloustein. There must have been all kinds of meetings because the Newark campus no longer, under Young, was the campus that it was under Malcolm. Remember they took Malcolm out of Newark.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: They took me out of Newark.

COHEN: But why—

ROTH: I'm telling you why. I think when Bloustein got there—and I wasn't privy to this—I was not brought into any of these conversations. I was really—I'm sure this all went on in New Brunswick, and I was in Newark. And went on behind closed doors with Bloustein and some of the top administrators—and Malcolm Talbott.

COHEN: Do you have any theories—

ROTH: I think the faculty wanted him out. And they wanted him out because they really didn't know. It was their own fault in a sense, although...yes. You know they didn't realize what Malcolm had to deal with. And they didn't want to know. There were a lot of young brash faculty who didn't give a shit, you know. So they bring somebody else in here. So Malcolm took his lumps, and he persevered. And he was a good administrator. Malcolm—I told you before he was an outside man. This also goes back to the '67 riots, and I wasn't around during the '67 riots. But the two people, among the two most important—back up and put it that way. Among the two most important white leaders that kept the riots from even.... [Break in recording]

COHEN: We were talking about Malcolm Talbott.

ROTH: Okay. Here's a man like Talbott whose everyday *raison d'être*, his reason for being, was to keep the black and the white communities of Newark together. He went out of his way. He did all kinds of things to keep the corporate structure in Newark, stay in Newark. He met with leaders. He was an important element to maintaining Newark as a viable city before the riots, during the riots, after the riots. He saw the city being torn apart. He joined—there was some major committee that he was part of, not only to calm Newark but to bring it together again. He was very important in keeping Newark together, very, very important. Greenberg will tell you all these things. Marvin used to go out and do some speaking for him. But Heckel was his roommate. They were the closest of friends. They both actually were roommates. They lived in this large apartment, old apartment house, on Prospect Street, or something like that, in North Newark. So Talbott was not just a university person.

COHEN: No.

ROTH: He was a community person. He played a role in the community, and he was beloved by them. The presidents of Prudential, Mutual Benefit, Firemen's Fund, the museum, the Symphony Hall, all these organizations Malcolm was a member of it. He was on their top committees. He was a donor; he donated funds. He brought fundraisers to these organizations, he brought money into these organizations. He knew the top drawer of the suburbs, of the Jewish community, of the other kinds of communities, the Hungarian community. I remember helping him one night representing him before some religious rites, some important Hungarian prime or something came to Newark, and he was, "Oh, you're from Mr. Talbott," you know. Talbott's name was an important name in Newark. It wasn't just at Rutgers-Newark. Malcolm Talbott was above and

beyond Rutgers-Newark. He was a man of the city. He was a builder of the city. He was a harmonizer. He was a—he brought groups and people together. He was an important person, okay? As much as Mason Gross was the great educator and the great philosopher and Mr. Rutgers, Malcolm Talbott was Mr. Newark. He had entry into the mayor's office and to Corporate America, into banking, into advertisers' offices. He was a lot! I don't know if I'm describing him very well. I mean this was not a second-rate individual. And so when he, you know, one of the faculty...and there were faculty actions against him. I'm sure it was the faculty that conspired with Bloustein, if we're going to put it on that level, to remove. It may have been for others and maybe even Malcolm, because I remember discussing it with Malcolm a little bit. At the time that I left, he was leaving. And we were kind of consulting each other. And I remember that afternoon. I remember I had a little time with him, and we spoke with each other. And he wasn't happy. He was being so-called being made the vice president of the university in charge of public relations. I don't think he really wanted that.

COHEN: Do you remember—

ROTH: He did make a move when they were looking for a president to replace Gross, and I wasn't also part of this.

COHEN: Did he move?

ROTH: Well, there was some move made by Talbott to become president.

COHEN: He applied.

ROTH: He applied. He probably did more than that because if I know Mal, he was a good lobbyist. He was a lobbyist for 20 other people and their interests. He probably lobbied for himself. Probably. Marv Greenberg might want to comment on that. I don't know. I know he was very disappointed that somebody else was brought in.

COHEN: I've never understood the faculty opposition to Malcolm Talbott. I've spoken to a number of people who....

ROTH: Well, I think I'm giving you some things. He wasn't a strong individual. He didn't command...you know some people command a lot of respect, just their presence; and of course Mason Gross had this in spades. Malcolm was more of a soft person, he was more of a softie. He was a nice guy. He was a friendly guy. He was an administrator, and I guess he was a decent administrator. But he wasn't the kind of guy who probably...although probably, Malcolm, you know, the guy's dead. You shouldn't talk about somebody who's dead. I'm sure he had his battles in New Brunswick. I wasn't privy to these battles, so I don't know. He may have come back and probably sat in Marv's office one time, or maybe ten times, or maybe a hundred times, and told Marv how he tried to do this, that, and the other thing and got rebuffed. But you see only Marv on the Newark campus, besides maybe Willard Heckel, because after all he was his roommate, so probably those two people knew Malcolm Talbott best. He certainly didn't let his hair down to me. He didn't. So I can't say that. But just looking at Malcolm, for all his good qualities, there were some what people might say were poor qualities. He didn't have that kind of

stature. There were those that respected him, but on campus he just didn't command that kind of stature. And he inevitably had to talk on behalf of the administration. That always places you in a bad position.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: If the faculty wants this, that, and the other thing, if they make four or five demands on you, and you say, Hey, fellas, I can already tell you two of those four are no. Okay? The other two I'll ask about. I'll go to New Brunswick for you, but don't hold out any hopes. And he comes back, and they don't get any of them. I mean what kind of.... If he came back with all four of them and then maybe each day got an additional four for the faculty, well, they might have loved him to pieces. But he had his limitations. He was only the boss of the Newark campus, and he was still beholden.... New Brunswick set his budget. He couldn't set the budget. He could give them probably—and did—a proposed budget, and God knows what they did with it.

COHEN: In the middle.

ROTH: Remember this was long before the state had bond issues. They started getting their first bond issues, first started getting their money—I think I was still there in Newark in maybe about '72, I think they had their first.... No, it couldn't have been '72, it had to be...maybe it was '68. Maybe it was the year I was there. Maybe I'd just gotten there. But they had very little money, the university. There was a time when the state wasn't giving any of the colleges any money. I don't even know if we had a Department of Higher Education at that point. We may or may not have.

COHEN: Well, Dungan was ...

