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

An Interview with

JOHN GILMOUR

Conducted by

Gilbert Cohen

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INTERVIEW: John Gilmour

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GILBERT COHEN: Okay. This is Saturday, January 25, 1992. And this is Gil Cohen. [Break in recording] Okay. We are back. I’m meeting with Professor Emeritus John Gilmour at his home in Westfield, New Jersey. Professor Gilmour started at Rutgers in 1948. And I was asking before if you could give a sketch of your academic career and before and during and since coming to Rutgers University.

JOHN GILMOUR: Well, I was originally in public accounting and attended…. Well, I’ve got to backtrack. I came from a family rich only in children. So when I graduated from high school in 1934, I said to the Old Man, “I’d like to go to college.” So he said, “Well, John, you can go to any college you can afford.” So I had to try and get a job. It was in the middle of the Depression, and I finally got a job on Wall Street as a messenger, which was the only job that I could handle since I had no specialized training. At least I could read the names and addresses on envelopes and see that they got to the right brokerage house and so on. And one day an old Scotchman at J.P. Morgan where I took some bonds to transfer—they were the American representatives of the German government—he wanted to know why I was wasting my time on Wall Street. He says, “There’s no future here, since The Crash, it will be a long time before there is…and you’ve got to get out of here.” He recognized the spelling of my name as being a Scottish spelling. And so he started talking.

So to make a long story short, I went to school at night at NYU; and at the beginning of World War II, I was just about finishing up. So that June I got drafted. I had previously volunteered for all the various services ever since Pearl Harbor and got turned down because of my eyesight at every one of them. But the draft caught up with me in the spring of ‘42, and they allowed me to finish school. Then I got married to a girl and went off to the Army. All during—you get a lot of time to think in the Army. All the time I was going through school, when guys were asking questions and I’d explain them; by the end of most courses, I had six or seven guys waiting for me out in the hall. And again and again they would say, you know, if the prof had explained it that way, I would have understood it. You should be a teacher. And I heard that all through school: You should be a teacher. So I got thinking about it in the Army. And when I was home on leave and visited my old office, I discovered that two of the partners’ sons had finished and were going to move into the jobs I thought I was going to get. So I said, well, jeez maybe there’s something to this.

So I went to Teachers’ College Columbia to get a master’s in education on the GI Bill after the war, and that’s the only time I ever went to school in the daytime. And got a job teaching in one of the emergency colleges up in New York State that were established to take care of the flood of GI’s after World War II. And I started there in February of ’49. No, no, ’47. And it was an excellent learning experience because these students, who were all ex-GI’s, and they’d lost two, three, four years of their lives, and they were in a hurry. They were trying to
study business and accounting and get somewhere in the world. And they were rough. And one
thing the dean there warned me before I even started teaching, he says, “If they ask you a
question and you don’t know the answer, tell them you don’t know. Don’t give them a bullshit
answer; because if they find out that you were wrong,” he said, “boy, they’ll just run you out
right of the classroom.” And that was damned good advice. But they were a wonderful student
body, and we enjoyed it very much. But it was a temporary college, it was a temporary college,
yes—school—until after the flood of GI’s was past.

So I reactivated my file at Teachers’ College placement office, and in the spring of ’48, I
got a call from a William J. von Linden from Rutgers in Newark, New Jersey. And I’d been born
and raised on Staten Island. I didn’t even know where Newark was. And he wanted me to come
down for an interview. And Betty and I came down. We had lunch. And he was interested in me
because reading my resume, he discovered that I had had six years of experience in public
accounting before going into teaching. And he wanted somebody who had practical experience.
So we talked, and he was telling me something about the school, and apparently the school had
been called the University of Newark. And the University of Newark was a satellite school
largely staffed by people from NYU, just as Hofstra out on Long Island was. They set up a
satellite program out there. So with all those faculty members from NYU who lived in New
Jersey, they were quite happy to teach in Newark because it cut down on their commuting. So
Von Linden was one, and Louis Stockweather, who retired from the Hanover Bank. Paul
Edwards. Many of the principal teachers there were currently or ex-NYU faculty members
teaching at the University of Newark. Then Rutgers took it over in 1945. So we liked what we
heard about the school, and it was close to my home in Staten Island and all my family and so
forth. And so we came down for a second interview with Dean Esterly. And we sat down and
chatted back and forth, and he was quite an interesting man. And finally he offered me a job at
$3600 a year.

COHEN: Teaching accounting?

GILMOUR: Teaching accounting.

COHEN: Yes, yes.

GILMOUR: As an assistant instructor, which is a rank they had in those days and they don’t
even have anymore because you couldn’t hire anybody at that pay. So I said…. Here I’ve got a
wife and child and another one on the way, there’s no way I can live on $3600 a year. He said,
“Well, John,” he said, “we expect our faculty members to earn more on the outside than they get
paid.” He says, “My theory is if people won’t pay you for what you know, you don’t know very
much.” So [laughs] I couldn’t very well quarrel with the man. But it was quite apparent that I’d
better get busy and start trying to develop an accounting practice or something on the side. And
he also gave me a long lecture about meeting my office hours, we were here to serve the5
students, and so on and so forth. So alright, we’ll give it a chance. And we went back and
finished up in Seneca, Seneca Lake, New York, in the Finger Lakes, where the summer school
was. And came down in September and lived with my parents again until we could find a place
to live and so on.
So I don’t know who it was, Emerson or one of the New England writers once said that every institution is the foreshortened shadow of a man. And certainly the business school was the shadow of George Esterly. He was a very fatherly man, but a very stern father. He had very high expectations from the students. A very polite man. He called everybody “sir.” “Yes, sir.” And “No, sir.” “Yes, ma’am,” “No, ma’am.” You thanked people. You opened doors for women. You took your hat off in their presence. He set the tone for the school. He expected all of his faculty members to be greatly concerned about their students and to be very active professionally. So all of them had consulting work on the outside. Stockweather was a consultant to some banks. Madlow, he came on as a consultant to banks. Paul Edwards in marketing was a consultant to advertising agencies. Von Linden was a partner in Main Hurdman in New York. Johnny Morton was in partnership with his brothers in an accounting practice. And all of them, all were very busy on the outside. And you had to be active in your profession. I became editor of the New Jersey CPA Society journal and served on committees. And since I….

Oh, the other thing was that I did not have my CPA certificate. So I’m having a meeting with Von Linden, the first meeting, and he says, “I notice you do not have your CPA certificate.” And I said, “Well, no. I … sit for the examination. I had to have my degree, and I didn’t get it ‘til June. And I went right into the Army in ’42. I got out in ’45, and then I was teaching in Upstate New York, and there was just no chance to sit for the exam.” He says, “Well,” he says, “I assume that you’re going to sit in November.” Well, of course I hadn’t the slightest intention of doing so, but I said, “Well, yes, sure. Of course.” And so I started pounding the hell out of the books and applied for the exam. Just got in over the wire in time. And managed by some good luck to pass at least two of the four parts, which they allow you to keep credit for. And then the next time in—I sat in May and November—I passed another part. And the next November I passed the fourth part. But he had told me that unless I got my CPA certificate, I wouldn’t be reappointed when my first appointment ran out. But every single member of the accounting staff was a practicing CPA. You had to be one of them. They didn’t publish. But they were actively engaged in the profession and on the committees, knew what was going on in the accounting world. And this carried the tone of the school.

The other thing was that there was an opportunity at another school. Most of the students came from NCAS, which meant that first they had to get through the admission process in NCAS. Then if they applied for our school, we had an opportunity to look over their scholastic records. And furthermore, because in the case of accounting, it’s a three-year curriculum. You had to take advanced accounting in the senior year, a year of intermediate accounting in your junior year, which meant you had to take introductory accounting in your sophomore year. So students at NCAS that wanted to come to our school were taking courses in our school in their sophomore year at NCAS. So that was about our only contact with NCAS, which was then down at 40 Rector Street. I remember the students telling me that there were still old beer barrels and stuff in the cellar of 40 Rector Street when they started there.

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: So it was probably the old Ballantine Brewery. So anyway, by the time the students got ready to apply to us, we already had a year of their achievements in accounting and their scores in NCAS. And since we were a small school—there were only two or three hundred
students in the school at any one time—we skimmed the best of the best. But they were very poor students financially. They were all first generation. No one had ever gone to college in their families. And they were looking to the business and accounting program for this upward mobility that educators like to talk about and get the hell out of this mess and go out there and make a decent living. So they were extremely hardworking students and conscientious students. They needed a live at home school, they needed a part-time employment school or they couldn’t go to school at all. But with the NCAS students, if the teacher was absent, boy, they got a holiday. In our school if the teacher was absent, the students were pretty annoyed. I was here, where were you? And I don’t think I missed more than six sessions in 38 years. You didn’t miss class or the students were really on you. So they used to do their homework and so on. But as many of the recruiters from the accounting firms, business firms, would say: You have a lot of rough diamonds here. So it was kind of a finishing school as well as an educational institution.

And Dean Esterly took this standing in loco parentis thing, he took that very seriously. And he’d tell the students about their dress. And he’d tell us in the fall to remind the students that Christmas was coming. And if somebody wanted to give him a present, give him a decent briefcase and give him a set of Cross pens and pencils. And that they would be mannerly and come into his office. And he’d say, “You didn’t knock.” “Yes, sir.” And so on and so forth. And in the two years that they were there, these rough diamonds were really getting polished.

In addition to that, for the seniors we had the so-called business luncheon conferences over at the Hotel Robert Treat; and usually six times a year, three times in the fall and three times in the spring we held a luncheon meeting with a speaker from some phase of the business world. And the students were instructed how to behave, to learn to engage in small talk with the visiting guest because there was always a businessman at each table who was invited as a guest of the program. And they learned how to eat, and they learned how people behave at luncheon conferences and to applaud the speakers and so forth and so on. And to introduce themselves to the speakers, to their business guest at their table. And it was kind of a finishing school for the students not just an educational institution.

COHEN: You say they were instructed. Was it formal the instruction or was this….

GILMOUR: They used to be told. Yes. They used to have assemblies and things, and they used to be told that all those that are in the…this is what the conference program is called; we’ll meet at room so-and-so at such-and-such a time. And they’d explain to these students that this was advertising for the school, that they would then sell themselves, to inquire, talk to the business guest about his business. Find out something about him before the meeting and what their company did and so forth and so on. And many a student got his graduation job at business luncheon conferences. They were quite impressed with all these students, and they’d tell them, you know, look me up when you graduate, and so forth. And a good many students did just that. In addition to that we had a very active placement service for students. And we’d always tell them, particularly in the accounting program, you know, work after school, work for an accountant instead of clerking in, you know, a fast-food restaurant or something like that or stocking shelves in the A&P.

COHEN: What percentage of the students were in the accounting program of the 200 or so students you said were in the school?
GILMOUR: I’d say 50 percent.

COHEN: Fifty percent?

GILMOUR: Yes. They used to like to say that they were the smartest students in the school. [Laughter] You know we like to think they were anyway. In addition to that, we had the accounting internship program in their senior year, where after December and to early February, they’d be out working for the accounting firms. And our internship program was different than the one at say Fairleigh and Seton Hall and so on, where they used to take just the cream of the class for the internship program. Every one of our students had to intern because we didn’t have any classes during the internship program, any senior courses. There just wasn’t any advanced accounting taught in that time, cost accounting and so on. So they had a good work training, they had good work habits. And in addition to their other courses, they had what they called practice sets, which was small sets of books with recycled accounting transactions. They had to write them up in the various journals and go home and post them and … prepare financial statements. They had those in the accounting courses, they had them in cost accounting, they had them in cost accounting, they had them in auditing. And we’d tell them again and again, don’t sell your books. They’re part of the beginning of your professional library. NCAS students were always selling books. Don’t ever sell your books. You run into a jam, there’s your book at home telling you. Look up your practice set, you know, and so on and so forth. And recruiters from the firms used to tell us: One big difference about your students than students from other schools, when you hire them, they’re ready to go to work. They have good work habits, and they were used to working. They used to complain a lot, Students would say, you know, my buddy is going off to Seton Hall, and he’s an accounting major. He’s out playing handball while I’m busting my chops over the homework.” [Laughter] We said, “Yeah, but have you noticed the passing rates in the CPA exam?” And ours were the highest in the state.

