Interview with Rich Bradley

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Interviewer: Chris Reynolds

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Reynolds: Okay, are we recording? I think we are.

Bradley: Yep, I think so.

Reynolds: I think we're in good shape. This is the first interview of Rich Bradley for the Oral History Program at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, the Statecraft Program. We're going to be talking to Rich today about his biographical information, career background, history of radio, here in Illinois and in Springfield, and then, we are going to move on to the history of SS-UIS and WSSR or, as it's now known, WUIS, WIPA, I think is included in that, and his involvement with NPR.

This is December 2, 2011. It's about 10:00 a.m. at the [Abraham Lincoln] Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois. I am Chris Reynolds, a volunteer interviewer.

So, let's get to the first question here, in terms of biographical information. Tell me what you know about your family background, parents, siblings, grandchildren. If there's any memorable aunts or uncles or cousins you could throw those in too.

Bradley: I was born and raised on a tenant farm over in eastern Champaign County, a mile and two miles. I'd say a mile and two miles because we had two different

plots of ground that my dad farmed. A mile and two miles north of Ogden, Illinois, which is in Champaign County, but right up against the county line with Vermilion. Ogden is almost exactly half way between Champaign and Danville. My dad also grew up on a farm. Then, during WWII, he was working in a steel foundry over in Indianapolis. When the war broke out, he was locked into that job, exempted from the draft as long as he continued to work there.

My mother was a homemaker. That was the environment that I grew up in, with two sisters younger than me. I'm the oldest of four…two sisters and a brother, six years younger. [I] Went to Ogden Grade School and Ogden High School. When I graduated from high school, my first inclination was to go into farming because that's all I knew at the time.

My dad was a tenant farmer, though. He didn't own his farm ground; he rented. There was just no ground available to be rented at the time I graduated. So, Ogden, being about fifteen miles from Champaign-Urbana, was right there in the shadow of the U of I [University of Illinois]. So, I —

Reynolds: (interrupting) So, you seriously toyed with a profession in farming?

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: …if the conditions had been right.

Bradley: If there had been hundred and twenty or a hundred and sixty acres available to rent, I really believe I would have gone that route. My dad would have assisted me. He would have allowed me to use his farm equipment.

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: …to get started. There's no doubt in my mind that that's what would have happened if there'd been any ground at all available because my dad lived his whole life at Ogden, with the exception of the three or four years during the war, in the early '40s. The foundry is in Speedway, Indiana, which is right outside Indianapolis.

Reynolds: Okay. Let's go back to your growing up in central Illinois. We kind of talked about where you lived, some of the schools you attended. Are there any important memories of events that affected your early life?

Bradley: Hmm, no.

Reynolds: Oh, like the Kennedy assassination or the—

Bradley: Well, I was working in radio by that time.

Reynolds: Oh, yeah.

Bradley: That was in ‘63. My radio career—

Reynolds: So, I’ve got to remember you’re older than me. So, I was in grade school when that happened. (laugh) So, I always think, oh, that’s always a big event.

Bradley: (laugh) Really, my career in radio really started in 1960, when I transferred from the U of I, where I went to school for two years. I transferred to Southern Illinois University in Carbondale

Reynolds: Well, let’s just go ahead and talk about your radio career. Did your dad’s experience in the war, or any of that kind of thing, have an impact or impression on you or—

Bradley: No, because I was still pretty young. I was born in 1940.

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: And my dad was working in the steel foundry at that time. Well, no, let me take that back. My next youngest sister, the sister next to me, is a year younger than me. She and I were born in Illinois. Then, my second sister, the third of four, was born in Indiana. So, by November of ‘42, we were living in Indiana. I have vague memories of living there. Weird things kind of stick out in my mind, like two draft horses in a field next to that house, snow being deeper than “ass-deep to a tall Indian,” as the saying goes.

Reynolds: This is outside of Indianapolis, did you say?

Bradley: Yeah, it was out on…it was about halfway between Indianapolis and Lebanon, Indiana, near Fayette, Indiana, I seem to recall. Anyway, then, by the time my brother was born in ‘46, we had moved back to Illinois.

But, there’s a story in my dad moving back to Illinois, leaving the foundry there to go back to farming. He knew that, if he left the foundry, he would be immediately subjected to the draft. This opportunity came along. His dad was a farmer, my granddad. He had this opportunity, while the war was still going on. This would have been in January-February-March of ‘45. He had this opportunity to come back to Illinois, one hundred and sixty acres, right next to my granddad at the farm. But, he knew that, if he did that, as long as the war was going on, he would be subjected to the draft. People never thought about…or, at least, as far as I know…never thought about politics and the role politics played in the draft at that time in history. So, my granddad understood quite well the implications. The draft board consisted of three farmers, all laborers, friends of my granddad.

Reynolds: What county was this again?

Bradley: This was in Champaign County.

Reynolds: Champaign County?

Bradley: Yeah…

Reynolds: Well, that's surprising because Champaign has some urban areas. You would've thought—

Bradley: It was a Selective Service Board.

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: You know, I don't too much about the breakout. I'm just telling, relaying to you now, what my dad told me. My dad came back, went with his dad, my granddad, to visit each of these three members on the Selective Service Board, explaining to them—and they were all farmers—that there was this opportunity to rent a hundred and sixty acres from Joe Ackerman, who also owned the same ground that my granddad owned, but, that my dad faced the possibility of being drafted if he quit his job at the foundry, where he was frozen and exempted from the draft, as long as he stayed there. But, if he came back, not only, he would be subjected to being draft. Well, he went to each of the three, with my dad in tow and explained the situation to each of the three farmers, asking them for their advice and guidance. Each of them, to a person, my dad told me, they each said they understood what a great opportunity it was for a young man getting into farming. They each, to a person, told my granddad not to worry about it. And so—

Reynolds: That was good enough.

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: Did you ever go to the foundry? Did you ever have a sense of what your dad did at this foundry? Or—

Bradley: No. I just knew that—

Reynolds: Too young?

Bradley: He got on. He rode a bus. The house where I lived was right on Indiana Route 52. He would catch the bus—he worked the night shift, I remember that. He would catch the bus late at night and then, come back on the bus in the morning, around 6:30 or 7:00 or 8:00. Now, I don't remember what this steel foundry produced—

Reynolds: Did the depression in the farm economy…is that what prompted him to move to Indiana and work at the foundry, do you recall? You wouldn't have recalled, but in their reminiscences about what…?

Bradley: He wanted a farm. There was just no farm ground. Very similar to the situation I faced in ’58.

Reynolds: Which would have been in the 30s, I guess, or the early ‘40s?

Bradley: Yes, my dad married in ‘39. Mom and Dad married in ‘39. He went to work at a Studebaker dealership as a mechanic, there in Ogden. That was just for a short period of time. [He] Wasn’t making much money then, and he had the opportunity to go to Indiana—and much of the family came from Indiana— to work at this foundry for, I believe, significantly more money than he was making as a mechanic. He had two kids, myself and my sister, Karen. So, he took this job in the foundry. Then, of course, when the war broke out, that changed the whole complexion of things. Then, I think Everett Robbins was farming this ground that my dad ended up on. He died. There was nobody to succeed him, to take over the farm, at least in his family. So, this hundred and sixty acres, owned by Joe Ackerman, became available. I think old Joe knew my dad was looking, always looking, to come back to Illinois to farm. So, my granddad also rented a hundred and sixty acres from Joe Ackerman. And that’s how Dad learned about the opportunity to come back to farming in the—.

Reynolds: But farming was kind of, what he thought was his way into the American dream or whatever?

Bradley: Yeah, I think so. I think so.

Reynolds: Just to backtrack a little bit, could you lay out your siblings and, you know, who they are and the order and, maybe, what they ended up doing, just to kind of lay that out?

Bradley: Sure. My first sister, next to me, is a year younger than me; Karen was born in April of ‘41. She was pretty much…she graduated from high school, with home economics, you know, kind of stuff. She worked at the University of Illinois as a secretary for a couple of years after she graduated from high school.

Reynolds: Back when they were secretaries.

Bradley: Yes. So, she had all the skills, you know, of typing and taking short-hand and all that stuff. So, she was able to get a job. Both my sisters, actually, were able to get a job at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana. It was fifteen mile into the campus and back. She met, then, her husband [who] was, I call him, a “Hoosier Farmer.” Paul was born and raised in Indiana—Paul Kirkpatrick—just across the state line from Danville, you know, in that vicinity. She got married. Then, she moved to Indiana with him and became a farmer’s wife. That’s where she is now, and that’s what she still is. She’s a farmer’s wife. (laugh) And they raised three boys.

My next sister, Sandy, was born in ‘42, but she was born in Indiana, see, when we moved over there. Then, when we came back, she graduated from high school, a year after Karen. Rich in ‘58, Karen in ‘59, Sandy in ‘60 and then my brother, Gary, in ‘64. She worked at the university as a secretary. Met her husband. He was a guy from Danville, and they hung around Danville. In Ogden, when we wanted to go to town, we either went to Champaign or to Danville. You know, just kind of like flipping a coin.

Reynolds: And Danville had the reputation for being a little seedier.

Bradley: It did, it did. (laugh) How do you know that?

Reynolds: I spent some time in Danville.

Bradley: Oh, did you?

Reynolds: Yes, I was a regional planner there for a while.

Bradley: Green Street...

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: I think, was called “the whore house row,” you know, at that time. Anyway, Sandy met her husband, Leonard, nicknamed Sonny. They married, and he was from Danville. They settled into…he worked at a place called Bon Aluminum in Danville. They manufactured aluminum grills—

Reynolds: Back in the hay day of manufacturing in Danville.

Bradley: Yes…and coils for heating and air conditioning, commercial grade, not residential, but commercial. He worked there…that was his whole career, until he retired here, about five, six, seven years ago. He and my sister still live north of Danville on the banks of one of the forks of the Vermilion River. They raised one boy and two girls. My brother Gary graduated from high school. But his high school career is kind of interesting because, about halfway through his high school career, Ogden and St. Joe, arch enemies when I was in high school, consolidated.

Reynolds: It’s early ‘60s we’re talking?

Bradley: This would have been ‘63, ‘64. He went a couple of years, as I recall, to Ogden High School, junior-senior year then, at St. Joe-Ogden. He was there during a transition period. Not longer after he graduated from high school, he ended up down at SIU Carbondale at Vocational Technical Institute, down there, which is a technical school that SIU Carbondale ran. Its campus was located at Carterville. Right after he completed his two years, technical school training, he was drafted into the Vietnam War.

That would have been in ‘68, ‘69. He had two years that he served, and he was over in Vietnam, [as a] gunnery sergeant and artillery battery. They had, what they call a LZ, a landing zone, where there were six guns. So, they could cover three hundred sixty degrees. He had two or three guys working under him as his crew. They were firing these big artillery guns. They each had enough range to overlap one another.

And Chris, you know, during the year he was in Vietnam, I saw my mother age like you wouldn’t believe, during that period of time. There was one Christmas that he was gone from home. You know, he was overseas, but he came back safe and sound.

As a matter of fact, he came back a month before he was scheduled to, simply because the unit he was with was…suddenly they decided they wanted to move this unit somewhere else, get closer to the Cambodian borders. They could shoot artillery into Cambodia before Nixon owned up to it. But, rather than send him in there for one month, they released him from his tour of duty, sent him back a month early. It happened so quick, the family…he didn’t really have a chance to notify the family. His wife didn’t know he was even back in the Chicago area until he knocked on the door a lot. I think it was in the middle of the night, and she answered the door. (laugh)

Reynolds: And he came back no worse for wear, no injuries or psychological problems?

Bradley: No, none that we hear about and read about now.

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: At least, not insofar as I know. And I think I or my mother or our sisters would have known, somehow or another. But, no, he’s—

Reynolds: What did he, then, go on to do?

Bradley: He went into automotive. He got a job in a parts department of a Ford dealership in the Chicago area. He met his wife down at Carbondale. She was taking training as a dental hygienist at the technical school down at Carbondale. That’s where they met. She was originally from Oak Lawn. They married in ’68, and that’s when…then he got drafted. He worked construction until he went into the service. When he came out of the service, he got a job in the parts department of, as I say, in a Ford dealership in, oh…

Reynolds: One of the suburbs up there?

Bradley: One of the suburbs. I can’t remember where it is…Fallon Ford.

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: But, he worked his way up to parts manager at this dealership. Then, this dealership sold and closed up that store. He was lucky enough to secure another similar kind of job at another Ford dealership farther away. His commute time became a lot farther. Then, he ended up where he is now, in a wholesale parts operation, and he is in charge of the Ford Motor Company aspect of the wholesale parts operation. That's where he is still today.

Reynolds: He was with the right company to get through the current problems.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: That's great.

Bradley: But, he was successful in convincing me and our dad to switch from Chevys to Fords.

Reynolds: Have you always driven a Ford van, have you? I guess you have, maybe?

Bradley: Well no. My first van was a Chevy…

Reynolds: Oh.

Bradley: …that I bought in '76. But, he convinced me.

Reynolds: Did he give you a good deal?

Bradley: Well, he didn't sell.

Reynolds: Oh, he didn't sell.

Bradley: He was just in the parts operation. No, by that time, I bought from my uncle, Dad's sister's husband, who worked for Roger's Chevrolet in Rantoul and then, later, for a Chevrolet dealership in Champaign-Urbana.

Reynolds: Hey, back to your childhood, you said that you came out of high school wanting to get into farming, so you obviously had a very positive image of agriculture and farming.

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: Were there activities during those years that sort of led you in that direction? Because I've become familiar with the whole… Agriculture is sort of system of FFA [Future Farmers of America] and putting people through training courses because they had to work pretty hard to keep people in farming. I'm wondering whether that was your experience. Did you have a real strong, sort of, sense of the industry? And were those activities sort of positive, in that regard?

Bradley: You know, I don't remember much about—

Reynolds: High school and—

Bradley: (problem with microphone) There we go…Yeah, I had FFA, and the girls went to FHA, my sisters. So, I had that agricultural education in high school. I went off to the U of I when there was no farming available. I commuted the first year, driving every day, but still kind of caught up in helping my dad in farming.

Reynolds: But you sensed, right out of high school, that you were probably not going to be able to make a career of farming?

Bradley: Only because there was no ground available. Had there been ground available to rent, no question in my mind, that's where I would have gone because my dad and I—

Reynolds: Would you have moved out beyond the general area where you'd grown up?

Bradley: Not too far, because the plan was to use some of my dad's farm equipment.

Reynolds: That would make sense…

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: …because of the investment in the kind of stuff, yeah.

Bradley: We were looking, I would say, within a ten-fifteen mile radius of Ogden. I don't recall now; there may have been other farm ground available but too far away to work out for me.

Reynolds: Plus, that's some of the most expensive farm land in the whole country, through central Illinois.

Bradley: Black and flat.

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: Royal, Illinois, which is about five or six miles north of Ogden, is the locus of a German settlement. [There's] A lot of farming up there and owned by people with German ancestry. As a matter of fact, my dad tells a story about, during World War II, a lot of those people he knew had first cousins fighting for Germany. That created some tense times.

Reynolds: During World War I and World War II.

Bradley: Yeah, well, I don't know about I, but II certainly, because that's my sphere of experience there, I went to school with some of those kids. Of course, by that time, the time I went to high school in '54, of course, World War II was over.

So, my reference point has to do with things my dad told me. He was in a family of eight kids, and they all went to high school with those kids from Royal. My dad graduated in '33, so his younger siblings had that experience, and it was touchy. Those people up there didn't endorse Hitler, but still, they had…

Reynolds: Loyalties.

Bradley: …uncles and cousins and German loyalty. It just happened to be Hitler. But anyway, that's off the track. So, I went off to the U of I and I—

Reynolds: Let's just start off with your college career that led, obviously, to your radio career, and then, you can start talking about your radio career.

Bradley: During high school, I built—like a Heath Kit or something like that—a little AM radio transmitter.

Reynolds: Radio Shack used to sell those?

Bradley: Yeah, it came in the mail. I don't remember, now, how I come to order one of those, but I did order it. I remember building it. It would transmit on a frequency on the AM band. You had a microphone, and I knew there had to be a way to hook the turntable to our hi-fi system up to that. I tinkered and figured out a way to do it so I could play music on the turntable and broadcast it on a AM transistor radio that we carried around the house. So, that was my first experience with broadcasting.

Reynolds: Your first radio network.

Bradley: Yeah. (laugh) I had this thing set up in the closet upstairs, so I could shut the door, with a light in there. [I] had my own studio and could broadcast and play music. That kind of piqued my interest in broadcasting while I was still in high school.

But then, when I graduated from high school, farming wasn't going to be in the picture, at least not for Rich Bradley. [I] Went off to the U of I, not really knowing what I wanted to study. So, I started in engineering. That was a tough nut at the U of I because, here I was going from a rural high school with an enrollment of sixty-seven, eleven in my graduating class, to the U of I. I didn't really develop the best of study skills when I was in high school, but I'd graduated third out of eleven, not too bad. So, I started out in engineering. That didn't work. So, at the end of the first semester, I transferred into accounting. That didn't work.

Reynolds: That's a pretty 180 degree turn.

Bradley: Yeah, but I was just grasping.

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: And then, the second semester, I wanted to get away from home and get on campus.

Reynolds: So, you commuted your freshman year?

Bradley: Freshman year, I commuted. The grade school basketball coach's wife worked for the university, and I rode with her. She wanted me to drive the car. If I'd drive the car, her car, there and back, I could ride free. Hell of a deal.

But, I wanted to live on campus. So, I lived in private housing on the U of I campus in the fall semester of '59. By that time, I was in geology because accounting didn't really work for me. But, here, like a lot of kids—I've got one kid that suffered the same fate—you get off by yourself, independent living. You don't pay attention to studies. Pretty soon, you flunk out. So, after three semesters, I flunked out. I went to work then for a sheet metal shop. I had been working part-time.

Reynolds: Champaign, Urbana?

Bradley: In Champaign, R. H. Bishop and Company, which has nothing to do with anything else.

Reynolds: Just a job?

Bradley: A job, laborer, doing some sheet metal work. This is a company that produced all the heating and air conditioning duct work for the assembly hall because it was under construction back at that time.

Reynolds: Big job.

Bradley: I worked there, part–time, and then, when I flunked out of the U of I, it would have been in February of 1960. The semester carried over for a couple, three weeks after the holiday break in those days. Then, you went up until early mid-June, I think, before the semester ended. Now-a-days, first semester ends at the holidays. Second semester starts in the middle of January and goes through May, anyway. So, I worked at the sheet metal shop, full-time, earning some money. [I] made the decision to go to the party school, at SIU Carbondale. When I was looking through the material for the curricula, I discovered that SIU Carbondale owned its own radio station, and the students operated it. I thought, ah, now that appeals to me. So, I made all the arrangements and made the transfer to SIU. I lost about a year's worth in the transfer.

Reynolds: You didn't have to sit out for a semester or anything, did you?

Bradley: Well, I sat out the spring semester…

Reynolds: Oh.

Bradley: …of 1960, February through September, when I went down to Carbondale. Carbondale, at that time, was on the quarter system. I went down there in the fall of 1960, knowing full well that I had a crack at getting into broadcasting at SIU because students went to school there and operated the radio station under faculty guidance. That's really how I got into radio.

I worked at WSIU FM as a student, in those days, for credit. The radio station was a place where all the broadcast students just hung out. We were like our own kind of fraternity. When I wasn't doing something on the station, I was hanging out there. All of our classes were in the radio station complex.

Reynolds: Was Cunningham going there at the same time? Or was he a little later?

Bradley: We overlapped.

Reynolds: Overlapped?

Bradley: Now I lived in a private residence, north of the campus and later, about half way over to Murphysboro. He lived in—I think it was called Illinois Avenue Residence Halls—across the tracks from the campus. But, yeah, that's where he and I got acquainted, was working as a radio-TV major at WSIU in Carbondale.

Reynolds: When you started with the college radio station, did you do news, or did you just spin records, or you were doing both or—

Bradley: Well, in those days, the radio station was operated very much as radio stations were in the '40s and '30s, in that some students ran the controls; other students announced in an adjoining studio. That's how that radio station was operated. So, I announced.

Reynolds: So, you went right into it. Did you sense that you had the voice to announce? Did you at that point or...that you had a unique sort of something…

Bradley: Yes and no. Well, I had to audition, and they accepted me.

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: I don't recall that I thought about it in those terms. Rather, becoming an announcer in a radio station was a star-struck kind of a thing that descended upon you. Clearly, I felt like I was better than students who weren't on the radio. (laugh)

Reynolds: Or you had a chance to be better with...yeah…

Bradley: But everything you did on the air in those days, was scripted. No ad lib. And the faculty passed judgment on…I mean, they edited your script. So, a lot of the announcing was very formal, station identification, reading the weather forecast, promoting upcoming programs, that was all scripted. Before you went into the studio to read your script during a break between programs, that script had to be approved by any faculty that happened to be in the studios at the time. All the faculty members, in addition to teaching in a structured classroom environment, also had a role as a copy editor for students when they went on the air.

Reynolds: You didn't actually have a radio program. You were like a disc jockey or…

Bradley: Yes, I had one half-hour program. After I was there—let's see, it was the fall '60, mid-way through the fall of '60—I inherited this program called…Oh, what was the name of the program? It was…

Reynolds: Sort of an interview program?

Bradley: No, no, no. It was a musical program.

Reynolds: Oh, a musical program?

Bradley: It was old tunes.

Reynolds: So, big band sort of stuff?

Bradley: Yeah. That sort of stuff or hit tunes from different years, so that you had to assemble your script, then Cliff Holman was the faculty advisor who approved my script. He came out of the days of CBS radio to teach in a broadcast school. He worked for CBS in Boston before he came to Carbondale to be on the faculty of radio and television there at SIU. He approved my script, and then, I would take the script to the station. This program went on the air, 10:30 at night. Other students were running the controls—

Reynolds: Oh, the program was at 10:30 at night.

Bradley: Yeah, on Thursday nights.

Reynolds: So, just once a week?

Bradley: Once a week.

Reynolds: Once a week.

Bradley: And we played…some of the songs I played were on 78s[1] because, you know, that's where some of the old time hits resided was on 78s. And Holman brought with him.

Reynolds: Did you do jazz? Like, we're you doing Count Basie and Duke Ellington and that kind of material, or was it pretty run-of-the…you know, sort of pop stuff?

Bradley: Pretty pop stuff—

Reynolds: Of course, those people were popular…

Bradley: …dance tunes, yeah.

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: No, I don't remember specifically focusing on…

Reynolds: Some of the emerging jazz of that period.

Bradley: Yeah, the stars of jazz. Rather, the program was intended to be a kind of thematic because the script you had to write had to be able to make the segue or the transition from one song to the next. The learning experience was, trying to figure out a way to write a script that provided the transition from this song to the next one.

Reynolds: Sort of a theme in a sense.

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: Yeah. More like what Lawrence Welk used to do when his show…he would be themed?

Bradley: Yes. Yes. Anyway, that lasted until I went off the deep end one night and played some really wild, raunchy thing (laugh) off a 78. I remember Cliff Holman calling up that that night…

Reynolds: Spike Jones or something like that?

Bradley: Oh gosh, I don't know.

Reynolds: What would be considered…

Bradley: I don't remember now, what it was, but it was—

Reynolds: Something not in the mainstream?

[1] Content was originally cut in grooves onto 12" plastic disks which were played by lowering a sensitive needle into the perimeter groove at 78 rpm. Later versions played at 45 rpm, then 33-1/3 rpm on smaller disks.

Bradley: Not in the mainstream, that's true. It was on the back side of a record that had a more popular side on the A side. I played something off the B side, which was…for the day, was fairly raunchy kind of sounding. Not raunchy in the…

Reynolds: This is…we're talking the early '60s?

Bradley: This would have been fall of 1960.

Reynolds: Okay. Well, rock and roll was, I mean, happening at that point.

Bradley: Yeah, but it hadn't become all that popular, nationally, on a lot of radio stations. For example, in those days, WLS in Chicago was the rock and roll station; Midnight in May of 1960 is when they switched formats to rock and roll. Up until that time, they were strictly an agricultural station, owned by the *Prairie Farmer Magazine*. And they had live country western music.

Reynolds: They used to do the Barn Dance on…was it WJAN? Oh,WJAN, maybe, did the Barn Dance.

Bradley: Well, WLS had it, initially. It was "The Old National Barn Dance" on Saturday nights on Eighth Street, at the Eighth Street Theater there in Chicago. Then, when WLS was purchased then from *Prairie Farmer Magazine* by ABC—

Reynolds: ABC…

Bradley: Yeah, they were O & O, an owned and operated station. And they went top forty. WABC in New York went top forty; WLS in Chicago went top forty. ABC bought up a couple of stations, San Francisco and Los Angeles; they became top forty. So, ABC was the young, whippersnapper network.

Reynolds: That's about the time I started to listening to radio.

Bradley: (laugh)

Reynolds: Yeah, Dick Biondi and all that, yeah.

Bradley: Yes, yep. Bob Hale, he used to do midnights—

Reynolds: Bob Hale, Art Roberts—

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: Top ten, every night, top ten songs every night—

Bradley: Mort Crowley was on the air—

Reynolds: …talking on the beep lines, as you voted?

Bradley: Sam Hancock.

Reynolds: Yep.

Bradley: Well, anyway that's—

Reynolds: Yeah, that's another subject.

Bradley: (laugh)

Reynolds: Interesting though.

Bradley: I got booted as a result of that.

Reynolds: By booted, you mean, you didn't do the show anymore or you…

Bradley: That's right; that's right.

Reynolds: Really and, what, you were a junior, senior, what, close to finishing?

Bradley: Actually, a second semester sophomore at that time because, at Carbondale, I ended going three full years before I got my degree, because I was really only a sophomore, actually, when I got transferred down there. I lost enough credit in the transfer that I really wasn't—

Reynolds: Almost had to start over.

Bradley: Yeah. That was in the days before the board of higher education was formed. And state institutions in Illinois were on their own when it came to lobbying the legislature—

Reynolds: It was the University of Illinois and then there was everything else.

Bradley: Exactly, see. I really kind of paid the penalty because I went to the U of I, in terms of SIU Carbondale. Anyway, I graduated in '63, but, when I got booted off the air at WSIU, I got a job at WJPF in Herrin, a commercial radio station, doing the sign-on shift only, on Sunday mornings.

Reynolds: Was that hard to find, or did you find that pretty easy? Was it easy to get those kind of jobs at that point, especially [since] you were still a college student?

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: Yeah, I don't know how to answer that, Chris, because I don't remember. I don't remember.

Reynolds: [It] must not have been too bad, if you, almost immediately, got the job?

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: [You] started looking immediately because you wanted to keep doing that?

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: Well, the first place I applied, it was at WCIL in Carbondale. But they didn't have any openings then, plus the son of the owner of the station and I—Paul McRoy was also a radio-TV student at SIU, but they lived there in Carbondale. His dad owned WCIL, which is a daytime only, commercial radio station. But, there was no job opening at that time. And I must have learned about a job opening in WJPF in Herrin, Sunday sign-on, and the shift was from 5:00 a.m. Sunday morning to noon on Sundays.

Reynolds: I'm guessing that those rural stations probably had a hard time finding people. Or was it…am I wrong about that?