ROTH: Well, Dungan was there.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: Okay, so he was. Okay. But he was the first one, right?

COHEN: I think so.

ROTH: He was the first one. And so they really didn't have any—they didn't get sizeable money out of the state. So I guess New Brunswick had limited funds to offer. But Newark wanted their money. They saw what New Brunswick was doing, and they wanted to do things. So he always had a weak relationship with faculty.

COHEN: Going back again dealing with Talbott's role in the negotiations to vacate Conklin Hall, considering his community contacts and the importance of the community contacts, how important was his role in the negotiations to diffuse the whole situation?

ROTH: I think, probably behind the scenes.

COHEN: Have you any idea of that?

ROTH: I think behind the scenes he was very important, but I don't have too much to say on that. Because it seemed like everything suddenly one day, which was Friday, which wasn't too many days after they left the hall, you know, suddenly they were negotiating. But Talbott had really good contacts with Bob Curvin, who was very important through this period. In fact through Talbott, I understand Curvin wound up going to Princeton Graduate School, had a lot to do with it. Sure. I mean when Curvin during this period was a lecturer, I don't even know if he was an assistant professor. He was a lecturer in political science. He didn't have his Ph.D. yet I don't think. And still he was a very important person in the community and on campus because this was a black city, and Curvin was either president or vice president of one of the major black organizations in the city.

COHEN He was involved with CORE, Congress Of Racial Equality. I remember he was in that.

ROTH: He was the vice president of that. He was important during the riot period and after the riot period, to calm it, or whatever he did. So I'm sure Talbott tried to work through Bob in getting the negotiations going. He knew everybody who there was to know. Malcolm knew every black community leader, I'm sure, that there was. I'm sure he pulled out all the stops to get in touch with them. I'm sure that was going on behind the scenes. It's just that the day of the final negotiations, it seemed like the ball passed to Gross. Gross was the president of the university. Once again, you can't upstage the president.

COHEN: Of course.

ROTH: And so his battles with the faculty also meant that you couldn't upstage New Brunswick.

COHEN: Yes. You mentioned the important role that Bob Curvin played in all this. What else can you tell me about Bob Curvin, whom I'm acquainted with. I used to meet him across the reference desk.

ROTH: I had an ambivalent relationship with him. I'll be very honest, and I would tell him if he were sitting here because I can be above board with Curvin. I remember one day he walked into my office. Now wait a minute. Let's start this one: One administrative council meeting. I hadn't been on campus too long at that point. A few months, but enough to know what was going on. And I saw a very distinct division of ethnic groups taking place. Maybe I was blind; maybe it was always that way. I didn't feel it. There was a certain point where suddenly I felt everybody in the cafeteria was sticking, staying within their own ethnic groups. Blacks together, and whites together, Italians together, and the other students. I used to see them walking, associating in the library, what have you. I got one picture that came through my mind, that there are divisions occurring on this small campus which, you know, as far as I'm concerned, stunk. I mean there wasn't a collegiality. There wasn't an intergroup mingling.

COHEN: You got this feeling before the takeover.

ROTH: Yes. So I made this statement. Usually we'd go from person to person around the table, you know, what each one has to say. And that was pretty much my contribution for that afternoon. I thought it was an important contribution. I was feeling that something was developing that should be looked into by others, be it a dean, maybe a dean of students. In fact I think laid it on the dean of students. I didn't like what I was seeing developing. And I wanted either some explanation or I wanted somebody to do something about it and find out what the hell was going on. Now it may very well be that this may have been the beginnings of that black protest. But the next day—it was either the next day or that same afternoon—in comes walking Bob Curvin, who hardly ever came in to speak to me except when he wanted some publicity on something he was doing, and I would get a story out for him, I'd get his picture out, you know. He was very close with Delora Jones who was black. And I guess he looked at me as hunking, in his own way. Bob is an interesting guy. He's smart and he's an intellect. He probably knows his history. [Break in recording] ...my office. Right after the time I made that statement. And he said something along these lines, he said: Morris, you may not know it, but most of the students who come to Rutgers-Newark come out of high schools where they're all black in one school. Or all white in one school. You know they come in a sense from segregated environments. And you want them to come here and suddenly be friends with each other. Well, that ain't gonna be. It just doesn't happen that way.

So then I started to explain it to him where I come from. I lived at that time right here in this town. And this was right after the riots. And I told him I'm a Newarker and how badly I felt about it. And how I got up before a council meeting in my own, which is—we didn't have a black family in town. And I said, "Maybe we, instead of worrying so much about what's happening in Newark, we might extend our hands to black families and invite them to come to Clark." Well, I won't go into what happened to me after that in this town, an all-white, basically Christian community. But it was not easy for me with the phone calls and nastiness that took place against me. So I tried to explain to Bob what I was willing to do personally to maintain harmonious relations between the races. And I said I spotted something developing here on campus, I didn't like it, and I thought we could do better. What's so wrong about that? He didn't sympathize with me for one moment. Practically turned his back and just, "Morris, that's the way it is." He turned his back. "I wouldn't say too much more about this." And he just walked out of my office. After that, you know, I'd had a lot of admiration up to that point. After that my admiration for Bob Curvin considerably shrank. You know I'll say that. I could say that to his face. That's just the way I felt.

COHEN: How effective do you think he was as the leader of the....

ROTH: Oh, I'm sure he was extremely effective. This is a man with a lot of polish, a lot of self-worth, self-esteem. This is probably a guy who in his own right probably has courage and is forthright and will stand up and speak his mind, you know. Yes, I consider that he had a lot of high qualities. Yes, I just didn't agree with his attitude about what I was trying to do, about which he obviously didn't agree with what I was trying to do. But, you know, I can have my grievances with somebody and still admire the guy because there was a lot about him to admire.

He was a very self-contained, self-possessed, self-controlled individual, self-disciplined. There's no doubt that he's— Look, when Gibson became mayor, Bob headed up his transition team.

COHEN: Oh, did he!

ROTH: Oh, yes. Bob has been involved in a lot relating to Newark. He was heavily involved with CORE. He's now a dean for a school of social work in New York.

COHEN: Oh, I—

ROTH: Dean of the—or was dean—of... I didn't understand the position he held as dean of the business school or something like that. I didn't quite...you know he obviously was well suited for political science and any of those areas that he has ascended to and probably very competently. So he's quite an individual, Bob. Of course, you know, he also was on the *New York Times* as an editorialist, and he served on the Channel 13—not Channel 13. He was on the editorial board, a guy whom I spoke to not too long ago. He runs a public forum program that this person... So, alright. You asked me about his leadership qualities.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: Obviously tremendous leadership qualities.