COHEN: Is that right?

GILMOUR: All the time. Sure. Yes, yes. And we were very proud of that.

COHEN: Is that still the case?

GILMOUR: As far as I now it is.

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: As far as I know. Yes, yes. So it paid off. Well, the Rutgers Law School graduates have the highest passing rates on the bar exam. Yes. This was historically true. Yes. So we had hardworking students, we worked them like hell. The dean was a great admirer of the fraternity Delta Sigma Pi, which was our business fraternity. And that was our school fraternity, that was run, as fraternities are, by the students with a faculty advisor. And they had an initiation dinner, black tie, usually in the Robert Treat Hotel with a business speaker. They had a dance in the fall and a dance in the spring. Black tie. You came. Always two couples were chaperones. And Betty and I were chaperones for many, many years. We were about the youngest on the faculty there. There was Mitch Martin and Charlie Martin and so on. And they were told to come up to the
chaperones, introduce themselves, introduce their dates. And they acquired a high degree of polish in the school. Not just debits and credits, you know. And again, that was Joe Esterly. That was Joe Esterly. And to this day—I’ll mention names, to Betty for example…. [Break in recording] Hi, Dear. This is Gil Cohen.

BETTY GILMOUR: Hi.

COHEN: How are you?

GILMOUR: And as I said to her the other day, we got a letter from Mike Trostow [sp]. And I said, “You remember Mike.” “Oh, yes, sure. Mike, sure.” He was a Delta Sigma, and he would be at the dances. He properly introduced himself, and he introduced his father.

BETTY GILMOUR: He made himself known. [Laughter]

GILMOUR: Yes. And that was the way it went. So it was a lot more than a business school, you know. And they turned out some really outstanding people. Walter Wexler, he was the treasurer for the State of New Jersey for 20 years, I guess. He was one of our graduates. Bob Boutineer [sp] was a managing partner for the whole Eastern Seaboard of Pete Marwick. Many of our students ended up as partners in national accounting firms.

COHEN: Can you mention any more of them that you can recall, some of the others?

GILMOUR: Oh, sure. Les Peters of course was our biggest. He’s now the 44th baron of Lee in Scotland. But he was raised in East Orange. And—

COHEN: How did he become that?

GILMOUR: Well, inherited.

COHEN: Inherited!

GILMOUR: And he was an outstanding student. He wasn’t an accounting major; he was too smart for that. But he and I became great friends. And at an introductory…it was quite apparent to me that this guy was—he was a comer. I got talking to him. He started when he was nine years old. He used to buy eggs from the farms, collecting. He’d go around with his little red wagon; sell them to the…. When other kids were with the Boy Scouts, he was out making a buck. But he was still from a very poor family. Well, he eventually…well, just, an anecdote about. [laugh] Jeezus. He—I never saw a guy track down a job the way this one did. He analyzed all the major industries, and he eliminated them one by one. Railroads—well, railroads had no future; they were out. And so forth. Retailing: cutthroat competition, margins are thin; that’s out. Paper industry: …profit margins are thin, forest are—no, that’s out.

COHEN: What years are we talking about now?

GILMOUR: Oh, this was in the Class of ’56.

GILMOUR: So he narrowed it down to three industries, one of which was electronics. And there was a firm in Newark called Tunksal [sp?], Tunksal [sp?] Electric. And so he found out about Tunksal [sp?] Electric. And he discovered through Standard & Poor’s Directory of Directors, all of the major employees and the executives were over 55 years of age. So he figured that’s my pigeon, that one. So he … How does he get into Tunksal? So he’s going to get Palmer—his name was Bruce Palmer; it was Palmer anyway—the president of Tunksal [sp?]. He was very active in the Newark Chamber of Commerce and sponsored the Junior Chamber of Commerce in Newark, the Jaycees. And he discovered that you could get a student membership in the Jaycees for five bucks if you were in a business school. So somehow he got up the five bucks, and he joined the Jaycees. And he went down there, and he said, “Okay,” he says, “I’ll take any job nobody wants.” So he says, “Good, you can stage the annual Jaycee parade.” In Newark. Okay. So he sat down, and there were some directors around. Got the names and addresses of the press agents for all the movie stars. And he wrote to them and wanted to know if any of them would be in Newark at the time of the Jaycee parade. And he discovered that an actress by the name of Jayne Mansfield…. Now, you may remember her.

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: And she had a glandular problem.

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: She came falling out of her dresses most of the time. She was going to be in Newark the day after the parade. But if she could be grand marshal of the parade, why, she’d be most happy to come the day before and be the grand marshal of the parade. So this was leaked to the newspapers, and the newspapers were talking about this big parade they were having in Newark, and Jayne Mansfield was going to be the grand marshal of the parade and so forth. And sure enough, everybody in Newark turned out to see the parade. And they’re going down Broad Street with the bands and so forth, and there’s a big limousine. And in the back there’s Jayne Mansfield waving at the crowds out one side, and Les Peters is waving to the crowds on the other. [Laughs] And the kid is stunned, right? They were sort of stunned.

COHEN: And the school business school.

GILMOUR: Right. So shortly after that, the school gets a notice that Mr. Palmer would like to get in touch with this young man, Leslie Peters. So to make a long story short, he had lunch—he was invited to have lunch with him. And he said to—Palmer says to him, he says, “What do you want to do when you get out of school?” Leslie says, “I want your job.” [Laughter] He said Palmer nearly jumped on his lunch. And he says, “Oh, you do?” “Really!” “Sure,” he says, “I think that would be rather nice.” [Laughter] He says, “I’ve studied your company.” He says, “Most of your management is 55 years of age or older.” He says, “I figure with a few years’ experience, I’ll move right on up.” [Laughter] So Palmer couldn’t believe what he was hearing, you know. Oh, geez! So he said, “Well,” he says, “okay. When you graduate from school,” he
says, “come and see me. You’ve got a job.” So in the meantime he’d gone on jobs with Tom Watson over at IBM and so forth. And turned the job down. Watson told him, “You’re right.” He says, “It’s a dead-end job. I wouldn’t take it either.”

COHEN: What was the link again between Peters and the president of Tunksal and the Jaycees? Peters went into the Jaycees.

GILMOUR: The Junior Jaycees.

COHEN: He went into the Junior Jaycees.

GILMOUR: Yes. Because he knew that Palmer was very interested in the Junior Jaycees.

COHEN: He was very much interested. Okay. Alright.

GILMOUR: And the success…. And then he put on the best Jaycee parade that they ever had.

COHEN: That’s what it was all about.

GILMOUR: Who the hell put this together? So he got a hold of Les. So Les eventually went over and got a job. He put him in sales. So he sent him down to the sales manager. Well, the manager of any department’s not particularly thrilled when the boss sends somebody and tells them to hire them, you know. So he says, “Well, okay, young fellow.” He says, “I’ve got a warehouse full of miniature lamps.” So miniature lamps are things you get in automobiles. You use for a panel, taillights, brake lights, …. lights. There are hundreds of different kinds.

COHEN: Oh, my, yes!

GILMOUR: And he says, “We’ve got a warehouse full of these things over in Hartenay [sp]. They’ve been there for a couple of years. See what you can do.” So Les had another buddy in the school, Bob Hurley. And Hurley was an auto nut. And Bob Hurley had told Les that that year the cars coming out would have lights all across the back, and they did. [Break in recording]

COHEN: Okay. You were on Les Peters.

GILMOUR: Yes. He finally got from Bob Hurley that there were these cars coming out that needed a lot of miniature lamps. So he immediately got on the phone to the purchasing agents to sell these miniature lamps. And they were beginning to wonder where the hell they were going to get them. Well, in two days he came back and said to the sales manager, he says, “Okay, they’re all sold. What else you got?” And the guy says, “Come on! Get out of here!” He says, “No, they’re sold.” And he shows him the sales orders, and every one of them had been sold. Then he gave him some other things like that. And the first thing you know, this guy, to get him out of his hair, moved him into the international division—sales. And he’s flying all around the world. He met Zhou Enlai, Zhou Enlai’s wife, in India, where she was interested in birth control measures and so forth. And he made contacts all around the world in the international division. So then they sent him up to Canada to open up a manufacturing line there for Tunksal in Canada because
Canada was raising tariffs and so forth against US stuff, and they figured they had to manufacture up there.

So he went up to Canada, and he found this old factory that he could get real cheap. And he sent down to the States for the various pieces of machinery and so on, had them shipped up, and had them installed. And finally told the people down in Newark, “Well, it’s okay; it’s ready for inspection. Why don’t you come up and see what the plant looks like?” So he met them all at the airport. And there was a great big empty factory on the way from the airport to the factory he had set up. So he got a hold of the guy, the janitor or the caretaker, whatever, and he had a big sign prepared: “Future Home of Tunksal of Canada.” And he hung it out the window so that coming down the road you’d see the sign. So he met the guys at the airport, and they’re driving towards the thing, and they’re looking out, and they’re talking. Suddenly they see the sign, and they look at this enormous plant. And all of a sudden all conversation stopped, and … nearly dropped dead. “My God!” he says. “What did you do?” He says, “What the hell are we going to do with that place?” It was a huge factory, see.

COHEN: This wasn’t the place that….

GILMOUR: No, it wasn’t the place.

COHEN: Okay.

GILMOUR: So Les laughed and he said, “I just put that up as a gag.” He said, “Oh, jeez!” So then he took them to the place he had bought, which was bigger than they wanted in the first place. But he knew that their place was much too small. So, oh, okay.

COHEN: Okay. [Laughs]

GILMOUR: This was great. [Laughter] The psychology of the guy!

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: He scared the hell out of them with this enormous factory. And then took them down to the real one which was bigger than he was supposed to have. But in two years, that thing was running full blast because he knew it would be. Because by that time he was active in Canadian circles, and he knew what was going on up there. And he eventually got on the board of Bell Telephone of Canada. He started an auto parts business up there. He bought Pete Boggs in Nova Scotia. He was on his way.

COHEN: What is his position now?

GILMOUR: Well, now he’s extremely well off. He owns about 10 percent of all the nursing home beds in the State of Florida. And in about five years’ time, when the 33rd Baron of Lee died in Scotland, the title passed down through his father to Les, and he now spends half his time in Scotland rebuilding the castle which has 230 rooms. [Laughter] He’s got his own zip code over there, the castle and his lands are all under so forth and so on.
COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: But his home base is Tampa. He’s made a lot of contributions to the University of Tampa for their liberal arts and their Ottwing [sp] School of Arts and Design and so forth and so on. I had him to a St. Andrew’s Society dinner in the State of New York, which is a Scottish society, and he brought over a kilt for me. Oh, in fact he was honored at the alumni dinner two years back, I guess. And he brought me a kilt of his own tartan. And we were both there; it was a big affair. And they were hoping to get funds from him to put a basement in the new graduate school of management. And I kept trying to tell him that I didn’t think it was going to work. And it didn’t because he plainly had no interest in the graduate school of management, certainly not in putting a basement in the thing.

COHEN: I’m trying to remember…. When did it become the graduate school?

GILMOUR: It seems to me it was in the sixties.

COHEN: In the sixties. That’s when things began to change.

GILMOUR: I’d have to look back through the old catalogs, I think.