Bradley: Well, yes and no, but then, Herrin was only, like, fourteen or fifteen miles away—

Reynolds: Was Carbondale their radio audience for the most part? Were they kind of off—

Bradley: They were a thousand watts [transmission strength]. There was Carbondale, Carterville, Du Quoin, Marion—

Reynolds: Murphysboro?

Bradley: Murphysboro, yeah. Marion, which is on the east—

Reynolds: Is that a pretty big—

Bradley: …south to Anna-Jonesboro. Yeah it was a thousand watts day to two fifty—

Reynolds: They didn't go all the way down to Cāiro did they?

Bradley: Probably not because Cairo had its own, on 1490, radio station. But the shows that were on the air were all taped programs. There was a minister who came in and did a live half-hour program, preaching—

Reynolds: Locally produced, though, taped programs?

Bradley: Yeah, well, they were a network station too, a Mutual station, so some of the Sunday morning programs were longer programs, hour long programs—

Reynolds: Just to set the stage, at that point, how many radio networks were there? There was Mutual and—

Bradley: There'd been Mutual, ABC, CBS and NBC—

Reynolds: Okay, so…

Bradley: Four.

Reynolds: Kind of like the TV stations when they first started

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: Yeah. And most radio stations were associated with one of those networks? Just for content, you know, for programming, I would guess.

Bradley: No.

Reynolds: No?

Bradley: As a matter of fact, when I was in school down there, WCIL Carbondale was an ABC station because they carried Paul Harvey. WJPF in Herrin was a Mutual station, but Du Quoin, Murphysboro, Anna-Jonesboro, Marion, none of those stations had networks. WEBQ in Harrisburg was a Mutual station, but that was a pretty drive from Herrin. And there was very little overlapping in their daytime signal. At nighttime, most stations went to 250 watts at night. You know, the coverage 250 on AM is only about a fifteen-twenty mile radius.

Reynolds: To save money, they would bring down the voltage?

Bradley: Well, they were on a frequency where the FCC dictated your power output during the daytime. They were on what they FCC called the local frequency at the time. So, it was a given, daytime operations, sunrise sunset, was a 1000 watts, then, sunset to sunrise, 250 watts. That's all there was to it. Some stations, like WCIL Carbondale, were on a clear channel frequency. The dominant station—the 1-A Clear, we used to call it—on 1020, was KDKA in Pittsburgh, which was the first commercially licensed station to go on the air. But since—

Reynolds: That's why, sometimes at night, you could pick up the national…

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: …sort of the out-of-town stations.

Bradley: The clear channel stations.

Reynolds: You'd get WLS or Pittsburgh or Cleveland or something like that?

Bradley: WLS was 50,000 watts, 890, but during the daytime, there were two or three other stations in the country that operated at lower power on 890. But at

sunset, they had to go off the air and couldn't come back on the air until the next day at sunrise. Well, as soon as they went off the air and the sun set, the ionosphere changed, and 50,000 watts went up and boomed down.

Reynolds: So, the airways were actually sort of managed because of the scarcity of…

Bradley: Yeah. There was something about AM transition to transmission that changed at night over…—

Reynolds: This was pre-FM. Is it pre-FM?

Bradley: Pretty much so. Well, FM[2] went on the air in the '40s, but they were far and few. For example, here in Springfield, when I came to Springfield in 1965, there was only one FM station here, and it was WTAX-FM, which is now WDBR. That was the only FM station on the air. And it was background music. That's about all there was on…—

Reynolds: Well, let's get back to—let's work through your early radio jobs. We're at Herrin, and how long did you stay there and what what was your show on Sunday morning like? What were you doing?

Bradley: I just doing announcing, reading some news, joining the network because…

Reynolds: They run news shows on Sunday morning from the network?

Bradley: Yeah, from Mutual, or religious programs. One of the programs was a live program from one of the churches there. But, all I did was run the control board, and at 10:00, there was a scripted opening for a church service, and I just turned up a pot, a potentiometer.

Reynolds: So, you're going solo on this, too?

Bradley: Oh, yeah.

Reynolds: You were the engineering guy, as well as the—

Bradley: It was a combo operation. I didn't have a show. This was a shift.

Reynolds: A distinction, probably, at that point.

Bradley: Yes, I read some commercials, but it was all scripted.

Reynolds: But that was pretty good. I mean, they gave you how many hours of air time? You probably felt pretty good about that.

Bradley: The shift was 5:00 a.m. to noon on Sundays; that's all. And then, a job opened up at WCIL, right there in Carbondale. So, I didn't have that drive to Herrin.

[2] FM : frequency modulation

Reynolds: How long did you do the Herrin job…just a few years or a few months?

Bradley: No, no a couple, three months, maybe.

Reynolds: Oh, not that long then.

Bradley: Yeah, because it was in January of '61 that I began working part-time at WCIL, while I was still a student at SIU. I'm trying to remember—I think, for the part-time job I had at CIL, I was working, like, ten to twelve, ten to noon, Monday through Friday, two hours.

Reynolds: This is now the job you got in Carbondale?

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: Yeah, WCIL. Then, later, I married in '62 to my first wife, who I met at SIU. She transferred over to SIU from Indiana State at Terre Haute. I got married a year before I graduated. She was, by that time, a graduate student in Home Ec. Then I had a chance to go full-time, as it were, at WCIL. Come in at sign-on, and sign-on varied, to sunrise, because it was daytime AM station. Sign-on to 1:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. That was my shift…No, sign on to 1:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

Reynolds: This is while you're still going to school or is that—

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: Still going to school?

Bradley: Right, because I scheduled my classes—

Reynolds: Wow, that's a hectic schedule.

Bradley: Well, I scheduled my classes in those days in the afternoon. I graduated in the spring of '63. But, yeah, that's pretty much how I operated.

Reynolds: So, were you the on-air announcer and, again, running programs or were you—

Bradley: There were two of us, me and the owner's son had that shift. We worked it together.

Reynolds: That work out well or?

Bradley: Oh, yeah. Coppolo was a great guy. And the old man didn't cut him any slack just because he was the owner's son. (laugh) But—

Reynolds: He didn't have an attitude?

Bradley: Pardon me?

Reynolds: He didn't have an attitude?

Bradley: Oh, no, not at all.

Reynolds: In that regard?

Bradley: Not at all. Not at all. He knew he better not try it too.

Reynolds: Did he want to be an on-air, just as an aside, or he liked being a technician?

Bradley: Yeah, because, after I left Carbondale and his dad retired, Paul became the general manager. By that time, WCIL had put an FM station on the air. Paul and his wife, Charlotte, then were management-owners, kind of ran the station, and they did all the hiring.

Reynolds: He was on a management track from the beginning?

Bradley: Yeah. I haven't seen him in a long time. He was manager and owner, and then, at some point in time in the recent past—I can't tell you when—he and Charlotte sold the station. I don't know what they are doing now. They still live in Carbondale, as far as I know.

Anyway, I graduated in '63 from SIU and became full-time, as it were, and an increase in the hourly rate. Like I went from a dollar…

Reynolds: WCI?

Bradley: At WCIL. Now, WITY was a very brief stint at Danville one summer, when I was home from Carbondale. That would have been the summer of '61.

Reynolds: What did you do? Just drop by and say, hey, you need some help this summer?

Bradley: I was working in the sheet metal shop at that time, during the daytime…

Reynolds: In Champaign?

Bradley: …in Champaign. I wanted to continue my broadcasting, so I…I don't remember how I ended up going to WITY. I think I just wandered in there and nailed down part time work, night 7:00 p.m. to midnight, Monday through Friday, I think. Then…was it Saturday? It was an all day shift on Saturday, from early morning until about noon.

Reynolds: Boy, that's some hours.

Bradley: Yeah, plus working a full forty hours a week at the sheet metal shop. That summer almost killed me, but I made a ton of money at the time. That was just three months' worth at WITY in Danville.

Reynolds: Plus, it sounds like you enjoyed radio so much that it didn't matter.

Bradley: That's why I was over there. I knew I had the sheet metal shop job when I came back, and I had a string or two to pull there because my dad's brother, my uncle, was shop foreman at the sheet metal shop. I knew I had that job locked in, but I desperately wanted…

Reynolds: To keep you radio chops up.

Bradley: …yeah, a job in radio. I found this job, and, since it was at night, I thought, well, I'll try and work both jobs. Like I say, for three months, I would work at the sheet metal shop from 8:00 in the morning until 4:30 in the afternoon, drive home from Champaign to Ogden, eat or get cleaned up, eat supper, jump in the car and drive to Danville. Those were the days before Interstate 74 opened, from Champaign to Danville. So, I was driving…

Reynolds: So, a tougher drive?

Bradley: …yeah, I was driving old Highway 150.

Reynolds: This is one of the summers back from college?

Bradley: Summer of '61, yeah. College at Carbondale.

Reynolds: Carbondale.

Bradley: That accounts for my work experience at WITY Danville, just those three months during the summer.

Reynolds: So, that's pretty much the downstate experience?

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: So, we're getting pretty close to coming to Springfield.

Bradley: Yes, I went full-time at WCIL Carbondale when I graduated in 1963. So, I worked full-time at Carbondale, doing play-by-play, as well as a new shift at WCIL. Also, a board shift for…they were an ABC network station, so they carried programs in those days, like "Don McNeil and the Breakfast Club." I don't know if you remember that or not.

Reynolds: Oh, yeah.

Bradley: It went from 9:00 to 10:00 in the morning, and then 8:30 to 9:00 was a show….Monday through Friday, was a show called "Coffee with Larry," hosted by the sales manager of the station, Larry Doyle.

Reynolds: He probably brought the advertisers in to interview.

Bradley: It was nothing but a half hour…

Reynolds: They still do that today, you know.

Bradley: …nothing but a half-hour, free time for sponsors, you know. It's just…

Reynolds: To prop up the sponsors, yeah.

Bradley: Yeah, to prop up the sponsors.

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: But he also wove into it, you know, events going on in town and had people from those events come in and do short interviews.

Reynolds: We're talking about the Springfield station?

Bradley: No, this is Carbondale.

Reynolds: This is still Carbondale.

Bradley: Carbondale, yeah.

Reynolds: Okay.

Bradley: Anyway, that's just what I did, was—.

Reynolds: So, you were kind of the announcer that kind of—

Bradley: Utility.

Reynolds: …brought up programming and transitioned to other programming and—

Bradley: …did newscasts.

Reynolds: …which was pretty much what you did in your later years…

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: …at the station here in town. You were the morning guy that did that.

Bradley: Yep. I also handled play-by-play duties at Carbondale. That was interesting because they were a daytime station at the time. And, if we had football and

basketball games at night, I recorded them. Then, Larry Doyle, that salesman, was successful in selling commercials on those broadcasts that were tape delayed, simply because we weren't on the air at night.

Reynolds: They weren't live though. The sporting events weren't live. You had to listen to them, what, the next morning or something like that?

Bradley: Yep. (laugh)

Reynolds: Yeah. Not quite as bad as Ronald Reagan. His days, you know, he would broadcast the ballgame from the teletype.

Bradley: Yeah. Anyway, that was the sum and substance of my career at WCIL, Carbondale. I'm trying to remember how I got…Oh, the big break of my career was being able to go broadcast the state tournament at the assembly hall in Champaign-Urbana. This was when I was in Carbondale.

Reynolds: The boys' basketball?

Bradley: Yes, boys' basketball. There was only one class back in those days.

Reynolds: In Huff Gym, or whatever it was, yeah?

Bradley: No, no, no, no. It was in the assembly hall.

Reynolds: Oh, okay. So, we're talking…I'm just want to get my dates right. We'd be up into the early '60s, here.

Bradley: Yeah. I think I did the state tournament for WCIL in spring, March, of '62.

Reynolds: You did play-by-play?

Bradley: Play-by-play, yeah.

Reynolds: Oh, I was going to ask you if ever thought about going the sports track.

Bradley: Well, I did play-by-play down there.

Reynolds: Yeah. Just basketball?

Bradley: Just basketball. I didn't do football. Larry Doyle, the salesman, did the play for football. (laugh) So, I did basketball. It was weird because CIL is a daytime station. I broadcast daytime programs, basketball games, live, and just sat around, but then, tape recorded the championship game.

Reynolds: So, this is like '61, '62, something like that?

Bradley: Yeah, it would have been March of '62 state tournament and March of '63 state tournament.

Reynolds: That might have been… I was living in Maywood at the time, and Proviso-East went down and made a run, I think, one of those years.

Bradley: March of ‘62, ‘63 and ‘64.

Reynolds: So, for three years, you did it.

Bradley: Three years, I went to the assembly hall. During one of those forays, I bumped into Tony Trent, who was a SIU grad, was doing play-by-play for WCVS, here in Springfield. I met him. As a matter of fact, we were kind of like sitting mates.

Reynolds: Did you have a color guy, or were you doing just doing the whole broadcast yourself?

Bradley: I did the whole broadcast myself, yeah. I learned from him, Tony, that they were in—gosh, I can’t remember—it might have been the fall of ‘63, I learned that they were going to have an opening at WCVS in Springfield in all news, a news director’s job. I was very much interested in that. Tony set up an interview for me on a Sunday, here in Springfield, after the Saturday night state tournament broadcast in 1965.

Reynolds: You’d done it up to 1964, the two state tournaments, yeah.

Bradley: Yeah. Cobden was—

Reynolds: Was that broadcast just for your station, or was it broadcast by others?

Bradley: No, just for WCIL. There were a lot of little stations like that that went to Champaign to broadcast, just for their market only.

Reynolds: And that was back in the days when there was only one tournament.

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: So, those southern Illinois teams sometimes had a real shot at winning that thing.

Bradley: Yep, yep.

Reynolds: Was it the Cobden Apple Knockers?

Bradley: That was in ‘64.

Reynolds: Apple Knockers or something like that?

Bradley: That was in ‘64. They won second place that year. I forget who beat them, now, but—

Reynolds: There were several downstate teams that were just power houses.

Bradley: Well, Pekin, Mt. Vernon, you know, were some examples. Pinckneyville, Lester Thomas was the coach there. Anyway, when I came up to Champaign-Urbana to broadcast state tournaments, I just stayed at home overnight to save the station some money, which was a part of my sales job, to convince the station to let me go up here and do it because we saved money by me staying two nights at my folks' house.

Anyway, Tony Trent got me this interview with the manager of WCVS, Ken Spengler, on a Sunday, after the state tournament in 1965. So, I did the Saturday night state tournament championship game, stayed all night with Mom and Dad, and then, drove straight from there to Springfield, to this interview on a Sunday afternoon, with Ken Spengler.

Reynolds: Did you have much exposure to Springfield at this point, or was—

Bradley: No.

Reynolds: Had you ever even been there?

Bradley: Once.

Reynolds: Did they take you on an eighth grade trip there or something?

Bradley: No, I went to Boys' State.

Reynolds: Agricultural related.

Bradley: No, that was—

Reynolds: Oh, Boys' State was that thing Bill Clinton was in?

Bradley: Yes. It was sponsored by the American Legion.

Reynolds: Oh, okay.

Bradley: It's held in Charleston now. But, in those days, it was held at the State Fairgrounds in Springfield. So, I was selected to go to Boys' State. It was a week long—

Reynolds: Now, what kind of organization was that again? Did it have to do with just leadership, government leadership?

Bradley: Government leadership.

Reynolds: Oh, okay.

Bradley: The American Legion and it was—

Reynolds: They would have picked people from the local, you know.

Bradley: Right, I was sponsored by the local American Legion Post. There was only one from Ogden that went every year. There was also one girl selected to go to Girls' State, and that was at Charleston. But, I went to Boys' State, and it was a weeklong encampment run very—

Reynolds: They actually camped at the fairgrounds?

Bradley: Yeah. We lived in what is, now, the prison out there. Those were the residence halls at the fairgrounds. And, once they moved the prison in there, that's when the Boys' State went to Charleston. But, it was run by the American Legion, very military like, because you had flag raising every morning, flag lowering at night, and you marched a lot. I was in the band because I played the trombone. That was summer of '57, somewhere between my junior…

Reynolds: So, that's when you were in high school?

Bradley: Yeah, that's when I was in high school.

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: Then I came back to Springfield. The second time I ever came to Springfield was to the State Fair. I was dating a girl, right after I got out of high school, and I went with her and her parents one day to the State Fair. We went over in the morning, came back at night. So, those were the only two times—

Reynolds: Couple of corn dogs and some heartburn.

Bradley: Yeah. (laugh) And this girl's father was also a farmer, so…

Reynolds: Yeah, coming from a farm family, I would've thought maybe you would have made more trips to the State Fair, although you probably did the county fair and—

Bradley: There wasn't much money around in those days. I was aware that my parents were poor, but we never wanted, at least not for food, because, gosh, we raised everything that we ate. We even had a milk cow for our dairy needs. The only thing Mom went to the store for was to get sugar, salt and flour.

Reynolds: She could stock up for months on that.

Bradley: Oh, yeah. And then, everything else…we had an acre of garden, so we raised all of our own—

Reynolds: But no lavish vacations or that kind of thing?

Bradley: No. The only vacation the family ever took was in 1949, when I was nine years old. I remember, we went on a weeklong vacation to Iowa.

Reynolds: Iowa.

Bradley: Yeah, only because…

Reynolds: (laugh) More corn.

Bradley: No. Estherville, Iowa, which was…

Reynolds: Family?

Bradley: It's only because a part of dad's family lived in Iowa.

Reynolds: Well, let's get back to Springfield.

Bradley: I interviewed for that job and then, drove back to Carbondale. I remember, my first wife was not necessarily a fan of me doing this interview. Then, when I was offered the job, it was as news director.

Reynolds: You were excited about that, I bet.

Bradley: Yeah. So, she and I went round and round, but the money was a hundred dollars a week, salary, at WCIL Carbondale. At WCVS in Springfield, it was going to be a hundred twenty-five dollars a week, salary, not hourly, but salary. So, that was a hundred bucks a month increase in pay, which was a lot of money.

Reynolds: Could be a lot of hours though, obviously, on salary.

Bradley: Yeah, and it was, sometimes. So, I took the job, came to work at WCVS in Springfield in April of 1965. By that time, I had twin boys that had been born in October of '64. She stayed with them. We owned a house down there, and she wanted to stay with the house until it sold. It was Labor Day of 1965 before it sold. I would get off work at WCVS in Springfield, noon Saturday, drive to Carbondale, come back on Sunday night because I had to get up early, Monday through Saturday. That's pretty much how I lived from April through Labor Day weekend. By that time, the house in Carbondale had sold. We found a house in Chatham that we bought, and I got her and the twins, who, by that time, were only two years old.

Reynolds: There wasn't much to Chatham at that point.

Bradley: No, un-huh, no. The house was three or four years old, at the time we bought it. My first wife was an only child, and, within a very short period of time, a year maybe, her parents, who still lived in Terre Haute, owned a business there, a dog kennel. They sold the dog kennel, sold their home there, moved to

Chatham, bought a new home a couple of blocks away, and served as baby daycare for the twins.

Then my first wife got a job, as her degree was in home economics, with an emphasis on nutrition. So, she got a job at St. John's Hospital, working as the food service director. No, it was the cafeteria director at St. John's Hospital. She was in charge of food preparation and staff that took care of the cafeteria there. Then, Doctor's Hospital opened, and she got a chance to go out there as—

Reynolds: Closer to Chatham.

Bradley: Yeah. …as food service director and more money. Gosh, I can't remember if she…that was '75, '76, I think, when Doctor's Hospital opened.

Reynolds: And so later, about the time you went out to the university. So, you're both out there.

Bradley: Yeah, I went to the university in '74.

Reynolds: Let's go back and pick up these stations you worked for before you got the university job. So, you got the news director job—

Bradley: At WCVS.

Reynolds: I'm thinking, back in those days, that didn't mean you had a lot of reporters working for you. You were, kind of, one reporter, but you were on air probably.

Bradley: Yeah, on the air, and we each had a shift. My shift was 6:00 a.m. to 1:00 or 1:30, Monday through Saturday. I was doing just newscasts.

Reynolds: So, they had a disc jockey there, and you would, every hour or whatever, do the weather maybe?

Bradley: Well, insofar as it went with the newscast. At WCVS, I was doing newscasts at twenty-five and fifty-five. No…in the morning, during morning drive, I was doing newscasts at twenty-five, because we carried ABC radio news at fifty-five. And that was my shift, because I would come on after the network newscast to do a five minute newscast at the top of the hour, but then also, five minutes to twenty-five minutes past the hour, until 9:00 o'clock, and—

Reynolds: Probably, during the morning, you were altering that newscast, or were you pretty much given the same? I mean, the news wasn't changing that much at that point.

Bradley: Well.

Reynolds: You were using wire stories and yeah.

Bradley: When I got in at 6:00, Tony Trent was doing a board shift and got off the air at 5:00, 5:30. Well, the overnight guy—I'm trying to remember—would make a run downtown, go to the police station, the fire department, the sheriff's office, gather up the crime news—

Reynolds: This was the reporter that you had?

Bradley: No, this was a disc jockey.

Reynolds: Oh, the disc jockey was doing the leg work?

Bradley: Was doing the…did the overnight disc jockey shift from midnight to about 5:30, and he got off the air at 5:30. Tony Trent came in to do a two hour country western show. Then, Jim Palmer came in as a top forty disc jockey after that. But, anyway, the overnight disc jockey would run downtown in the mobile unit, Little Red, and go to the three stops that I mentioned to pick up crime news, come back and write the stories and give them to me, and then they were done. And so, I just did newscasts, get stuff off the wire—

Reynolds: So, you would cover state and national, if it was on the wire?

Bradley: No, network. We'd just let—

Reynolds: Oh, the network would cover national…

Bradley: All I was doing…

Reynolds: …but they wouldn't cover state news, would they?

Bradley: No, that's what I was doing.

Reynolds: Okay.

Bradley: I was focusing on local news, crime news, Springfield, chasing ambulances, fire trucks and those kind of stories. I didn't really cover the State House. We had UPI.

Reynolds: During these years where you only had your local radio stations, yeah.

Bradley: I was just using the wire service to cover legislative and state government news. I didn't go to the State House. The commercial stations here in Springfield at that time consisted of WCVS, WMAY, WTAX. They didn't cover the State House news. They just covered the local news. They covered city council, the county board—

Reynolds: So, the stations that you worked in, here at Springfield, before you went out to the university were…

Bradley: Just WCVS.

Reynolds: WCVS, okay.

Bradley: I was there from ‘65 to ‘72.

Reynolds: Okay. So, the whole period you had one, and you were the news director there.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Now, in my interview with Ben, he recalls, at that period of time, coming into town and getting a job with TAX [WTAX], I believe…

Bradley: That was ‘67, I think.

Reynolds: …and he said that the big three in Springfield radio, at that time, was you and him and, I think, it was Bill Miller?

Bradley: Well, Bill Miller was at WTAX. He hired Ben.

Reynolds: Oh, okay.

Bradley: …at WTAX.

Reynolds: Was there another name of a main guy that was a Lawson, maybe, or

Bradley: Oh, Bill Rawson was the news director at WMAY.

Reynolds: Okay.

Bradley: So, I’m sure the big three you were talking about were Miller, Bill Rawson and Rich Bradley. But then, Bill Miller left in 1967. I think. And then, Ben became the news director.

Reynolds: Okay.

Bradley: Bill—

Reynolds: So, when he came to town, like the people that he wanted to emulate, you know, were these three guys. And, of course, he was—

Bradley: I guess, I never—

Reynolds: Bill Miller was, of course, a big name to him.

Bradley: Oh, yeah.

Reynolds: His mentor. Now, why don't we move on, just before we get to the university, because I was interested in… Oh, do you want to talk about any of the stories that you covered during that period, before you went

to work at the university? Were there any stories, memories of characters, people that you covered or stories, during that period, that pop out in your mind?

Rich Bradley, 1973-74, working for the Illinois News Network

Bradley: Only in the sense that—we're talking about WCVS '65 to '72—there was a two year period, '72 to '74, that I worked for Illinois News Network.

Reynolds: Now, I want to get into that, but let's get back to when you were just working as the news director. Do you recall anything, in terms of Springfield news or state news?

Bradley: I recall that…when I say we didn't cover the state house, we did always go over, whenever the governor held a news conference. Now, in those days, the governor didn't hold a news conference all that often.

Reynolds: So, let's set this. We're talking about Ogilvie?

Bradley: No, we're talking about Otto Kerner.

Reynolds: Okay, back to Otto Kerner.

Bradley: Ogilvie was elected in '68.

Reynolds: So, you were still doing…so, it would be partly Otto Kerner, partly Ogilvie?

Bradley: Ogilvie, yeah.

Reynolds: Yeah, okay.

Bradley: Kerner was governor when I came to town.

Reynolds: Okay.

Bradley: It seemed to me maybe he scheduled a news conference, maybe once a month.

Reynolds: In the local…you would send somebody or you would go?

Bradley: I would go.

Reynolds: Okay.

Bradley: I would go, but Kerner's news conferences was an interesting scenario, in that reporters were invited into his office, literally his office, on the second floor.

Reynolds: At that state house, yeah.

Bradley: But, no cameras or microphones were allowed in there. I could go in, but all I had was…and that's where—

Reynolds: Didn't worry about being misquoted, huh?

Bradley: (laugh) The news conference was run that way, and the print people at the state house—the biggies, the *Tribune*, sometimes, *The American*, and the wire services, AP and UPI—controlled, ran things, controlled the State House media.

Reynolds: So, you're kind of just reporting on—

Bradley: Well, but broadcasters got a crack at Kerner because, after that news conference in his office, then he would step outside in the hallway, outside his office, to accommodate television, where they had the lights and the camera and everything all set up and the radio guys. And we would re-do the news conference to capture it for radio on tape, for TV on film in those days. But, also, his press secretary was a guy by the name of Chris Vlahopulous), who in 1974 hired me. By that time, he was at Sangamon State [University, later renamed UIS, U of I at Springfield.]

But anyway, Chris was a former UPI reporter who became press secretary to Otto Kerner, and, if Kerner tripped over his tongue in the initial news conference, there was no time for the governor to step outside and face the cameras and microphones. So, Chris was good that way, in that it was a measure of protection. At least Kerner, if he fluffed, wasn't on film or on tape fluffing. If he was okay in the print part, then he would come out and do TV and radio. That's how Otto Kerner conducted his news conferences.

Now Kerner left office half way through his last year because he was appointed to the federal bench by Lyndon Johnson, Court of Appeals in Chicago. Sam Shapiro was Lieutenant Governor; he became Governor. Now, Sam Shapiro was the first Governor to hold one news conference every week in the mansion. And radio and TV was allowed in, with the print reporters, and they set up in a—

Reynolds: How often was Kerner doing it?

Bradley: Once a month.

Reynolds: Once a month.

Bradley: Sometimes, less. It was really kind of rare when Kerner held a news conference. I don't remember how he conducted himself in Chicago. But, Shapiro then opened it up for radio, TV and print, all doing at one time. He started out holding it in the mansion.

That's one of the things that I remember a lot about my days at WCVS. There was a big murder crime that I recall. Two people murdered, beheaded. Found their bodies out on Spaulding Orchard Road.

Reynolds: This is late '60s, early '70s?

Bradley: Would have been '67.