COHEN: What more can you say about Gus Heningburg, his role, his *modus operandi*?

ROTH: Yes. Gus was a peacemaker. Gus is a very smart, very intellectual...not so much book smart as people smart, organization smart. He also probably is in the mold of Malcolm. He's a coalitionist. He's an organizer and a person who brings people together, organizations and people. He has probably tremendous executive abilities. People admire him. You know before I was talking to you about Malcolm not evidencing strength, personal strength. Gus Heningburg oozes with strength. He's got wonderful presence. He is a leader of people. He is one of the people I admire. He's very good because he crosses the ethnic line; in a society that's so racist as ours, he's among the few people who is comfortable in both worlds, who's admired in both worlds, who can serve as a leader in both worlds. And who can open people's minds. He's a helluva guy.

COHEN: What is his position?

ROTH: He's got his own PR, and that's probably where he belongs.

COHEN: In Newark?

ROTH: In Newark. Has his own PR. He's had it for a number of years. But he has his own organization where he does things or people call on him to do things. And in the areas that I've just done speaking about, he's heavily involved with unions.

COHEN: You know the name of his organization?

ROTH: No, but if it's important enough, I could probably find out. I don't know the name right now.

COHEN: Sounds like a man I should be interviewing quite possibly if we can get to him.

ROTH: Oh, yes. In terms of what happened that night, he was smack in the middle of things. Whereas I can take guesses of what people were doing and who was doing what, he was right in the middle of it.

COHEN: He's a very familiar figure from television. I mean a number of years ago he appeared regularly on Channel 13 in some talk.... [Break in recording] We're back again.

ROTH: I can't say too much more about him. I admire the man tremendously, as you can tell by what I have to say. And I just don't know where his place is right now.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: But if I know him, he's right in downtown Newark.

COHEN: Yes, I'm sure.

ROTH: It might be Gus Henningburg Associates, I don't know.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: I think maybe call the operator. It may be as simple as that.

COHEN: I think I'll call him.

ROTH: Just maybe call the operator or check an Essex County book.

COHEN: Introducing my topic here.

ROTH: If you do run into him, say hello for me.

COHEN: Sure.

ROTH: Some of the guys— Well, he's got to remember me. I'm not going to say anything. Just say Morris Roth said hello. I don't know what else to say about Gus. So let's wind up. If I happen to think of anything, I'll say something. Where do you want to go from here?

COHEN: Okay. Since we're on personalities, notable people, an important person I always thought in the office of the vice president at that time, and then later on under Provost Young, was Alice Shapiro. What could you say about her?

ROTH: You want me to talk about Marvin.

COHEN: Oh, Marvin!

ROTH: I can say a lot more about Marvin than I can say about Alice Shapiro.

COHEN: Okay, okay. Yes, yes, yes. Okay.

ROTH: Okay. Marv Greenberg was the guy whom I saw right after I saw Talbott when I was being considered for this job. And Marv took me to a—you remember the little restaurant on Rector Street? Maybe it's still there. Robin's Nest or something? I don't know.

COHEN: On Rector?

ROTH: Rector, right next to where they had their building.

COHEN: There was a Roost on Fulton, the next block over. I think it was on Fulton the next block over.

ROTH: Okay, it was the Roost. Okay, we went in there, and he found out what I did and things like that. So, you know, then he was telling me about some of the things that were happening. He had no idea about the protest or anything like that. So he was the one who really signed off. Malcolm Talbott said, you know, "Let Marv talk to you and see if you're the right person for the job." So, you know, ever since that point, we worked really closely together. Marv was known for a lot of talents, not the least of which were his commitment to the campus, being a graduate of the Newark campus. I've forgotten just what capacity.... I guess it was Rutgers-Newark. It may have been even before that. He was a glutton for work. I wasn't there very long before I realized that this guy, whereas most people put in one shift, you know, worked from nine 'til four-thirty, five if they were extremely ambitious. This guy would be starting the second shift at five, and he was good for ten-thirty, eleven. Day in, day out, day in, day out. Particularly when the campus was first developing. I said before that Talbott was the outside man, and Marv was the inside man. There were a lot of things that had to be done, a lot of things that had to be organized. He was involved with faculty, he was involved with administrators. He was forever holding meetings, running meetings and taking notes on meetings. And I remember when I had to put together it was either one or two releases on this protest, Marv wound up doing at least two thirds of the release because he had the background of the place. I know what was happening that day, but I had no—I had absolutely no background. He had to put together a lot of the stuff that I was writing about. He really did. It would never get out of the typewriter if they had to rely on me. I didn't know. I just didn't know. He knew. Marv knew. Marv knew this, Marv knew that, and Marv knew everything. He was—I forget what his title was...assistant, something like that. Assistant to the vice president. But for all practical purposes he was the assistant vice president. He wasn't the assistant to, he was the assistant vice president. [End of Tape #2]

COHEN: We were discussing Marvin Greenberg and his role.

ROTH: Now of course Marv was very much involved during the period of the takeover of the buildings. And I had to report often to him about things. You know I would attend meetings, student meetings, during the day, you know, for updating activities, what the students were going to be doing next and what all was happening. So I kept him pretty much apprised. I remember one day, one morning, when I came to work at about eight-thirty, what have you, there was smoke in one of the buildings. We thought what the hell was going on. It was in Conklin actually. I think it was Conklin?

COHEN: During the takeover?

ROTH: No, no. I guess it couldn't have been Conklin. Maybe it was Boyden. I don't know. It was in one of the buildings. Now maybe it was during the takeover. Maybe it was after the takeover.

COHEN: Oh, okay.

ROTH: I remember we went down there. There was some kind of smoke that blew out of there; opened up the door. And I think some reporter came back, and Marv was such a houseman, let's put it that way. The reporter asked him, did some of the black students do this? you know. And Marv literally lied through his teeth. He made up some cockeyed excuse, he said something about—I forget just what it was. But he totally, as far as I was concerned, misrepresented what actually happened. I think some students had in fact thrown something in there, and I think he denied that anything had taken place or something. Anyway, Marv was very much a Rutgers person. And I really can't say too much more about him. Oh, there was one thing that should be said: During the time of the takeover, we were being pressured by TV to make a statement. And we hadn't been ready yet with...there hadn't been any negotiations yet. I guess it was like between things. But the media was expecting some statement. Maybe something that I had told them, that something was going to be ready at three o'clock or four o'clock or something like that. But anyway, I remember CBS coming out of New York for this. And they were looking for a statement, and they weren't ready for somebody to say, Well, it's not going to happen until tomorrow.