COHEN: And what were the beginnings of change that you can recall, indications. I mean you gave a pretty vivid portrait of …

GILMOUR: They started an evening program in accounting.

COHEN: An evening program.

GILMOUR: Now here’s what happened. Bill Von Minden was very active in the professional societies. And of course the American Institute is the most important society, and its office is in New York where he was a partner in Main Hurdman in New York. And he was on the trial board. He was on the board of trustees and the major committees and so on and so forth. And the strange thing about it is that many of the major firms, their partners, they’re all graduates of business schools and accounting schools. Then they got to be partners in national firms. And then to a local idiom, they didn’t live in Newark anymore. They lived in Short Hills. They lived in Summit, so on and so forth. And when their kid went to school, they’d send him off to Brown, Colgate, and Princeton and so on. Then the kid graduated, he couldn’t do anything. He was a specialist in ancient literature or something. And he’d been on a debating team or played lacrosse, had a great time. And what do you do now? And I said to Von Minden, “Look, you’re in education. Why can’t you come up with some kind of a program that would equip students to sit for the CPA exam in a short period of time?” Well, to sit the CPA exam, you have to have at least 60 credits in the professional field: You have to have 24 in accounting, six in law, six in finance, and so on and so on, a total of 60 credits.

So Von Minden turned the problem over and over in his mind. Finally he says, “Well, if we went on a trimester system and put 15 credits in each trimester, we’d only need four of them,
and we could do it. And if the students came to use right out of school—most of the graduations are in May. See, we could start them in June, go the first summer, one trimester, the fall trimester, the winter trimester—winter/spring trimester—and the following summer, they’d have their MBA.

COHEN: Three trimesters and a summer session, is that what they did?

GILMOUR: Well, the summer session was a trimester.

COHEN: So three trimesters, three a year.

GILMOUR: Four trimesters with 60 credits.

COHEN: Yes, yes. Okay.

GILMOUR: So he said, “Well, that sounds great!” He says, “But we couldn’t do it because we don’t even have air conditioning at 18 Washington Place. Summers in Newark are murder.” So the national firms gave him the money to completely air condition the second floor of 18 Washington Place, which was the only part of the building that was air conditioned. That meant the dean’s office—he had a window air conditioner in his office. And we had that authority to give the MBA with a major in accounting.

COHEN: Oh, I see. So this was an MBA.

GILMOUR: Right, right.

COHEN: These kids are coming in from the schools.

GILMOUR: It’s a postgraduate degree.

COHEN: Okay, okay. The first graduate program was the accounting MBA.

GILMOUR: It was such a revolutionary thing it was written up in the Journal of Accountancies and so on and so on and now has been widely copied. In fact NJIT now has come up with one of these executive MBA programs like Rutgers.

COHEN: An executive MBA.

GILMOUR: Of course it’s slightly different.

COHEN: First executive MBA program was an MBA then in accounting in Newark, is that correct?

GILMOUR: Right. Mm-hmm. Right. And it was the firms that put up the money to make it possible so they could send their sons. And in the early classes we had, which were very small classes, practically everybody there was a son of somebody in a major firm. And as I say,
Princeton and Yale and so on. But they had degrees in English literature and so on. And so it was a school for liberal arts graduates.

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: You see?

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: And that’s how it got started. Well, these kids went to the national firms, and they took off like rockets. Well, most all of the national firms had a policy: They never allowed the son of a partner to serve in that firm. They’d serve in some other firm. But if the kid’s old man was with Peat Marwick, why, he’d get a job with Price Waterhouse. You know? And so on. And they were topflight students because they very carefully reviewed who they wanted to put in this program. And they all had a very definite goal in mind where they were going. And it was just a beautiful program. But the dean in the meantime had been very active in the formation of the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business. George Esterly in a way was a snob, you know. And he once said to me, he says, “About the only thing you can say about snobbery is that it works.” And what he really meant was you’re very critical of your associates, who you pick for your friends, and so on and so forth. And you don’t get involved with the wrong people, and you don’t get involved with shady firms. And you go for the best. And he liked to talk about the aristocracy of excellence. As long as able and motivated people were able to rise to the top, regardless of their background, he said, “This country will be all right.” As opposed to England where you had to be the third earl of such-and-such to be the head of Rolls Royce or whatever. No. Aristocracy of excellence, that’s what he was after.

And he came from Kansas. Somehow he got into Harvard Business School. Just what prompted that, I don’t know. I never did find out. And he tried to make our school on the model of the Harvard Business School. And anyway, that’s how he and several other deans of business schools were instrumental in forming the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business, as an accrediting group. Because there were no accrediting groups in business schools at the time. And they felt that it was a time that we should be raising standards. Most business schools were trade schools really. And you just went in and studied for a while, and you graduated and went to work.

And anyway, so the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business started tightening up standards. We found out that accreditation had real value when the proposal was made. For example, when they were building the library in Newark, a lot of the books in the law library were of interest also to students in business programs. The tax books and the business references and so on and so forth. And the proposal was made to build a joint library. And it seemed perfectly logical on its face, and the law school said, Well, be that as it may, no way. Or we will lose our accreditation as a law school.

COHEN: Yes. Because the library has to adjoin the school, has to be in the school; it can’t be freestanding. Right, right.
GILMOUR: Oh really? Oh, this accreditation gives you some clout, you know. And we were prohibited from accepting students with grade levels below a certain number unless they were clearly labeled as risk students, which enabled you to admit minorities and so forth. And anyway, Rutgers was very active in setting that group up—the university. So with the success of this accounting program, why can’t we give the regular MBA program on a trimester system? And the first thing you know, they started offering the business program—14 months you get your MBA. Because the MBA normally is a two-year program.

COHEN: Why was the undergraduate part of it so long into the College of Arts and Sciences?

GILMOUR: Well, when the MBA program in accounting was firmly established, then they phased out the undergraduate program. And there was no undergraduate program in accounting in Newark.

COHEN: But the business program, the rest of the business program, it was my understanding that the AACSB favors having it all under one roof, administrative roof, so to speak.

GILMOUR: That’s right.

COHEN: In Newark they chose to split the program, to move the undergraduate operation to the College of Arts and Sciences.

GILMOUR: They split it because there was nothing to split. There was no more undergraduate program.

COHEN: There was no more undergraduate program at all in the school of business.

GILMOUR: That’s right.

COHEN: Either in accounting or in the…

GILMOUR: That’s correct. We are now a graduate school. And they changed the name of the school.

COHEN: Why did they make that decision, which seems to be in conflict with the preference of the AACSB?

GILMOUR: No, no, no.

COHEN: No?

GILMOUR: The choice they made was to go from an undergraduate to graduate school.

COHEN: To a graduate school.

GILMOUR: Right. That was it, period.
COHEN: Why was that choice made? Why didn’t they choose to keep it under one roof, so to speak, to have one school of business? Which is what they’re talking about now. I mean basically that’s what’s going to be happening now. There’ll be one umbrella covering not only Newark but the entire university. So why was that decision made at the time to split them up?

GILMOUR: As the graduate program developed, you got a lot of faculty members in there who were of the opinion that undergraduate education for business really wasn’t proper; that we in the field of business education should be like the law schools. The law schools used to accept students after only three years of college. Our own school did when I came there; when it was up on Lincoln Place in Newark, the law school. No, that was the school of pharmacy. I’m sorry.

COHEN: Used to accept students with three years of college.

GILMOUR: The law school used to accept students with three years of college.

COHEN: Used to. No more though.

GILMOUR: No, no more. And they decided no way. From now on you’d have to have a degree, and then you studied law. And the business faculty said, Well, if that’s good enough for the lawyers, why isn’t it good enough for us? Harvard is strictly a graduate school. And as I understand, Stanford is a graduate school and so forth. We’re going to be a graduate school. So they phased out the undergraduate program. And there was no more undergraduate training for business in Newark by Rutgers.

COHEN: Until—

GILMOUR: Well, then back when I was in the law program…I don’t know; you’d have to look it up and find out when that was. I don’t remember. About 15 years ago, I guess. Oh, during this time, I had been very active in the AAUP. And that was something I’d never heard about until I went to teach in Upstate New York after getting out of Teachers’ College Columbia. And we were teaching 18 hours a quarter. And sometimes you would have—I know I had—three three-hour classes back to back. Nine hours! And you’d go staggering out—

COHEN: Oh, geez!

GILMOUR: —of the building in such a mental fog, you didn’t know what day of the week it was. It was brutal. And the school had been put together very hastily. And a lot of the faculty members were retired people. And there was one fellow there…we got talking one night. And he was retired from Yale. And he said, “We were all complaining about the horrendous conditions…We were spending our time grading papers and marking and marking lessons and trying to keep ahead of the students.”

COHEN: This is in the graduate program.

GILMOUR: This was Upstate New York.
COHEN: Oh, okay, in New York.

GILMOUR: It was a killer. So he says, “There’s only one group in this country that can do anything about this, and that’s the AAUP.” “What’s the AAUP?” He says, “It’s the American Association of University Professors.” Never heard of it. “Well,” he says, “I’m going to help them write a letter. I’m going to write a letter and have them send a team in here.” So they did. Well, by gosh! Within a few months, we were on the blacklist, and they couldn’t hire any faculty. They wouldn’t come to work and so forth and so on.

COHEN: What year was that again?

GILMOUR: Oh, this was in ’47.

COHEN: ‘Forty-seven, before you came to Rutgers. Yes.

GILMOUR: All of a sudden our workload was lightened, and they hired grading assistants and so forth. And you began to think wow! How long is this going to go on? That’s AAUP. That’s a wonderful organization. And I joined. And I was a member for a long time. And finally, due to one thing or another, I got active in it in Newark. And met a guy named Leo Troy. He was chairman of the Economics Department and very active in the AAUP. So one day he said to me at an AAUP session of some kind, he said, “How would you like to come over to NCAS and start an undergraduate accounting program?” Well, it had irritated me for a long, long time that there was no undergraduate accounting program, because a lot of very deserving students couldn’t afford to go to graduate school. And by default they were going to what I considered inferior schools like Fairly Ridiculous [Fairleigh Dickinson] or over at the Hall [Seton Hall] or something. And damn it all! They should have been Rutgers students, you know. And it just annoyed me.

So I said, “Gee, that sounds great. An accounting program in NCAS?” He said, yes. He says, “We’ll put it in the Economics Department.” So I said, “Well, do they want one?” He said, “Well, the dean wants one. And if the dean wants one,” he said, “we’ll have one.” So I went over, and the dean at that time was Dean Samuels. So we sat down in the dean’s office, and he says, “Well, the situation’s very simple. I’ve got 3,000 seats to keep filled.” He said, “And we’re having a helluva time doing it.” And he says, “I’ve noticed that the liberal arts schools around the country are all starting accounting programs.” And he said, “Do you think you could start one here?” And I said, “Certainly.”

So that fall, whenever it was, we started an accounting program. Well, it developed that they had had introductory and I think a couple of sections of intermediate or advanced courses or something. That’s all they had. In the Economics Department. So I immediately had to hire some faculty and so forth and so on. And set up a program. And within a couple of years about a quarter of all the students in the school were in the accounting program.

COHEN: The accounting program that was set up before the Business Department.
GILMOUR: That’s right.

COHEN: Okay.

GILMOUR: And then gradually, as the student body was there and needed courses in marketing and they needed courses in finance and commercial law and so forth, they had to hire the faculty for a business program as well. But we were all in the Economics Department.

COHEN: That’s right. It was a program within the Economics Department.

GILMOUR: Yes, yes. And Leo had said to me when we were talking about this—and I had said to him—“Well, I’d like to set up the program, but I’d like to think that we’re going to be a department of our own.” And he said, “Well, within five years.” Alright. I was willing to give it five years because maybe the program would fall flat on its face.

COHEN: You’re talking about accounting, not business, accounting.