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: It was weird. I remember April of '67, when that happened. It was a rather grisly kind of a thing. Never got to see the crime scene. None of the media was allowed to go to the crime scene, but, later, I saw photographs in the coroner's office. They'd beheaded, cut off the arms, legs off these bodies. One body—

Reynolds: Sounds like a mob thing, almost.

Bradley: No, some weird guy. They caught him…

Reynolds: Oh, they did catch him?

Bradley: …later that day.

Reynolds: Wow.

Bradley: Convicted, he went off to serve time in prison. He may even have died in prison. The death penalty wasn't in force at that time. But, you know, just some occasional stories like that.

Reynolds: Any big corruption cases that came up, either in… Of course, Otto Kerner, obviously, got himself in trouble.

Bradley: Later, after he left—

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: …office as Governor. Although he got into trouble over some of his dealings with personal wealth, at the time he was Governor. Jim Thompson prosecuted him. That was at a time when he was a Federal Appeals Court Judge in Chicago and convicted and removed from the bench and sent off to prison.

Reynolds: Well, we'll try to talk more in detail about some of these gubernatorial issues later on, if we continue to do the interview—

Bradley: But the years I spent at—

Reynolds: Were there any local corruption things with mayors or you know—

Bradley: There was one, because Bill Miller was the investigative reporter on that, and he won an *Edward R. Murrow Award* for investigative reporting. Had to do with the new County Building, at that time, which opened in 1968.

Reynolds: Which is now the City Hall, that building?

Bradley: City Hall East. That was the County Building, the new one, at the time. [It] Had to do with kickbacks on new furniture for that building. Gosh, I can't remember the specifics—

Reynolds: Sounds pretty mild now, after—(laugh)

Bradley: Yeah. (laugh) But I'm trying to remember…There was an office supply owner and one…

Reynolds: Politically connected?

Bradley: Apparently.

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: …got indicted. I can't remember if it was a county elected officer. I'd have to go back and review that. But anyway, that was the only governmental scandal, locally, that I remember.

Reynolds: Now, I know Ben talked a lot about this, but we're talking, probably the early '70s, these radio networks started to appear.

Bradley: Statewide radio.

Reynolds: Could you lay that out for us? What went on with that, and what was the motivation for that? Really, I guess, Springfield was kind of a leader in that?

Bradley: Bill Miller was the father of that. I mentioned earlier, he left WTAX in 1967 to put together an organization called the Capital Information Bureau, CIB, which was…I think, the financing behind that was an advertising agency in town at the time called S.P. Wright Advertising? And it was a one-horse kind of an operation, where he covered state government, the state house and the legislature, and then reported on that and sold that service to commercial radio stations around the state, but exclusive in a market. If you take a market like, well, let's say Decatur, for example. Decatur, at that time, had two or three stations. WSOY bought the Capital Information service, and the other stations were out in the cold.

Reynolds: They had a one-up on everybody else.

Bradley: WSOY had exclusive access, and that's the way it was around the state. In Chicago and St. Louis, only one station got the service out of Springfield. It

was a marketable service, attractive service, because none of the commercial radio stations in the state, at that time, were providing any kind of meaningful coverage of state government. Rather, they relied upon wire service coverage, the AP or UPI.

Reynolds: Why do you suppose, up to that point, nobody was much interested in what went on in state government, or what was it about that period that caused people to want to do that? Was there anything, a particular story that prompted it, or was it, maybe, the politicians were more than willing to, kind of, feed into it?

Bradley: You know, I honestly don't know how to answer that, Chris.

Reynolds: It just became a profitable thing to do. A guy like Miller, he saw this as a potential and just—

Bradley: Rather, I think, it was some people at this advertising agency, S. P. Wright Advertising Agency who—

Reynolds: Thought it'd be lucrative.

Bradley: …maybe saw the potential for that because this was an ad agency that had clients. I'm assuming, although I don't know for sure.

Reynolds: Their clients probably were radio stations, and so, this is a way to…

Bradley: Advertisers, yeah.

Reynolds: …enhance the content of the radio stations that they were advertising on.

Bradley: Yep. That could very well be what was going on. They put together the organization, then hired Bill Miller, or enticed Bill Miller, because he'd been at WTAX since 1949 and had made a life's career there.

Reynolds: It was probably a pretty risky deal to try that, do you think, at the time?

Bradley: I think probably it was. I don't know if they did a market survey around the state.

Reynolds: Well, if they were dealing business with all these radio stations maybe they had a sense that, you know…

Bradley: Don't hold me to this, but I have a sense that CIB operated at a loss.

Reynolds: The early years.

Bradley: In the early years. They really didn't make any money for S.P. Wright Advertising. As a matter of fact—

Reynolds: So, they were part of the corporate entity of the advertising firm?

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Oh, okay.

Bradley: S. P. Wright Advertising Agency owned Capitol Information Bureau, and they hired Bill Miller to run—

Reynolds: That's an interesting thing for news, when you think about it, an advertising company running a news bureau.

Bradley: But, they took a very much hands off attitude when it came to content. I'm sure that was, knowing Bill Miller's integrity, I'm pretty much sure that Bill Miller wouldn't have done it any other way. If he even had inkling or a thought that…

Reynolds: It was product placement (laugh).

Bradley: Yeah. …that his hands would be tied from a content, he wouldn't have taken that job. Well, that was in 1967, and, before long, CIB began to distinguish itself and make itself because they—oh gosh, I don't know how many stations Bill had by that time taking the CIB service?

Reynolds: Both downstate and in the Chicago area?

Bradley: Oh, yeah. And in the metro-east, and, I'm pretty sure, KMOX in St. Louis—

Reynolds: Would the Chicago stations, like WGN and WLS, would they cover statewide?

Bradley: WGN had a TV station, and they had a guy by the name of Steve Schickel who came down to cover for WGN television. They used to do all his stuff on film, and then, they would put the canister of film on the train or a plane going to Meigs Field. That's how they got their stuff back up to Chicago. They had to be done by 1:30 or 2:00 in order to get the film up there to be developed and—

Reynolds: To make the evening news, yeah.

Bradley: Steve Schickel did the TV, but, while he was here, he also did some reporting for WGN. So, in Chicago, WGN had the only live, on-the-scene coverage. Then, in '68, WBBM went all news, and they, pretty soon, followed along by bringing a guy to Springfield by the name of Alan Crane. He used to do weather on Channel 20. In '68, they hired Alan Crane. Eventually, I think, Alan ended up living in Springfield and covered the state house for WBBM. But, I'm trying to remember, in the suburbs there was one station—

Reynolds: So, how were, like, the other stations in Chicago doing their news? They would just tend to, maybe, have a news guy, a news director, and one reporter who would…kind of like the model you…

Bradley: Yeah, you'd use the wire service. WLS, I think, used Bill Miller's stuff.

Reynolds: So, that's a big…

Bradley: Yeah. At the time, Bud Miller, no relation—

Reynolds: Big contractor.

Bradley: …was the news director. WLS was top forty. They had a guy by the name of Lyle Dean, Bud Miller. They had whole cadre of news people that were just doing on-the-air stuff at twenty-five. And part of the ABC network newscast at fifty-five was a couple of minutes of WLS News. It was all done wire copy and rewrite stuff that they were using, and then, Bill Miller's stuff.

Reynolds: Let's get back to the creation of these networks. So—

Bradley: There was only two.

Reynolds: You became part of the Illinois News Network.

Bradley: I became the orator, originator, the founder. A guy by the name of—

Reynolds: How did that happen?

Bradley: A guy by the name of Ray Phipps, who at one time was State Fair Manager, I think, was a part of S. P. Wright Advertising Agency that launched CIB—

Reynolds: So, he came out of advertising also?

Bradley: Yeah. …and launched CIB. I'm trying to remember…What Phipps recognized was that, establishing CIB and operating for five years, created a demand for another competing service. So, he—

Reynolds: Because every town had, maybe, a couple radio stations, and so, they were getting out scooped by the…

Bradley: Exactly.

Reynolds: …and so, they wanted to keep…

Bradley: At least they had a voice of a person in Springfield covering state government. So, it created a demand, not only a market, for another service. Phipps…I'm not sure about the finances. I think, Bob Lubin was the money behind the establishment of the Illinois News Network. Lubin was a part of Barker Lubin which owned…

Reynolds: That was a big name here in town.

Bradley: …construction lumber company here in town, at the time.

Reynolds: Big developer.

Bradley: Yes. Phipps approached me to come and do this, and it was more money. I think I was at WCVS at the time, not making a whole lot of money, barely cracking ten grand a year. He offered me a job that started at fourteen, four a year, which—

Reynolds: Our kids will think that's…(laugh)

Bradley: Oh yeah. …which was significantly more than ten thousand dollars. So, I jumped at the chance. I left CVS [WCVS] in May of '72. The first few months…INN [Illinois News Network], we set up in the St. Nicholas Hotel, on the second floor, and bought equipment, customized some of the equipment, and I'm beginning to make contacts—

Reynolds: So, you were there at the very beginning.

Bradley: At the very beginning, yeah.

Reynolds: I mean, you were even ordering, setting up equipment and…

Bradley: And Phipps, then, was selling to the stations. I think we went on the air in the fall of '72, with, maybe a dozen stations. I can't remember now. But, anyway, I ran Illinois News Network from 1972 until I went out to the university in October of '74. It was two years—

Reynolds: Was your role primarily as a reporter, then, to pick up, find the stories and report on them?

Bradley: Yep, I went over to the State House every day.

Reynolds: So, you were almost like a State House reporter back then.

Bradley: Well, yeah, I really was. But, unlike Miller, I created a network of stringers to reporters, news directors at other stations in the state to contribute stories to the Illinois News Network, so that the feed that I did in the afternoon and early in the morning frequently would include reports from downstate, from Chicago, Western Illinois, Eastern Illinois—

Reynolds: This was the beginning the model of what you did out at the university.

Bradley: Yeah, really it was. These reporters were being paid a stringer's fee. Every time they submitted a story—we had a great set-up at the time—these reporters would get paid for them.

Reynolds: Did you have a business manager? Or did you have to do all the…

Bradley: No, Phipps did it all. He was the sales and business manager, yeah. Now, he made arrangements with somebody to handle the accounting. He kind of did all the management and sales.

Reynolds: How profitable were they? You say the Capitol Network probably didn't do very well for several years. Did you guys start making money right away?

Bradley: No, I don't think Illinois News Network was on a money-making foundation after two years. It eventually went belly up and ceased to operate. I can't remember when that was. I know that, when I left, a guy I had hired at WCVS came in to take it over for a short period of time.

Reynolds: Did you sense that the business model wasn't going to make it?

Bradley: No.

Reynolds: You didn't have any sense of that? You didn't leave because of that or…

Bradley: Oh no, no, no. I left because I missed live radio. Everything I was doing at INN was not live. It was—

Reynolds: Feel like a technician more than anything else. You were—

Bradley: Technician, but I…Yeah, all of the stuff that I did from my coverage at the State House was recorded. I recorded reports, but I also just added excerpts which were included as a part of each of the feeds, morning and afternoon. It was money and the desire to get back into live radio. Plus, by that time, I'd begun to hear about public radio. I had begun to hear about NPR.

Reynolds: Well, we'll move into that. Just one last question before we move into your job out at the university. So, we're talking the early '70s. '74 was when you started working for them?

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: What was kind of the lay of the land in media at that point, in terms of radio and television and print? Had radio sort of moved up to a same status with TV and print, or was print still king, or what was kind of...Where did you kind of fit in in radio in sort of the landscape of reporting on…especially state issues?

Bradley: I think wire service and print was still king at that time—

Reynolds: And you were feeding off that, primarily? Stories and…

Bradley: Yeah. …and television, channel 20, channel 17 and channel 3 covered the State House on behalf of their stations—

Reynolds: They actually had reporters assigned.

Bradley: Yeah. They would come from the studios over and cover and leave and then go back. That's the way WGN operated. WGN was the only Chicago television station that regularly covered Springfield, because Schickel was down here all week long. He lived down here.

The other stations, BBM, MAQ, WLS-TV would come down to Springfield on rare occasions, usually the last two or three days of the session. They would come down, make a lot of noise and elbow their way around and push and shove and create a ruckus. Everybody down here would piss and moan about the Chicago media. But, at that time, I would say that, because of CIB and INN radio statewide had kind of raised its visibility in terms of coverage offered of state government and the legislature.

Reynolds: I think that radio almost was…more people were listening to radio than watching TV at that point, maybe. I mean, the nightly news' were starting to become very popular.

Bradley: Yeah, and it wasn't really until CNN went on the air that, I think, that maybe that changed, where you have twenty-four hour…

Reynolds: People started then using TV instead of radio. Radio was the source. You'd have the radio on at your work or in your car.

Bradley: There's a lot about what TV did in those days. I want to be careful, here, because I don't want to…

Reynolds: Show your bias toward radio?

Bradley: (laugh) Well, yeah, because, I think most of what TV did was for show. I didn't have a sense that it was really substantive. I was just—

Reynolds: They were looking for the most outlandish, the salacious, almost a tabloid sort of approach.

Bradley: Yeah. I think the Chicago stations were…Even locally, channel 3 was the only station that had a person who lived in Springfield and covered the legislature. And it's actually more than just channel 3. Channel 3 was owned by Midwest Television, which also owned channel 31 in Peoria, WMBD-TV and WMBD radio. The Midwest correspondent served both those TV stations and the one radio station. So,—

Reynolds: But they were Illinois owners?

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Rather than national?

Bradley: Exactly. Although, they did own…

Reynolds: Midwest owned other stations in other states?

Bradley: AM-FM TV operation in San Diego, I think. But, yeah, it was just AM-FM TV, Peoria and then, just TV in Champaign. But still, I think, print led the way, followed by radio and then, some TV.

Reynolds: Was it almost like what many people call the *New York Times* model, now, where people read the *New York Times,* and that's what drives everybody's coverage of the news? The print sort of led in that regard?

Bradley: And I think it was the, maybe, the *Tribune* played a major role, although there's a newspaper called the *Chicago American…*

Reynolds: There were five papers up there? There were going at that time*? American, Chicago Today, Sun Times…*

Bradley: *Sun Times.*

Reynolds: *Tribune* and the *Defender,* I guess, would also be—

Bradley: Yeah. Simeone Mosby was with the *Chicago Defender,* which was the black newspaper.

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: I still think print and wire service were leading the way at that time.

Reynolds: But the *Tribune* was the dominant.

Bradley: Yeah, but I think radio was beginning to come into its own.

Reynolds: Generating their own sort of stories and covering them.

Bradley: Because, by that time, I think [W]TAX, [W]MAY, and [W]CVS were beginning to send reporters to the State House on occasion.

Reynolds: Did the St. Louis area have much of an impact? Were they active in covering State House stuff at that point, stories?

Bradley: Less frequent than commercial O&Os in Chicago. But they would, occasionally, KMOX especially…well, KSD too.

Reynolds: Because later on, remember when I was in state government, those St. Louis papers almost did a better job sometimes.

Bradley: Well now the papers, *Post Dispatch* and the *Democrat…*there were two St. Louis papers that had full-time bureaus in Springfield. The *Post Dispatch*

Reynolds: Even by the ‘70s?

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: …*Post Dispatch* and *Globe Democrat*. The *Post Dispatch* still has a full-time reporter in Springfield, Kevin McDermott. I don’t know if you—

Reynolds: I have run into him over the years, yeah.

Bradley: But, in terms of TV, once in a great while they would come. All those stations would always show up whenever the governor made a speech to a joint session of the general assembly, which was the state of the state address.

Reynolds: And the budget.

Bradley: Excuse me, and the budget message.

Reynolds: We kind of talked about top…any other reporters you can think of during that period that stand out, or characters or stories about guys?

Bradley: Characters?

Reynolds: Because we know the reporters are characters, I mean. Had you run into Charlie Wheeler by that point, who was working for the…Was he at the *Sun Times* by then?

Bradley: Charlie came about the time the Constitutional Convention started up and was going on…

Reynolds: Seventy.

Bradley: …was going on.

Reynolds: Did you have to cover that extensively?

Bradley: No.

Reynolds: No?

Bradley: That was in the ‘60s, in the late ‘60s. No, that was at a time when…

Reynolds: Miller was a big guy on that.

Bradley: Yeah, yeah. That was in…I’m still at [W]CVS at the time. But, the local commercial stations were focused on ambulance, fire truck chasing, local news, covering the County Building, covering City Hall, covering the city council was the mayor and five commissioners in those days. On just rare

occasions was there any expectation on the part of management that a reporter, or maybe the news director, would go to the state house to cover something. And just didn't have the horses to cover something like the Constitutional Convention. I was naïve at the time, quite frankly, because I didn't fully comprehend or understand the significance of a constitutional convention.

Reynolds: And you didn't get to the network until after the con con was over.

Bradley: In '72.

Reynolds: Yeah, yeah.

Bradley: I didn't really get to know Charlie, or become acquainted with him, until I went out to Sangamon State, and we put WSSR on the air.

Reynolds: He was at the university by then?

Bradley: Pardon me.

Reynolds: Was he at the university by then?

Bradley: No, he didn't come until '93.

Reynolds: Oh, much later.

Bradley: So, he was working—

Reynolds: So, you had a relationship with him as a reporter?

Bradley: Yes, because I would invite him to come on *State Week in Review*. He didn't come on very often because Charlie worked hard as a reporter. But, he became an expert, well-respected by all media in the State House as knowledgeable about the budgetary process. Charlie would always come on *State Week in Review* on the first program we had, after the budget address. And we would talk about the ins and outs of the budget and where we needed to look for…

Reynolds: Yeah. I wanted to talk about the show, so maybe we'll hold off on that, so you can talk generally about the show. Okay.

Bradley: Sure. But, in terms of characters when I was still at WCVS, there was a guy by the name of Dick Shaughnessy at WMAY. When I first came to town, a character by the name of Marty Wright had initially been at WMAY years before I came, but was working at WCVS as the afternoon news guy, and then did a disc jockey shift on Sunday nights, seven to midnight. He was a character. Those were the only two characters I…

Reynolds: Some of those guys that wrote political columns…well, you were talking about Gene Callahan before. Wasn't there a guy that was a columnist for the *State Journal Register* that got into some weird stuff and became a big story? I can't remember. Maybe it was Al Manning or somebody like that?

Bradley: Well, Al Manning was a columnist. Jerry Owens was a columnist.

Reynolds: Jerry Owens, right.

Bradley: Gene Callahan had a column called *Callagrams*. Do you mean somebody that got into some…

Reynolds: Kelly somebody?

Bradley: Kelly Smith, he was the Channel 20, yeah—

Reynolds: Kelly Smith. He wasn't a newspaper guy. He was a TV guy. That's who I'm thinking of.

Bradley: Some porno tapes. (laugh)

Reynolds: (laugh) Okay, well that's probably not as relevant in this discussion. But, I do remember that because I was in town for that.

Bradley: Some of those—

Reynolds: But, some of those columnist guys were…had kind of wild reputations. Weren't they?

Bradley: Well, if they did, that must have been before my time, even in Springfield. I know Callahan was writing the column when I came to town. Then there was—

Reynolds: That was like a big deal for you to read; wasn't it?

Bradley: Oh, yeah. I read Callahan. I read a column by Jerry Owens and then—

Reynolds: Jerry Owens ran for mayor, didn't he?

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: By that time he had left the paper and, I think, was working for state government.

Reynolds: I think he was on the school board too, maybe?

Bradley: He did serve on the school board. He was elected to one term that I recall. Al Manning was a columnist and reporter. [He] Left the paper to go into state government and went to work for the attorney general in Chicago, I think, initially.

Reynolds: Public information officers, which is always been a track for TV and print guys to get a job in state government, because it always paid more.

Bradley: Callahan left, of course, to go work for Alan Dixon, when Dixon was in state office and later in the U. S. Senate. Later, he got wrapped up in baseball. [He] Retired, now, back to Springfield. Kelly Smith, yeah. (laugh)

Reynolds: I don't know why that stands out in my mind, but I remember him.

Bradley: Well, he turned up on some porno tapes that had been put in the junk, garbage. Some of the garbage guys came across the tapes and—

Reynolds: What are the chances of that?

Bradley: And some of those tapes were duplicated and circulated. That was in a day when none of that would have made its way on the air. But boy, the rumor mill…because the rumor was, you know, that he was hung like a stud horse and demonstrated it on these tapes. (laugh)

Reynolds: (laugh) Oh, boy.

Bradley: But Kelly later—

Reynolds: My fault, I brought it up.

Bradley: (laugh) He's up in Milwaukee now, I think.

Reynolds: Is he really?

Bradley: Yeah, you ought to call him down here (laugh) and have him do some oral history.

Reynolds: Put those tapes in the archive here at the Museum, huh? Okay, well let's get to the university. So, you were hired in '74. Now, it sounds like you've already done this before once. I'm assuming that you got there; you had to order the equipment; you had to set up everything, or was…?

Bradley: No, that was not the case. I went out there October first of '74. By that time, the university had already hired Jim Newbanks, the chief engineer, who was the equipment guy. SSU had hired Howard Hill, who had been news director at WTAX, hired Howard to be a manager of the radio station. The grand scheme for Sangamon State, at that time, for the president, Robert Spencer,

was to put public radio and public television on the air. That's what he wanted to do.

Reynolds: This was the CONVOCOM thing too?

Bradley: Well, it became CONVOCOM. But that was Bob Spencer's vision. He saw public radio and TV as a natural extension of the public affairs mandate for Sangamon State University. But, there was a kind of a conservative board at the time—governing board, board of regents—who took a dim view of public broadcasting because of government money. The funds that went to—

Reynolds: I guess we should set the stage for Sangamon State, in that the community college system was set-up, and Sangamon State and Governors State were to be the feed agencies, the feed universities—

Bradley: …were conceived as capstone universities, junior-senior graduates, yes.

Reynolds: And it was kind of a new concept and a new way looking at things.

Bradley: It seemed to be a natural sort of thing. Although the idea of a capstone university and bringing students in from the junior college system, community college system, never really seemed to work for Sangamon State. I think Governors State was much more successful at it. Really, Sangamon State and Governors State too, to a lesser degree, became more of a commuter institution and…

Reynolds: …even more of a focus on graduate work than…

Bradley: …graduate work.

Reynolds: Undergraduate work.

Bradley: Night classes offered for career employees in state government, for example, or other people in Springfield who just wanted to take a course here and there.

Reynolds: Let's go back to the formation of the station. We can talk about Sangamon State a little later.

Bradley: Let me just break in and ask you, how much longer do you think we are going to go?

Reynolds: What would you like to (end of recording)

(End of interview #1 #2 continues)

Interview with Rich Bradley

ISP-A-L-2011-057

Interview # 2: Dec. 9, 2011

Interviewer: Chris Reynolds

Reynolds: Okay, this is the second interview with Rich Bradley. We are going to cover, primarily, his time at SSU [which later became] UIS and the formation of the radio station over there. This is December the ninth, about 10am. We're at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois. I am Chris Reynolds, a volunteer interviewer. Rich, where we left off at the last interview, you were just beginning to talk about the formation of the radio station over there. You were working for the radio network and decided to go to work there. You just began to talk about how you got the job and the early days of the station.

Bradley: I hadn't really had a lot of State house coverage and reporting experience during my seven years at WCVS. It was only during the two years that I was at the Illinois News Network that I was first exposed to the State house environment. So, I had the benefit of those two years at the time Sangamon State University began work on putting public radio station on the air. I heard in, somewhere around January of 1974, that Sangamon State was in the process of doing all the paperwork, all the federal bureaucracy with the Federal Communications Commission, to accomplish that. At that time, the goal of Sangamon State and its first president, Bob Spencer, was to put both a public radio and a public TV station on the air. He saw that as a natural extension of the public affairs mandate that had been given to Sangamon State University by the legislature. When I first heard about that, National Public Radio was a very new entity. I think it was formed sometime in 1972, and its premier program, *All Things Considered*, went on the air at that time. That was the only program that they were doing; itwas from 4:00 to 5:30 central time in the afternoon.

Reynolds: Their network was pretty small at that point?

Bradley: It was and had…I don't know how many stations, but just not that many stations in the very beginning. I know, here in central Illinois, WILL-AM radio carried NPR and *All Things Considered* when it first went on the air in 1972.

Reynolds: That's the Champaign.

Bradley: That's on the Champaign campus of the University of Illinois. I heard about this, I think it was in January of '74.

Reynolds: Just to set the stage: Did they have a big audience over here? Could you pick it up from here. A lot of people listen to the Champaign station? Because I know that's always been an issue with the TV stations.

Bradley: Yes. The Champaign operation is AM and FM stations, and two radio stations. Their FM station carried a signal into Springfield, clearly. Because they were operating in a hundred thousand watts, they were grandfathered in, whereas fifty thousand watts, in time, became the maximum power output that the commission allocated for FM radio stations east of the Mississippi River, west of the Mississippi, up to a hundred thousand watts. But, WILL-FM went on the air prior to the time the commission established the Mississippi River as the dividing point between fifty thousand and one hundred thousand.

The AM station on 580 did not get into Springfield very well, if at all. That signal was a directional signal, which went mostly north and south and east, almost over to Indianapolis. That's the background there.

Sangamon State had already, I think by the time I heard about this, made the case to the Federal Communications Commission that—they had done a marketing study and all that—that there was funding and an audience here that would support a non-commercial, educational station, as it was licensed at Sangamon State University. And the fact that SSU made a very good case, I assume, to the commission, that the kind of programming it would do would be that kind of programming not heard on commercial radio in the Springfield market.

Reynolds: Just to further that, did Chicago have a major entity that was running the NPR and maybe even St. Louis, or?

Bradley: You know, I don't know the answer to either one of those questions, especially St. Louis. In Chicago, WBEZ, which is the NPR station up there now, WBEZ was on the air, and that station had been on the air quite a while. But, at that time, it was owned by the Chicago Board of Education. The Chicago Public School District owned that station. They were using it, in the early days, primarily for strictly instructional purposes, to teach over the air. But—

Reynolds: Does it still have that relationship, or is that so long ago, it became independent of the…

Bradley: It became independent of that. I think the Chicago School District sold out or transferred the license to a non-profit community group in Chicago that took over the ownership and the operation of that station.

Reynolds: Not attached to a university or anything like that?

Bradley: No, no, no. And there are a few public radio stations around the country that are owned and operated that way, by a non-profit, community organization. But, whether or not WBEZ was carrying any NPR program in those early days—by early days I mean 1972, up until, at least [when] WSSR went on the air, in January of 1975. So, I heard about this station, made some calls and finally found my way to a fellow by the name of Dale Ouzts. Do you know Dale?

Reynolds: Yeah, because, you know, my wife worked at the station in the early days. So, I know all those guys or met them all.

Bradley: Dale came here from Wichita. He was originally from Alabama, I think, very—

Reynolds: Kept his southern drawl, as I remember.

Bradley: He used to call it LA. He came from LA, lower Alabama. (laugh) Somewhere around Dothan, Alabama, I think, was his hometown. But, he had already established a track record for putting non-commercial public radio and TV stations on air, building them from scratch. He was in Wichita, Kansas at the time, if I recall correctly. The university had already hired him. He was already working. He came to work, I think, in late ‘72 or early ‘73 to begin the whole paperwork process, because applying for a radio station license, at least in those days, was a long, bureaucratic process.