And Marv really showed, I thought, tremendous ability when he actually took over. He decided to run a press conference and make some very strong statements as to how things were up until that particular point. If he hadn't done it, I probably would have had to do it. And I think I had less information about what was happening at that point than he did. But I had tremendous admiration for him because there was a lot of media out. There were like half a dozen, several, network people. They'd come there for a story, and they didn't want to leave without one. And I thought it took a lot of moxie, a lot of courage, a lot of personal ability to step into that situation. Malcolm wasn't around. I think Malcolm was what we were looking for. He wasn't around. There was nobody else around. And Marv stepped in and dealt with it and did a good job...as he usually did.

So Marv—oh, yes, Marv, that I can say something else about. Marv actually created the job that he wound up with; not in the sense that he created the vice presidency, senior vice presidency, for budgeting and what else? Budgeting and admissions. But when Mason Gross got

ill and there was an acting president for Rutgers—I forget his name; he was a philosopher also. I remember I did a couple of stories on him. He wound up committing suicide actually in Princeton the guy I'm thinking of.

COHEN: Who?

ROTH: He was the acting president.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: After Mason died and before Bloustein came. He was the acting president.

COHEN: Committed suicide?

ROTH: Committed suicide. I think that was done on a hush. I don't think that came out in print that way. But I was on that story, and I know he committed suicide. And then later on it came out but I don't think it came out immediately. If I mentioned the guy's name, you would know. He was very close to Mason Gross. He was his provost, in fact. You know Mason Gross was provost before he became president. And this guy succeeded him as provost when Mason became president.

COHEN: Mm-hmm.

ROTH: And I can't remember the guy's name. But anyway, he brought Marv down to Newark. Marv, the university.... Dungan, I guess, Dungan?

COHEN: Dungan.

ROTH: Wanted more specifics about the financial operation of the campuses, particularly the Newark campus, I guess. So Marv and I actually went down to Dungan's office. I remember the two of us went down. And it was around that time that what he was doing at Newark he began doing in New Brunswick for the entire university. It was the beginning of the first budgeting that the university had ever done. When Mason Gross was president, he didn't have a monkey's uncle's idea of what it means to run a business. A university, aside from being an academic institution, is also a business. It's an important business. We have over a \$300 million dollar budget. It's a very important business. Close to \$400 million. I don't know. Mason Gross had no idea about how that should be operated. Marv began putting together a budget operation. When Bloustein came, he saw Marv doing what Marv was doing, and Bloustein, as you're well aware, was...he was an executive par excellence. He may never have run a business corporation, but he knew certain things had to be in place if that company was going to run well. So he reorganized, if you recall, in '72 a total reorganization of the university, established all kinds of vice presidencies; that was all created under Bloustein. When Gross was there, it was a very simple organization.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: Bloustein, Bloustein was there, and he...I mean there was a table of organization.

COHEN: O,rganization yea.

ROTH: You know there was admissions, there was financial, there was the treasurer's office, there was employee relations, personnel, there was budgeting. None of that existed under Gross. And budgeting...I mean Marv was so good at putting things together, he created, in a sense, his own department. I imagine it's going to be difficult for someone to succeed Marvin now. But he created that department. And this was what he was doing in Newark.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: He was creating a budgeting situation. And I'm sure the departments were budgeted according to what he was—the things he was putting together. Marv could deal with everybody and anybody. That's another thing to be said about Greenberg. He dealt with—he often represented Talbott to the business community at meetings. He often delivered speeches for Malcolm. Here's the same guy who would deliver a speech to maybe the board of Prudential, and maybe in the afternoon have to get together with the editor of the *Observer* because maybe the *Observer* didn't have some information that he needed or something like that. He functioned at all levels. He got involved in everything, in every nook and corner of the development of the Newark campus and as it was developing. He was the one whom you called on if you wanted something to get done. He was a very important person as an assistant to the president. Or some such low non-recognizable title.

COHEN: Now you mentioned before changes that occurred under Bloustein, and you just recently mentioned the organization chart that evolved. What other changes were there as far as relations with, that you saw, with faculty and students between the administration?

ROTH: Which administration?

COHEN: Under Bloustein. What changes ...were there?

ROTH: Bloustein was a very tough executive. He was tough on the people who worked for him, and he was tough on faculty and tough on deans. He made demands. He instituted this whole procedure of grading personnel, grading them in the sense that every year when you had to...the person in charge of the department had to describe a person's working, whether it was good, bad, or indifferent. Had to give a descriptive analysis of every person who worked under him. And that went right up to the top. My office, our office manager, did it for us. She in turn was analyzed by her boss on a form sheet of paper; all that was created by Bloustein. So Bloustein was tough on the entire university: on his deans, on his faculty, on his faculty through his deans. And Malcolm was liked—I mean Ed, certainly in the beginning years, was disliked probably by most of the faculty in New Brunswick...to the extent that each of the faculties, Rutgers College, Douglass College, Cook College—I don't know whether NCAS; I can't say how many—but at least two school faculties.... This is before the reorganization in which they established the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. This is when each school was an entity onto itself.

This goes back to '76, '77, when the university was reorganized under Bloustein's jurisdiction. There were votes of no confidence against Bloustein by whole faculties. I was at the Rutgers College faculty meeting when they did that, and I was with Bloustein, as I recall, when we both left the room together. And his attitude was, as we were walking, as he was walking to his office and I joined him on the College Avenue campus, I was walking toward my office, and we both walked together for a while. I said something—I used to call him Ed. I said, “Ed, gee, I didn't expect them to do that.” He said, “Morris, it doesn't mean anything.” He was right. It didn't mean a thing. The no-confidence vote was principally because he was battling with the faculty over salary, and they didn't have an agreement signed. But they had other complaints about Bloustein, I thought a number of legitimate complaints. He wasn't—he didn't meet with them that regularly to get involved with their problems. He was kind of an outsider. They had a number of beefs about him. And I thought that if it weren't for Bloustein, the university wouldn't have half the reputation that it has today. I think Bloustein—it rests pretty much on his shoulders. He was the one that handed to Kean...he handed to Kean the plan for a tripartite, high-tech development program at Rutgers, made up of the state, private industry, and the academic institution. Bloustein delivered this blueprint to Kean. Kean ran with the ball for budgeting purposes. And then the university got its money. It was a creature of Bloustein. And Bloustein got this....