GILMOUR: Yes. Right. So the five years, and it was the sixth year. And I said to Leo, “You know how about setting up our own program—our own department?” I said, “By now you’ve got business students and so forth and so on.” Well, he didn’t want to let go of it because by now the Economics Department was the biggest department in the whole place. It had almost a third of the faculty in Arts and Sciences between business and accounting.

COHEN: And it was all under economics.

GILMOUR: It was all under economics, and Leo was the chairman. And it was like Churchill saying he didn’t become prime minister to supervise the destruction of the British Empire. And Leo wasn’t about to put up with the destruction of the Economics Department. He had the whole top floor of Hill Hall and a couple of other offices around. So finally—I don’t remember exactly how—I got this petition up to go before the faculty to set up a separate department. It was going to be called, and I made the presentation as to why I thought it should be a separate department, so forth and so on. And Leo got up and talked about the broadening influences of a student’s being in the Department of Economics and so forth. And it finally came to a vote. And apparently Leo was very unpopular with the faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences. He tended to be a dictatorial sort of a guy. And anyway, the vote, as I recall—and you’d have to check this in the minutes—the whole faculty voted against Leo. He got 23 votes. [Laughs] And the poor man, he was crushed. He just couldn’t believe it, that they would do this to him. But anyway, we’ve since become very good friends. But, oh, God! He didn’t talk to me for a long time. And the next thing you know, I was attending chairmen’s meetings.

COHEN: You were the chairman of the Accounting Department. [Laughter]

GILMOUR: So there we had a Department of Business and Accounting.

COHEN: A Department of Business and Accounting.
GILMOUR: In NCAS.

COHEN: Okay. And then it was subsequently split into two.

GILMOUR: And the AACSB started coming around and accrediting. And they said, What is this? The business school isn’t a business school; it’s part of a Department of Economics. And we kept arguing that we should be accredited because this was a fine way of doing things, and off the record we were saying, aw geez, we can’t do anything about this because the administration won’t set up a separate school and so on. The vested interest here is that they’re going to lose a lot of lines and so on and so forth. So that was the situation when I left. And it still is. It’s part of the Economics Department. No. I’m sorry. You’ve got a separate department in a College of Arts and Sciences.

COHEN: Well, two separate departments: accounting and business.

GILMOUR: Yes, right.

COHEN: Whatever the present reorganization was or something. They’re all going to go under one umbrella called the School of Business, the Rutgers School of Business, which includes the graduate school right now.

GILMOUR: Right. Well, Lawrence came in.

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: And he made it quite clear that he was not happy with education for business in the Rutgers complex. It didn’t seem right to him. And he welcomed comments. So before that they had talked about setting up a business school in New Brunswick. You had accounting courses and finance courses being taught at Douglass, at the men’s college, Livingston College. You had them scattered all over the campus.

COHEN: Camden, too? I don’t remember.

GILMOUR: I think Camden already had a business school.

COHEN: I think so.

GILMOUR: I’ll tell you a strange thing about—

COHEN: Losing track of….

GILMOUR: Yes. But AACSB, the lever they have is that if they’re going to accredit a graduate program, they have to be able to accredit the undergraduate program as well. Unless the undergraduate program is geographically separated far enough that it’s not feasible to control it. So they accredited us reluctantly. With this department in the College of Arts and Sciences in
Newark, the accredited the Graduate School of Management. But they were warning them that you’re on pretty thin ice here.

COHEN: Mm-hmm. Yes.

GILMOUR: We’re ignoring New Brunswick. But that won’t continue too long either. Something should be done about New Brunswick. So we started giving evening courses down in New Brunswick in the Graduate School of Management, but requiring them in their senior year to come up to Newark and finish the courses and so on. And a lot of people were unhappy with that. Now in the meantime, they talked about setting up a business school in New Brunswick and they welcomed comments. So I wrote down to—oh, I’m trying to think who the associate was—who the provo was down there or something. It wasn’t Demarest.

COHEN: What year is that approximately?

GILMOUR: Oh, this is two years before that school was set up, whatever that was.

COHEN: Winkler? No, he was the vice president.

GILMOUR: No, it wasn’t Henry Winkler.

COHEN: Okay.

GILMOUR: Geez, I can’t remember.

COHEN: Okay.

GILMOUR: Anyway, welcoming suggestions as to what this school should look like. So I wrote down to him a very lengthy letter describing exactly what the school of business was in Newark when I came. And pointing out to him that this would be politically feasible because he was drawing from all of the schools in the New Brunswick area and not threatening them and their existence. Some of their students took some accounting courses in Douglass and finance. And some of them at the men’s college and some of them at Livingston and so forth. And that they finish their last two years in this business school. By gosh! That’s exactly the school that was set up. That’s exactly the way it worked. Just the way the business school worked in Newark in 1948. It was going full circle. But we still don’t have one in Newark.

COHEN: Not one school.

GILMOUR: Not one school.

COHEN: Right.

GILMOUR: Yes.

COHEN: And that’s what their moving and that’s what its going to be
GILMOUR: So Lawrence came in and expressed his displeasure with what he found and welcomed comments and so forth. So I’ve written some letters to him.

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: And got some very nice replies. And describing exactly what the school of business was when I came. Why it was the experienced school that it was and so forth and so on. And it’s quite clear to me that that’s what he’s decided. This is the way it should be. And I said there should be one head of the business program from the top down and supervised …And knows what’s going on. We’ve got teachers, for example, in the Graduate School of Management that haven’t taught a class in three years. They hire substitutes.

COHEN: Oh!

GILMOUR: Yes.

COHEN: They can do that?

GILMOUR: Oh, yes. They’ve been getting away with that. Sure.

COHEN: They’re doing a lot of research and consulting work.

GILMOUR: That’s right. And I said…. [End of Tape #1]

COHEN: I’m back with Professor Gilmour. You were…

GILMOUR: The School of Management as it is now is really the creature of Horace dePodwin.

COHEN: Yes. What—

GILMOUR: And Bloustein.

COHEN: Yes. What changes did it occur in the school in terms of access to students under dePodwin and Bloustein?

GILMOUR: Well, dePodwin was a very bright man. And he wanted to make that school a much larger school than it was when he took over. For the life of me, at the moment I can’t remember who was dean before him. Did he replace Esterly?

COHEN: He replaced Esterly, didn’t he?

GILMOUR: Yes.

COHEN: I thought it was Esterly and then dePodwin, yes.
GILMOUR: It was Tom Brindles [sp] that brought him in, that brought dePodwin in—from where I don’t remember.

COHEN: And then Blake succeeded dePodwin.

GILMOUR: So dePodwin caught on very early to the fact that the budget of the school is enrollment driven in the sense that the budget was largely determined by the so-called ECH, the Equivalent Credit Hours. And that’s a mythical concept. For example, if a full-time student is supposed to be a minimum of 12 hours, if you have two students taking six hours, that’s one student, you know. So you take all the hours in the courses, and you add them all up, and divide them through and so forth, and get the so-called ECH’s, and the budget is largely based on that. So he knew that the accounting program was a bestseller. We had more students trying to get in the graduate school of accounting than we could possibly handle. And Von Minden always tried to keep it down to sections of 20 students. And the classrooms in the school on New Street are built for 20 students, on the second floor, which was the Accounting Department’s floor. He did not believe in large classes. He wanted every student to recite every day, and he wanted every instructor to know every student in his class and what he was doing. So we had two sections. Well, Von Minden of course had died. And Charlie Martin was now acting dean of the accounting program. And dePodwin says I want four sections. We’ve got enough faculty, so four sections…you have four sections.

COHEN: What year is this about—approximately?

GILMOUR: I don’t know. Find out when Martin retired, and that’ll tell you.

COHEN: Okay.

GILMOUR: [Laughs] Because it was about two years before that. So all of a sudden we’re flooded with students, and the quality of the students was really not up to par. We had students we would not have admitted before. But instead of having 40 students, we had 80. Then we started packing more than 20 students in a classroom. But we were generating Equivalent Credit Hours, and our budget was steadily rising. And Horace hired a lot of people in our disciplines, not in accounting.

COHEN: This is in Engelhard Hall now.

GILMOUR: This is in Engelhard, right.

COHEN: Yes, right. Mm-hmm.

GILMOUR: So pretty soon…. Our budgets keep steadily rising. As our budget rises, he hires more people, he’s building the school up very rapidly. And then he started headhunting for national scholars like Larry Fisher in Chicago and so forth, and pulling them in. And he was emphasizing research because that’s what Bloustein wanted.

COHEN: Yes.
GILMOUR: So it soon became apparent, especially to us in the AAUP for promotion, even though they had instituted student evaluations and so forth, they didn’t mean a thing. It was publications, you know.

COHEN: Right.

GILMOUR: Because you had a strange situation in that you had the final review board—they’re in New Brunswick—and I remember one time when I was the counselor to a grievance who were going down there trying to present their case. You had a practicing musician, you had mathematicians, you had performing artists. And they’re all evaluating people who were professors of taxation. How did they—What the hell were we doing?

COHEN: Did you have your doctorate at that time?

GILMOUR: No. Never did get my doctorate.

COHEN: Oh, I thought you’d….

GILMOUR: No, I never got my doctorate. And later I found out why about that, too. I managed to pick up three masters at night, but I never got my doctorate. And you don’t remember Doug Haynes—or do you? He was very active in the University College at night.

COHEN: I don’t think so.

GILMOUR: And I was going over to NYU trying to get my doctorate in public administration, because there was discussion of having a school of business and public administration. So I thought, well, if I’m going to get promoted, I’d better a degree in public administration. So I thought I’d go for a doctorate. So I went over there, and I was a pretty darned good student. And I passed all the qualifings in my own mind, but I got flunking grades. But they never let you review your papers. By this time I was in my late fifties. And you’re allowed to take them again, so I boned up like mad. Went over there. And they were courses in statistics and economics and so forth. No, this was duck soup for me. And I was taking it over the second time, and passing it. Boy, I knocked those things cold. I was told that I flunked. But again, I could not review my papers. I was talking to Doug Haynes about this, and Doug was a sharp guy. He was thinking the same thing as me. He says, “You’re too old.”

COHEN: These are the qualifying or the—

GILMOUR: Yes, the qualifying.

COHEN: The qualifying. Is that right?

GILMOUR: He says, “By the time you finish, you’ll be ready to retire.” He says, “You’re not going to bring any honor and glory to NYU. They’re saving the doctorates for younger people.”
COHEN: Oh, my God!

GILMOUR: Yes. They did the same thing….

COHEN: He took all the courses, and then they….

GILMOUR: They did the same thing to Bob whatever his name was. Older students never made it. Yes.

COHEN: Oh, boy!

GILMOUR: They were strange.

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: Yes. So anyway…I don’t know what the hell I was talking about.

COHEN: Well, we were…I think we were….

GILMOUR: Oh, so the emphasis then became on research and these stellar researchers and publishers. We hired a guy—they called him Stony, a Japanese fellow. A great big fellow. Stony—his name in Japanese means a stony brook. And he came over from NYU. He didn’t get tenure over there, but we hired him. And one of the first questions he had was, “When do you have your publication roundtables?” Oye! I asked him what he meant by that. He says, “Well, don’t you meet and review the papers of your graduate students for publication?” And to make a long story short, it developed that the profs in the graduate school over there were assigning papers to their classes, and then they’d extract from those papers … and send it out under their own names, which is how they achieved this enormous record of publications in all kinds of journals over there. He says to me, “You mean you don’t do that here?” I said, “We never heard of such a thing.” He said, “I thought everybody did.” And all of a sudden they started…. If the profs were interested in some area, they’d start assigning papers to their students in those areas and pulling out the papers they were doing the research for. But publications started to rise very rapidly in their school.

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: Teaching was bad.