Reynolds: Would take several years?

Bradley: Well, in this case it took two or three years. In some cases, it does, particularly if there’s a challenge. If somebody applies for a frequency, for a license, and somebody else also applies, then that sets into motion a long, bureaucratic process of holding public hearings and looking at the kind of programming that the applying entities…and sometimes it was more than just two. Sometimes it was three, four, which really dragged the process out. I’ve heard that some license applications, back in those days, took up to ten years.

Reynolds: They become political at all?

Bradley: I’m sure it did. I don’t know about the WSSR license. I, frankly, don’t know that much about what went on in the process of applying…

Reynolds: …before you got the job.

Bradley: …before I got the job and went to work in October of '74. But Dale was the first guy I talked to, and he confirmed what I'd been hearing. I was interested in going into that kind of radio because, at WCVS before I left there, there was a top forty, rock and roll station. You did a five minute newscast at twenty-five and at fifty-five, but, out of the five minutes, usually ninety seconds was commercial, leaving only about three, three and half minutes of content time. Near the end of the seven years I was at WCVS, there were just too many times when I would finish work in a day, and going home with a feeling that I hadn't really accomplished anything that day.

Reynolds: Plus you're probably not making a lot of money doing news.

Bradley: Well, no, not in those days. I was making maybe $10,000 a year. I was there from 1965 to 1972.

Reynolds: Late '60s, yeah.

Bradley: I think, when Ray Phipps came to me, he had the funding, I think, from the Barker-Lubin family in town, at least from Bob Lubin, a member of that family. He offered me $14,400… No, let me back up. That was my starting salary at Sangamon State. He offered me, I think, $11,500 to come and put this Illinois News Network together. And I did that. I went into the state house environment as a real novice. There was nobody to lead me around. I was on my own because, the two years I was at Illinois News Network, I was it.

Reynolds: Just to back up on the…I know we don't want to go too far back because we've covered a lot of this. But, the radio network, the Barker-Lubin family…Now, the other radio network we talked about, the one that Ben was associated with, was an advertising agency that put that together.

Bradley: Bill Miller put that together in 19—

Reynolds: What was the motivation of Barker-Lubin? I mean, I can understand their motivation because they were selling time to radio stations. Why did Barker-Lubin, which was a real estate outfit, why were they interested in radio?

Bradley: Well, at that time, Barker-Lubin was also a lumber company and a construction company. But, I don't think it was so much the Barker-Lubin family as much as it was money provided by Bob Lubin, who I think was close friends with Ray Phipps.

Reynolds: So, he's like an investor, and good friend of his and wanted to do this.

Bradley: And he was the principle investor. But, I think he and Ray Phipps…

Reynolds: And what was Phipps' background? Did he...was a radio guy?

Bradley: He came out of S.P. Wright Advertising Agency as a salesperson, but he had a broadcast background. As a matter of fact, I think he had a journalism degree that he gotten from the University of Missouri, down at Columbia. He got involved with politics too and, during the Ogilvie administration, he was, I think, Director of the [Illinois] State Fair for a couple, three years. That was the background and how I knew him from covering him as state fair manager.

At S.P. Wright, when they put CIB, the Capitol Information Bureau, that Bill Miller—who was news director at WTAX in those days—put together in 1967. He saw, after a while, that Miller's work had created a demand in many markets in Illinois—commercial markets I'm talking about—because CIB was sold in multi-station markets on an exclusivity basis, So that, whichever station bought the service, had exclusive rights to it.

Reynolds: I think we covered this in the last interview. I'm sorry to—

Bradley: Oh, that's okay.

Reynolds: I just wanted to pick up a few more facts on that. So, let's go back to SSR and pick up: You're process of getting that job.

Bradley: I made contact with Dale Ouzts. He confirmed, but he said they weren't at the point yet where they were going to begin hiring of staff, but that they soon would, around the first of July. He told me—

Reynolds: '72, we're talking about?

Bradley: No, this is '74.

Reynolds: '74.

Bradley: Dale had already been in town a year and a half or two years at that time, I think...because, I think Bob Spencer hired him very early on in Sangamon State's—

Reynolds: Remember when the university actually started? Was it the?

Bradley: 1970, I think.

Reynolds: '70.

Bradley: 1970 was the first class that they graduated or when classes first started. I think 1970 is identified as the beginning of Sangamon State.

Reynolds: So, we're four years into Sangamon State as we start this.

Bradley: When I went to work. But, when they hired Dale Ouzts, they were only about two, two and half years in. So, very soon after Dr. Spencer…

Reynolds: Early on they decided they wanted to do this.

Bradley: Yes, I think Spencer had that in mind. He came from New England area, where he was…

Reynolds: I think it was Vermont or something like that.

Bradley: He served in the legislature up there and then got into higher education. Yeah, he came from up in that area, and early in his life he'd been exposed to WGBH, which was a big…

Reynolds: Was that a Boston…?

Bradley: Yeah, an FM TV, public TV, operation in Boston. So—

Reynolds: It's big still, big producer of shows and…

Bradley: Oh yeah, very much so. He liked what he heard there and saw the potential for an extension of the public affairs mandate that Sangamon State had, from the State of Illinois, literally. So, he went to work on that as soon as he got the university basically grounded, up and running.

Anyway, back to '74. Now, Dale Ouzts just told me to stay in touch, that they just weren't ready to begin staff. So, I stayed in touch because I'd heard enough about non-commercial public radio and the opportunity it afforded for in-depth reporting and coverage of events, of news. Dr. Spencer at Sangamon State, saw a need for extending the public affairs mandate to include coverage of Illinois State government and politics, the general assembly, et cetera, et cetera.

So, I stayed in touch, calling almost weekly. (laugh) I think Dale got a little upset with me. But, in time, it came time for them to advertise the job, and I put in my application. I think a lot of people in town, initially, had a mistaken impression about what this station was going to be. I think they thought it was going to be a kind of instructional in nature.

Reynolds: Kind of like the example of the Chicago station.

Bradley: Exactly, yeah. I'm making some assumptions there, but I seemed to recall that seemed to be what a lot of people were thinking. Ouzts had convinced me, early on, that that wasn't at all what he had in mind. The two or three or four other applicants, or finalists in the application process…

Reynolds: Did you ever know who applied? Did you ever hear who else…ran into somebody later on and said "Oh, I applied for that job"?

Bradley: I knew of one, maybe two. One was Tom Hecht, who I think, at that time, was working at channel 20, here in Springfield.

Reynolds: Here in Springfield.

Bradley: Yeah. But Tom and I had gone to school down at SIU Carbondale, so I knew him from that experience and both of us working on our radio-TV degree at the same time at SIU Carbondale. But Tom was, and…there was another fellow who was principally an ad salesman in town. I think he had some sales experience, I think, at WTAX. Those are names right now, Chris, that just don't come to mind. But anyway—

Reynolds: And I'm not going to come up with the names. (laugh)

Bradley: Yeah. I think that, as I said, the assumption was that this was going to be an instructional kind of station. Nobody seemed to be interested in applying. But, as I say, Ouzts had convinced me that he had other plans for this station. So, I went through the interview process. I spent, I think, the better part of two days out there interviewing and going around and meeting—

Reynolds: Did you talk to Spencer? Was that part of it?

Bradley: Oh yeah, Spencer and a fellow by the name of Chris Vlahopoulus, who had been hired as the Vice President of University Relations at Sangamon State. The other vice president was Thomas Goins.

But, Chris Vlahopoulus had been press secretary for Otto Kerner, and he is the guy who…I think earlier, I explained how Kerner's news conferences were conducted in his office, with just pencil and tablet only, no recording microphones or cameras. If the governor hadn't stepped in anything in that part of the news conference, Chris Vlahopoulus, press secretary, would allow him to come outside his inner office and be interviewed by radio and TV. Chris' background was with *United Press International,* covering the State house. So…

Reynolds: So, he was at the university. What was his position there? He was a…

Bradley: He was a vice president of what they called university relations. The radio station operation was going to be a component of university relations, which also was the unit that housed the PR arm of this new university and community outreach. Broadcast services was a segment of university relations, and, within that, would be the public radio and the public TV station. That was the original organizational plan.

But, as time went on, the public TV station didn't come to be. The Board of Regents, governing board, indicate – I'm told – to Sangamon State that they should drop the idea of a public TV station for the time being and focus on getting the FM radio station on the air, which is what they did.

Reynolds: Well, so maybe we can come back there. That was Convocom, I think, you're talking about.

Bradley: Well, it…but—

Reynolds: And that has to do with the tower going down and…

Bradley: Well yeah, but Convocom was a not-for-profit consortium that was put together…

Reynolds: After the university bowed out of the…

Bradley: Exactly…

Reynolds: Got you.

Bradley: …because Sangamon State never really owned the public TV station, channel 14, I think it was. But, it was a member of the consortium because the other members included, like, Western Illinois University at Macomb, I think, Quincy University at Quincy, and Bradley University in Peoria. And, up in the Quad Cities area, I think, Black Hawk.

Reynolds: I believe so. Well, your memory's good on that because my wife, you know, worked there for a while in the radio station. She went over to be the volunteer coordinator there for a while. But the disaster struck. That's another subject, with their tower going down and lost their initial director.

Bradley: That tower was originally built over there, was an ABC station that was headquartered in Jacksonville, the commercial station. They went belly up. They just, you know couldn't—

Reynolds: I think it was that ice storm that really killed…that terrible ice storm that brought it down.

Bradley: Well, yes. Convocom was in the process of, or had purchased, that tower and transmitter site over there before the ice storm in 1978 brought it down.

Reynolds: Well, that's a side thing. Let's get back to the station. But, I was interesting to know what the sequence of events…in other words, the university, originally, wanted to have the TV station, but decided that that wasn't going to work. So, they kind of let that go.

Bradley: It wasn't the university that made that decision. It was the governing board.

Reynolds: Oh, the Board of Regents?

Bradley: The Board of Regents, which had Sangamon State—.

Reynolds: Governor's State probably.

Bradley: No, that was under the Board of Governors.

Reynolds: Oh.

Bradley: Under the Board of Regents; it was Northern Illinois University, Illinois State and Sangamon State. Those were those three institutions under the Board of Regents' umbrella. Under the Board of Governors, there were five universities, like…

Reynolds: And then there was the University of Illinois.

Bradley: …like Eastern, Western…

Reynolds: I forgot that about that structure.

Bradley: Yeah, but anyway, they were… during Edgar's administration, they threw out that organization and gave Northern and others their own individual boards.

Reynolds: Actually, I think the SIU was their own, weren't they, politically? SIU in Edwardsville?

Bradley: Edwardsville, yeah.

Reynolds: They stood alone because they had a lot of political clout, almost as much as the University of Illinois.

Bradley: They and the University of Illinois were the only ones that had their own individual boards, yes.

Reynolds: Anyway, back to the station.

Bradley: [I] went through the interview process, and, I'm told, that I was clearly the most qualified person to do the job that Ouzts envisioned. So, I was hired and went to work on October first, 1974.

Reynolds: Now, at some point, you… And this was, I think, off the interview, the last time we were talking as we got into this, but you were kind of concerned about getting the job. And so, you thought you, maybe, had to make some connections to make sure that sure that—knowing Illinois as you do, I'm sure.

Bradley: Well, back in those days, I can't really give you the background. But, Phipps was well acquainted with Neil Hartigan, and I became acquainted with him as well. I knew that Hartigan was acquainted, and had political ties, with Chris Vlahopoulus, who was the press secretary under Otto Kerner. I remember, on a couple of occasions, when I mentioned to Neil Hartigan, who was lieutenant governor under Dan Walker, that…

Reynolds: And, of course, ran for governor later.

Bradley: …Yeah. …that I was putting in an application at Sangamon State University for the job as news director of a new station that Sangamon State was going to put on their air.

Reynolds: Let's see, it was Hartigan…at that point, '74, was he an attorney general?

Bradley: No, no he was…—

Reynolds: He was the lieutenant governor at that time.

Bradley: He was lieutenant governor under Walker because Walker served from '72 to '76.

Reynolds: And he was the attorney general before that.

Bradley: No, after that.

Reynolds: After that. Okay.

Bradley: Yes. But, anyway, under Walker he had to find his own way as the lieutenant governor. But, Hartigan came out of the political arena of Richard…

Reynolds: Daley.

Bradley: Well, I'm trying to come up with the middle initial. Richard M. Daley, I think it was.

Reynolds: The old Mayor Daley.

Bradley: Yeah, Richard senior, (laugh) the original Mayor Daley.

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: So, that was his political background. But he just told me, on two or three different occasions, he said, "Look" he said "I know Chris Vlahopoulus. If you need any help, just let me know." That offer was there; it had been made to me twice. I was aware of that offer. I decided that I was going to try that offer out, if I needed it. Well, as it turned out, I didn't really need it. I felt much better about it, after the fact, but I wanted the job bad enough because I wanted to be able to formulate the policy I had in mind for news coverage and the philosophy of news coverage that I was prepared to do that, at least take the guy up on the offer to see if he would be of any help.

Reynolds: Now, during the interviews, pretty much everybody assured you that this was what it's going to be. And your idea and your mission of what you would like to do there was going to fit in well with what they had in mind.

Bradley: What Dale had told me was also supported by another fellow. To explain why, Howard Hill, who had been news director at WTAX, was already out of

Sangamon State. In the original formulation, there was going to be a division of broadcast services, under the university relations division of the university. Broadcast services was radio and TV, and there was an instructional TV component somewhere in there.

But the organization structure was: Dale Ouzts was Director of

Broadcast Services, and then, under him, would be a radio general manager and a TV general manager. Howard Hill was hired to be the radio general manager. He was also part of the hiring process because, by that time, they had already hired the chief engineer, whose name was Jim Newbanks, who was the chief there for years, until he retired, I don't know, in the early '90s.

Jim came up here, where he was the assistant chief engineer from the whole SIU broadcasting establishment down at Carbondale, where they had public radio and public TV on the air—

Reynolds: Probably, after the time you were a student down there, so you didn't necessarily know him.

Bradley: I didn't know him from that. And I think you're right. I think—although don't know what time, what year, he went to work down there. But, that's where Jim's background was, in engineering. He was the assistant chief of that whole operation down there.

He came up here because he was interested in building a radio and a TV station, both from scratch. Well, TV didn't happen. He thought long and hard about whether or not he wanted to stay and decided, finally, to just stay here and get the FM station on the air because there was a belief that, after they successfully got FM on the air, they would go back then and the board of regents would sign off on pursuing putting a TV station on the air.

I don't remember now, but I think budgetary issues and…there was a conservative segment on the Board of Regents that was anti-federal funding, state funding for public radio and public TV stations.

Reynolds: I wanted to talk about this next, but was there kind of bias against SSU in that regard, in terms of its mission things, or…on the Board of Regents, it was kind of a—

Bradley: I don't recall that—

Reynolds: …It was kind of a weak sister to the other universities that were on the Board of Regents?

Bradley: That could very well have been. I didn't know anything at all about the politics of the board of regents. What I do know, came only after I was hired and went to work at Sangamon State, and that the board of regents, in my

mind at the time, was just the governing body for Sangamon State, which also included Illinois State and Northern in that group. There was always a feeling, in the early days, that, yeah, Sangamon State was a new state university, as was Governors' State. It was conceived of as a capstone kind of university that could handle a pretty good sized student enrollment, coming out of the community college system at that time. So, that's how the idea of a junior-senior graduate institution was conceived of in the legislature here. That goes back to, I think, Otto Kerner's years in the early '60s, when he conceived of putting together the Illinois Board of Higher Education and that organization…

Reynolds: That structure, yeah.

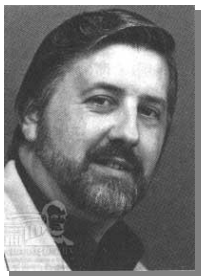
Bradley: That structure.

Reynolds: Well, let's go back to the…So, you've got a director of the station already, the chief engineer…

Bradley: Howard Hill.

Reynolds: And so, you come in, and things are cooking along. So, you're the news guy, the news director.

Bradley: October first, now, the stations not on the air yet. It didn't go on the air until January of 1975. So, those first—October, November, December—those first three months I was there, was spent formulating and articulating the basic news coverage philosophy. It was also doing some pretty hands-on kind of things, like organizing the news room, making decisions about wire services, the kind of format that we would have on the air.



Rich Bradley, 1975

Reynolds: When did the NPR thing? Was it already a done deal by the time you got there or…

Bradley: Yeah. I mean, it was already known, when I went to work, October first, that we would be carrying *All Things Considered*, which was, at that time, the only news program that NPR was producing.

Reynolds: So, you guys had already signed on with NPR at that point. They were a growing network, so they were looking for people to sign on. There was no competition to get that. Although, was…

Bradley: Oh, no. Not in Springfield, no.

Reynolds: …was the Champaign-Urbana folks concerned about you guys being the, you know, so close to them or…because they were probably NPR, right?

Bradley: Well, their AM station was, not the FM station. And, since the AM station didn't really come west very much past Decatur, you know, there wasn't, I don't think, much concern on the part of the WILL broadcast operation over there about any competition for NPR. Their FM station, which did put a signal in here, was just all classical music at the time. And so, there was—

Reynolds: Twenty or, not twenty-four hours a day, but certainly, all their—

Bradley: Well, I think they were on the air twenty-four hours a day on 90.9 FM.

Reynolds: They let students on the station over there?

Bradley: No, no, no. See, that was the difference between the broadcast operation at the University of Illinois and the broadcast operation at Southern Illinois University, where I had gone to get my degree. Down there, it was students operating hands-on. But at WILL, they had hired a full time, professional staff to run the radio station and operate it, and to run the TV station and operate it.

Reynolds: Was there any discussion, here at Sangamon State, about an AM, or it was always just an FM?

Bradley: Always just an FM, although, at some point in time after I went to work there, I heard that Ouzts might have been poking around and looking at the possibility of an AM station, but I just don't remember.

Reynolds: This was kind of the golden era of FM, though, as it is all of us that recall that were in college during the late '60s, early '70s, FM stations were all the rage and would play alternative music and all that kind of thing.

Bradley: The room that was my office at Sangamon State, or in the Building L, which is where the radio station is today—it's no longer called Building L—but, that's what it was back in those days. That was where the studios were located. As a matter of fact, that single story building had extra head room in the top because they had already assumed, when that building was built, that TV would come along. So, they needed the extra height to handle studios for a TV station—

Reynolds: The pre-fab building that you've always been in out there.

Bradley: Yeah. …then enough room up here for lights and, I don't know, whatever else goes into putting a TV studio together. I don't claim to know too much about how that works. But, anyway, I was focused, in October, November and December of 1974, of getting the news department put together and getting ready to start broadcasting news as soon as the station went on the air. As a matter of fact, a live newscast that I anchored, was the first live thing done on the station, when it went on the air in January of 1975.

Reynolds: You started out early in the morning?

Bradley: No, no, no. We went on the air at noon…

Reynolds: At noon!

Bradley: …on that day, on January third. The station, then, was not a twenty-four hour operation. We started out operating, I think, at seven. We went on the air at 7:00 a.m. and then, went off the air at 9:00 in the evening, maybe, in the early days. I would…

Reynolds: Well, later on, you would let the students have it late at night. I know because I went out with a roommate to do some of his shows and things, I think, at midnight, maybe, or something like, you would let the students do shows.

Bradley: Yeah, *East Side Beat,* I think it was called. Not only students, Chris…

Reynolds: People from the community?

…people from the community. They had to go through a screening process. I know, Howard Hill who was the radio station manager, set up a screening process. He didn't allow just anybody to go on the air. But, the door was open for volunteers, whether from the campus, students, or from the community.

See, at that time, Sangamon State was a junior-senior institution, and its average age of the student was late twenties, around thirty, because it was a very much commuter set up. The populated classes were at night. There were very, very few students who actually went to class during the day at Sangamon State.

Reynolds: Now, NPR was just this show that they did, and that was pretty much it. You weren't getting national news feed from them or…

Bradley: No, no just…

Reynolds: Okay. So, we'll come back to NPR later, maybe, and talk about how that evolved. Since you've already talked a little bit about Sangamon State, let's just kind of move on. Before you got the job, what was your impression of the university? We talked a little bit about you were on board with the public mission, and that's what made this possible. But, I went to school there, and their reputation was an interesting one. They had recruited a lot of these radical professors to teach there. The community, I think, was a little wary of Sangamon State. Did you have that sense, or did it ever really affect the radio station, anyway?

Bradley: It never really affected the radio station; although, I had a sense that the community was suspicious. Dale was very careful. I mean, he was aware of the kind of faculty that was beginning to be hired to provide the instruction for the university. Howard Hill, who was a good friend of mine, was hired to become the station manager. So, it was clear to me that there was no way the

station would have gone on the air with a really left leaning kind of bias. I mean, that was a problem of enough for us working there in the later years, when NPR began expanding its program offering, news offering. Early on, NPR got tagged with this liberal, left wing bias. There may have been some credence to it.

Reynolds: I'm kind of surprised that, you know, just the few of the professors that I remember out there, were very active, radical sort of…

Bradley: That's not to say there wasn't pressure put on them.

Reynolds …like Ron Sakolsky and Bob Sikes and Munkirs, and…Did they ever want to get on the air? Did they…yeah?

Bradley: Sure. They tried because they felt like, if we were going to allow community members on the air to host music shows, that that was opening the door to them to do things other than music. But, Dale Ouzts and Howard Hill controlled that and were very successful in doing so. It's not to say it didn't create a lot of friction on the campus.

Reynolds: Yeah, because, as I recall, Ron Sakolsky his famous technique was gorilla theater. But he also was a big music guy. I believe he was sort of an expert on blues music.

Bradley: If I recall right, he did host some of those late night music shows in the early days…

Reynolds: That would make sense.

Bradley: …of the radio station. I'm trying to think; it wasn't *East Side Beat*. That was a weekend program, I think, that the station produced, with the help of volunteers and community members from the east side of Springfield, African-Americans, primarily.

Reynolds: Do you remember who some of the early disc jockeys were in that east side?

Bradley: George Rollard…—

Reynolds: Oh, George. I worked with George.

Bradley: Erskine Route

Reynolds: Yeah. Wasn't there a guy in the east side that had sort of an underground radio station? I can't think of his name right now.

Bradley: Ah, Blanta. Yes.

Reynolds: I'm not going to be able to remember his name either. But I remember that?

Bradley: Didn't he, in time, hire a radio station on the air?

Reynolds: Yeah, I think so.

Bradley: Primarily in the John Hay Homes area? Duane Readus was his name. But, he later…

Reynolds: You remembered the name.

Bradley: Well, yeah. It just came to me.

Reynolds: I wouldn't have got that.

Bradley: I can't believe I can't remember the name of the program. It went from midnight to 2:00 a.m.…

Reynolds: I can't remember the name of it either.

Bradley: …during the week.

Reynolds: Like I said, I sat in on a roommate who did it.

Bradley: The music offering was very, very eclectic and really was pretty much tied to the individual, musical taste of the particular host. There was a broad offering of musical types on the station in those early days.

Reynolds: Do you think sort of the image of the university hurt the radio station? Or in those early days, it didn't put you off at all, obviously.

Bradley: No.

Reynolds: You always got the sense that the community thought it was, like, those crazy radicals out there at SSU, sort of thing.

Bradley: I think, in the beginning, that leading members of the community suspected that would be the case. But, I think, from the time we went on the air, we were successful, I think, in time, in convincing the community that was really not the case.

As NPR evolved, it certainly didn't help what we were trying to do in the community here. I mean, carrying NPR programming, and therefore, becoming one of the horses that the saddle of liberal bias was strapped on us, and we had to deal with. The only way we could, at that time, counter it, was through…you know, we put words out there and tried to establish our news programming.

I tried very hard, really, to play it right down the middle, down the middle as much as you reasonably could expect, understanding full well that you talk a

lot about being objective. You're still talking about people and their own individual biases that may have been left-leaning or right-leaning.

Reynolds: Did any of that affect your ability to raise funds in the community? Because, I know, you've always had to raise funds at a public radio station.

Bradley: But in the very, very early days, Chris, we didn't really have on-air fund drives. I think the first…

Reynolds: So, you were funded through the university, primarily? You were part of the budget?

Bradley: Yeah, we were a part of Sangamon State's budget. Well, the radio station, even today, still is. The majority of its funding, at that time, came from the university. That was pretty much the case as long as Bob Spencer was president because he believed in putting money into the operation to get it up and running and on the air and to sustain its operational costs.

And then, because WSSR went on the air as a CPB qualified station—corporation for public broadcasting—required, as a condition of federal funding, that you hire five full-time employees, and then you operate seventeen, eighteen hours a day, seven days a week.

Reynolds: And you had federal funding for that.

Bradley: That kicked you into the federal funds made available by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. That was the other component.

Reynolds: Just to run that one show and be part of the network in the early days?

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Interesting.

Bradley: Well, they also provided some funding for hardware, as it were, not just programming.

Reynolds: Could you get grants to do local programming, or local programming was just part of their grant, or…?

Bradley: This was a grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which doled out federal funds that came from congressional appropriations, doled out to public radio and TV stations, nationally. It wasn't programming money. It was just a grant given to the stations to use as they saw fit. Now…

Reynolds: To help grow the system, primarily?

Bradley: Yeah. In the case of the radio station, I simply just don't recall. Primarily, because I wasn't really involved in those kinds of decisions at the time. And sad to say, at the time, I really wasn't interested…

Reynolds: As long as you get your paycheck. (laugh)

Bradley: Well, that, and money to run the news department, to pay for the United Press International wire machine, to pay for the Reuter's wire machine, the service that these two teletypes, setting in the newsroom, were running and cranking out all this news.

Reynolds: Did you have staff to begin with, or was it just you for a while?

Bradley: Just me.

Reynolds: How long before…

Bradley: A couple, three months, and then Peggy Boyer came aboard, initially as a volunteer, and…

Reynolds: Was she a student at the time, or this was a full-time—

Bradley: No, she already had a bachelor and master's degree in journalism from the U of I over at Champaign. Peggy, at that time, was doing a lot of freelance reporting, magazine style reporting and writing.

Reynolds: Which is what she's involved in now, isn't she?

Bradley: She's retired, now, but she…

Reynolds: She went on to *Illinois Issues*, didn't she?

Bradley: Right, well but, there were two stints at the public radio station, in between, and she was out in Seattle doing some community organizing for a period of time, during that time.

Reynolds: Just to put it into context, when did *Illinois Issues* magazine get started?

Bradley: The same year as the radio station—

Reynolds: Okay. So, that magazine started at the same time.

Bradley: Yeah. But she wasn't involved in the magazine in those early days.

Reynolds: Another entity that's well known at SSU was when Paul Simon lost the primary race with Dan Walker. They recruited him to come out and start a public affairs reporting program.

Bradley: A master's programming in public affairs. Paul established that at Sangamon State and ran it for two years before he…

Reynolds: Which would have been '70, probably before the radio station, a little bit before the radio station?

Bradley: Oh, yeah. I'm trying to think… He was Lieutenant Governor under Ogilvie.

Reynolds: Yes.

Bradley: And he ran and was defeated by Walker in…was that '72?

Reynolds: Uh huh.