I was involved with the first major project, high-tech project, at the university; namely, Ceramics, I covered Ceramics. I was the one that wrote the stories when they broke ground for the Center for Ceramics Research. I did the stories when they dedicated the building. I did most of the stories telling the public of this new concept, a partnership of academia, state government, and private industry. It first started with Ceramics. It started with Mal McLaren; he's the one probably that had put it into Bloustein's head.

COHEN: Who was this now?

ROTH: Malcolm McLaren. He's no longer...he used to be the director for the Center for Ceramics Research. He's the chairman of the Department of Ceramics at Busch campus. But he's the one who made the name for ceramics for Rutgers throughout the world, and he's a Rutgers graduate himself. College of Engineering graduate. And he's the one who originally ran with this ball, that's concept. And now it's involved with about eight different high-tech centers ... We have the Center for Advanced Food Technology. We have the fiber optics operation. We have something now called the Lara [sp] Lab. We have something called.... But the principal high-tech centers were created by Bloustein with the assistance of Kean. And I think that Mal McLaren was instrumental in helping to formulate the plan for this.

COHEN: You mentioned before the faculty votes of no confidence. What role did the AAUP play in the relationship between Bloustein's administration and the faculty?

ROTH: They played an acrimonious role. But I think there were two sides to the bitterness. And you're not going to see it with Lawrence. You're not going to see it with Lawrence.

COHEN: Well, why did we see it with the previous administration?

ROTH: Because Bloustein, for whatever reasons, Bloustein was a very independent—he like ran the university like an entrepreneur. They were going to do things his way. The faculty—remember he removed Martin—or Martin was removed, the former personnel manager. He brought in Susan Kohl.

COHEN: Oh, Martin, John Martin, who was personnel VP.

ROTH: He was brought in by Bloustein and he was given some publicity spread. I mean he was the first black in one of the...first top in New Jersey, top administrative positions at the university. He held the top black position.

COHEN: So he was Kohl's predecessor.

ROTH: He was Kohl's predecessor, sure.

COHEN: And where did he go?

ROTH: I don't know how he left, I don't know under what circumstances.

COHEN: You don't know why he....

ROTH: I don't know. There must have been...the word is that Bloustein and he, for whatever combination of reasons, didn't get along. Also the fact that Bloustein didn't have somebody who would take his orders, I guess. I don't know. I was not privy to any of that. I just heard that they didn't get along. And in the beginning supposedly they had a great relationship. But then supposedly that fell apart—for whatever reason, I don't know. Bloustein I've always been told was a tough administrator. And he just didn't cotton to anybody who didn't follow orders, I guess. As far as the AAUP is concerned, Bloustein, I'm sure, had his own personal views on faculty salaries, and wasn't prepared to yield and maybe compromise as much as perhaps someone else might. He played hardball with the unions. And although I was a PR person at the time, I didn't have that close—first of all, I didn't cover Susan Kohl's office. So I wasn't the one who dealt with reporters on the latest negotiations and contracts. There were others in the office who were doing that, one in particular who's now in charge of the office. And I do know that Bloustein was a tough bargainer. And expected Kohl to be, and she was. And faculty I guess are not all that—are not all that academic. Faculty are concerned with wages and salaries, of course. And they know who provides it and who doesn't. And they know who is in control of money and who isn't. So the whole tenure, to my knowledge, I don't think there was any year that went by, that there wasn't difficult moments between—and that's being mild; that's saying it bluntly—that there weren't difficult moments between Susan Kohl and the unions and Susan Kohl/Bloustein. I can't imagine there was anything that Susan Kohl was doing that didn't come as orders, that didn't come as—Susan Kohl was a very smart individual unto herself. And she had Bloustein to dictate to her. Kohl pretty much knew, I guess, what Bloustein wanted, and she was very close to you know, she'd give him a buzz, the next floor up in the Old Queens building and just got the other. But I think the basic problem with Bloustein was that Bloustein wasn't prepared to give them as much as they wanted. I think it could be said as simply as that.

COHEN: The complaint was often made, and you mentioned it sometime ago, the rallies in Newark for more resources for Newark, which was very interesting. What was your perception, when you were in Newark and then when you were in New Brunswick about this claim of unfair allocation of resources?

ROTH: I don't think there's any doubt that New Brunswick probably and still does takes the lion's share. Of course just in size alone, they probably deserve the lion's share.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: But to go to the point of parity and fairness, to go to the point of per capita, to go to the point of per department, to go to the point of, you know, other ways of analyzing that—and although I wasn't privy to the budgets—I had this sense: When Talbott went and Young came in, Young began to run a totally different ship. First of all, Young came in from Camden, and he had already introduced some separate measures of administration. For example, whereas Holstein selected me to be the PR director for Newark and all that Talbott had to do was say yes or no, Young selected his own PR person. In other words, Young ran more of a sovereign state.

COHEN: More of a decentralized—

ROTH: More of a sovereign— What's that?

COHEN: More decentralization?

ROTH: More of a decentralized operation. But then again, by the time Bloustein came aboard and by the time Bloustein began hearing about the prior administration, namely Malcolm Talbott, pretty much like Lawrence began to hear about the prior administration of Bloustein and began changing Bloustein's administration around, Bloustein did the same thing with Gross. So probably he was prepared to accept when he called maybe Young in to be provost, I wasn't sitting in on that either, Young, just from the things that I was learning and hearing, was that Young set up his own shop and Bloustein had to accept that. I also told you that Bloustein was a very strong executive type. This was just at the beginning of his new administration. So I don't know how he would act later on. But apparently in the beginning he was prepared to give Young...if he wanted Young, he was going to have to give Young what he wanted. And Young wanted a decentralized operation. Now I don't know still what that meant in terms of the budget. The budget's still the prime element here. You can only do as much as you've got moneys for. So I don't know how decentralized the budget was. I don't know. I just don't know. I can't talk on that. I just don't know.

COHEN: When you were in Newark in 1968, you served.... Well, Malcolm Talbott was the acting dean, followed by....

ROTH: Well, Talbott wasn't—he wasn't acting dean. When I got there, Malcolm was in charge of the Newark campus. He was the vice president.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: They had a funny title. He was the vice president of the Newark campus. So somebody would say, Who's the president of the Newark campus?