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: The teaching was poor. And that was an entirely different way of…

COHEN: Oh, is that right?

GILMOUR: Yes. He used to talk about the integrity of the classroom.
COHEN: Of the classroom, I see.

GILMOUR: Yes, the integrity of the classroom. That’s your job.

COHEN: So what was happening when the program opened up in the College of Arts and Sciences, accounting and so on? Was the same pressure being applied then to yourself and other people to publish?

GILMOUR: It was. And we were resisting it, so our people never got promoted. And we had fellows like, for example, Carlos Maldanado. Now, he is working with Oscar Figueroa in the small business program there in the Graduate School of Management.

COHEN: Mm-hmm.

GILMOUR: And Carlos, I hired, because…. Well, somehow it came to my attention that this fellow was looking for a job teaching. So I hired him on a part-time basis. But he was very good. But I found out he was from Puerto Rico, and I had taught down there. Rutgers…. When the government was handing out all kinds of money, I think the American University in Puerto Rico got a grant to establish a program in accounting, in business. And their main campus was on San … over on the south side of the island, but they also had an active campus in San Juan. And that’s where most of the business courses were given. So we went down there for six months teaching, Betty and I and our youngest daughter for a while. And I was instrumental in setting up an advisory council for the school for the practitioners on the island; they had a society of accountants there and so forth. And getting in some new instructors. Their guys had great difficulty in passing the CPA examination because one of the four parts is law. And law in Puerto Rico is the old—is the Napoleonic Code, set up by Napoleon.

COHEN: Oh!

GILMOUR: It’s not English Code.

COHEN: A great big difference.

GILMOUR: And they could never get past that. So we started setting up courses for them and so forth. So anyway, Carlos was in Puerto Rico, and his family was there. They lived—and we knew where they lived and so forth. His mother and father. And he had no accent. And we found out he’d been very active with Badio in the Bronx and had moved to New Jersey and was setting up an accounting practice, and he did some teaching and so forth. Well, he’s an excellent classroom man. So I gave him a three-year appointment as an assistant professor. And the students liked him, and he did a great job. But he came up for renewal, and we told him, “You’ve got to start publishing or you’ll never get—or your three years are up.” Well, he was very active with his practice, he was active with that Puerto Rican group ….PELA?

COHEN: FLAS—Federation of Latin American Students?

GILMOUR: No. It’s—
COHEN: Puerto Rican Organization?

GILMOUR: Yes, Puerto Rican—

COHEN: Well, I think that was the acronym. A campus group?

GILMOUR: No.

COHEN: Oh, oh, not the …

GILMOUR: It’s a group that tries to raise money to get scholarships for students to keep them in school and so on. And damn if I can remember what the name is.

COHEN: We’re still talking about the—

GILMOUR: Arts and Sciences.

COHEN: Arts and Sciences.

GILMOUR: But they wouldn’t give him tenure.

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: I lost a lot of good instructors because they had no publications.

COHEN: What did that program do for access for students who in earlier years would not have been admitted to such programs? Who would not have become accountants and other people in the…. 

GILMOUR: Oh, it brought lots of them. Yes, it was a very big program. And many of those students are now out in business working.

COHEN: Well, how was the change in teaching students with that background compared to the students that you were teaching in the late fifties and the sixties and so on in terms of communicating, in terms of—

GILMOUR: Undergraduate?

COHEN: Yes, undergraduate in terms of their level of preparation, that sort of thing. What was the contrast between the student body you were teaching in the earlier years compared to the student body you were teaching when you moved over to Arts and Sciences and set up the accounting program?

GILMOUR: The student body in the Graduate School of Management was of two distinct types: The daytime students were…of course they’re all graduates of undergraduate programs. And the
daytime students were from Bucknell, Brown, Colgate, Harvard, Yale, whatever in some field that did not equip them for the business world. Usually, very often, their parents were professional people or who had businesses. And [when] Junior got out of college, well, you’d better get yourself an MBA. And I understand at Rutgers you can get it in 14 months, not two years. As a resident of the state, the tuition is low, and so on and so forth. And go to Rutgers. Well, most of them knew they had a good job waiting for them when they got out. And sometimes you had the feeling that they’re sitting there: Now teach me something. I dare you. [Laughter] It was the damnedest thing; they were much interested in the social life and so on. But they weren’t driven at all. And it was very frustrating.

The evening classes were quite different. There you had people who were working all day. And for whatever reason, they realized they’d better get back to school and get their MBA. And it was a very interesting group to teach because you would have Ph.D.’s all over the place. But they were Ph.D.’s in organic chemistry, they were Ph.D.’s in molecular chemistry, Ph.D.’s in physics. And they worked for Merck and Johnson & Johnson and so forth and so on. And they’d been working on the bench doing research for years. And now they were chairmen of programs and so forth. They had budgets, and they didn’t know a general entry from a debenture bond. You know it? They said, geez, I’d better get my ass back to school and find out what the hell this corporate world is all about. [Laughter] And they were bright. And you’d be talking about some damned thing or another, all of a sudden you’d have a guy who’d say, Oh, that explains why Shell Oil and so-and-so, and he’d start telling you something. While the kids in the daytime had never had a job; they didn’t know anything. Another guy would speak up and say, “You know they do that in my company, too, and I always wondered why they did that.” And it was a very different sort of thing. And they were a joy to teach. I loved teaching in the evening division, and I really didn’t enjoy teaching in the daytime.

The last class I had in financial accounting, I had four Ph.D.’s and seven lawyers in my class, and one of them was on the state Public Utilities Commission. And he was passing on rate applications for utilities in the State of New Jersey, and he couldn’t read a financial statement. He didn’t know what the hell I meant. And he came up to me after class, and he explained the situation. And he was working there in the Newark office on the Public Utilities Commission. He says, “Geez, most of this stuff, I don’t know what the hell’s going on.” [Laughter] So he used to come before class with statements and stay after class with these statements. You know? And we’d go over this stuff, and he’d go, “Oh, Jesus! Thank God. Boy they were talking about this stuff and these reserves, and I was wondering why they didn’t spend all the money in reserves. And I realize now that they’d have negative assets because there is no money there. He was making a fool out of himself, you know. The guy was bright, and he was politically active in the campaign for the governor who’d gotten elected. And he suddenly wound up on the Public Utilities Commission.

COHEN: And you’re teaching this guy in the graduate school.

GILMOUR: Yes. But the daytime students, unless I asked, they were pretty much like the students we used to have before. You had the Ukrainians from Union and the Irish from Jersey City and Pollacks from Bayonne and so forth. But they were all anxious to get training to get somewhere in the world.
COHEN: Are the day-school students as motivated as the evening students in the graduate school?

GILMOUR: Right.

COHEN: How many minority students were you teaching when you were in Arts and Sciences, black and Hispanic?

GILMOUR: Not too many…not too many, no. They had minority students in the school, but many of them would wind up in the African Studies or Women’s Studies or some other sort of thing. It was very hard to get them into the business program.

COHEN: Was there any move or anything to recruit students into the accounting and business program, that you can recall?

GILMOUR: Yes. That was one of the reasons, for example, I hired Maldanado, because the students needed role models. And we did hire black faculty, too, women faculty. Kathleen Oranado [sp] and so forth. And we gradually started attracting large numbers of women into the program. But for minority students, we didn’t do all that well. I used to go over and talk to the students in the—what’s that program they have where do they remedial work?

COHEN: Academic Foundations Department.

GILMOUR Department of Academic Foundations, yes.

COHEN: What was your experience with Academic Foundations?

GILMOUR: I used to go over there and talk to students over there. And we would have them come and sit in at meetings of the Accounting Society and so forth. And we would try and get minority people to come and speak to the groups. To say, you know, it’s possible. You can do this. There are a lot of people out there doing it. We had limited success, but not nearly as much as I had hoped for. Yes. In the early days of the business school, they were very rare, very rare. And women—we almost didn’t have any women. A woman in the business school was very rare indeed. So you could tell the kind of jobs you’d like to tell them and not worry about them. [Laughter] When we started having women in the classes, you had to watch your step. Oh, but it was pretty much a man’s school in the old days.

COHEN: What effect did any of the big public events have on your teaching, principally all the stuff with the anti-Vietnam War movement on campus? Did that in any way influence your teaching?

GILMOUR: Very little impact at all. Very little. Most of the students that acted in that were Arts and Sciences students, not business students.

COHEN: Yes.
GILMOUR: Our students figured if you can’t lick them, join them, if that’s what they want. You dress in business suits and so forth. That’s how you do it.

COHEN: And by the time you moved over to the Arts and Sciences, that was all over.

GILMOUR: Pretty much.

COHEN: Yes, yes. I mentioned before we were taping, I asked you if you had any recollection of the takeover of Conklin Hall by the Black Organization of Students in 1969.

GILMOUR: Not really. I knew it was a big thing on the campus, but we pretty much ignored it.

COHEN: Mm-hmm. Yes.

GILMOUR: We just go on with our work. And when the riots were on….

COHEN: Yes, I was going to ask about that.

GILMOUR: Come in through McCarter Highway, park your car and go out that way, and you won’t have any trouble. There’s all kinds of hell going on farther up the hill. But we didn’t know anything about it.

COHEN: Was there any discussion among faculty at that time, among the students, about the reasons and causes the….

GILMOUR: Not among the students. There were discussion in faculty groups. And it was quite apparent that we, Rutgers University, had some kind of a deal with the City of Newark—now, Now, the City of Newark condemned a great deal of the property on which there was housing, and people lived there, whole square blocks—to put up the Newark campus. And they did it with the understanding—I have been told—that we would have open admissions. Because the City of Newark wasn’t about to do all of this and dispossess all of these people unless there was going to be some kind of a payoff.

COHEN: I’ve even heard of that.

GILMOUR: Yes. And we were told there was going to be open admissions. Now, that meant the student had a chance to get in; it didn’t guarantee that he was going to stay. But they did have the Academic Foundations program and so on.

COHEN: You had heard this information before the riots or after the riots?

GILMOUR: After the riots.

COHEN: After the riots.
GILMOUR: After the riots, yes.

COHEN: But before the takeover of Conklin Hall, do you recall? That’s a period of….

GILMOUR: I don’t know.

COHEN: Yes. Okay. But that had been discussed.

GILMOUR: Yes. And when they integrated the evening and day programs in NCAS, which was five, six years ago, we started exchanging faculties. The day faculty was supposed to teach some night classes, and the night faculty were teaching day classes, and so on. And I had students in the classes, they were terrible students, and they didn’t do their homework. They thought it was rather humorous when you’d ask them, you know, why they didn’t do their homework and so forth and so on. And I was told off the record, well, you know, it’s different at night. This is our deal with the City of Newark. We take all comers, and most of them wind up at University College. Now, years ago I remember University College used to turn out very fine students; it was a tough school. And many of the people in the public accounting firms, when they encountered some of them, Oh, yes, I’m a Rutgers graduate. Yes? Oh, yes, I graduated from University College. In 1947, I had had no contact with University College at that time. It was a separate thing that went on at night, and we didn’t even know about it in the daytime.

COHEN: When you say you were told, this was just sort of loose talk?

GILMOUR: No, it was supposedly the grapevine, you know.

COHEN: The grapevine.

GILMOUR: Yes, you were supposed to understand this. Yes, yes. And that may or may not be the case today. I don’t know. My daughter goes to University College at night there now, and she’s approaching 40. She just never thought a college degree was important. Now she finds out that it is. And she says she has a lot of very able students in her classes. The instruction isn’t all that it should be in some cases, she says, but it’s pretty good. So perhaps that has changed in recent years. They’re tightening up. I think they are. But for a while there, anybody could walk in. If you could write your name, you know, you could go to University College. Yes. And that was some kind of a deal with the City of Newark. There were some other things I was willing to talk about. Oh, yes, some of the things that went on in the old days when we were on 18 Washington Place; that was right across from Washington Park.