Bradley: Yeah, March of '72. That's when he went out to Sangamon State to establish that master's program in public affairs reporting.

Reynolds: That was well up and running by the time you started the radio station.

Bradley: It was. As a matter of fact, my first exposure to the internship program that's a key feature of that master's program: academic in the fall semester, full-time internship in the State house, with a news bureau down there that maintained a full-time bureau. That was the essence of the internship, January to July 1, six months full-time, hands-on. My first exposure to that was when I was at the Illinois News Network. I think I participated two years there, with an intern from the PAR program, which gave me an extra hand when I was at the Illinois News Network because I was the only guy there, and I had a PAR intern from January through June, two years…

Reynolds: Do you remember who those two interns were, or is that going to be to hard to remember? People that went on…

Bradley: Jack—

Reynolds: Well, maybe it will come to you later on.

Bradley: Jack Beary (B-e-a-r-y) was the first one. Maybe there was only one intern… and Jack Beary because, later, he ended working in government in the Chicago area. With the public affairs reporting internship program, here was one side…at the radio station, every year there was one, and sometimes two, interns that we hosted, every year for the thirty five years that I was there. So, you're talking…

Reynolds: You always had two.

Bradley: Not always. Nominally, it was one, but there were years when, for example, Bill Miller had enough students that he could place a second intern at WSSR, WSSU.

Reynolds: And Bill Miller, after Paul Simon left, became the…

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: That's not the same Bill Miller that did the…

Bradley: CIB, yes.

Reynolds: Oh, okay. So, he came out to Sangamon State.

Bradley: His career was news director at WTAX, 1949 to 1967, where he left to go to work for S. P. Wright Advertising Agency, created CIB Capital Information Bureau, which he ran until Paul Simon was elected to congress and took over the… As matter of fact, Bill Miller and I went to work at Sangamon State in 1974, about the same time. Bill went to work there in August in '74

Reynolds: So, Simon really wasn't there very long, and I think he ran for the senate, then. Didn't he?

Bradley: No, the house from southern Illinois.

Reynolds: Oh, did he start out for the house?

Bradley: He established residence in Makanda and ran for congress down there. I think it was Kenny Gray's seat, in those days.

Reynolds: So, Bill Miller was at SSU when you were there and was running Paul Simon's program.

Bradley: Exactly. He went out there as the director of the program. I went as news director. We had been competitors in local radio and in statewide audio news service, and then came together out there at Sangamon State. As a matter of fact, when I created *State Week in Review*, a weekly program still on the air out there, I invited Bill to be one of the regular, recurring members of *State Week in Review.*

Reynolds: Well, I want to go back and talk about *State Week in Review.* But, let's see, I want to talk about your formation of the public radio network and also the Statehouse Bureau, which you created out there. Why don't we just start with those two.

Bradley: The Statehouse Bureau was created, and Peggy Boyer, who worked there as a volunteer, became the bureau chief, on strictly a volunteer basis until we generated enough funds to hire her, initially, as a half-time person, and, I think, then later, as a full-time person. I think she became a full-time employee…oh, maybe 1976.

Reynolds: Okay. So, two years after you'd been there, you…

Bradley: Well, about a year and a half, actually.

Reynolds: Yeah. …you moved to set up the bureau over there.

Bradley: Our first PAR intern at WSSR was a fellow by the name of Frank Akers who later became general manager of the public radio station at SIU Edwardsville and, I believe, is still there today. I've got to think about some of these individuals, back in…but, we established the Statehouse Bureau in the very first year of operation, 1975. I would run down there on some days and cover things going on at the State house. Since we were interested in doing a full-time operation down there, the Legislative Correspondence Association, which is a group of all the media people who kind of ran and organized and policed themselves, as it were, we had to make application to that organization to approve what we wanted to do. And they did. So, we set up our first bureau, which was nothing more than a couple of recorders, a microphone, a telephone, typewriters and a broadcast loop. In other words, a special circuit that Illinois Bell Telephone, in those days, created, a designated circuit that went out to the main station. That was an open and live line all the time, so that we could broadcast live from down there or feed news reports from down there.

Reynolds: Now, was that pretty unique for a public radio station to do that, or was there a model for that somewhere else or—

Bradley: May have been. I don't recall that that was the case.

Reynolds: For instance, the Chicago public or the Champaign, did they do that?

Bradley: No.

Reynolds: So, you were the only public…

Bradley: …that was doing live stuff, yeah, like that. See, in Missouri, for example, there's no public station in Jeff [Jefferson] City. So, no, that wasn't the case there. But, if memory serves me, in most of the state capitals in the country, if there was a public radio station on the air, they weren't doing that kind of concentrated coverage in the state capital.

Reynolds: Because it was unique for WSSU to have this public affairs mission. It probably made sense to you…

Bradley: Very much so, yeah.

Reynolds: …and the university was probably very supportive of that idea. You said that, "as funding grew." Did the university fund that over time or…

Bradley: Oh, yeah, because that was a part of the news department operation. Yeah, in the beginning, they were fairly generous, although SSU was a part of the state

budgeting process, and sometimes that doesn't happen just over night, Chris, as you well know, having worked for the state. You had to do a lot of …

Reynolds: Incremental, as they say.

Bradley: …incremental kind of stuff, getting your toe or elbow in the door, as it were, and establishing yourself. Developing and establishing the rationale, almost like an entitlement program in some cases, quite frankly. But that's how it would work. We hired Peggy Boyer. We hired and scraped together enough money to pay her on a half-time basis, and gradually…

Reynolds: She saw the potential, obviously.

Bradley: Yes. Oh, yeah. Well, she was interested because, even at that early date, NPR had already established the concept of going into the print journalism media to bring reporters into radio.

Reynolds: So, let's track NPR as we go along talking about this. So, you're about a year and a half, two years in. Had NPR expanded tremendously during that period, to more than just the one show?

Bradley: Yes and no. Yes, in the sense that, in the early days, they did a ninety minute program from 4:00 p.m. central time until 5:30. And that was it. The West coast stations, for them that came…

Reynolds: Late at night.

Bradley: No.

Reynolds: No, earlier.

Bradley: Earlier.

Reynolds: Earlier, right.

Bradley: Because NPR only did that show once. The first expansion that they had was to roll that program over, so that 4:00 to 5:30, they would start a roll-over of a ninety minute program, from 5:30 until 6:00. And then, 6:00 until…

Reynolds: Repeat the same program or tweak it?

Bradley: Essentially…

Reynolds: New stuff.

Bradley: …essentially repeating the same magazine elements of the program. The newscasts at the top and bottom of the hour were new, fresh and live.

Reynolds: So, it was like a radio equivalent of *Sixty Minutes* to begin with, except it was ninety minutes.

Bradley: Yeah, very much so. It was structured, but only in the sense that there was five minutes created at the top and bottom of the hour for a network newscast. Or, local stations, if they wanted, at the bottom of the hour, could cut in and drop in their local five minute newscast, right there. And here in Springfield, that's what we did, at 4:30.

Reynolds: So, just to get a sense for this, in the early days, what was the content of the radio station? Would you come on and do a morning show and then classical music and then NPR.

Bradley: Did a morning newscast, half hour at 7:30. That was at sign on time. Then, there was a brief five minute newscast at 10:00 a.m., and then, at noon, there was a whole hour.

Reynolds: Of local and state news.

Bradley: Local and state news, but a lot of that was syndicated stuff. I think a lot of the universities produced a weekly ten or fifteen minute public service program. I think we got our hands on all of those, and I offered them on the air. Not only did Sangamon State, but the University of Illinois in Urbana. Their ag department produced these weekly programs; they would mail these tapes or send them to us on the bus, (laugh) and we would put them on the air. That's how we helped provide local area content.

Reynolds: Plus statewide stuff.

Bradley: Statewide, Illinois Public Radio Network didn't really come into being until the mid- to late '80s.

Reynolds: Ok. So, we'll talk about that next. Then, you did run the NPR stuff in the afternoon?

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: And at night, you had musical shows. Did you have the *Jazz Show* way back then? That's been on forever.

Bradley: Jazz and…Well, classical music during the day. In the first year or year and a half or two that we were on the air, I think there was, kind of like, a locally produced, magazine kind of programming in the afternoon. It was called, for lack of a better term, *Illinois Afternoon*. That consisted of local interviews and a really eclectic musical offering. In the afternoon, no classical music, as I recall, at all. That was all at night, classical music programming. Then, jazz programming was first offered on weekends, only.

Reynolds: Okay, just on weekends.

Bradley: To refresh my memory, I'd have to go back and look at some earlier program schedules because I was hired as news director, and I was focused really on…

Reynolds: I'm asking you stuff that you didn't really have to pay that much attention to this early.

Bradley: Yeah. I really didn't give a shit about it, myself.

Reynolds: Yeah, right.

Bradley: I was only interested in what we were going to be doing in the news department.

Reynolds: I'm just kind of interested in how the station evolved with their content, that kind of thing. But we can—getting back to the Statehouse Bureau—so that grew over time and you were using interns over there?

Bradley: It grew into one full-time person, Peggy Boyer, and then, during the January through June internship—and that was key to the legislative sessions essentially, because, in those days, the legislature was in session almost full-time, from January to…they always shoot for midnight, June 30, which later got moved up to what, the end of May?

But anyway, the internship, then, was six months in length, hands-on. One of the commitments we made, and all media organizations made, in order to serve as a host for a public affairs intern, was that it would be hands-on and at the State house. The idea of sending a PAR intern out to cover a local news event, in those days, was frowned upon because that wasn't the intent of the internship, as Paul Simon envisioned it and as Bill Miller, who picked up that vision and envisioned it.

Reynolds: You were covering state government and state politics and the State house.

Bradley: Exactly.

Reynolds: Where were you picking up local news, if you tried to do local things?

Bradley: We really weren't doing any local news.

Reynolds: So, that noon show that you had, it would cover, primarily, state government and politics in Illinois?

Bradley: Yes. In the early days at noon, see, we would go down, and Peggy would provide, in a live basis, ten or fifteen minutes of news from the state house every day, within that hour long presentation that we had at noon. We also had

UPI wire service, but we also had the UPI audio service. And so, we had additional audio cuts that were available to us.

Reynolds: So, you could cover national news.

Bradley: Yeah. Like at noon, we had students; by that time, I had a small group of students who were volunteering to go on the air and do news. They were anchoring elements or segments of the newscast, back at that time. There was a sports segment, world and national news segment, state news segment and then, weather.

I can remember in the early days, we had one student who had this interest in meteorology. In those days, the weather bureau was at Capital Airport. They were doing a morning and noon broadcast for all stations in Springfield, the weather guys were. They allowed us to go out there and install our own broadcast line and give us access to the meteorological data. So, John Hawkins was his name. For two years, he would go out there every day and do a live weather program on our air, during the noon hour and, later, during the evening newscast.

Reynolds: Probably geared toward farming and things like that too, since we had a rural audience, for the most part.

Bradley: Well, yeah. But mostly, it was just the idea of doing a live weather broadcast from the National Weather Service office at Capital Airport.

Reynolds: Interesting, yeah. You want to move forward to the network, the Public Radio Network that was formed in the ‘80s?

Bradley: The time is now five after 11:00. If we could pick that up in our next recording session… I don’t know, have we, to your satisfaction, Chris, pretty well covered on-air operations, up until formation of the…

Reynolds: Yeah, I think so.

Bradley: …of the statewide, because…

Reynolds: You want to pick up that on the next time because you have a limited amount of time?

Bradley: Or we can talk about other people who came after Peggy to…

Reynolds: Okay.

Bradley: She was here from 1976 until 1978. She left in July first of 1978. Then we had the task of hiring her replacement. The fellow we hired was her PAR intern that last year she was here, a guy by the name of Mike Strand, who was in the… The PAR program is structured: print interns and broadcast interns.

Nominally, I think, it was open to about twenty students, fifteen print and about five broadcast. So, there were two in the screening process. That's how Bill structured it. You hired five students for the print interest, five students for the broadcast interest, be it radio or TV.

So, Mike Strand was a broadcast intern who got his undergraduate degree from the University of Kansas at Lawrence. He was really from the Chicago area, good voice. We hired him full-time in 1978. He met, in the PAR program, a gal who was also a broadcast intern, who was doing television at channel 31, Peoria and at channel 3 in Champaign. Eventually they dated and married and went off to Minneapolis - St. Paul, after about two and half or three years. But, Mike was a full-time bureau chief from 1978 to about 1981.

After him, we hired Mary Frances Fagen, who was a bureau chief from 1981 until she left, I think, in '88, somewhere around in there. She was here long enough to see the start of the early beginnings of IPR, the Illinois Public Radio. That was the full-time employment situation at the time.

Reynolds: Well, let's just do a couple more questions, then we'll cut it off then. We'll do an interview, starting with that the next time. But, clarify this for me. The university never had much of a broadcasting-related program out there, did they? I mean, didn't have people that were studying to be broadcasters out there, but you had people studying to be reporters? Have I got that through the original Paul Simon…

Bradley: From the Public Affairs Reporting Program. That's true, although, there was no structured radio – TV academic component, like existed at SIU Carbondale or at SIU Edwardsville or at the U of I in Champaign – Urbana, or even, at that time, Eastern in Charleston had a broadcast component. That never was established or evolved or developed at Sangamon State. There was a communications program that involved, oh, the theory of communications and some print writing. The only broadcast component had to do with courses that Howard Hill, who was the general manager at the radio station, taught and that Dale Ouzts taught. I'm not sure about the background of how that came to be, whether—

Reynolds: It was kind of a supplement for the people that were going into news reporting, broadcasting. They could at least pick up a little bit of broadcasting-related, you know, training.

Bradley: I think—don't hold me to this—but, I think that Dale and Howard taught one course a semester, each, which, somehow or another, gave the radio station entre into the faculty at Sangamon State and, maybe, had as much as anything to do with funds that, then, accrued to the radio station, as a result—well, it's coming to me now. To wit, a third, maybe, of Howard's salary and a third of Dale's salary came from the faculty…

Reynolds: Always the government. You're looking for ways to share salaries…

Bradley: …at Sangamon State University. That was something, I'm sure, Dale—who was very much a salesman—I'm sure that was something that Dale set up.

Reynolds: Wheeling and dealing with the budget.

Bradley: Yeah. It is a matter of fact, being able to get a third of that faculty money for each of two people. That freed up, essentially, that one-third salary to do other things at the radio station that Dale and Howard both had in mind.

Reynolds: One more question as we lead up to the formation of the network. Was the strength of the Statehouse Bureau, the growth of it and the success of it, did that lead directly to the idea of a network, because you were producing a lot of content that you knew people would be interested in?

Bradley: Yeah. Well, and it wasn't just that Rich Bradley became aware that they were interested in, it manifested itself in requests, initially, from WILL-Urbana and, as time went on, the other public stations who became aware of what I had set up, established and what we were doing in Springfield.

It kind of coincided, also, with these individual stations kind of coming of age and hiring news people to broadcast news in their own local markets and wanting to have that audio component of events going on in the State house.

Reynolds: You sensed a demand before it was starting to be created.

Bradley: Not really. Not that I sensed the demand. I woke up to the fact, when I started getting calls from Urbana wanting to know if, Well, did you cover this? And, if you did, you know, can you feed us something? I was happy to oblige because I could be heard on WILL at Urbana. And later, I woke up to the fact that there's still some of the star struck stuff, ego I guess, that I first experienced when I went down to SIU Carbondale as a student and got in the radio-TV program down there. [It] was this whole idea of being on the radio. In time, that left me, and it became a job that I enjoy and no longer had such a huge ego…a kind of an impact for me. So, that was a part of how it… I woke up to the fact that these stations were interested in what we were doing in Springfield. That became the very rudimentary origin of the network itself. We were hand creating, on an individual request basis.

It wasn't until Convocom came to be, and we used a part audio circuit of the television microwave system, went from Springfield to Peoria over to Macomb and, ultimately, lead to the quad cities. Convocom allowed us to use an audio sub-carrier, that microwave system, to feed high quality audio out. Then, that lead to public radio and TV stations in the state organizing here and getting legislation enacted in 1985 that created the Illinois Public

Broadcasting Council and began the annual grant process for public radio and TV.

Reynolds: Okay, well let's cut it off there, then we can get into that in more detail when we get together again, okay? So, thanks, Rich, and we'll pick it up.

(End of interview session #2 #3 continues)

Interview with Rich Bradley

ISP-A-L-2011-057

Interview # 3: December 16, 2011

Interviewer: Chris Reynolds

Reynolds: Okay, this is December the 16th, 2011. We're at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. This is an interview for the Statecraft Oral History Program. We're interviewing Rich Bradley for the third time today. My name is Chris Reynolds, and I'm a volunteer for the library.

I think we left off at the formation of the Illinois Public Radio Network when we were last talking. So, let's pick it up with that.

Bradley: Chris, there were really two things that came together that really kind of paved the way for Illinois Public Radio to be born. Yeah, I was instrumental in conceiving of the idea and getting it up and running, but there were a lot of… It's kind of like the old story about a perfect storm. I think that really was the case with how we put IPR together and how it came to be and how it exists and continues even today. But, from the very beginning, I wanted to, and I did, in fact, establish a permanent, full-time news bureau in the state capital.

We applied for membership with the Illinois Legislative Correspondence Association, which was an organization made up of media units that covered the state capital on a full-time basis and had at least one full-time reporter who lived in Springfield, or at least was in Springfield five days a week, and whose principal, primary responsibility was to come over and cover and report on the general assembly, state government and state politics.

I wanted to get radio involved in that sort of thing, because in commercial radio there really wasn't that much being done by the local stations. Bill Miller, as I think I've already explained, was news director at WTAX, left there in 1967 to put together Capital Information Bureau and began to cover, on a kind of limited basis, because he was just one person, coverage of the state capital, making his news reports and audio, then,

available to commercial radio stations around the state. That created a demand in multi-station markets in the state for another competing service.

That's when Ray Phipps, with a silent partner by the name of Bob Lubin, hired me away from WCVS, where I'd been working for about seven years, then, to put together the Illinois News Network. I ran that and provided a similar kind of service as CIB to other commercial stations around the state. But I wanted to…

Reynolds: So, that experience was crucial to…

Bradley: Yes, I really think that it was.

Reynolds: Just to clarify, the Statehouse Bureau that you created out at the university had been in existence how long before you started the network? A couple of years, three years?

Bradley: Well, we went on the air in 1975. Now, we had the bureau there and were actively covering—on WSSR in those days—were actively covering the state capital. Peggy Boyer was the first Statehouse Bureau Chief, and we were utilizing the full-time interns from the Paul Simon Public Affairs Reporting Program, which Bill Miller began running in… well, Simon established it 1972. So, in 1974, I think, Bill took over for Paul Simon who, by that time, had run for and was elected to congress from southern Illinois, Makanda at Carbondale and that part of the state. But Simon had established the Public Affairs Reporting Program, and Miller took it over.

So, we had a full-time bureau in the state capital by that time and a full-time reporter working there. That entitled us to one full-time intern from January through June in each year. So, that was the basis of our coverage.

The January through June period of time is critical and significant because that's essentially when the legislature is in session. They come back, yes, for a veto session in the fall for, what, a week or two, but that was the full session, from January through the end of June, which not only was the end of the fiscal year—it still is for that matter—but also was the date by which the legislature had to enact legislation to go into effect on July 1. If they failed to do so, after July 1, it took an extraordinary, or three-fifths majority, to pass legislation that would become effective immediately in the new fiscal year. It wasn't until about 1985, then, that public radio and TV stations…

Reynolds: So, almost, for a five, six, seven year period, you had your state house program going.

Bradley: Yeah. Well, it was established in the very first year of our operation…

Reynolds: Oh, okay. So, from the very beginning…

Bradley: …on the air in 1975, yeah.

Reynolds: So, you'd been doing it for quite a few years by the time the network idea popped up?

Bradley: Yeah, about nine years, actually, because what then began to happen was the word began to get out and around to the other non-commercial, public radio stations in Illinois, stations that were operating by…well, the University of Illinois-Urbana, for example. At Northern Illinois University they had at least one radio station. Western had a radio station. Carbondale had a radio station. I should say SIU; they operated one radio station at Carbondale and one at Edwardsville. Illinois State…

Reynolds: Eastern have one?

Bradley: They did, but they never became a qualified CPB station. They still operate today, but they're not a qualified station, and they're not getting or benefiting from federal funds. I'm trying to think; Illinois State operated a station too. Those stations…

Reynolds: You just described all of this, sort of, universities that had stations. Was that pretty much your network when you started?

Bradley: The core, yeah. Well, you want to throw in there, then, a radio station at Peoria that Bradley University, which was not a state institution, but Bradley University operated it. Then Augustana operated an FM station in the quad cities…

Reynolds: Anything in Chicago?

Bradley: Yes, WBEZ, at that time, which was owned and operated by the Chicago Board of Education, operated an FM station. Then, College of Du Page, Glen Ellyn, operated a low powered, non-commercial, public radio station. So, that then, was pretty much the core of what became, or what is, today even, IPR, Illinois Public Radio.

These individual stations, as they began to develop their own respective local news departments, which really didn't exist when WSSR went on the air. But, in that eight or nine period of time, these stations established their local news department, hired at least a news director, and they had students working. But they were doing local news and reporting on the air and sparked an interest, then, in what we at WSSR and the state capital was doing because they learned that we had a full-time bureau and a full-time reporter covering that.

So, then, they would call up on the phone when they saw a big story break on the wire, and they would call and want to know if we had covered that story? Did we have audio, which was very important, and it was…what everybody wanted was the sound, the sound bite, the audio of…

Reynolds: An interview or just a report…

Bradley: …or debate on the house floor or debate on the senate floor because we setup down there and were positioned to record those floor debates, which sometimes were pretty colorful. (laugh)

But anyway, these stations saw these quotes, then, on the wire service and learned, then, that chances were really good we had, in fact, recorded what the quotes they were seeing in the wire stories that were coming into their newsrooms. We were spending a lot of time and feeding this audio out to the individual stations. Now stop and think, Chris…

Reynolds: For no charges or anything. You just doing it…

Bradley: No, just, you know, they were colleagues. They were non-commercial, public radio colleagues.

And, at that time, I began to develop this interest in creating some kind of state-wide organization of public radio stations to, yeah, really compete with CIB, the commercial and Illinois News Network, which I had already founded and then left to go out to the university. Then, these non-commercial stations around the state didn't have that kind of a service.

I carried the idea of what I'd established at INN over and out to Sangamon State. That idea was only bolstered by the fact that these stations began calling and asking, could we feed over a dial-up telephone circuit the sound that we had recorded. Pretty soon, when stop and consider, there are eleven or twelve non-commercial stations in the state. If there was a big debate on the house floor or the senate floor, and we had the recorded audio, these stations began, individually, to call us up. Well that took a lot of staff time to accommodate each station, to feed the audio to them, one after the other, because… and a lot of times they would call, almost at the same time. You'd have to put them off and do a callback basis. That went on for a couple, three years.

Tthe legislative session in 1985 was the year that public radio and TV in the state had begun to, pardon the vernacular, get their shit together and became a cohesive force in terms of lobbying for some kind of state funds, state appropriations, to help support what they were doing in Illinois with money given to them by the federal government through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Reynolds: Incidentally, just to backup over that three year period where you're taking all these calls, was there any particular story that really, really sort of got them going on this? What was it about state government, during this period, that really—because we're talking, what, the early '80s, or it would have been the Thompson administration, I guess—any particular story you remember that

just really got all them interested in what was going on in state government that they wanted to cover?

Bradley: No, not a specific story. It's just that, as these stations, individually, established a local news department…—

Reynolds: So, it's capacity more than anything else, then…

Bradley: Yeah, it really was. They hired at least one person to be a full-time reporter, news director usually, at these stations. Urbana, I think, had two or three people, maybe, in their news department over there. And they already even had a somewhat established news department when WSSR went on the air in January of 1975 because WILL-AM had been on the air for years, from the 1920's, and were targeting, primarily, an agricultural audience, doing a lot of ag programming, being assisted in that effort by the University of Illinois, you know, agriculture department, which had developed its own unique reputation and well respected around the country. Much like a lot of the so-called big ten stations, they were land grant colleges and…

Reynolds: Or their mission and that…

Bradley: …and their mission was agriculture. But, that was the case for WILL. In answer to your question, no big story that I recall. It was just the daily reporting off the wire services. And the wire service…

Reynolds: And the need for content too.

Bradley: …content and sound. The sound bite, rather than reading a quote on your newscast, taken off wire copy. It added credibility to the station's news operation if they could indicate—Well, the governor, in a speech to the general assembly, called for a tax increase—and then you run out a thirty, forty, fifty second clip of the governor and his speech to a joint session of the general assembly or at a news conference, where he's announcing a tax program. These are examples.

Then we had the sound, the actual sound, the actual recording. They could put the sound, with the actual quote they were saying, on the wire service. It was that, really, which kind of gave birth to it, so to speak.

Reynolds: And very attractive. After about three years of doing this, you were thinking about the idea, probably. How long did it take to implement the network after you, kind of, decided we need to do this?

Bradley: Well, in its loosest, simplistic form, I would say that, in '83 and '84, it really began to operate. I discovered there was in place… By that time, Convocom had come along, and they had a low powered television operation at Bradley, at Macomb, at Quincy—

Reynolds: We talked about them in our previous interview.

Bradley: But there was a microwave set-up to hook those three areas together, the quad cities, Macomb, Peoria and Springfield. I found that, what was taking a lot of time was trying to satisfy requests from these stations one at a time. So, I began to think in terms of: How can I schedule a time in the day, or twice a day, where I can offer all this audio at the same time and have everybody capture that, and I would only have to end up doing it one time and feeding it to all these stations simultaneously.

Reynolds: So, the creation of that technology, through Convocom, actually helped the idea along tremendously because you had a mechanism for doing it.

Bradley: It did because we were able to use the second audio sub-carrier of the TV system. I would feed audio. We established a morning feed, somewhere around six, six thirty in the morning, and we had fifteen minutes of microwave time that Convocom was giving us, before they went on the air for the day. So, I was feeding audio up to Peoria. From there, it split, went to Macomb and went to the quad cities. It was high quality audio. Then, the other stations could take that feed over a dial-up telephone circuit. So, I established this system whereby, in Springfield I took in a couple, three phone calls from two or three stations; WCBU radio in Peoria took in two or three phone calls, and Macomb took in one or two phone calls. Then, all these stations that didn't have access to Convocom, dialed in to the radio stations at the same places where the Convocom microwave existed.

Reynolds: So, it wasn't like your typical government sort of thing where you got to go out and get agreements signed by everybody. You just did it, and it worked because everybody needed it. Everybody wanted it.

Bradley: And it accommodated. We didn't have a…

Reynolds: When did you start labeling it a network, immediately or…? So that they could say, now from the, you know, the Illinois Public Radio Network.

Bradley: I think probably, Chris, we did because I saw what was going on at the national level, and I saw NPR was already operating for two years by the time we went on the air. I was really enamored with the public radio model in the early days, being able to cover and report in-depth on issues, not just the hit and miss commercial approach, where you only had three, four, five minute newscasts.