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: There are no presidents. There's only vice presidents. And the headman is Malcolm Talbott.

COHEN: And then after he.... Well, I believe that he...I think he had a dual title. I think he was vice—I know he was vice president as you said. But I think he was also the acting dean after William Gilliland left the deanship.

ROTH: Of the Newark College of Arts and Sciences?

COHEN: Yes. Anyway—

ROTH: That might be.

COHEN: Yes. But then the first dean then that you worked under while you were in Newark then was Henry Blumenthal.

ROTH: Exactly.

COHEN: What do you recall about Henry Blumenthal, his deanship, his manner, his personality, his contribution, his administration?

ROTH: I don't know of anybody who ever met Henry who didn't love the guy. He was just that kind of guy. Not that you could pull fast ones on him. He expected respect, and he got it. But he was just basically a warm person who loved people. People were his thing. He loved people. He was a historian supposedly of some note in his own specializations. I thought he was a good dean. I guess Henry was a dean of the old school. Norm Samuels was probably more of a dean or provost—or became a provost, first he was dean. First he was dean of Arts and Sciences, right, before he became provost. But he was also assistant dean of Arts and Sciences because I remember this guy they brought in from Columbia who succeeded Blumenthal, who had no use for some young guy. But anyway, Blumenthal was easy to talk to. He was always accessible. He always was prepared to help. He was a colleague of people. He wasn't a great disciplinarian. People loved him and respected him, his faculty, his cohorts. They couldn't say enough nice things about him. [Break in recording]

COHEN: Okay, we were talking about the deans of the College of Arts and Sciences.

ROTH: I didn't know too much about Gil except that—

COHEN: As acting dean.

ROTH: He was very much involved in chemistry and, you know, was supposedly quite noted in his field. I had one bad episode with Gil Panson. I don't know whether you want to make that part of the tape.

COHEN: Mm-hmm.

ROTH: Well, it was a negative thing and kind of soured my feelings about the guy. He was a—I guess the little I know about Gil, he was a pretty tough individual, and he certainly showed his toughness when he attempted to—when he assailed, you know, simply assailed Rutgers in New Brunswick for not providing the funding that he thought that the Newark campus deserved. So he was a standup guy in that respect, you know, sort of stood up for his views. I didn't have all that much relationship with him. When I knew him, he was like chairman, I think, of the Chemistry Department.

COHEN: He chaired, and then he was acting dean for the year. And then later on he became the first dean of the graduate school. And that was probably a little after you left. About a year or so after you left.

ROTH: I didn't have that much of a relationship with Gil. I had some relationship with him when he came down to the administration office. I'm sure Marv knew Gil a helluva lot better than I ever did. So I don't know that I want to say much more about Gil.

COHEN: Richard Robey then came in.

ROTH: Okay. He's the guy—we had a very difficult time there with him. I found him pretty much of a know-it-all. I found him not very supportive. He was just the opposite—everything that Blumenthal was, Robey wasn't. He had trouble with his own faculty, as I recall. And I remember it was Norm that kind of saved the day for him often, he who had taken over differences between the faculty and Robey. Robey was not, to my knowledge, a likeable individual. And, you know, it's as simple as that.

COHEN: Let's see.

ROTH: I don't think there are too many friends that kept him happy, Robey. Robey wasn't too happy with me, and I wasn't too happy with him.

COHEN: Before I maybe run this side of the tape and wind it up, you took some notes before. Is there anything which you were thinking about you wanted to address, that I haven't brought up that you would like to talk about? Since obviously you have a good memory for an awful lot.
[Laughs]

ROTH: We never mentioned this guy Lehrman, Dan Lehrman.

COHEN: Okay. Oh, yes. An important person....

ROTH: I did his obit when he died.

COHEN: The Institute of Animal Behavior.

ROTH: He founded it. He died in New Mexico.

COHEN: Yes, let's....

ROTH: And I didn't get to know him all that well. But I remember during the student uprising, and particularly when the white students began to attack the black students because there reached a point.... They weren't attacking them physically, but I have told you already that they were very disturbed that these black students had taken over one of their buildings, you know? So they used to hold their own rallies and condemn the black students. And I remember one rally, Lehrman addressed them, as I recall. Yes, he addressed them. I don't think it was a mixed group that he addressed. I'm pretty sure he addressed essentially an all-white student body. And he was making a point as a psychologist because that's what he was. He was a biopsychologist or something like that. He had like a double discipline. And he said—he quoted somebody or he was just making a comment, but he said, "Do you ever walk down a dark street at night in Newark, and somebody's behind you. Just walking, the person's just walking. And you see that he's black, and you become deathly frightened." Said a lot of people nodded had a similar experience. He says, "That's because you're a racist." He broke the place up.

COHEN: What do you mean broke it up?

ROTH: Well, can you imagine telling—this is in the middle of an important talk that he's giving them, and he had a gift of language. And he was a big heavy-set guy. He's tall. He dominated a stage, his presence. He was a tough guy. Malcolm Talbott wasn't a tough guy. He had a tough presence. He didn't take any bullshit from anybody. He was not—he didn't pussyfoot [around] anybody. He told it like it was. And he was telling this room the reason why you're taking this position—I guess he was also telling them that if there are a group of whites who did something similar, you probably wouldn't be all that aggrieved. But you're probably nothing but a bunch of racists. [Laughs] That's why you take this strong feeling, this feeling of dissension that you're doing all this. He called them all a bunch of racists. Or he says, "If you've done it, that's racism. Or something like that. But he pretty much told them that they did what they did because they are racist.

COHEN: This was at an outside rally.

ROTH: No, this was on the second floor of the campus center. I always remembered him for that. Because he really laid it on the line to them as to why they had no sympathy at all for what these black students were trying to do.

COHEN: And when you say he broke up the meeting, what happened?