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: The Washington Park had its share of derelicts like most parks in the big cities do.

COHEN: Mm-hmm.

GILMOUR: And sometimes you’d go to class and realize there was something going on in the class. There was just an electric atmosphere in the air, you know. And all of a sudden, some guy
would stand up and start babbling and looking around wondering where he was. And they’d brought in some derelict from the park.

COHEN: As a joke?

GILMOUR: Yes, in the back of the room. And I remember one guy got up, and he looked around, and he started giving us a lecture and so forth. So while he’s—Les and I went out and asked the campus patrol to come in. They eventually did, and they took him out, you know. Les said, Geez! He must have thought this was a course in public speaking or something. They all laughed, and we got back to work. Sometimes they’d bring stray dogs in, too. [Laughter] Practical jokes. This dog would come walking up wagging his tail, you know. We had some pretty wild students in those days. They were good kids. And some of the hellers later became partners in national accounting firms, you know. It was funny. I used to lecture the students on their dress, you know. And I remember telling them years ago that they should wear English shoes. And then I said, “You should buy English shoes because when shoes are made in England, they put on the last, and they’re put on the shelf for a year before they’re put out for sale. And they hold their shape much better than American shoes do. And they’ll last you longer, and they look better. And if you watch the sales, you can get them for about the same price.

About 25 years after he graduated, John Kirkpatrick was the managing partner in Peat Marwick Mitchell office here. Peat Marwick threw a big conference on something or other and invited a lot of faculty members, and I was one of them. Now John had been a Marine in World War II, and he was a heller in class. Practical joker and so forth and so on. But bright as could be. And so I came up behind him—he was talking to somebody, and he turned around, and he saw me. He says, “Jesus! Professor Gilmour! Damn!” He says, “I look older than you do.” To tell the truth, he did. [Laughter] I said, “I don’t know about that, John. But I never thought I’d see the day when you were managing partner of an office of Peat Marwick Mitchell. He starts laughing, and he picked up his foot, and he tapped his shoe, he says, “It’s these goddamn English shoes!” [Laughter]

COHEN: That’s really good.

GILMOUR: And he’d been out of school for 25 years, and he still remembered that. You took a very fatherly interest in the students.

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: And you’d tell them to go to thrift shops in the towns that had expensive—that had well-to-do people in them that had to keep up with styles. And you could get warm clothes and things, ski suits and things, for very little money. And many of our students did. But don’t go to one in Jersey City. You know go to the one in Caldwell and Verona and Summit. And they did. [Break in recording]

COHEN: And we’re back.
GILMOUR: I remember when I was talking.... I remember when I was talking to him about this business of getting a CPA and so forth. He says, “You know in some schools, accounting is being taught by finance people, by economists.” He said, “Out in St. Elizabeth’s College, it’s being taught by nuns.” He said, “If a student wanted to ask you in practice is that what you would do and you had to say to him, ‘I don’t know. I’ve never been in practice.’ Don’t you think he’s wondering why are you standing up there, and I’m sitting down here.” He says, “That’s never going to happen in this school.” And he was very adamant about that. That you be active in the profession, you serve on committees, you knew what was going on. Your read your journals. And by gosh, you didn’t always have the answer. But, you’ve been out there. And you could tell them what it was like.

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: You don’t wear blue suede shoes. [Laughter] And you don’t show up for interviews in a big Hawaiian shirt and so forth and so on. It was a finishing school.

COHEN: How has that role evolved?

GILMOUR: We don’t do that now.

COHEN: Why? Why has that changed?

GILMOUR: Well, it’s that the schools have largely given up this in loco parentis role. They don’t do it anymore. We’re infringing on their rights or whatever. I don’t know.

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: But you just don’t do that anymore.

COHEN: Mm-hmm.

GILMOUR: I’m trying to accumulate material for a handbook for accounting majors. And I wanted to incorporate a lot of this material in there in a way that I think will be, shall we say, politically correct these days. But a lot of students now, they never get past the interview. Yet they’re bright, and they’re capable. But they don’t understand when they go out to lunch, they’re having lunch with the company treasurer or controller or someone, these are educated people. You see, the strange thing about it, particularly in the undergraduate curriculum, if the normal curriculum is, say, 120 hours for the undergraduate degree—maybe 124 or 126—the CPA board requires 60 hours in professional courses. [Break in recording]

COHEN: We’re back with Professor Gilmour. Okay. You were talking about the requirements.

GILMOUR: Unfortunately, the accounting majors particularly, they only get two years of college, and the other two years are training.

COHEN: Yes.
GILMOUR: And yet they’re going out and meeting with people in the higher positions in the corporate world particularly—budget officers and whatever—and these fellows have gone to school. They’ve played lacrosse and been on the debating team and so forth. Our students never have. And there’s a great deal that they don’t know about the larger world. And if a student has an elective, they’ll come to you and say, What should I take? Should I take another course in cost accounting? And I tell them, “No, you should probably take a course in art history.” And they look at you, you know, as though you’ve lost your senses. And yet, you try to explain to them, you’re going to be pursuing professional work, particularly in accounting, which now requires what they call CPE—Continuing Professional Education—40 credits a year, or they don’t renew your license. So you’re going to be doing this the rest of your life. You’ll never get a chance to study art, music, any of the liberal arts. And yet they are going to make your life and determine how high you’re going to rise. You’re not going to get anywhere in this world because you’re a great cost accountant. That’s only on the job.

COHEN: You tell the students that?

GILMOUR: Yes, you tell that to students. You should take a course in philosophy. Philosophy?! Yes. So you’ll have something to talk about across the luncheon table. Our students don’t know how to score a tennis match. They’ve never been to an opera. They’ve never been inside a museum of art. They’re culturally deprived.

COHEN: Yes. So what….

GILMOUR: And I also tell them the most important course you’re going to take in this college is English.

COHEN: I’ve heard that from a lawyer.

GILMOUR: Oh, yes.

COHEN: I heard that from a student who graduated from NCAS and said almost word for word what you just said.

GILMOUR: That’s the most important course you can take.

COHEN: That’s exactly …

GILMOUR: And they look at you, you know, as though they can’t believe their ears.

COHEN: So how could this school resolve this really conflict between on the one hand the requirements, the professional requirements of 60 credits, and on the other hand you’re talking about 120 or 130 credits?

GILMOUR: Number one, the American Institute has adopted and they set the examination for CPA nationally. The exams are held by the states, and the certificates are issued by the states, but
the exams are all drawn from the examining center nationwide, from the American Institute. And there’s a strong move afoot now to have national CPA certificates. There’s no difference between a CPA from Connecticut and New York. It’s just like the Bar. A New York lawyer can’t practice in New Jersey. A New York CPA can’t sign a certificate in New Jersey.

COHEN: Of course.

GILMOUR: See? Well, anyway, if we had a separate school, we could at least make sure that the 60 credits that are devoted to the liberal arts are devoted effectively and efficiently. And with the requirement now from the institute that in order to sit for the exam you not only have to have 60 credits, you have to have 90 credits of professional courses. You have to have 150 credits.

COHEN: So how could that….

GILMOUR: And this takes place in the year 2000.

COHEN: So I don’t understand. Then how could a student, if the student had to have 90 credits for professional credits….

GILMOUR: Well, they’re not going to be professional credits, and they haven’t spelled out what these 90 credits are supposed to be, see?

COHEN: Oh, oh, oh. I see.

GILMOUR: So really what the schools are saying now is they want a more liberally educated candidate for the profession than we have had in the past.

COHEN: Well, why have they sent—You were talking about this before about over the dinner table, but could you expand upon that.

GILMOUR: Well, for example, when I set up the program in NCAS, students were still required to take physical education by the State of New Jersey. So I went down to the phys ed people, and said, “I want you to set up a special course for my students.” And I said, “I want you to teach them how to play handball and tennis and trout fishing and lacrosse and soccer, some lectures, some written assignments, some films, that they know what these sports are. When somebody comes into work and says, ‘Hey, I won three straight sets 40-love and so on,’ what the hell is he talking about? Our students don’t know.

COHEN: How about golf?

GILMOUR: Yes, and golf. And if nothing else, they’ll find sports that will interest them that they may follow when they get out of school, that they’ll enjoy, and they’ll know something about them. When the guy is talking about dry fly fishing, you’ll know what he’s talking about. I said, “Why am I wasting these credits in physical ed with guys going through calisthenics, you know?” I said, “We can’t do that.” [Laughter] We don’t have the equipment, we don’t have this, we don’t have that and can’t do it.
COHEN: Right.

GILMOUR: Our students are required to take 12 credits in humanities. They take six credits in Spanish, six credits in Hebrew literature in translation, and they’ve got the requirements. That Hebrew literature in translation can’t do you a damned bit of good in the profession! Or they take courses in black studies because they know they’ll get A’s. I said, “What kind of professional preparation is this?” Now, I talked to Dean Hosford about this. He says, “I know.” He went to Brown. He said, “We had a 12-credit course called Our Cultural Heritage.” He says, “We had people in there from art, from music, from history.” He says, “The grandeur that was Greece and the glory that was Rome.” He says, “And we covered the waterfront culturally. And we did it in 12 credits. I said, “Why can’t we do it now?” He says, “I couldn’t get the faculty to surrender their turf. And if we did,” he said, “they’d put their poorest faculty members in those courses.” If we had a separate school of business, we could …and by God, that’s what we did.

COHEN: And you have the….

GILMOUR: That’s right. We started doing something for our kids who are now just lost students in the College of Arts and Sciences. So there was much that can be done to…. And also we would have students assigned to a counselor, and it would be that counselor’s job to turn in reports as to when he’s seen these students. Then he’s got to talk to these students, and he’s going to go over their academic records, and he’s going to talk to them about their career goals and manners and dress and so forth and so on. And will have these as part of the curriculum as well. You can’t do it now. But you could if it was required of the students.

COHEN: Yes. Sure.

GILMOUR: I’d like to see the business luncheons revived.

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: We could do it, and the business community would support us handsomely. But they won’t do it now.

COHEN: What other components of the liberal arts program do you consider important, you know, for a student to, as you said before, know out in the larger world?

GILMOUR: Well, I don’t know other than that there are great deficiencies in art and music and the humanities in general. They are goal-driven, career-driven, and they’ve got blinders on. They see nothing but that. And if they have a few credits left over, they want to take another course in taxes.

COHEN: Yes. So when they’re going out with these blinders, what’s happening to them in the real world? So they go out, they get a job as a good accountant, all this other business. And he’s running into people—is it just dinner conversation we’re talking about?
GILMOUR: No.

COHEN: Oh. Or luncheon conversation?

GILMOUR: Well, for example, Johnson & Johnson used to come up every year and recruit from our school. Then they didn’t come. Ben Summers was the director of placement then. And I said to Ben, I said, “What happened to Johnson & Johnson?” He said, “I don’t know. They haven’t been here for a couple of years. Why don’t you find out?” Oh, alright. Because I used to place quite a few students with them. Went there and talked to them. They said, “We find out you turn out some of the best accountants in the world. But they don’t know anything else.” He says, “And they can’t manage. They don’t understand people. So they’re going to stay there in their cost accounting or tax department or whatever. They’ll never become managers in the company. We’ve tried it, and they’ve failed.” “Well, what are you doing now?” He said, “We hire liberal arts graduates.” He said, “Most of them are English majors.” Yes. He said, “In fact we’re opening up a new personal products plant, and the plant manager is an English graduate from Swarthmore.” He says, “We get them in here. Then we send them across the street to University College at night.” This is in New Brunswick, right? To acquire their tool skills: their management and their finance and their marketing and so forth and so on. How is it working out? It’s working out beautifully.