When we went on the air in 1975, I had the freedom to setup and do a half hour newscast every morning, a fifteen minute newscast at 10:00 in the morning, and then at noon, we did a whole hour. And then, in the afternoon, *All Things Considered* ran from 4:00 until 5:30. Then, we went on the air and did a one hour, local newscast, from 5:30 to 6:30. Now, that one hour included

state and local news, world and national news, where we were using audio from, as I indicated earlier, the UPI Radio Network.


Rich Bradley, training a student in 1985

I had students then that I had trained, were doing sportscasts. One guy—remember I told you—went out to the weather bureau, and the guys at the

National Weather Service let us setup out there and install our own broadcast circuit. John Hawkins was a student who had this interest in meteorology. He would go out there every afternoon, and the National Weather Service guys would let him have access to the content they had out there. He would put together, and then broadcast live on WSSR, a five minute weather report, w this hour long newscast that we were doing, Monday thr

Reynolds: Now, did the network get any…When did you start…Did you do any shows for the network, like a complete news show?

Bradley: Just one, *State Week in Review.*

Reynolds: When did that start?

Bradley: *State Week in Review* went on the air almost immediately after we went on the air because I was familiar with public television's *Washington's Week in Review*. In the three months after I went to work there, from October 1 until we went on the air, January of '75, I began to think about these kinds of things. I liked what *Washington Week in Review* was and what it represented. You utilized a regular, recurring panel and rotated into that mix, a guest journalist from the state capital. I wanted to call it *State Week in Review*, which I did. So, that program began back at that time. But then, stations later developed an interest in also having access to that program.

In 1985, something happened that really, kind of, worked to our advantage and really, kind of, advanced what Illinois Public Radio became and is today. I mentioned earlier about the public radio and TV stations coming together, lobbying the legislature. They enacted the Illinois Public Broadcasting Council Act; it set up an annual funding mechanism for public radio and TV.

Reynolds: Did you have to apply for that or you were just in the budget, as they say, for that?

Bradley: Well, the legislature had to approve this new grant program. It was a grant program, and, as you well know, grants don't have to be repaid. Grants are doled out and then spent. Now, in time, we had to make an accounting of how we spent that money.

Reynolds: Did you have to apply for it every year?

Bradley: Yes, there was an application process that was set up. I think the first year appropriation was around a million and a half, and it grew over time to about five million. Here, in the last couple of years, unfortunately, I think that funding has been cut off altogether, although the funding program is still in place. But, the line item has been reduced to zero because…

Reynolds: When did the first funding for that start, late '80s or mid-'80s that we were talking about here, in this period?

Bradley: The legislation was enacted in the January to July, 1985, legislative session period.

Reynolds: So, right about the same period?

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: So, all that stuff kind of came together at the same time.

Bradley: Well, and the other component was, there was a one-time appropriation that was enacted along with the legislation that set up the granting program, hardware appropriation, in which the granting program established the Illinois Public Broadcasting Council. Then there was an appropriation of $600,000, one time appropriation to the newly formed council. That money was earmarked to purchase and operate satellite up-link technology. So, there was $200 [$200,000] earmarked for radio, $400,000 earmarked for public television. So, we talked Sangamon State University—the administration out there—into donating free space on the campus for the Public Broadcasting Council to spend that $200,000 on constructing the radio up-link out at WSSR. This was a permanent installation that still exists today out there.

Then they used the $400,000 that went to the public television stations to purchase a mobile television up-link. In other words, they put it on the back of a truck, so they could drive it around to cover events for public television, but also marketed it for use by the commercial networks. If something was happening in Springfield or Chicago or somewhere in the Midwest, and NBC, CBS, ABC, CNN even, wanted access to a television up-link, so they could get audio and video back from wherever something was going on, they could hire or lease this truck, and this truck would be dispatched to the site. They would drive all over the Midwest. It generated income, then, for the council, that came back and was used for the council activities, as well as maintaining that mobile up-link because they had a vehicle they had to operate and maintain, buy gas, oil changes and all that stuff.

Reynolds: So they were headquartered out at the university, the council? Sounds like.,or ran out…

Bradley: Yeah, more or less, because they came to the campus there to hold their quarterly meetings. In the very beginning, the council was meeting every month. Now the council membership was made up of one person from each of the member radio and TV stations. So, at the time the council was created, there were eleven radio and nine TV stations. So, there were a total of twenty members on this council. These were usually the general managers from the radio and TV stations.

Reynolds: Any particular politicians that were tremendously helpful in getting this funding and keeping this funding year after year?

Bradley: Roland Burris, who was the comptroller at that time, was helpful in that the legislation that created the funding program specified that the Comptroller's Office would promulgate rules and regulations for these stations to apply for the grant…

Reynolds: Kind of the fiscal agent, almost.

Bradley: Yes, and he became—the Comptroller's offices, where the annual appropriation for public radio and TV granting program went to the Comptroller's office who then, as I say, established the application process and doling the money out on an annual basis. So, in that sense, Roland Burris, but, after Burris went on to become attorney general…

Reynolds: So, was the Thompson administration a big supporter of this?

Bradley: Well, yeah, because he signed the legislation. As a matter of fact, when it came time for the legislation to be signed, we made arrangements for the governor to sign the bill in WBEZ studios.

I need to back up a little bit and tell you that, when National Public Radio, in 1979, went from a landline network to a satellite network, NPR established, not only an up-link at their headquarters in Washington, but they also established—gosh I'm trying to remember now—fifteen or sixteen regional up-links around the country. One happened to be at WEBZ in Chicago, where they could transmit audio into the NPR satellite system and then back down to all stations, or in this case, just the Illinois stations.

So, I made arrangements for Thompson to sign that bill in the studio at WBEZ, and we fed it up on the satellite; then the radio stations could, if they wanted, carry that bill-signing live because we had access to it live in real time. So, in that sense, yeah, Thompson was very big on getting that up and running and made a big deal.

That was a feather in his cap, I think, because, as governor, to make that happen because, at that time, Chris, there were only like two, three, maybe four other states in the country who had a statewide system: Florida, Minnesota, of course—Minnesota Public Radio goes back years—Ohio. Ohio

had an effective statewide system. They were interconnected radio and TV by microwave at that time, but then, when NPR went into satellite, then they were able to use satellite technology to tie their stations together.

Putting this up-link in Springfield, then, gave us access to the NPR satellite system. We had to pay for the NPR time on the NPR satellite. That's how NPR made some extra money. But then, the stations collectively shared in the cost of the time we bought on the NPR satellite.

I was naming the four states: Florida, Ohio, Minnesota…

Reynolds: Nobody on the east coast, huh? Not Massachusetts, the Boston station?

Bradley: No…

Reynolds: Maybe it'll come to you later. We kind of covered the way—what came together to create that network—

Bradley: What really tied it together was the establishment of the up-link, which then, we did this daily news feed, sometimes twice a day, once in the morning, always at 5:30 and again in the afternoon. But we utilized it—the NPR satellite system—to deliver, direct from Springfield, high quality, studio quality audio. That's what the up-link, then, enabled us to do, and we abandoned that early baling wire hybrid kind of system, where we were using the terrestrial microwave for TV, which then went to off dial-up telephone, which was really…

Reynolds: So, that was kind of the next technological step.

Bradley: …which was really crappy quality, but it was better than nothing.

Reynolds: Got you off the ground.

Bradley: Yeah. It also gave us the ability, then, to originate live programming coverage of the governor's speech to a joint session of the general assembly or live coverage of the house and senate. We could feed it to the stations through the NPR satellite system, using that radio up-link that the legislature had paid for with that one time appropriation and was established and built. It still exists on the campus of then, Sangamon State now, UIS.

Reynolds: Excellent. The other thing I want to go back and talk to you about was, we talked about your rural, sort of, background. Did you do something special for coverage of rural stories as part of the network, or was that just something that you naturally did because of the…

Bradley: Well, that we naturally did, but still, the focus of our efforts at WSSR, at that time, was state government. We weren't doing anything, to speak of, in terms

of coverage of local government or county government or the school board. It was really focused on just state government.

Dale Ouzts, who was hired by Bob Spencer, first president of Sangamon State, he really wanted to follow through with the mandate Spencer had given him, to put public radio and TV on the air—radio went on, but TV didn't, later—and cover state government and politics as an extension of that public affairs mandate, which the legislature had laid down on Sangamon State, back at that time. So, that's why that's all we were covering.

So, no. No agriculture, per se, but, in so far as agriculture sometimes had issues that came up in the legislature and state government, state department of agriculture. Well, even the state fair was kind of like a subsidiary of…

Reynolds: The major agricultural event of the year, obviously.

Bradley: …the Department of Agriculture.

Any agricultural coverage came from WILL in Urbana because, once we had the satellite system, distribution system, in place, Chris, then I began to become interested in expanding the content of what we were broadcasting on the air. When the governor was out—and Thompson did a lot of flying around, both in fixed-wing aircraft and in that fancy helicopter…

Reynolds: He had a little air force, didn't he?

Bradley: Yeah, he did, Illinois air force. But anyway, I then began to be interested in what the governor was saying in Rockford or Chicago or Carbondale and…

Reynolds: That could be dangerous for politicians.

Bradley: Well, (laugh) because, once they woke up to the fact that public radio was covering the governor, wherever he was in the state, and then all the stations were broadcasting his comments, he recognized—or his staff, at least, recognized pretty quickly—that he couldn't go to northern Illinois and tell one story and then go to southern Illinois and tell a different story on the same issue. The time arrived when it caught up with him pretty quick. That's, then, how the concept of sharing our stories came to be.

But, the principal interest, statewide, was what we were doing in the legislature. Then, the NPR satellite up-link that we had at WSSR—or WSSU as it became, and now WUIS—that afforded us the opportunity for all stations to contribute stories they were covering in their local markets as their own individual news departments were being developed and evolving. The maturity, the professionalism of what they were doing began to rise in credibility and became quite good.

Reynolds: In a sense, then, you were getting more rural stories from places like Western [Western Illinois University], Southern [Southern Illinois University] and Eastern [Eastern Illinois University], and it wasn't just the University of Illinois, then, that was covering those kinds of issues.

Bradley: Well, see, WILL offered ag policy kind of coverage, being a land grant college over there, whereas, in these other areas, like in Macomb, for example, locally, they were doing some regional and rural coverage. Of course, Western has a big rural…

Reynolds: Absolutely. A big concentration.

Bradley: …academic program over there and policy program too. We began…

Reynolds: They had a group called the Rural Affairs, I think, Center or something like that.

Bradley: Rural Affairs Center, yeah. So, we began to be able to offer our listeners in Springfield what they were doing over there. Then, what we were doing in Springfield, we were sharing with all the stations. So, they had live access to our coverage of the legislature, state politics and government.

Chicago—as you well know—the State of Illinois has a large presence up there, in many respects, probably larger than what they do in Springfield, which is the state capital. WBEZ had a satellite up-link, as well, that NPR owned and operated. So, we were able to carry live speeches out of Chicago, using their up-link, but using the distribution system I had set up on the NPR satellite, so that all the other stations in the state could have access to live coverage, not only from the State of Illinois Building in Chicago, but also live coverage, what we were doing, at the state capital here in Springfield.

Reynolds: Plus it allowed all these other stations great content that then could be shared with everybody else.

Bradley: Exactly. We got to offer a lot of colorful coverage because we had a lot of colorful characters working in public radio in those days, in Carbondale and Chicago. The voices you would hear on those stations really did, in fact, in a lot of ways, kind of represent the regional flavor of the culture of the state.

You take a state like Illinois, you see Rockford and Chicago, how far north they are. Then, you look at Carbondale, down to Cairo. Parts of southern Illinois are farther south than Kentucky, for example: Louisville, Kentucky or Cincinnati, as an example. So, yeah, it was…

Reynolds: Diversity of coverage.

Bradley: I was really excited about what we were able to pick and choose from what the other stations were offering and contributing. So, it was that loose knit,

cooperative venture. The only money involved was to pay for the satellite time.

Then, in time, we had a general manager by the name of Rod Gordon who came to Springfield. That was in 1988, after the satellite system had begun the up-link operation here in Springfield in the fall of '87. The legislature passed and set up and created the council, in '85 was signed into law. It took a couple of years, then, to build the distribution system, which was the satellite up-link operation in Springfield. That began operation in October of 1987.

We had this high quality distribution system around the state. For the first time, the ability to anchor down and cover a speech by a governor to a joint session of the general assembly; annually, you've got the State of the State Address by the governor and the budget message. We could originate and co-anchor—which is what we did here in Springfield—and distribute that around the state. But, then, it put a lot more pressure on us here in Springfield to do more and more at the state capital with, essentially, the same dollars.

So, Rod Gordon came to the station in 1988 from Washington, where he'd worked at NPR. He conceived of this idea of putting together an Illinois Public Radio audio service, headquartered in Springfield, and charging the member stations a share of the cost to hiring a full-time reporter to be assigned to the State Capital Bureau.

Reynolds: How'd that go over?

Bradley: Well, because we were able to make them understand that the pressure was being put on us to cover more and more in the state capital, was very labor intensive and time consuming, and what we were giving the stations, up until that point, was free. We didn't have to do it, was one of the points that we made. We're just doing this out of the goodness of our heart. The council just made it easy for us to share all of this with you by seeking the appropriation to build the radio up-link, and also, the TV station had their own thing going. That just accommodated a free content for you guys. So, now it's time…if you want more, it's time to kick in a few bucks.

The satellite time really wasn't expensive. We would do a forty-four minute feed in the morning, from 5:30 to 6:14. We wouldn't use all the time, but we had the time available on the satellite if we needed it. That was, like, costing $25 a day, split by how many—ten or eleven radio stations. So, the cost to the individual stations, on a daily basis, was really not that much. And so…

Reynolds: The salary of the reporter, though? Was that a…

Bradley: Well, it was, you know…I forget now what we paid him, $25,000, I think, plus the benefits because…

Reynolds: Way back when. We're talking about now.

Bradley: Yeah, that would have been in '87, '88, '89 because that reporter was on our payroll, here at Sangamon State. So, it was in WSSR-WSSU's budget, and we paid the benefits. We charged the stations for the salary, but we picked up the benefits cost. That was our contribution to the statewide effort. These stations agreed, then, to pay…

Reynolds: How much did it cost again, a few thousand dollars? Or was it…

Bradley: The original grant, though, was doled out to the stations, based upon the costs of their local operation. So, WBEZ in Chicago, their budget was the largest of all the stations in Illinois. So they got…

Reynolds: Got paid according to what they could afford.

Bradley: Yeah, they got about 30 percent of the grant money. Then, the remaining 70 percent was doled out to the other stations, based upon the size of their budget. Urbana, for example, had two stations, WILL-AM, WILL-FM, and they got money accordingly. Now, they got grant money for two stations, but we went round and round with them over there because they only wanted to pay for one station, but they wanted to carry the content on both stations. The other stations had ganged up on them because, if they were going to insist… Well, and there was another station too, at Northern Illinois University. They were operating two stations by that time, and they only wanted to pay for one station. But, the rest of the stations, as I say, in a friendly manner, ganged up on them and said, if you want to pay for one station, that's fine, but you can only use the content on one station, not both stations, which is what they wanted to do. They backed off and finally agreed they would all pay according to their budgetary operation. So, there were some stations that were only paying, like, $1,800 a year for this full-time time reporter at the state house. WBEZ in Chicago, at that time, was probably paying around ten or twelve or thirteen thousand dollars, but all stations contributed enough to pay for the salary.

Reynolds: Well, it's good to have a pay in. I mean, it's more valuable to you when you're paying a little bit for it.

Bradley: So, that was, then, really, fundamentally the origin of how Illinois Public Radio came to be.

Reynolds: And it all just sort of just came together at the right time, funding and the demand and all that.

Bradley: And the hardware and the satellite distribution taking off…

Reynolds: The technology was there to help you do it. That's great. Now, you said the one show that you did as part of the network was…

Bradley: *State Week in Review*.

Reynolds: *State Week in Review*. Was there ever any other show? Just that one, pretty much, was the flagship of the…

Bradley: Well, programs per se? No, just *State Week in Review*, which is a program we started doing in 1975, when we went on the air. But, as soon as we got the satellite system up and running, in the fall of 1987, then stations became interested. Well, we just flat-out told them, here's this half-hour program that we are doing every week, and we'll throw it out there and offer it to the stations.

Reynolds: They could run it at time and run it as many times as they wanted?

Bradley: Yep. We put it up on the satellite distribution system, which, then, came back to all stations in high quality audio, studio quality. We recorded that program around noontime on Friday and then would up-link it by satellite, starting at 12:30, to the stations, and then they could…

Reynolds: So, by Friday night, they had it and then could run it Friday night.

Bradley: By Friday night, they had it and could use it through the weekend, usually by the close of business on Sunday. When Monday dawned, a lot of the content—not a lot, but some of the content—was outdated, really, by that time. Stations had access to the program. They could record it at 12:30. If they chose not to run it, they didn't have to. There was no demand. It was just there and offered to them if they wanted it.

Reynolds: To your knowledge, did they all run it?

Bradley: In time, yeah. They all…

Reynolds: Took a while, but they all…

Bradley: Well, all except the Quad City station. They never did use the program, simply because…

Reynolds: Who was running it up there, Augustana or a…

Bradley: Well, it was owned by Augustana, but it was really…

Reynolds: Blackhawk is up there, I know.

Bradley: Yeah. The reason they chose not to carry the program was because they saw their market as the quad cities, stations in Iowa…

Reynolds: So, there wasn't much Iowa stuff going on…

Bradley: …audio. There was nothing from Iowa that offered the same type of content that *State Week in Review* did. So, they opted not to provide coverage. There was some of the…

Reynolds: Which was half their listening audience, wouldn't be interested in it.

Bradley: They took the same kind of attitude with respect to our live coverage, sometimes, of the governor's address to a joint session. They didn't have access to that kind of programming from Des Moines. In time, they did. Iowa Public Radio, then, was created later, after Illinois Public Radio was created. But, at the time, Augustana, WVIK, did not carry any of these programs.

Another thing, Chris, that satellite technology and the Illinois Public Radio brand allowed us to do, then, was on election night as to create a statewide, live network, which we originated in Springfield for five or ten minutes every hour, at the top of the hour, to do a live election night returns, from 7:00 PM, until midnight. All the stations, then, in Illinois had access to it. They could, then, use it to complement what they were doing, in terms of local news coverage of election returns.

Reynolds: So, they didn't have to cover the statewide races. They could do their local races and use you to do statewide races.

Bradley: Exactly, yeah.

Reynolds: Now, over the years, I was sort of a fan of your show, listened to it for years and years. You were the commentator for the whole time you were there, I take it, no one else…

Bradley: *State Week in Review*, you mean. I was the host and moderator.

Reynolds: Moderator, yeah.

Bradley: I set the formula up so that there was a regular panel who were repeaters every week. Then, we invited one guest journalist from one of the media organizations who had a full-time bureau at the state capital to be a part of the panel, then, on a weekly basis.

Reynolds: Any colorful commentators over the years that you want to talk about? Or how long did that regular group of people stick with you, or, obviously, having always to replace one of two of those?

Bradley: They changed. For example, one of the original panel members was Bill Miller. Then, when he retired in 1993, he went off the program. Charlie Wheeler, who succeeded him and is still the director of that program now, came on the panel as a regular.

Reynolds: Kind of, almost, a regular slot for whoever is running that program?

Bradley: Exactly. Oh yeah, very definitely. Charlie had occasionally been a guest reporter on the program, by virtue of the fact that, for twenty years, he covered the state capital for the *Chicago Sun Times* and was the Statehouse Bureau Chief for the *Chicago Sun Times.* His expertise as a reporter lay in the budget. We always asked Charlie to come in and be our guest panelist on the first *Week in Review* program, after the budget was unveiled by the governor in a speech to the joint session of the general assembly. That's one example of how the membership changed.

Reynolds: Did you try to balance the discussion, in terms of political bias, like trying to get more of a Republican commentator and a Democratic commentator? You know, like Mike Lawrence is somebody you see on a lot of these shows over the years. Clearly he has a point of view. On the other hand, you see other people that have come from a more Democratic-oriented news outlet or…

Bradley: You know, at the time when I first conceived of the program, in the beginning, I didn't think about the membership in those kinds of terms. Rather, I thought about the membership in terms of what I felt like these individuals could bring to the table.

Reynolds: In terms of information, not necessarily the model of the current talk show, where they get people on there to argue with each other. You, obviously, wanted just talk about the facts, the information that are out there, what's…

Bradley: And I abhorred that kind of programming. I went to great lengths and went to a lot of pains to avoid any… If somebody was on the program trying to make a point, I made it clear that I didn't want anybody to interrupt them until they got done making their point. Then, if somebody wanted to respond or challenge that point, they would be given the opportunity.

One of the biggest problems I had with the program, believe it or not, wasn't trying to keep them away from one another's throats, but rather remembering—if we had a lively discussion or conversation going—this was radio. As a host and moderator, I sometimes forgot and had to be prompted to—for the listeners' benefit—identify who was speaking. In other words, if you had a conversation or a discussion or a debate going—and we had two, sometimes three, of these people wearing just earphones in the Statehouse Bureau studio and two or three people wearing just earphones out of the station studio—

Reynolds: So, you went all, physically, together sometimes?

Bradley: No, we were in two different locations, always in two different locations. I knew who the voices belonged to, but I needed to remember to let the audience know who was speaking, who was making this point or that point.

Reynolds: I can see where the interruptions would be a problem, if you were in two different locations, because you couldn't necessary see people.

Bradley: Whereas on television they had the visual picture, of course, but then, they could just put the caption under the guys' talking head, as it were.

But no, I was interested in identifying people who would agree, number one, to come out, week in and week out.

Reynolds: Can you think some of the other regular commentators that were guests?

Bradley: The names?

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: In the very beginning, when they program went on the air at WSSR, I think Ed Armstrong, who was, like, the editor of the *State Journal Register*. Well, in those days… I can't remember when the *Journal*, the morning paper, and the *Register*, an afternoon paper, merged.

Reynolds: I think they had merged by then, wouldn't you think?

Bradley: Well, I'm thinking they had, yeah. Ed Armstrong was the editor. Burnell Heinecke, at that time, was bureau chief of the *Sun Times*. Bill Miller.

Reynolds: Anybody else from the university was a regular, besides Charlie?

Bradley: Yeah. Bill Miller represented the university at that time. A fellow by the name of Leon Cohen, who was the Director of the Legislative Studies program out at Sangamon State. When Leon moved on, then another guy we had on as a regular, Bill Day, who at that time, was the head of the legislative council, which was a part of the general assembly. The council did the research for legislation that the reference bureau was putting together. So, Bill Day was also a regular.

Reynolds: Did you have people from state government at all? Or did you try to avoid that?

Bradley: Yeah, we tried to avoid that. We never… Although, when Walker was governor, his press secretary, Norton Kay, tried to make us put him on the program.

Reynolds: I thought that would something that they would push for, or even people that maybe used to be press secretaries that became sort of commentators, like a Mike Lawrence, who worked in state government, those kinds of folks.

Bradley: See, the fact is, I had Mike Lawrence on the program, but, at the time when he was bureau chief for Lee Enterprises, before he went to work for Jim Edgar, when Edgar was secretary of state, and then later, when Edgar was elected governor.

Reynolds: Well there's probably lots of examples of that because governors tended to get somebody that's been in the field to be their press person. So, there's people who move in and out of those positions all the time.

Bradley: Norton Kay was the gubernatorial press secretary that I recall who tried to pressure us into putting him on the air, on that program.

Reynolds: You personally? He'd call you up, bring it up?

Bradley: Yeah, I'm the guy who he called. And I told him, I said, "No, Norton, that's not the concept of the program."

Reynolds: Would he go above your head and call the president of the university?

Bradley: If he did, I never knew. Now, that was the interesting thing about my job as news director. After a period of time, I became aware that there were times when pressure was exerted at the top, at the university, to do certain things at the radio station, that got shunted and just rejected and pushed aside, that clearly would not have been in the interest of so-called objectivity in our news department content. I never knew at the time. But, I later found out that there were a few instances where people felt strongly enough—people like a gubernatorial press secretary, for example—and were not above using that kind of pressure and influence on, even, if not the President of the university, certainly on the general manager at the radio station.

Reynolds: Did you make a point to try to get the big newspapers on regularly, like the *Tribune* and *Sun Times* and, maybe, the *Post Dispatch*? Did they have regular…

Bradley: The wire services too.

Reynolds: They had folks in town that were covering state…

Bradley: Well, they had full-time bureaus that operated out of the State Capitol Building. As a matter of fact, UPI [United Press International] and AP [Associated Press], both, had a bureau chief, a second reporter and each had a photographer. But all three, in each case, worked full-time out of their respective bureaus in the state capitol.

Yeah, I would have, if not the bureau chief from AP or UPI, but also their second reporter. I think AP may have had a total of three reporters because they were big in newspaper service, less so for radio. UPI was big in their broadcast service, the service they provided to radio and TV stations around the state. They had fewer newspaper clients than did AP, so that their newspaper print writing and reporting.

Reynolds: Did you focus mainly on print media, or did you have people from broadcast TV, other radio commentators…

Bradley: We had whoever happened to be the reporter at *Illinois News Network*, where I had been…

Reynolds: …would be a regular on your program?

Bradley: Not a regular, but as one of the guest journalists. See, I established a regular panel, and then, some of these people I've been talking about, were guests that I asked to come on the program one week, another reporter the next week. Virtually all of the reporters covering the state capital for radio or TV or the wire services or the newspapers or Gannett or Lee Enterprises, the St. Louis papers, they all had a presence at some point in time throughout the year.

Reynolds: So, you almost, kind, of wrote—and probably that period, from January to June, when all the action was going on, you probably rotated everybody in, sort of, that period?

Bradley: Oh yeah.

Reynolds: Now, did you do it year round?

Bradley: Oh, the program we did year round. And then, we reached a point where the regular panel members began to push me for a break from the program. So, the time came when we would operate the program, not fifty-two weeks a year, but thirty-nine weeks a year, which was three-quarters. We would end the program on July 1, put it on hiatus for July, August and September, resume it, then, on October 1…

Reynolds: For a veto session.

Bradley: Yeah. …then come around and cover the full six months of the full-blown session, to the next July 1. We operated that way for…probably, the larger time that I was there, running the program.

Reynolds: And it's still going.

Bradley: Yeah, but the last two or three years before I retired, we had resumed a full year, fifty-two week a year, production of the program.

Reynolds: How about political columnists, opinion people, were they, like a Bernie Schoenberg or a…

Bradley: They were on the program, sure.

Reynolds: Steve Neal, those kind of folks that wrote columns?

Bradley: Nobody out of Chicago, but, once in a while, we… Nobody from the print media out of Chicago, because their presence manifested itself through their

reporters in the state capital. In other words, my view was that—and you're talking about people like Neal, who was a columnist.

Reynolds: Right. And in town, I guess, like, Gene Callahan would be an example. Al Manning, Bernie Schoenberg, are the three that…

Bradley: Jerry Owens and…

Reynolds: Jerry Owens, yes.

Bradley: Yeah, then Bernie Schoenberg, who…

Reynolds: Because they tend to cover the state house a lot, as part of their columns.

Bradley: …and did some reporting. Yeah. Their columns covered, not only state politics, but also local politics, local in the Springfield, Sangamon County.