ROTH: They just..you "Oh, what's he saying?!" You know, 'what's he saying,' somebody'd laugh...They didn't expect anything like that. The place became uproarious for a while. Yes, you know, wow! People just commenting all over the place. And I remember that. Well, Lehrman

received a lot of grants for his—probably you know. And he was such a special guy that the grants that he received didn't go to Rutgers. They went to him. He could have taken any one of his grants and just marched out of the university. He could have taken them anywhere else because the grants were for him: National Institutes of Health and what have you. And he was doing some very basic research with doves, with birds, with the subject of psychology, human psychology, how animals, you know, what relationships if any they've found between people and birds. So he was a very respected individual. But something long after his death that we commented about. Josée Steinbock and me commented about: Smith Hall in the seventies became the target of sickness. There were some employees, some staff people, who were getting sick down there. And the state health department was on top of that. They were investigating. Various departments at Rutgers were investigating. And it turns out that a lot of it came from Lehrman's—from the feces of Lehrman's animals, be they monkeys, be whatever they were. And people were getting sick of it. And I remember Josée and I saying only a Dan Lehrman could have put together a series of labs like he did and probably get away with as little inspection. Because he would browbeat you, you know. I can just imagine a government inspector coming down and wanting to see this, that, and the other thing. I don't think it would have happened. I think Lehrman at the time that he was functioning at Rutgers was considered such an important person—this guy was forever getting honors. They were honoring him all over the world. France was forever throwing honors at him. He had pretty much his own way when he put together that lab. He probably had a lot to say with how that building was put together. As I understand it, there wasn't any proper drainage for waste products by his animals, you know. If that's a fact, that's outlandish. Anyway, just so you know, people were just intimidated by him. And because of his reputation, provosts—well, we called them provosts, but during his time there wasn't any provost, although there may have been; I forget exactly when he died. I was in Newark when they were developing. It could have been in '71, '72; but it was in that period. And his boss, I guess, was Blumenthal.

COHEN: Well, he was on the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

ROTH: Well, the dean....

COHEN: The dean at that time, '71, well, Blumenthal.

ROTH: It might have been Robey.

COHEN: Well, Blumenthal.... Panson was '71-'72. So before that was Blumenthal. He probably served under two deans there.

ROTH: I'm sure he'd have pretty much his own way. Nobody really knew what he was doing anyway. There weren't a helluva lot of people who understood what his work was all about. I knew he had birds, and they knew he was a psychologist, and I knew he was doing experiments that related humans to animals. But I don't know that they knew what he did about putting together a lab, how that's assembled or what kinds of safeguards you have to take. The assumption was that he just had his own way. But Lehrman was...what made Lehrman such an important person on the Newark campus was that in every respect, he participated. He wasn't just a member of the faculty. He participated in various committees. He was involved with the

whole life of the campus. He was interested in music. He was interested in art. He was interested in other disciplines. He was interested in the welfare of the Newark campus. I guess maybe in some respects he may have been—well, if you want to reach out and call him a renaissance man. But anyway, he was a man with a variety of interests.

COHEN: Do you have any recollection of his role in the discussions about admissions standards for minority students?

ROTH: Yes. I think he very strongly.... Politically he was a liberal, a very strong liberal. And I think I heard him speak out in defense of what Mason Gross was doing. So I would think that he was very much in support of the Black Organization of Students and very much in support of what they were trying to do and in support of Mason Gross and what he finally wound up doing. So as I recall, Lehrman lived in Newark. He lived in the apartments, I think. He was not one to leave a city. He was some guy!

COHEN: Yes, I remember him. But you remember a lot more about him than I did. Is there anything else in your notes that you—

ROTH: Well....

COHEN: —would like to talk about? Because its getting late...

ROTH: We didn't mention anything about the takeover. When Nixon became president and we made the incursion into Cambodia....

COHEN: What can you say about that?

ROTH: When that happened, there were so many damn rallies, a whole series of rallies, mostly run by whites, mostly run by the radicals that moved across the country. They were people like Abbie Hoffman. There was Mark Rudd. They all came to the Newark campus. And they had guerilla theater with people whom I still remember by their face—I can't think of their names—who attacked our efforts in the war, who attacked the Vietnam War, who attacked our being there. And this was a very hot time on the Newark campus. A lot of rallies, a lot of attacks on the government. And I guess—I don't know how far it carried, but.... Also in a sense they were orderly. Nobody was—they weren't taking over buildings like this. Mark Rudd took over Columbia, but they weren't.... Mark came here. He was invited by a radical, as I recall, a radical group on campus, maybe a chapter of the Students for Democratic Action [SDS—Students for a Democratic Society]; I don't know. I don't know whether we even had a chapter of that. We may have. And of course I mentioned to you when Mark Rudd was here and he was sounding off about the government, Professor Weisman asked him a question relating to the politics of the day. And it may have had something to do with Russia and Stalin or something like that. But he made him look poor because he couldn't really be able to deal with the question. But Rudd drew a fairly interested, very sizeable audience, and he didn't stay very long. He gave his talk. He asked for some questions. He was there I think with a gal, and they both sort of ran out of there. And I don't know if at that point the police were looking for him. They may have.

COHEN: Do you remember any of the—at one time there was a clash between the police and the students after a rally in Military Park. Do you have any recollections of that?

ROTH: Well, I remember when the actress—the gal who went to Hanoi.

COHEN: Oh, Jane Fonda.

ROTH: When Fonda came. You know she never came to the campus, but she came to Military Park.

COHEN: She was on campus. That much I'll vouch for.

ROTH: Okay.

COHEN: I saw her there.

ROTH: Okay, I didn't see her. Maybe that was right after her talk. But I was there when she made an appearance.... I was there when she made a talk in Military Park. And at that time there was a clash between students and police, but I'm not positive. I don't have much of a recollection about that.

COHEN: Nothing reported on.

ROTH: No, I think I was there, but I just don't recall—I remember listening to Jane Fonda.

COHEN: Anything else that you wanted to bring up?

ROTH: Oh, it was interesting that the.... I knew right away that I was going—that my job was going to be interesting. Because the first day I got a call from George Holstein, my boss from New Brunswick, and he said, "Morris, late this afternoon the Puerto Rican students are going to be picketing. And I want you to cover it to make sure that the press gets filled in properly." And maybe we'll wind up with that particular thing because that took place, that started about four-thirty, about a half hour into the rush hour. And this was on Washington Street which was one way at the time. And the group of Puerto Rican students and some faculty decided that they were going to take over a couple of lanes and do a march in a circle of the cars right in front of the administration building, which was the building where they had the gym.

COHEN: The older old administration building.

ROTH: Right next to—

COHEN: 15 Washington Street.

ROTH: Fifteen was it?

COHEN: Right across the street from Washington Place.

ROTH: Right next to the museum.

COHEN: Yes, right, 15 Washington Street.

ROTH: Okay. And it was right at the height of the rush hour.

COHEN: Do you remember the year?

ROTH: Yes, sure. It was when I joined. It was '68.

COHEN: Oh, '68, ok.