Our students don’t have four years of college; they have two, and the rest of it is technical training. And they’re very shallow in history, they’re shallow in literature, they’re shallow in most of the liberal arts. By necessity. And they should have a good course in world literature, which would at least expose them to Carlyle and Swift and some of these people and to know these names exist. They don’t know anything about them. Never heard of them. Most of them have never heard of Michelangelo. They certainly haven’t heard of the Dutch and Flemish School of painters. And these things come up in casual conversation, and our guys sit there like dummies. They don’t know anything about this. But you ask them a tax question, oh, they’re right there. Go to a cocktail party, they don’t know what to talk about. They’re culturally deprived, particularly the students that we get in Newark. They’re poor kids, and they’re looking for a way to get out of this mess. And we should be doing a lot more for them than we are. But with the present setup, you can’t do that that. Furthermore, the recruiters aren’t coming down; they’re going to New Brunswick.

COHEN: Oh?

GILMOUR: Yes.

COHEN: For the …program…

GILMOUR: yea, yea.

COHEN: Is that right?

GILMOUR: J.H. Cohn just gave a scholarship; they gave it to New Brunswick. Yet half the partners in J.H. Cohen came from Rutgers-Newark.
COHEN: J.H. Cohn?

GILMOUR: J.H. Cohn.

COHEN: Cohn?

GILMOUR: Cohn from Newark, yes. It’s a large local firm. Yes, they gave it to New Brunswick, which is in a separate school of business. It’s not in the Department of Economics— liberal arts school.

COHEN: Under the liberal program, as you say, under the umbrella.

GILMOUR: Yes, yes, yes.

COHEN: Oh, that’s very, very distressing.

GILMOUR: The Port Authority did the same thing. They used to recruit from our school.

COHEN: Has this case been made to the, well, the liberal arts faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences in a way that you’ve expressed that.

GILMOUR: No. I have talked informally to many of the chairmen and so forth, and there’s no way, no way you could ever do anything like that here. The departments are … too... It doesn’t fit in with their research interests, their publishing interests. And if it doesn’t, then academically they couldn’t survive. And the Graduate School of Management, of course, is so research-oriented. You know when the Newark News went out of business, they offered that building to Rutgers, to GSM.

COHEN: To GSM?

GILMOUR: Yes, to Rutgers.

COHEN: Where’s that building located?

GILMOUR: It’s on Broad Street.

COHEN: Oh.

GILMOUR: Yes, it’s now condos.

COHEN: Oh, yes! Of course. Across from Lincoln Park.

GILMOUR: So we went down there. Of course Dick Marshall was there; I’m talking a black in GSM. A wonderful man. There’s a guy you should interview about minority recruitment.
COHEN: Yes, yes.


GILMOUR: He’s a wonderful man.

COHEN: Did he retire or is he still there. I haven’t seen him in….

GILMOUR: Well, he does his teaching in the summer and in the fall.

COHEN: Oh, I see him occasionally.

GILMOUR: Then he spends his winters down in Florida.

COHEN: Yes. I guess that’s the reason why.

GILMOUR: Yes, he’s got a department down there at Miami.

COHEN: Yes, yes.

GILMOUR: In fact we just got a church program when he was the preacher at a Sunday service.

COHEN: Wow!

GILMOUR: He’s a wonderful human being. And if you can get him to talk about what’s happening to minority recruitment; it’s a shame, yes. Dick Marshall. But anyway, we went down there. His field was real estate. And we went down there, a group of us, and looked the building over. And the thing is built like Fort Knox. It’s got poured concrete floors to support rolls of paper and printing presses and so forth. Freight elevators. There’s a rail track in the back. And this was when I was trying to get the school interested in starting incubator businesses to get jobs back into Newark.

COHEN: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

GILMOUR: And I said to the team, “Look, Newark used to be a very busy manufacturing area.”

COHEN: Sure.

GILMOUR: “And what this city needs is not grants; it needs jobs. And if we can get small businesses started and get their accounting systems set up and teach them how to market their products and so forth and so on…. When we’re able, move them out and put new businesses in.” They’re business incubators. And it’s something that’s been good all over the country—now. And I said, “This would be an ideal business form for any kind of business you can put in there. Printing business cards or whatever. They’re strong. They’ve got freight elevators and so forth.
It’s right on public transportation. Because so many of the jobs that used to be in Newark have moved out of Newark.

COHEN: That’s right.

GILMOUR: Unless you’ve got wheels, you can’t go to work. And the poor people of Newark don’t have the wheels. So they stay there on welfare. And I said, “We could get our faculty to advise these people on their problems and so forth and so on, how to run these businesses.” The dean said to me, he says, “Our faculty our researchers. They couldn’t manage a hotdog stand.”

COHEN: Was that Forrest [sp] at that time?

GILMOUR: Yes. He said, “They couldn’t manage a hotdog stand.” And he was right. [Laughs]

COHEN: Was this the genesis of the Small Business Development Center?

GILMOUR: Yes. Then later they decided they’d start it because they had government grants for it.

COHEN: Yes. There was the nucleus of the idea perhaps.

GILMOUR: But you don’t see any faculty over there.

COHEN: No?

GILMOUR: Yes. So…. It’s a research institution. And if the students learn anything, well, that’s—that’s just the fallout, you know. [Laughter] But that’s not true today.

COHEN: I wanted to ask you…you mentioned a couple of the administrators under the various deans. Do you have anything to say about some of the presidents—for instance Bloustein you mentioned before—about his…. Of course you were there under Lewis Webster Jones and Mason Gross.

GILMOUR: Clothier was president when I was there.

COHEN: Do you have any comments about Mason Gross’s administration?

GILMOUR: No. As far as I knew anyway, we were pretty well insulated from New Brunswick. We went on our way. They didn’t bother us, and we didn’t bother them much. I got quite an education in that my first year there, I was elected faculty secretary. And I thought, gee, that was quite an honor. Well, later on I discovered that was a job that nobody wanted. They always stuck the new guy with it, you know. [Laughter] So we had a faculty meeting, and I brought up the minutes and went into the dean’s office and said, “I’d like to give these to the typist to type up,” and so forth. And Esterly says, “Well, first I want to edit them.” I said, “Edit them?” He says, “Young man, a lot of things go on in the school that are within the family.” And he says, “Copies of the minutes go to New Brunswick. I always edit the minutes first.” So he sat down, and he
starts drawing lines through this and through that. [Laughs] And my four pages of minutes were reduced to about a page and a half of minutes. [Laughter] And that was my education in campus politics.

COHEN: Yea, campus politics.

GILMOUR: We keep our dirty linen at home. So we didn’t have too much contact with New Brunswick and the presidents. Once in a while, well, we went down there for graduations.

COHEN: How about under Bloustein? Any changes there?

GILMOUR: Not really except that the emphasis was, it became quite clear, publish or you just don’t get promoted. Yes.

COHEN: On the local scene, Malcolm Talbott was vice president from 1965 to ’72. He never became provost. Any sense of his work, contribution?

GILMOUR: All I knew was that Malcolm was a wonderful guy, dedicated, seemed to work like a dog, never wound up as provost—I never did know why. I know the provost ended up being a fellow from the law school. He used to sing …

COHEN: …5 You mean the dean of the law school?

GILMOUR: No. Very active in the Presbyterian Church.

COHEN: Oh, Willard Heckel. Oh, he was the dean, yes. Well….

GILMOUR: He was for a while, that’s right.

COHEN: They shared the department, yes.

GILMOUR: And Heckel loved to sing.

COHEN: I didn’t know that.

GILMOUR: Oh, yes.

COHEN: I knew he was active in the….

GILMOUR: He used to sing in amateur productions of German operas. He had a wonderful voice.

COHEN: I just…all these years—

GILMOUR: Oh, yes.
COHEN: —he was a famous orator? And he was very active in the—was it the Presbyterian?

GILMOUR: Yes.

COHEN: Yes, yes. That I knew, but I didn’t know he was a singer.

GILMOUR: Yes, he was a great singer. And great admirer of Wagner, and we used to talk about the Wagnerian operas because I’m kind of an opera fan myself. But I didn’t know much about Talbott except he worked like hell. Whether he ever accomplished anything or not, I really don’t know.

COHEN: Jim Young was the first provost. Do you have any sense of his administration?

GILMOUR: Well, how do you put something off the record?

COHEN: Well…. [Break in recording] We were talking about Jim Young’s contributions as the—well, the first provost on the Newark campus.

GILMOUR: Well, it just seemed to me that the provost merely carried out the wishes of New Brunswick; they really had no effective power. I know when the Pingry School moved out of Newark, they offered us their playing field, which had seven acres, for $30,000. It was a steal and would have been a wonderful athletic center for Rutgers-Newark. And there was no way we could get $30,000 from New Brunswick.

COHEN: Where was that located?

GILMOUR: Up in the…what do they call that section where there’s still all the lovely homes and stuff.

COHEN: Mount Prospect? Off of Little Fair Avenue? I’m trying to remember now where the…. I think that was always…. It wasn’t near the campus, though, where the campus is now.

GILMOUR: No. It was about a half mile away from it.

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: Which would have been nothing at all.

COHEN: Could’ve managed it.

GILMOUR: Oh, sure.

COHEN: I see.

GILMOUR: We never got the Newark News Building either.
COHEN: Yes. I didn’t realize that.

GILMOUR: It would have been a gift. We got offered other buildings; they turned them down. I was surprised when they finally took that building from the Fire Insurance Company.

COHEN: Yes, on Washington.

GILMOUR: For the law school.

COHEN: Yes. Well, that was the….

GILMOUR: Of course there was a lot of hell raised by the alumni of the law school, too, because they gave a lot of money to building a law school in Newark. And when they found out they were going to move out of Ackerman Hall, there were a lot of attorneys around the state that were pretty steamed about it.

COHEN: I think eventually people realized that was a good move. It’s a great building.

GILMOUR: Yes, eventually. But unfortunately I think the provost should be much more located on the campus than away from it. There’s a lot going on on the campus that I don’t think ever reaches to the top floor, or whatever it is, of 15 Washington.

COHEN: Yes, yes. The deans. I mean you’ve worked under…well, in the College of Arts and Sciences, when you can in, was Norman Samuels the dean?

GILMOUR: He was the dean, yes, yes.

COHEN: How did that work out? I mean what is your perception of his deanship?

GILMOUR: Good. He was a good dean. Yes, I think he was a good dean. Had some pretty good people working for him. He did what he could to increase the hiring of women, minorities. He was carrying out company pretty well. And I think he was a pretty good dean. But I don’t think that Newark has ever been too close to the heart of New Brunswick. And most of the things we could have done—to make it a bigger and better school, a fine school—never got off the ground. New Brunswick just wasn’t interested in that. I do think that the head of the business education should be in New Brunswick. I think it should be there where the president has frequent contact with him and finds out what’s going on. And I think the deans should spend a good deal of time in Newark as well as New Brunswick. And he should really run things. I was impressed. Years ago before we ever had accreditation, the State of New York used to decide whether or not graduates of certain schools could sit for the examination in the State of New York. Because a New York CPA certificate was the certificate to have.

COHEN: Oh.
GILMOUR: In fact the accounting firm where I first started work, one of the partners had his CPA certificate hanging on the wall. Gee, he must have had 20 or 30 of them. Nebraska, New Hampshire…

COHEN: He could work all over the country.