Reynolds: Would you ever take up, like, the mayoral race in Springfield, or did you try to keep it all statewide?

Bradley: No, simply because I tried to keep the program focused on statewide issues, so that the discussion, then, would be relevant for listeners, wherever they were listening, whether in Chicago or northern Illinois or Macomb, Peoria, Normal…

Reynolds: If something in Springfield was happening that was relevant to everybody else, you would cover it.

Bradley: …Carbondale, everywhere.

Reynolds: How about national politics? Did you get into presidential politics, exclusively, to the state, you know, somebody who, maybe, was running a campaign in Illinois or a favorite son that, maybe, was running a presidential campaign?

Bradley: Yeah, because we covered Barack Obama, who was in the state senate, then later was elected to the U.S. Senate. Or, if a president came to Springfield or to Chicago or to one of the other locales in the state, maybe, for a visit, we would cover what he had to say. He might have come to Peoria to talk about Caterpillar issues. Yeah, we would cover that, in terms of our discussion on *State Week in Review*.

Reynolds: Were you big on trying to get folks to make predictions on races and on how an issue was going to come out and what the legislature was going to do and that kind of thing, which reporters hesitate to do a lot of times?

Bradley: I set up a routine, where I would do that, on *State Week in Review* program, prior to primary Tuesday and prior to a general election Tuesday. The regular

panel members usually would participate. But, the reporters who worked out of the full-time bureaus, down at the State Capitol Building, if they were uncomfortable doing that, I didn't press the issue. I invited panel members to offer up an idea, if they wanted to offer it. I didn't force the issue.

Reynolds: Occasionally, that's probably where you probably got some disagreement. People would say, "Oh, I think it's coming out this way."

Bradley: Oh, sure. Well, I would always keep score, and then, the next week, we would see who ate crow and who…(laugh) And we had a lot…

Reynolds: You had a lot of the tape, didn't you?

Bradley: Yeah, oh yeah. We had a lot of fun with the program, you know, in that way.

Reynolds: Did anybody ever shock you with what they were talking about, or something they said, or a moment that sort of comes out? Do you remember?

Bradley: No, but I remember whole humorous incidents that come, like, Bill Miller was great for landing on regional colloquialisms to try and make a point that he was expressing in the prayer. Now, this wasn't on *State Week in Review*, but I remember, (laugh) one time, I'd invited Bill to be a part of our election night coverage.

We were talking about some race going on somewhere in southern Illinois. Bill, as he was prone to do in an ad lib kind of basis, made some reference to Joe Six Pack running around barefooted, (laugh) meaning…a blue collar worker, is what he was referencing. It irritated a couple of people, and they called us that night, just madder than hell. Bill took it in stride, and the next time we went on the air on our statewide election coverage, he apologized. (laugh) He apologized and went on, that it was the point he was trying to make. But he got in a final zinger, in that he said, "So, I really didn't mean to step on anybody's toes." (laughs and claps hands)

Reynolds: Was he from southern Illinois?

Bradley: Carlinville's where Bill grew up.

Reynolds: Oh, so he could get away with that, right? He was one of them.

Bradley: (laugh) Yeah. That's just an example, but I use that example, only because Bill was a regular panel member on *State Week in Review*, so because of his broadcast background, to me it made sense to invite him to be a commentator on our election night coverage.

Reynolds: You're talking about a downstate sort of thing. Was there an ongoing sort of cynicism about the Chicago politics that came up regularly? Did you—since you didn't have, probably, people on from Chicago that often, did the *Tribune*

and the *Sun Times*…of course, Charlie's from the *Sun Times*, but was there sort of a downstate versus Chicago, sort of, theme to a lot of the discussions?

Bradley: When we had reporters on from the *Sun Times* or the *Tribune*, they always—and the wire services too—they always, I think, made a genuine, concerted effort to balance what they had to say. Those reporters who came in on a rotating guest basis, by and large, were very careful about opinions. That was fine with me because I had the so-called political scientists on the program to offer up the political aspects.

Reynolds: So, opinions of particular politicians. For instance, in the course of doing research in some of the governments, Charlie Wheeler comes up all the time with really sharp opinions about some of the governors. That was avoided pretty much. I mean, could they…

Bradley: He did not do that, though, when he was working for the *Sun Times*. I mean, in terms of what he had to say and the content of what he had to say on the program when he was actively working for the *Sun Times* and was on the program as the Statehouse Bureau Chief for the *Sun Times*, he was right down the middle, made every effort, at least.

Reynolds: So, you tried to avoid personal opinions about a particular politician or, maybe, even their style of…

Bradley: Yes. And, you know, almost all of the state house reporters were that way, particularly, the wire services and the Chicago papers. Occasionally, we would have a reporter on from—I remember Simeon Osbey was a Statehouse Bureau Chief for the *Chicago Defender*. And Simeon was not above reflecting the African-American or the black point of view, particularly in the Chicago area, because that's what the *Defender*…that was their cliental or subscription base, anyway.

Reynolds: I also noticed that, over the years, there's sort of one thing that all the reporters seem to have in common is, sort of, a cynicism about the way the legislature works and politicians, sort of, in general, quote, unquote…

Bradley: And rightfully so, yeah. (laugh)

Reynolds: Did you have difficulty keeping that under check, or did you pretty much go with it?

Bradley: No, no, no. I never made any effort, as a moderator of the program. As a matter of fact, I was accused a lot of time, trying to…goading—and even got accused, one time, of being public radio's Democratic, Rush Limbaugh. I was accused of being that kind of person, on *State Week in Review*. I don't know whether that was flattery or what. (laugh)

Reynolds: Well, it sounds like you had a lot of fun doing it.

Bradley: I did. I had a lot of fun doing it, and, as I say, I enjoyed goading all the panel members. I sometimes would deliberately make an outrageous statement, just because the panel members were never sure if I was trying to goad them or not.

Reynolds: I don't think you're in the Rush Limbaugh league of outrageous statements, Rich. (laugh)

Bradley: I never really tried to.

Reynolds: I mean, now days, the ante is very, very high on those kind of statements. (laugh)

Well, I'm down to my last few questions here, so we'll see if we can… We touched on this a number of different times, over the course of our discussion, here. But, could you, kind of, go over the technological changes that you've seen throughout your career. They are just vast, it sounds like, from ticker tape to wire services to phone lines to…

Bradley: When I went out to Sangamon State, and we put the radio station on the air in 1975, in the studios we used reel-to-reel machines. I think, when I used that technology, everybody understands what I mean by reel-to-reel. The reporters were using portable, audio cassette machines to record our interviews. In the studios, we were using cartridges, self-contained, plastic cartridge with varying lengths of tape in it, forty seconds, seventy seconds, ninety seconds. The sound bites would be recorded on those cartridges, and then, we would insert them into a machine that had a slot in it. That cartridge would have a number, and we would know…

Reynolds: Big, heavy cartridges. They were good size, I recall.

Bradley: Well…now, there are two different kinds of cartridges.

Reynolds: Kind of, almost, like eight tracks, sort of.

Bradley: Yeah, eight tracks, yeah, was one cartridge technology. Broadcast technology was a little bit different, and cartridges, per se, were much lighter than the eight track. In the eight track cassettes, they had a lot of tape in them, plus the pressure roller was inside the cartridge. In the broadcast cartridge, the pressure roller was in the cartridge machine and not in the cartridge itself. When you inserted the cartridge…

Reynolds: A more expensive machine.

Bradley: Yes. When you inserted the cartridge into the slot, the pressure roller would come up through a hole in the bottom of the cartridge and be that far from the tape. Then, when you hit the start button, it would pinch the tape between the

roller, the pressure roller and the cap stand and pull the tape, which was on a continuous loop through the cartridge.

Our first foray into digital, at the radio station, this had some impact on technology.

Reynolds: You buying new equipment about every five years, you think, or something?

Bradley: Yeah. Well, in some cases… Once we got into computers, the turnover was much more rapid than that.

Reynolds: Which would have been late '80s, early '90s.

Bradley: Yeah, sometimes annually. You needed to do it annually in order to stay up to speed. By that time, our budget in public radio and at the university—which provided some financial support to the station—the budgets weren't able to keep up with the need. So, some of the equipment we had, we kept for sometimes two, three, four, five years. And then, finally, machines would just physically breakdown. Or, the kind of technology it represented would just go out of style, and you had no choice, but to get rid of it, abandon it, and buy into the new because parts, then, became an issue, available parts.

Reynolds: So, like, for instance, the wire services, when you first started, they were coming in off of a…

Bradley: Oh, they came in on a wire, into a teletype machine.

Reynolds: Right. And it would just print out.

Bradley: And when machines at the station—one for UPI and one for Reuters—and these machines would just sit there and run twenty-four hours a day, cranking out paper. Every morning, when I would come in, I would have to wade through this big pile of paper behind the machine that had come in all night long and go through. And, what I didn't need, or want to use, got tossed in the waste paper basket. There was humongous waste of paper in those days.

Reynolds: So, how long before, then, they converted to computer delivery of their stories?

Bradley: Well, their method of delivery didn't really change. What the technology did was, it created a software program that would receive the data stream that was on the circuit and convert it and write it off to a hard drive on a computer. It was the same data that went into the teletype machine and into a modem, I guess, it as it was. And then the modem…

Reynolds: Over the phone lines, to begin with.

Bradley: Phone lines, yeah.

Reynolds: Did you see the Internet come in on that particular service before you left, where they were delivering it over the Internet or…

Bradley: The wire services never really delivered over the Internet on a twenty-four, seven basis. Initially, they delivered it on a phone line. And then, when satellite technology came along, they delivered the data stream over a satellite link, both AP and UPI. What they were doing on a designated telephone circuit, they were just doing over the satellite system. That still is…

Reynolds: So, they're still doing it off of a satellite. They don't have, like, websites you go to and, kind of, like, you know, all these guys that put all these stories out on websites. *Drudge Report*, I guess, is an example.

Bradley: They began to make some of that content available on the web for some stations. For example, if our satellite for AP went down, we lost the data stream. But, then, AP would give us a website address, along with a user ID and a password, then, to access the same content on the Internet. But AP preferred that we use the satellite distributed data stream, and that's still the case.

Reynolds: So, the reliability of the Internet, maybe, hasn't got to the point where they want to do away with the old system. The old system was just more efficient.

Bradley: Well, not only that, but from a broadcast point of view, on the Internet there's too much latency. Now, what I mean by that is, we learn that, as soon as you said a word, if you're going to transmit it over the Internet, it would be twenty seconds before it got from point A, before it showed up at point B. Whereas, with…

Reynolds: Like an e-mail, that takes, you know…

Bradley: Like, with satellite technology, keep in mind that you went up 22,500 miles to a geosynchronous satellite, back down, then, to a receiving dish for 22,500 miles. There was a bit of a delay, less than half a second. But, with the Internet, there's almost twenty seconds of delay.

Reynolds: For instance, you see a lot of the TV broadcasts trying to use Skype, or did I get the right word?

Bradley: Yeah, Skype. Well on…

Reynolds: And it's real rough, still. It's still difficult to do streaming stuff off the Internet, isn't it? So, we haven't really completely gone over to that delivery.

Bradley: It requires tremendous bandwidth. The Internet is a creature that, its efficiency is driven by the number of people using the Internet at any given time. Because that latency issue varies, sometimes it's very short, but sometimes

it's very long. With Skype, for example, you see that manifested in the delay from a host's question to somebody.

Reynolds: Same thing with the phone lines, over the Internet. You see the same kind of thing, a delay.

Bradley: Exactly, yeah.

Reynolds: So, pretty much, that's the evolution of how you receive information and actually broadcast, then…

Bradley: Broadcast, yeah.

Reynolds: Satellite is still the primary way that the signal goes out to everybody.

Bradley: FM stations now, in addition to broadcasting an analog signal, which is almost in real time, are now doing a digital broadcast; in a digital broadcast there's about an eight second delay, from the time you say a word until the digital receiver broadcasts it.

Reynolds: Is that just the technology of recording it digitally or what…it's broadcasting digitally, versus…

Bradley: It's the amount of time that the digital conversion requires. To convert the analog to digital, it takes eight seconds to make that conversion.

Reynolds: And it's the quality of the broadcast that is the benefactor of that, yeah. So, you've seen a lot over the last…

Bradley: I have, in terms of: from the news gathering point of view, we went from audio cassettes to portable, digital machines, very much like what we're using here to record this interview. Whereas, the audios recorded in a digital format and stored on little flash cards, or compact flash cards, that these digital recorders use.

Reynolds: Do you see anything in the future coming up? Did you see any new trends beginning to emerge as you were, kind of, wrapping up your career, in terms of technology?

Bradley: You mentioned the Skype. Now, for radio, that offered a lot of possibilities in terms of high quality audio. In radio, obviously, you're not interested in the video, although that's a component of Skype. We were more interested in the technical quality of the audio. The audio of the Skype is really very good. The video leaves a lot to be desired, sometimes, most times, I suppose. But, the quality of the audio is always very, very good. So, that became very attractive to people like me who worked very hard to maintain the technical, studio quality of the audio product that we were broadcasting.

Reynolds: In terms of collecting the news, you said you still got your news directly from the satellite feeds. Did the Internet play a role in terms of looking at, like, the *New York Times* news side or some of these places where they put stories together, like the *Drudge Report* is the only thing I'm thinking of at the moment—all he had is a political point of view. Did the Internet make it easier to build news reports, in terms of using those kind of resources?

Bradley: Yes, in terms of, for example, Illinois Public Radio today does not use the satellite technology to the degree that it did in the very beginning, simply because much of what is done in our coverage at the state house, for example, is reporters covering, capturing audio interviews, debates, news conferences. They edit the audio down. They package a report. And now, instead of distributing that at a fixed time, 5:30 every morning or 3:30 every afternoon, in a feed, we now use the Internet to upload that packaged report to an audio server. The studios are at WUIS. The stations, then, can access that audio over the Internet, using a user ID name and a password to get access to it. And on the server, I arranged for every station to have their own, individual, folder on the audio server.

Reynolds: So, the Internet has improved your delivery of content.

Bradley: Yes. So, when those stations want to offer a story, they upload that to their folder on the IPR server in WUIS's studio. And then, they send out—we have a listserv, where we can communicate among ourselves privately, just members of the Illinois Public Radio System. We send a message out. It's kind of like, I suppose, a Twitter or Tweet or whatever, because it's usually a very brief message. We'll say, "Well, we got a five minute report on the governor's news conference on the tax increase in the state house folder."

Reynolds: They'll go out and look at the Internet several times a day to see if there's anything they haven't used?

Bradley: I think all of the stations, now, are learning—and we did—to keep the listserv running in the background, so that, when a message from a station came into the listserv, you saw it when it popped up. You could look at it right away because you might be sitting there waiting for whatever it is the station is working on. The stations use it to communicate among themselves too. They'll…

Reynolds: Share stories and…

Bradley: …well, share stories, but also, make inquiry about what stations are covering on a given day. They may see, on the rundown on the wire service, that certain things are going on somewhere around the state in a given day. And maybe, Chicago or Springfield or Carbondale would say, "Anybody in Peoria covering the governor at Caterpillar?" Then the station at Caterpillar, at Peoria

or Bradley, WCBU, if they were planning to cover that event that day, they would just answer, "Yeah we're going to be there."

Reynolds: It just improves communications tremendously.

Bradley: Yeah. And it really became very helpful, in terms of individual planning in the individual news rooms.

Reynolds: Did you see any of this issue of all this information out on the Internet, much of which is not very reliable at times? Did that come into play at all? Were you getting, looking for, sources of news that presented questionable quality? Or did you have to doubt things that came in because of that…because you see that every day on the cable stations? They'll report on something in a blog and have to apologize for it a couple of hours later because…

Bradley: No, that was never an issue with us because we never relied on that kind of information as a primary source. Rather, we would read it for its entertainment value. (laugh)

Reynolds: That became a story.

Bradley: Yeah, a lot of times it did. My view was, they were not reliable sources. We had our standard reliable sources. One of which we relied upon a great deal was the individual public radio reporters and the individual public radio stations in the state. From NPR's perspective, they had a national system of the reporters in the member stations. Those were our primary sources for the wire service, where we monitored what the newspapers were saying, because, with the advent of the Internet, they were able to provide updates, really on virtually a real time basis. So, we relied a lot upon newspapers that were doing that. But, blogs, no, not unless…

Reynolds: It became the story, you know, somebody…

Bradley: Even the Matt Drudge stuff, I never was able to bring myself to accept that—

Reynolds: Because, lord knows, the sources on there…some of them are established sources, but others of them are who knows what?

Bradley: Now I saw…*Capital Fax,* for example, that Rich Miller runs. In the very beginning, my sense was that it was very much like a kind of gossip. I think that was how Rich initially operated. But, as time went on, Rich's sources became very, very good and very, very independent, confidential.

Reynolds: And he was an example of somebody who just had a website, was kind of blogging.

Bradley: Yeah, but now, I think, he is considered to be a primary source, a reliable source.

Reynolds: That'd be an example of somebody who really has, kind of, brought that up to the point where it's legitimate.

Bradley: And he is identified as a source, for attribution.

Reynolds: Right. Last couple of questions: The transition from SSU to UIS, I mean, and to the University of Illinois system. How did that go? Was that a pleasant situation? It was, obviously, it improved, or it probably improved your status a little bit to be a part of the University of Illinois system. Did it cause the radio station any…or was it pretty much business as usual and, you know, whatever?

Bradley: Initially, it was business as usual. The fact that we became a campus of the University of Illinois, when I look back, when that happened in 1995, I didn't view it, at that time, as any kind of issue. But, there were one, maybe two, instances where efforts were made by the broadcast operation on the Urbana campus to grab the station here and claim ownership of it.

Reynolds: Sort of reorganize you into their structure?

Bradley: Yes. There were at least two different instances when that happened. One was when the president of the campus here—it was in a tight budgetary situation—offered the station up. The view was that…

Reynolds: As a money saving situation.

Bradley: Yes, because, you know, there was almost a million a year, I think was the figure, that was going…

Reynolds: Could be saved or…

Bradley: Could be saved, yeah. Now, part of that was in-kind because, where the station is located in a university-owned building, we were using the university's utilities: natural gas and electricity. And, out at the transmitter site, the rural electric bill out there, the university picked up as a part of their utility bill, annually, and not an amount that was charged back to the radio station.

The idea was that the control, programming and management of the station would pass to the University of Illinois broadcast operation because they, after all, had the reputation of owning and operating an AM station, an FM station and a TV station. The savings, by taking over the operation here, would be that they could lay off everybody, except the news department. The news department, then, would be left here to cover just the state house.

Reynolds: So, essentially they get a Statehouse Bureau out of the deal.

Bradley: Well, the bureau would, in fact, become theirs, yes.

Reynolds: Which, maybe, is something they'd coveted for years anyway. I don't know.

Bradley: I think that would probably be the case. But, I think the management of that kind of thinking no longer exists over at Champaign-Urbana.

Plus, you know, the very nature of what public radio is has changed a lot. When people in our listening area became aware of what was on the table and being discussed—and there were a lot of back and forth discussions—one of things that was going to happen would be that this station would lose its local Springfield identity. It would lose the staff that was put in place to look after and program the station, provide programming in the Springfield area for the Springfield area audience, because all that programming—the intent was to move that over to Urbana and put all the programming they were doing on their AM station on 91.9, here in the Springfield area.

Reynolds: It would consolidate the budgets of—so, they could, then, you know, decide who gets what resources. Would it have consolidated your fundraising activities and those kind of things also?

Bradley: Yeah. But I'm not aware that there's thinking along those lines at all anymore.

Reynolds: It was just entertaining during the transition.

Bradley: Yes, yes.

Reynolds: Well good. You also ended up as part of the Center for State Policy Leadership, is that correct, or do I have that right?

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: How did that…does that work out pretty well for you?

Bradley: Yeah, that was really just a place to put the radio station.

Reynolds: Where were you before?

Bradley: Well…

Reynolds: Did you have an independent situation?

Bradley: No, we were always, essentially, in a unit that had all of the public affairs media-related elements.

Reynolds: Like the Paul Simon Program and those kind of things?

Bradley: Well, no. We were never located…

Reynolds: So, you weren't part of an academic program?

Bradley: No, no. Efforts were made sometimes, and that bothered us because we didn't see that as being in the best interests of the radio station because, in an academic program, the communications program would be used…the thinking was that would be used to let students operate the radio station, have hands-on operate the radio station, lay off the full-time people. Doing that would take full-time employment down below the mandatory minimum of five employees, which the Corporation for Public Broadcasting required to receive federal funds.

Reynolds: We already discussed that, that the university never had a sort of broadcasting-related program.

Bradley: Exactly. Whereas at Carbondale, as an example, their radio station is a hands-on operation. And same way at Edwardsville, their radio station is a hands-on operation for students. It's a part of the academic radio-TV program within the college of communications down there.

Reynolds: The reorganization into this group—which, I think—does that also have the *Illinois Times?*

Bradley: *Illinois Issues,* a magazine, the radio station. UIS has a very professional TV production facility, which is a part of that unit. That facility, once upon a time, operated the local community access channel. Then, when Comcast bought out the local cable system, they terminated that contract and started taking care of operating the local community access channel themselves. The university, then, lost that funding. But, that was a part of that unit. Then there's the legislative internship program, the legislative studies program…

Reynolds: So, the actual internships are in the same…

Bradley: …yeah, the legal studies department—it's all part of this center. But, the radio station…

Reynolds: It's sort of an applied thing.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: So, everything that has to do with putting people in state government and servicing state government, is all under this center.

Bradley: The radio station and *Illinois Issues* magazine were both founded and established in 1975. When the station went on the air at that time, it and the magazine were a part of what was called the Division of University Relations. Also, within that division was the university's public relations function. Essentially, that's where the radio station has always been, is in that public affairs, university affairs, community affairs kind of department, within the greater university organization.

Reynolds: One of the things I had mentioned: some of the academic people that are part of this policy center that appeared on *Washington Week* and the *Illinois Issues* people would also, sort of, appear on your…so there was a way of, sort of, promoting all of any research that was going on. And they do, I think, a survey every year, as I recall. You could bring them in and have them talk about that and that kind of thing.

Bradley: There was a period of time for example, Chris, when the editor of *Illinois Issues* magazine was a regular member of the *State Week in Review* panel. I don't think that is…

Reynolds: You said Peggy Boyer was there for a long time.

Bradley: Well, Peggy, see, was a Statehouse Bureau Chief, my first one, at WSSR, well, now WUIS. She was there for two or three years, then left, but then came back in '89 or '90 for another two or three year stint as Statehouse Bureau Chief. And then, she went to *Illinois Issues* magazine. When she went over to *Illinois Issues* magazine, she was on *State Week in Review* as Statehouse Bureau Chief, a staff member of the radio station. I just carried her over, as editor of the magazine, to be on the program. The Statehouse Bureau Chief of WUIS is a regular on the program.

Reynolds: Whoever that might be over the years.

Bradley: Well, right now it's Sean Crawford.

Reynolds: Right. So, it sounds like the arrangement is pretty good. Actually, I think, was it an attempt by the university to organize their, sort of, public affairs stuff, more so, under a center? Since they are broadening out beyond, the whole mission, being public affairs, this sort of focused that in a center that would concentrate on state government and research related to state government.

Bradley: If memory serves me, there is not a whole lot of hard dollars that goes into the operation of this center.

Reynolds: The faculty is paid for through their regular academic program.

Bradley: Well, they have a joint appointment. Almost all of the money that operates the center is soft money, money that's raised through grants. You know, it's like the radio station, even. We get a grant from the Illinois Public Broadcasting Counsel. We get a grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and listener contributions. We sell underwriting to businesses, organizations. Whatever, they…

Reynolds: Seems more like a University of Illinois sort of model…

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: …because, pre-University of Illinois, you didn't sense that there was much activity to try to get state agency grants out at Sangamon State University.

Bradley: There wasn't.

Reynolds: You'd go out there and try to get somebody interested in what you were doing, and there was nobody interested in it.

Bradley: I was at the radio station for, what, ten or eleven years before it was merged in with the U of I system. One of the things that became really apparent a short period of time after the merger, was we lost a family feeling on the campus. When we were Sangamon State there was, really, among the faculty and the staff and the students, a close-knit family-like environment. And well, bureaucracy was kind of a laid back…well, you know, maybe I can get it done tomorrow. But, there was not a lot of worry about the bureaucracy. But when we became a part of the University of Illinois, they were ingrained with this, make sure you got all the dots there, the periods and all the t's crossed…

Reynolds: It's the bureaucrats over there.

Bradley: Yeah. Well, exactly, yeah.

Reynolds: Final question. You recently received an award, the Lee Award, which is given to…

Bradley: Oh, that was in 2005.

Reynolds: Tell us about what the award was for and how you ended up getting it and some of the people that have maybe gotten it in the past. Did someone nominate you, or how did that happen?

Bradley: That's an award that's given by the Public Radio News Directors, Inc. That's a national organization of public radio news directors. I was a charter member of that organization in 1985. There was a small group of us in the country who put together the organization, and, in time…In those days, it was PRNDA. We were an association. We incorporated, and then, set up an officer, president, vice president structure. It was a pretty loose-knit operation in the early days.

One of the charter members was a fellow by the name of Leo Lee, who ran a public radio school on the west coast. I need to go back and look at his origin. It was called Western Public Radio. It was an academic unit, if I recall right. But Leo Lee also did some reporting in the early days of national public radio. Anyway, the Public Radio News Directors Organization established this annual award to identify and honor an individual who made outstanding, significant contributions to the journalistic aspect of public radio in America.

Reynolds: So, really, you weren't awarded for your organizational skills, necessarily—setting up the network, the station and all that—but for purely reporting type things?

Bradley: But, the association also viewed the establishment of a co-op, like Illinois Public Radio, as a contribution to trying to raise public radio's status in Illinois and what it had the capability of doing in its reporting, the kind of reporting that it was doing.

So, somebody, I think one of the news directors from one of the Illinois stations, nominated me. Then, the steering committee and the board of directors of the national organization, then, had to pass judgment on the nomination and awarded me the Leo C. Lee Award in 2005, which was the twentieth anniversary of the existence or founding of PRNDI, as we call it. That was held back in Chicago, which was the site of our first organization meeting, back in 1985.

So, yeah. Some of the other recipients included Bill Buzenberg, who was the news director in National Public Radio for a number of years and later went on to run the news organization in Minnesota Public Radio; Ira Glass…

Reynolds: A very popular NPR show.

Bradley: …of *This American Life*; Linda Wertheimer, who was a congressional correspondent and later a host of *All Things Considered* on National Public Radio. Gosh, I don't have the list in front of me, but there were—

Reynolds: Lots of them…names you would recognize.

Bradley: Yes, I was very proud of that award because…but embarrassed too, Chris, quite frankly, because all my years at the radio station, I made an effort to bring publicity, professionalism for the station, not for Rich Bradley, but for the kids who worked there, the people who worked there full-time, and for the news department and for the co-op, the Illinois Public Radio Co-op, was to bring a favorable, professional light to shine on all of the collective efforts, but proud too of the award that I'd got, yeah.

Reynolds: Congratulations for the great career. We're going to end this part of the interview right now. I hope we can have future interviews, talking more about politics and some of the gubernatorial administrations. But, thanks again. I appreciate it, Rich.