ROTH: It was '68. That was my first day. And of course I was monitoring that. I was saying, How are they going to do this? All the traffic just stopped when they got close to the picketers, and they just kind of doubled into another lane, and just went around them. I thought somebody was going to get hurt or something, because this was the rush hour traffic out of Newark. And you know at around four o'clock they start.... All the traffic that came in at eight-thirty or eight o'clock coming south into Newark was heading—

COHEN: North out of Newark.

ROTH: Was heading north out of Newark.

COHEN: Out of Washington Street.

ROTH: Out of Washington Street. And Washington Street was one way, and the picketing went on. And there was no incident. There was, I think, *a* reporter from the *Star-Ledger*. And there wasn't much of that. It went on for about an hour and a half, and that was that.

COHEN: During the course of the discussion, your narration, you refer regularly to the *Star-Ledger*. Correct my memory about the demise of the *Newark Evening News*. Wasn't that—

ROTH: Okay.

COHEN: —around at that time?

ROTH: Okay, you're right. You're absolutely right. And I'm sorry to have forgotten it—me of all people; I was a reporter for the *Newark News*. I should remember the *Newark News* very well. But anyway, the *Newark News* went out of business in about '72.

COHEN: Around about...so it was in that period.

ROTH: 'Seventy-two, '73. But I think it was more like '72.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: And it was true. In fact, one of the more interesting things happened while the *Newark News* was around. And that was one year the students at NCAS each year they had selected a teacher of the year. And they still do that.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: So this one year they selected whoever it was. I can't remember her name. A young, attractive teacher, professor—assistant professor. She was an English professor. That was—the announcement was made just at the time that her faculty announced that she was not going to get tenure. So the moment that she was made the teacher of the year, she was being fired. That was simultaneous. And I remember the guy who was covering for the *Newark News*, who was a good friend of mine at the time, he came into my office, and then Bob Braun also came into my office. At least this guy was somewhat different, decent, because I was able to talk to him at least and point out a couple of things that didn't make the university look all that bad. But with Bob Braun, he didn't even want to talk to me. He went right to Delora Jones, you know, pipeline to Delora, a pipeline that was developed in the student protests. And he just walked into my office, and I was sitting there and standing there. And I was furious because I knew why he came to the office, and he should have gotten the story information from me. He deliberately snubbed me and went to her. And I was furious. I remember I wondered how it could be, the next day, the late afternoon. But anyway, that was the story that developed. And the *Newark News*—I think the headline read: "TEACHER OF THE YEAR FIRED."

COHEN: Mm-hmm. [Laughs]

ROTH: Big headlines. And she was fired.

COHEN: She was fired. She never came back.

ROTH: Well, she was fired in the sense that she was not granted tenure.

COHEN: Tenure, yes. And that was the point.

ROTH: And that was the time that...up until that point I really didn't appreciate what it meant not to get tenure.

COHEN: Not to get tenure.

ROTH: I just thought it was... I said, Well, at least she's hanging on, you know. I didn't realize she was gone. You're gone after that. And okay that was one thing. There was something else, another kind of situation. But that was worth knowing.

COHEN: Do you have anything else that stands out that you'd like to get on?

ROTH: I'll probably think of a dozen things when you leave.

COHEN: Maybe we can make that another session.

ROTH: No, no, no, no. Look, we said a lot of things here, I think.

COHEN: Yes.

ROTH: Oh, yes! Well, I don't know if we want to get that in. Nah, let's forget about that. That was more of a personal thing, I would say. Oh, it was nice to know that one of the people whom I hired, Mike Norman—

COHEN: Mike Norman.

ROTH: Became a top-flight feature writer for the *New York Times*.

COHEN: Oh! Mike?

ROTH: Mike Norman. He was working for the *Observer* at the time.

COHEN: Oh!

ROTH: And I hired him from the *Observer* because I had originally hired Erma Brown who still works there. I put her on the payroll—I hired her. And then she was very palsy-walsy with Mike Norman, and together I think they put out a special feature on Vietnam. He's just written a book on Vietnam.

COHEN: Oh.

ROTH: I guess he's still—he's not called an author, and I think he still works for the *Times*, but I'm not certain. But he was working for the *Times* for about four or five years. And he turned into such a terrific writer. I never knew that he had anything like that in him while he was working for me. So that's an interesting note, Mike Norman. Very fine writer. I mentioned Huey Blake already?

COHEN: Oh, yes! What was the—that's right...

ROTH: That was a—Marv Greenberg was involved with bringing concerts and recitals to the campus center. And this one afternoon he brought Huey Blake in. And I happened to be in the center at the time. I was asked by somebody—you're a public relations man. Introduce Huey Blake to the audience. So I introduced him. You know I couldn't say very much about him, I didn't know very much about him. I just gave him a big applause as he was walking on, and that was that. They had an interesting dedication of the Robeson Center. They brought in Robeson Center, and they brought in Bloustein. They also brought in Baraka, Amiri Baraka.

COHEN: Oh! Mm-hmm.

ROTH: I found that very interesting because Paul Robeson made his mark in New Brunswick. And outside a cultural center for students, they really had nothing to honor the man. They've now just broken ground for a new building called the Paul Robeson Cultural Center, and that'll be the first real thing.

COHEN: Oh, is that right! In New Brunswick.

ROTH: Yes, in New Brunswick. Yes.

COHEN: That's the first I've heard of that.

ROTH: Yes. Now I always found it ironic that the first celebration of Paul Robeson was in Newark by naming the campus center the Paul Robeson Center.

COHEN: Was that before the Robeson Student Center on College Avenue in New Brunswick? There's a Robeson Student Center on College Avenue.

ROTH: Was that before?

COHEN: I'm asking. I don't know.

ROTH: I really don't know. But to me the irony was not that they were naming a building for Paul Robeson, but that they went to Newark. Paul Robeson was Phi Beta Kappa, All-American. I don't know what other kinds of honors he achieved as a Rutgers College student. The university, the first honor that I'm aware of, for Paul Robeson was in Newark. The Paul Robeson Cultural Center I don't think was an honor by the university. I think it was just the students who bought a piece of property for their student activities and called it the Paul Robeson.... They just gave it their own name. I don't believe—I hope I'm not off base there. But anyway, I found it very interesting that the university's first honor of Paul Robeson was in renaming the campus building in Newark. And I felt they should have been a little more gutsy than that. Okay. That's it.

COHEN: Thank you very much, Morris. Thank you very, very much. [End of Tape #3]

[End of Interview]

Edited by Gideon Thompson