GILMOUR: If he happened to be in that state where they were giving the exam, he’d sit for it. And some of them were just bookkeeping examinations. Because if you had a CPA certificate in the State of New York, that was something to have. There used to be a guy who used to come around, examine our program. And one thing he wanted was copies of all final examinations. And he’s go over them very, very carefully. Then he’d go over the grades. He’d go over the backgrounds of the faculty members who were teaching there and their professional experience and so forth. Then he’d talk to the students. He’d take them out to lunch. Then when he got through, he knew that school pretty darned well. One guy; that’s all it was, an accrediting school. And if he passed your school, your graduates could sit in the State of New York; otherwise they couldn’t. And I think that if that kind of a head of business education would come around to Newark and see what’s going on and look over the class rosters, who’s teaching what and how many students are in the classes, he would find that some of those classes, 15 students. The course schedule comes out, and again and again it’s TBA—To Be Announced. Because if they told who was going to teach the course, no students would sign up for it. And they know it.

COHEN: You’re talking about in the Graduate School of Management and the Business Department?

GILMOUR: No, in the Graduate School—

COHEN: The Graduate School of Management.

GILMOUR: Yes. TBA. And finally the students would register, and there’d be 25 students in the class, and in the second class there’d be 15. By the end of the semester, there were only four.

COHEN: Mm-hmm.

GILMOUR: And there was some terrible teachers over there. They don’t care about teaching. They’re researchers, and they don’t want to be bothered with it.

COHEN: Why are there so many TBA’s, though? Don’t they know in advanced who’s going to be assigned the class or—

GILMOUR: Oh, the administration does.

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: They don’t want the students to know.

COHEN: Oh! [Laughter]
GILMOUR: Sure. Sure, they do. Guys like Demser [sp], a wonderful guy. Couldn’t teach worth sour apples. We got seven students. He’d wind up with three at the end of the term, you know. Ching, she never taught classes for years. And some of the other Orientals that Horace hired, you know. Geez! The students couldn’t understand them, and they were just a public embarrassment. Yes.

COHEN: Well, is there anything that we’ve talked about you’d like to go back to, maybe promote or expand upon?

GILMOUR: No. There were just some interesting faculty members there, like Eric Otto who used to introduce himself to his class. He’d say, “My name is Eric Otto. Spelled the same way forwards as backwards, O-T-T-O. [Laughter] He used to teach finance. And then of course there was Sol Fink [sp].

COHEN: Oh, yes.

GILMOUR: Solomon Fink. He was—

COHEN: The economy of New Jersey.

GILMOUR: He was a graduate of the University of Berlin, and he got out before the Nazis got him.

COHEN: Oh, is that so!

GILMOUR: And he was a real Prussian type. And of course the saying around the school always was “Flunk with Fink.” And he taught economics and made it quite clear to the students if they didn’t pass economics, they weren’t going to graduate. And he held the whole class in terror. [Laughs] Flunk with Fink. Charlie Martin who used to teach cost accounting; and by some means which we never figured out, used to do these long, elaborate cost accounting problems on the board. And he’d write like hell, and the students would be writing like hell trying to keep up with him. But somehow he put the final answer on the board, the phone would ring, he’d throw his stuff in his briefcase, and be out the door. His timing was fabulous. And everyone in the school used to wonder how Charlie Martin did it, how he timed it. Of course Starkweather; as I say, he was head of finance, and he used to be from the Hanover Bank. He was quite a flamboyant character. But that’s, I don’t know, that’s about it, I guess.

COHEN: Okay. One final question. Anything we haven’t touched on that you’d like to touch on? I wonder if there might be any questions that I haven’t asked that maybe I should have asked.

GILMOUR: No, not really. I think, from what you have told me, that the education for business is going to be overhauled at Rutgers. Apparently there will be one business school. And I know there’s a lot of resistance to it in GSM because they’re an elitist group, and they don’t want to get
contaminated with undergraduates. And if you could have access to the memos that have gone back and forth, it’s been pretty vile, pretty vicious.

COHEN: Oh….

GILMOUR: Yes. And, oh, Wishward [sp] offered a memorandum about how the intrusion of undergraduate teaching into the Graduate School of Management faculty ranks would decimate their scholarship and their productivity and so forth and so on… Oh, boy! They’re pretty much an elitist group now. And they really have no empathy for undergraduate students at all. They think that first they should go out and get a liberal education and then come to them. A la Harvard, which is what Harvard does. [End of Tape #2]

COHEN: We’re back with Professor Gilmour. We were talking about the whole question of the elitism of the school and then how this compares with the mission of the Newark campus.

GILMOUR: It seems to me that, as a state-supported institution, the taxpayers have got a big investment in Rutgers. And they ought to be seeing more of a return from that investment in terms of their own sons and daughters. And Newark is the hub of a very heavily industrialized area. When you think of Harrison and Kearny and Union and Jersey City and so on, and you’ve got literally thousands of young men—and young women—who would very much like to prepare for an education in the business world, and really don’t have the chance to do it in a Class A institution, which Rutgers should have and should be, in the Newark area. Now, the present faculty of the Graduate School of Management is not at all in accord with that philosophy. They are a faculty that wants to teach college graduates. Well, the students that I’m talking about—and you’re talking about fellows like Mike Trostow, who’s now the chairman on the board of trustees of Rutgers, he’s a graduate of that business program. He could never have gone to a college for four years and then gone to a graduate school. He didn’t have the money. And neither did Les Peters and many, many other people that have gone through that program.

COHEN: Graduate of the business program, you’re saying, in the College of Arts and Sciences?

GILMOUR: No, no, no. When it was the business school.

COHEN: When it was the business school, undergraduate business. I’m sorry.

GILMOUR: Right, an undergraduate business school. Right. And there are a great many young men and women out there who deserve the chance, whose parents and whose parents’ employers are paying the taxes that support Rutgers, and they’re not getting the output; they’re not getting the results. They’re getting a graduate program in Newark whose faculty members are turning out reams of publications of interest to nobody but other academics. And if you read the titles of their publications, they’re pure professional jargon. And they’re printed in obscure journals that nobody reads except other academics. They really have no interest in teaching business courses to undergraduate students. So you really need an undergraduate school of business that is student-oriented, not research-oriented. Student-oriented where the faculty are active practitioners and know what they’re talking about; and they know what job opportunities exist and where they are pure myth and what they need to get into these. And they can tell these
students honestly, and the students know that they know what they’re talking about: You’ve got to do this, and you’ve got to do that or you’re not going to make it. You’ve got to polish up your speech. You’ve got to learn to use English better than you do. You’ve got to change your dress. You’ve got to get an attaché case. You’ve got to get Cross pens. So these little things that make all the difference between getting hired and not getting hired. Well, even if you have the school, unless you adopt a student-oriented faculty and program, it’s not doing the job that those taxpayers are entitled to. Now if we were a private school, we could do whatever we like. But we're not. And I feel very strongly about this. And I think that in my lifetime we’re going to see a school of business in Newark, which is going to be pretty much a lot of what was in 1948. Yes. I think the wheel is going to go full cycle.

COHEN: That’s very interesting.

GILMOUR: And that would be an outcome greatly to be desired. School of practitioners to turn out practitioners, not researchers. Furthermore, I think the research laboratory for faculty in the school of business is the marketplace. It’s not punching computers and modeling. It’s out there where it’s really happening. Our faculty doesn’t get out there and get their feet wet in the marketplace. They criticize the model of somebody else as written up in some other journal, and then there’s a rejoinder. And it goes back and forth. And nobody gives a rat about it anyway in the real world. If you want to know about utilities, you don’t ask Tom Crew. You ask the brokerage firms that specialize in marketing securities in the utilities. They know what’s going on. So it’s largely an ineffectual exercise.

COHEN: Tom Crew?

GILMOUR: Crew, yes. C-R-E-W.

COHEN: Faculty?

GILMOUR: Yes.

COHEN: His first name is Tom?

GILMOUR: It isn’t Tom.

COHEN: Is there an Ian Crew on that?

GILMOUR: No. It’s Crew, though.

COHEN: Oh, okay.

GILMOUR: He’s from Liverpool.

COHEN: Oh, okay.

GILMOUR: An English accent.
COHEN: Uh-huh. Yes.

GILMOUR: Yes. And he runs some Institute of Public Utilities something-or-other. He collects all kinds of statistics and so forth. Yes, and they get high salaries.

COHEN: Mm-hmm.

GILMOUR: Oh, yes. Oh, what you could do with that money in a real school. Well, the school did what Bloustein wanted. But I don’t think it’s what the taxpayers are entitled to.

COHEN: Yes.

GILMOUR: And if you look at the doctoral programs. And the same thing is true, of course, across the street at NJIT. You’ll find that the taxpayers in New Jersey are paying a lot of money to educate foreigners. Asiatic Indians, Orientals, Koreans, very few American-born.

COHEN: They’re public seats.

GILMOUR: Hmm?

COHEN: They’re public seats.

GILMOUR: They’re public seats, right, right. And they’re almost, in effect, paying them to come to school. And they give them stipends so they can teach. The vicious part of that is that—and I’ve talked to students about this in NCAS—is instruction is being given by people whom the students can’t understand…the language barrier. And I was talking to one student when I was working on the books of the pub [sp]... I was the treasure of that since its inception years ago. I said, “I thought, according to your class schedule, you’re supposed to be in class.” He said, “I don’t go to class.” “Why not?” “I can’t understand the instructor. And if I ask him a question, I can’t understand the answer.”

COHEN: In what course are they talking about?

GILMOUR: I don’t know what the course was.

COHEN: In NCAS?

GILMOUR: NCAS.

COHEN: Uh-huh. Yes.

GILMOUR: It had to be a business course because these are graduate—doctoral program candidates.

COHEN: I see, yes.
GILMOUR: I said, “Well, how do you get through the course?” He said, “Well, the exams are all straight out of the book.” He says, “If you study the book, you don’t have to go to class.” “Do many students do that?” He said, “Oh, yes, lots of us. We don’t go to class.” He said, “We can’t understand the instructor.” He said, “A lot of them you can’t.” So why bother?

COHEN: This is in the GSM you’re talking about?

GILMOUR: These are doctoral candidates in GSM.

COHEN: Doctoral candidates in GSM.

GILMOUR: Right. And they’re teaching undergraduates.

COHEN: Oh, they’re teaching undergraduates. Oh, I see.

GILMOUR: That’s the way it is.

COHEN: I see.

GILMOUR: Now, if we had a separate business school, we could refuse to accept them as instructors. Can’t now. Yes.

COHEN: Difficult time.

GILMOUR: Yes. And you will find people, for example, teaching, oh, a course in accounting. The candidate says Organizational Behavior in the doctoral program. They really don’t know anything about accounting.

COHEN: And they’re teaching accounting.

GILMOUR: Yes.

COHEN: What’s the connection?

GILMOUR: Well, they’re teaching marketing or something because they’re supposed to teach so many hours for their stipend. So they sent over by GSM to teach courses in the business program in NCAS.

COHEN: In NCAS.

GILMOUR: Yes.

COHEN: They’re really not…. 
GILMOUR: They’re really not competent. Yes. The Marketing Department in GSM, you’ve got four Asian Indians. They’re teaching marketing to American students. What do they know about marketing in the United States? [Laughs] But the chair happened to be an NJIT graduate, and he hired four more. They can get them cheap. Oh, there’s a lot of things wrong with education for business in Newark. Oh, geez! And if a sharp dean from New Brunswick could spend some time in Newark, and all of a sudden you begin to find out a lot of things that should be changed. Yes. So I’m quite pleased that President Lawrence has the perspicacity to realize that there’s something very wrong with education for business in Newark. And delighted with these meetings that are going on. I don’t know what’s going to come out of them, but I’m sure it’s going to be a damned sight better than what we have now.

COHEN: They have to finalize, and I guess the final administrator will work on the issue of the reporting system, I guess. But they’re pretty close to that, I understand. Well, you have been very forthcoming. Anything else?

GILMOUR: Not that I can think of.

COHEN: Okay. Well, thank you very, very much.

GILMOUR: You’re welcome.

COHEN: Thanks. [End of Tape #3]

[End of Interview]

Edited by Gideon Thompson