Bradley: Thank you.

(end of interview session 3 #4 continues)

Interview with Rich Bradley

ISP-A-L-2011-057

Interview # 4: January 27, 2012

Interviewer: Chris Reynolds

Reyynolds: Okay, this is January 27th, 2012. It's about 10:00 AM. We're at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. This is the fourth interview with Rich Bradley. My name is Chris Reynolds; I'm a volunteer interviewer for the library's Statecraft [Project of the] Oral History Program. We are going to try to talk about gubernatorial administrations today.

Since, during this period, Rich, you were primarily the news director at the public radio station, you supervised state house reporters, plus you also did a weekly discussion show as a moderator, with reporters and kind of expert observers on state politics. From that vantage point, I guess, we want to talk to you about some of the impressions of these guys.

Bradley: From an organizational point of view too, Chris. The Statehouse Bureau was physically, obviously, removed from the main studios at Sangamon State and then, later, the University of Illinois at Springfield. We had a full-time bureau down there, where we had one, and then later, two full-time reporters working down there. That bureau was given quite a bit of latitude, in terms of being autonomous. I provided kind of a broad sweep of the issues and items I felt needed to be covered, not only for the Springfield are, generally, but I tended to look at some of these issues on a statewide basis, knowing that a lot of the material we were generating out of the Statehouse Bureau was being picked up through this loose-knit cooperative that we called Illinois Public Radio. I wanted stories that the bureau did to be relative for their audiences, as well.

Reynolds: Let's go ahead and start with Jim Thompson. You started as the news director in what year? We'll get our years set up here.

Bradley: The public station went on the air in January, 1975. So Thompson hadn't yet been elected governor. He was elected in the fall of '76, November '76. Took

office in January of ’77. That was a two year term, I think, his first term out because there…

Reynolds: Changing the constitution.

Bradley: …were aspects of the state constitution that were being implemented, and that’s how they set that up. I think there were several statewide offices that had only a two-year term in 1976.

Reynolds: I think it had to do with the aligning with the—or being opposite of the presidential elections. That’s what that was.

Okay, what—so, you had a little bit of time, and, of course, you were actually a reporter before then. What were your impressions? What knowledge did you have about Jim Thompson before he ran for governor?

Bradley: Actually, I didn’t know a whole lot about him, hadn’t been around him. I later became aware that he was a federal prosecutor, working out of the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Northern District of Illinois in Chicago. I think he became the main guy, received his appointment, I believe, from Richard Nixon. Nixon resigned in ‘74? Yeah, I think Thompson was working out of the federal prosecutor’s office because he prosecuted Governor Otto Kerner, won, successfully prosecuted him, and sent Kerner to jail for, I forget how many years now, but three or four or five years. I think Kerner was later released from prison early, I think because of health issues. I really had no knowledge of Jim Thompson, beyond the fact that he was the prosecutor who had successfully sought an indictment and a conviction of Otto Kerner and sent him off to federal prison.

Reynolds: Thompson’s principal image was of sort of a corruption buster, crime fighter. He had a fairly pragmatic reputation. At that point, he was a very fresh face on the political scene, kind of had a white knight sort of image.

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: Also seemed to have a real sense of candor about him. And he was young, vigorous and hard working. Did the governor that you observed—once he became governor—did he continue to fit that image? What were your views on all that?

Bradley: I think that he did. And the thing that we haven’t mentioned here is Thompson’s physical stature. He was a big man. By big, I don’t mean fat or overweight. He was tall; he was, what, 6’6” maybe 6’7”? So, physically, he was a very imposing figure. That kind of lent itself to the aura of this white knight riding in and sweeping out corruption.

His work in the U.S. Attorney’s Office did, in fact, go beyond just Otto Kerner. Don’t ask me to count the number of heads, but he did

successfully prosecute some people who were a part of the Richard Daley regime in the city of Chicago. So, he had that going for him when he prosecuted Kerner. And Kerner was considered a part of that Daley—oh, what's the word I'm looking for?

Reynolds: Machine.

Bradley: Machine, yeah, the original Richard Daley machine. Thompson was seen as the white knight that took that machine down a few pegs. I think it was based upon his success as a federal prosecutor that really lent itself to his deciding to make the run for Governor of Illinois.

Reynolds: Did the candor thing…did you notice that? I mean, that he would seem to be more honest than your typical politician? Was that something that, right away, you picked up on?

Bradley: I think so, and I don't know, Chris, if it was so much a feeling of honesty that I had as much as it was his willingness to answer a question, if it was asked. I always felt like there wasn't a whole lot of BS when he answered a question, particularly specific, direct questions. If he felt circumstances required it, he could skirt a question and answer a question that wasn't asked. (laugh) In that sense, he learned the politics of being a candidate, running for governor. Certainly he learned that.

Reynolds: He seem to avoid calculated spinning, but, of course, he could spin with the best of them.

Bradley: Oh, sure. Yeah.

Reynolds: Thompson's personality has been described as gregarious and playful and informal. He used to wear jeans and boots and drink beer with the guys. I remember, I went to Western Illinois, and, I think, he showed up at football games and would drink with kids and stuff like that. Had a very laid back style.

Bradley: The original tail-gater. (laugh)

Reynolds: [He] loved to socialize, wanted to be buddy buddy with the media, I think, more than anything. Are those observations all pretty accurate?

Bradley: Yes they are. I do know that governors in Illinois, historically—I think, in the spring—had an annual media reception that was hosted at the mansion. So, it was in that context that I got to see him socializing, anyway. All members of the media turned out for that because that was a pretty big deal. The chance to see, not only the Executive Mansion, but to be right up and close with the governor, because he certainly made members of the media who came, feel welcome. He warmed right up to them, and they warmed right up to him. That

really, kind of, solidified, I think, the public image, when you looked at the way he conducted himself in that kind of environment.

Reynolds: How did he do on the charisma meter? Did you feel like he had a high level of charisma?

Bradley: Yeah, and it wasn't until later that I began to suspect (laugh) some BS, a lot of times, in how he responded to situations in state government. For the most part, Thompson left me with an impression that, if you asked him a question, he would answer it. There wasn't much fudging in his answer.

Reynolds: The tax situation, of course, was…when you're in four terms, you know, I mean, you got do some high level politicking.

Bradley: I don't remember Walker doing this so much, and certainly not Ogilvie before Walker or Shapiro, and then Kerner. But Thompson, in my mind, was the first governor who didn't hesitate to walk onto the floor of the house of representatives, walk on the floor of the state senate, and use this physical stature of his to, as we used to say in the media, strong arm or twist somebody's arm, if there were an important piece of legislation that he really wanted to see passed. He lobbied that way and made his presence known. He was a very imposing figure in that kind of setting, particularly when you look at people like state representative C.L. McCormick from Vienna, little bitty fellow, or somebody like Sam Vadalabene, a Democrat from Edwardsville. They were small, short people, you know, five and half feet. Thompson was more than six and a half feet. It really lent that aura of strong arm. He began to pick up that reputation for not being afraid at all to walk from the second floor office of the governor in the state capitol, up to the third floor, where, in opposite wings, the house and the senate were in session. He'd walk right in there.

Reynolds: So, the same style that he used with the press, he used with the legislators. It was just as effective with the press as it was with legislators.

Bradley: It was. Yes.

Reynolds: Let's talk about your memories of the sort of the public sentiment that Thompson may have used to his advantage in his many campaigns. Did you observe that the governor was more civil and less confrontational? We've already talked about his anti-machine politics, although, in many cases, he developed his own machine, I think.

Bradley: Sure, oh yeah.

Reynolds: He came off as more non-partisan and independent; again, that candor, refreshingly honest sort of thing. Was he unwilling to make promises, maybe, that he didn't think he could keep? But also, there seemed to be a lot of gimmicks involved in some of his programs and policies. But he always, sort

of, let you believe he was a friend of the taxpayers and all that kind of thing. He also, as I recall, would apologize for things. If he made a mistake, he seemed to be one of the first politicians that would say, "You know, I made a mistake," and that kind of thing.

Bradley: That made him more human in the eyes of the public at large. I'm trying to remember… I think Thompson may have been the first of the modern day governors who utilized the statewide fly around to get his message out. For example, after the state of the state address or after a budget address, if there were anything particularly controversial about what he proposed, in either the state of the state or the budget message, he would hop on a plane in the Illinois Air Force cadre, out at the airport there, and fly around to all these media stops around the state, address the local media. Of course, members of local radio and TV stations and print media were thrilled to have the opportunity to interchange with the governor one-on-one. So, Thompson successfully used that vehicle to bolster his image in the public, of being a can-do kind of guy and not at all hesitant to apologize or admit if he felt like he had done something wrong or made a mistake, misspoke, whatever.

Reynolds: Did you sense that that, maybe, wore a little thin after a few terms because, especially on the tax issue, it seemed like he was constantly promising that he would not raise taxes, and then, he would start a new term…

Bradley: After the election, yes.

Reynolds: …and he would raise… Of course it was all based on, well, there's a new analysis of the situation and that kind of thing. Did you sense that that was kind of wearing thin, toward the end of his… Which is, for any politician (laugh), if you're in for four terms, I mean—

Bradley: Well, yeah, because Thompson did serve fourteen years, longer than any other governor in Illinois' history. As a matter of fact, I think governors in Illinois have really not served more than two terms. But, Thompson was in fourteen years, four terms. But one of those terms…well, his first term was only two years. So, in response to your question, yeah, it did wear a little thin and began to fall, I think, on some deaf ears, not only in the media, but around the state, as well.

Reynolds: But you think the media was always with him, pretty much throughout, or did they sort of turn on him toward the en a little bit?

Bradley: Yeah, I think they did turn on him a little bit, toward the end. That was because, I think, the argument he kind of wore thin on, at least the state house media. And there were times when he would, seemingly, kowtow, or cater to, the Chicago media. There was a belief—at least among reporters working in Springfield, the state house media—there was the belief that a lot of the Chicago media was more interested, particularly the TV stations, more

interested in the flash of publicity and didn't really zero in and focus in and drill down to try and dig out anything below just the surface.

They didn't come to Springfield, except at the end of a session or to cover the state of the state message or the budget message. They just pretty much stayed in the Chicago area, and Thompson used that, to the chagrin of the downstate media or the state house media, anyway.

Reynolds: It seems like the first time I heard the phrase, "budgeting was smoke and mirrors," came into view with Thompson. A lot of his programs were labeled as sort of gimmicky, that kind of thing. I think, as you go along, that kind of stuff sort of builds up and people…you know, it hurts your credibility, over time.

Bradley: Well, and, in that sense, it was something that caught up with him. Thompson was not a stupid or ignorant man. But, it seemed like it took him a while to catch on that some of his explanations weren't holding much water anymore and, maybe, that he might have been a little slow to recognize that fact. It's hard for me to believe that he was slow to recognize that sort of thing, but that was the appearance. That was the sense that one had, especially during that last term.

Reynolds: To be fair, of course, he served as governor through one of the most difficult economic phases in the state's history, almost. I mean, we went through sort of the rust belt recession that started early in the decade and lasted almost until the end of the decade. So, pretty much during his entire…

Bradley: Now you're talking about the decade of the '80s?

Reynolds: Right, right. Even though the national economy came out of it about midway through the '80s, Illinois—I know because I was working at the department of commerce, and we were still having to spin the unemployment data—right until the end of the decade because it was so difficult. I got to give him some credit. I mean, the "smoke and mirrors" a lot of times, had to do with revenue problems that were caused by the economic downturn.

Bradley: The "smoke and mirrors" also was a gimmick that, not only Thompson, but later administrations, also did, maybe not to the degree that Thompson did, but they had to play that "smoke and mirrors" game in order to satisfy the state constitution, which required the submission of a balanced budget each year to the general assembly. He had to play that accounting game, in order to satisfy that requirement in the state constitution, when, in fact, the state, frequently, was doing some deficient spending.

Reynolds: And think about it, he had to submit, what, thirteen or fourteen state budgets?

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: Boy. The one policy area I did want to get into with you is, during the administration, the Rutan Supreme Court decision was decided, which found hiring, based on political affiliation, unconstitutional. Did you observe that the administration was serious about enforcing the ruling, or were they more motivated about getting around it? What was your impression?

Bradley: Lip service. Lip service in terms of adhering to the Supreme Court ruling. From a practical application point of view, they were looking for ways to skirt the Supreme Court's decision. I don't think there was any disagreement among most people that's what was going on. I don't know if that was a viewpoint that people, by that time, were just suspicious of Thompson and his politics, or if they weren't very—oh, what's the word I'm looking for—weren't very good about hiding it, covering it up.

Reynolds: Even their public stances were kind of weak, kind of ignoring it. Of course, the guy that ran against him a couple of times, Adlai Stevenson, perpetuated this notion of pinstripe patronage, which, I think, was the first time that had ever been used. There did seem to be this, sort of, the structure of the—there's a columnist up in Chicago that calls it the "combine"—the sort of, we'll take care of you, if you take care of us. That whole sort of thing seemed to really take shape during the Thompson years, in terms of contracts.

He also, being an anti-machine politician, he worked tremendously well with the Daleys, or whoever. I guess there were some mayors between the Daleys there. But, you know, he seemed to really build a machine…

Bradley: Of his own.

Reynolds: …of his own, which really hadn't been done by a Republican before. Are my observations somewhat accurate?

Bradley: They are, and I think Thompson recognized, early on, too, the value and importance in making an effort to get along and accommodate the Daley machine. After all, the city of Chicago and Cook County, which was almost entirely Democratic—just a few collar counties, DuPage County, that were heavily Republican—but the original Richard Daley had a lot of influence in the legislative process here in Springfield. He had his lieutenants who were in the house and who were in the senate.

Thompson recognized that he was a force to be reckoned with and, I think, went out of his way to accommodate Daley because they each had their own agenda, and they each recognized that, in order to satisfy and accomplish what they had on their plate, they had to work together, and they had to accommodate one another.

Reynolds: Interestingly enough, when you think about it, during Thompson's terms, there was that huge transition, when the old mayor died, and there was a series of mayors. I mean, Harold Washington sort of established himself, but then he

was gone. It wasn't until his son [Daley] took over as mayor that there was really a counterbalance to a governor, at that point, because it was such fighting going on in the city of Chicago.

Bradley: I'm trying to remember the mayors, now, after Harold Washington, who also died—he dropped dead around Thanksgiving time, I think, while he was in office—but then, you had Michael Bilandic and Jane Byrne…

Reynolds: Was there somebody after Harold Washington?

Bradley: Wasn't there another Black American mayor, African American mayor?

Reynolds: Oh, Tom Sawyer, I think. No, that's—Eugene Sawyer.

Bradley: Eugene Sawyer, yeah.

Reynolds: Eugene Sawyer.

Bradley: Very brief though, wasn't it, his—

Reynolds: After Harold Washington died.

Bradley: Yeah. I think the council appointed Sawyer to fill out Harold Washington's term. I can't remember if Washington had just one, elected one, four year term?

Reynolds: Maybe he got elected a second term, and then, died pretty much into the second term.

Bradley: Could be, yeah. I'd need to get a book out and look at the dates.

Reynolds: Would have to check on that—

Bradley: But you're right. When young Richie Daley, who represented some of his father's interests as a member of the state senate because Richie Daley served for, what, two terms maybe, in the state senate before he went back to Chicago to run for and was elected as Cook County's State Attorney, and then, ultimately, ran for mayor and served, gosh how many years there, twelve, fourteen, fifteen years, as mayor of Chicago? Well, he served longer than his father did…

Reynolds: In think he did.

Bradley: …in office.

Reynolds: Plus, I don't think that Richie Daley held the kind of potential grudges that the old mayor would have had against Thompson, since Thompson spent all that time putting his buddies in jail, a lot of his alderman, and, I think, Dunn. Some of the Cook County presidents, I think, got into trouble and that kind of thing.

Bradley: They had the mentality of "don't get mad, get even".

Reynolds: Right. Again, we're talking about fourteen years, so we're talking about a long time. But, during his four terms, did you observe that there was an increasing level of, sort of extravagant behavior regarding receiving gifts. I know he was a big antique buff, and there were stories about him going to antique stores all over the state.

He also did a lot of international travel, and he also had these national ambitions, which would pop up every so often, as a presidential candidate. And he also became known as sort of a salesman type guy. I became very aware of that, working at the department of commerce, because he was trying to get these auto plants to move to Illinois. So, he was like, you know, very national about persuading Saturn to come here and persuading Mitsubishi…

Bradley: Of course, Saturn ended going down to Tennessee. But then, there's a Mitsubishi plant settled in Bloomington-Normal.

Reynolds: He was able to get at least one and then, all of the suppliers. Over the course of his term, did those kind of activities ever affect him, his credibility as governor or his effectiveness?

Bradley: I don't know that I can answer that directly. My recollection is…I don't know what peoples' thoughts were. I think his ability to sell was recognized.

Now, I never thought of Jim Thompson as an extravagant sort of person, even though he frequented antique shops. You know, he had a personal interest in antiques. But he also, I think, had a sense of history, insofar as recognizing the importance of shopping for antiques to go into the Executive Mansion. He did, in fact, get a lot of credit from a lot people for purchasing antiques to equip and furnish the Executive Mansion. A lot of people who like history, who like antiques, gave him a lot of credit and applauded his efforts in acquiring a lot of pieces to go into the Executive Mansion. There may have been some grumbling in some quarters about things that he purchased but had to use State of Illinois funds to do it.

Certainly, I think, one of his big rescues was the Susan Lawrence Dana House, Frank Lloyd Wright house. That property was purchased with State of Illinois funds, general revenue funds, I think, during Thompson's administration. And, certainly, the stamp on those of us who live here in Springfield, we recognized that was probably a really smart move. Who knows what might have happened to that property, if the state hadn't taken it over.

Reynolds: Well, during a tough economic period, I can see where people might have criticized that. But you're absolutely right, in terms of historic preservation, I think it was more than Dana-Thomas; there were a number of sites around the state that he championed to bring into the state fold and to have restored. He

really, sort of, elevated that whole level of state activity more than it had ever been, I think.

Did you ever sense how strong was his political ambitions at the national level? Did you ever really sense he was a presidential timber? Did he fit in with what was going on? It would have been… I guess, in fourteen years, there were several presidential races during that period; although, Ronald Reagan did dominate, I think, probably, during that period. So, he was kind of outside of, maybe, the mainstream of the Republican Party.

Bradley: I don't know what was in Jim Thompson's mind or heart, if he really believed that he could run for and be elected president. I know that the media, here in Springfield anyway, the state house media, ran with that kind of story, simply because of… very similar to Barack Obama, being from, misplaced, but (laugh) being from Illinois and coming to Springfield and announcing his candidacy and then running and then, of course, ultimately being elected. So, I think the media, at that time, was ready to play that game and did a pretty good job of promoting Jim Thompson as a viable Republican nominee and candidate for president, whether deserved or not.

Reynolds: He, certainly, might have been considered on VP lists a few times.

Bradley: Oh, yeah. I think there was more speculation that he might end up as a vice presidential candidate on the ticket, more than being a presidential nominee.

Reynolds: But interesting enough, toward the end of his term there, I guess Bill Clinton would have been—well, no, Clinton didn't get in until '92, so it's pretty much Reagan-Bush during his period, wouldn't it have been?

Bradley: Yeah because there was…

Reynolds: Edgar was in '92, so…

Bradley: The gubernatorial elections in Illinois were off-set from the presidential, so there was a gubernatorial election in '90. That was, what, Jim Edgar?

Reynolds: Yeah in '92. But when Clinton won. So, probably the only realistic chance that he had for a VP pick would have been with George Bush, after Reagan's two terms.

Bradley: Yes George H. W. Bush—

Reynolds: Yeah, the first George Bush. But he probably was too much of a politician, like George Bush, H., to be even considered.

Bradley: And by the time George W. Bush ran for president, Jim Thompson had settled back into law and was leading one of the larger and more prolific and well-

known law firms in the country, in Chicago. I'm trying to remember the name of that law firm…Strawn.

Reynolds: Winston-Strawn.

Bradley: Winston-Strawn, yes.

Reynolds: I got a list of names that were kind of big political people during this period. We've actually mentioned several of them. But, I'll just run through these names and, if you have any comments you want to make about them, if you have any stories about any of them… Roland Burris, of course, I think he was…what was he?

Bradley: First, state comptroller and then, later, attorney general.

Reynolds: Right. Have any experiences with Roland Burris or… Of course, he popped back up here just recently.

Bradley: Well, yeah. But, at the time you're talking about, when he was state comptroller and attorney general, I don't recall anything specific that—I shouldn't say, specific, because I do recall one instance. Roland Burris was the state comptroller when, during the Thompson administration in 1985, legislation was passed by the general assembly, and Thompson made a big deal out of signing this legislation to create the Illinois Public Broadcasting Council in the State of Illinois and set up a granting program for public radio and TV. That legislation that Thompson signed into law into 1985 directed that these grants be administered by the State Comptroller's Office.

In that respect, I had occasion to come up against Roland Burris. Here in Springfield, he came out to the studios when ground was broken—and later dedication of the NPR up-link that we used as a part of Illinois Public Radio—was the National Public Radio satellite distribution system, and we were able to access that on behalf of public radio in the state of Illinois. That was my only real one-on-one, personal experience with being around Roland Burris when he was state comptroller. I never was around him at all in a capacity as a reporter or journalist when he was the attorney general.

Reynolds: Did he play a prominent and positive role in that particular issue, or was he just kind of along for the symbolism of the whole thing?

Bradley: Oh, he was along for the symbolism, because I don't recall that he had any input into how the legislation was put together. He just, kind of, benefited from the inclusion in the legislation, however you want to characterize it, that required the state comptroller's office to promulgate the rules and regulations for how these grants would be doled out to public radio and public TV stations in the state.

Reynolds: How about Harold Washington? Did you have much to do with him?

Bradley: Only when he was in the bureau, the Statehouse Bureau reported on him when he was in the Illinois House, and, I think, he may have served a short term in the state senate before he went to Chicago and ran for mayor. Only in that respect did those of us working at WUIS come into contact with Harold Washington.

Later, when he became mayor, that became part of a period of time when this co-op off of public radio included WBEZ in Chicago, and they were certainly on top of Harold Washington's campaign for mayor and his first term as mayor and, subsequently, his sudden death. They were covering that story and shared their story with the rest of us in public radio in the state.

Rich Bradley takes a call from WUIS's Statehouse Bureau.

Reynolds: Downstate people: were they interested in the stories about… Another person was Jane Byrne. Jane Byrne and Harold Washington, who were very outgoing personalities and, sort of, got a lot of publicity up there, obviously, for what they did. Did downstate people care much about that or did you?…

Bradley: My sense was that our listening audience in [the] Springfield area certainly did, much less so in terms of the audiences for Carbondale or Edwardsville or Macomb or the Quad Cities. But, at least, the politics was, I felt, of interest to our audience here in Springfield. So, yeah, in that sense, I was very much interested in what the mayor of Chicago was doing and how the mayor of Chicago's clout came to bear on the legislative process, and yeah, even the administration of a governor.

Reynolds: Alan Dixon: Do you remember much about Alan Dixon?

Bradley: Covered him when he was state treasurer. I remember a couple of his staff people were—

Reynolds: He was also in the senate for a while, U. S. Senate.

Bradley: Well, yeah, but first, he was in the state senate, from the Belleville area. I don't recall reporting on him when he was in the general assembly here in Illinois, certainly when he was state treasurer, but then, when he ran for and was elected to the U.S. Senate, we covered that.

I recall having pretty good contact with Dixon, largely because of Gene Callahan, who was his chief of staff. Gene had worked for the *State Journal Register,* or the *Register,* I think, at the time, and was a columnist and Gene understood the needs, demands, requirements of the media. In that sense, he was very instrumental, I think, in the success that Alan Dixon enjoyed.

I never fully—as somebody in the media—was I able to come to grips with how Carol Moseley Braun beat him in the primary. I think about, when you look at what happened to her after, what, one term and some negative publicity that she got running around with, some would say, terrorists (laugh) in Africa—

Reynolds: Her buddy—Cozy…what's his name?

Bradley: Yeah. A lot of times, I thought, what a loss.

Reynolds: Yeah, it's sort of baffling, when you think about it, how that happened. What did Alan Dixon do that would turn Democratic voters off so that they would turn to someone who was just… She had Cook County office didn't she? She was like…

Bradley: Yeah, she was sort of this…

Reynolds: She was like county clerk or something like that?

Bradley: But didn't she also serve in the Illinois General Assembly too?

Reynolds: It's possible.

Bradley: And then went into Cook County office. I don't remember much about that primary election because that's where Carol Moseley Braun defeated Alan Dixon, in the Democratic primary.

Reynolds: You know, Illinois politics sometimes it's just—you can't explain—like what happened to Adlai Stevenson with those guys from the LaRouchies. (talk over)

Bradley: Oh, the LaRouchies, yeah. That was in the 1986.

Reynolds: There were such weird occurrences. I mean, Thompson lucked out, in terms of those kind of things, because of some strange things that went on.

Bradley: What year, now, was it in?

Reynolds: It was the second run;, Adlai got stuck by the LaRouchies.

Bradley: But it is in his first run, where he came within five thousand votes of beating Thompson, which is, I think, why he ran a second time against Thompson. And then, the Democrats really went to sleep in that Democratic primary in what, '86? It allowed two members of the LaRouchie, Fairchild and—

Reynolds: Janice…Hart, I think her name was.

Bradley: Hart, yeah, secretary of state. Oh yeah.

Reynolds: It's crazy stuff to remember.

Bradley: Did you ever think about—because I have—I've wondered, what if they had won a general election—Hart-Fairchild?

Reynolds: Hart—was it secretary of state?

Bradley: State, yeah.

Reynolds: Yeah? Oh, and Fairchild was lieutenant governor, wasn't it.

Bradley: Lieutenant governor.

Reynolds: Wow that's crazy to think about. Well, Alan Dixon also, kind of like Paul Simon, aspired to be governor, but lost in a primary also. So, it's what could have been, if either Paul Simon or Alan Dixon had run for governor…

Bradley: …followed a similar kind of path and…Of course, Simon was a lieutenant governor at a period of time when the old kind, the 1870's state constitution, which didn't require the governor and lieutenant governor to be of the same political party. You know, that was kind of unique. Of course, a young fellow by the name of—young fellow, he's the same age as me now (laugh)—he was the same age as me then, but it was that exposure that Dick Durbin had got, serving as parliamentarian, that Paul Simon, who, under the old constitution, the lieutenant governor presided over all sessions of the state senate.

Reynolds: We talked about Neil Hartigan. You talked about him in our previous interview. Is there anything more you'd like to say about Neil Hartigan?

Bradley: I first met him and really got to know him on a personal level, when he was lieutenant governor. He was lieutenant governor under Dan Walker. Hartigan definitely was a product of the Daley machine. It was because of that that Walker treated him as if he didn't really exist. Walker also, kind of, took exception to some of the projects that Hartigan chose for himself to pursue as lieutenant governor.

Clearly the state constitution doesn't provide any direction, only in the sense that you take over if something happens to the governor—he drops dead or dies or whatever. I always felt like that was a shortcoming on the part of the constitutional convention, in setting it up that way. Even to this day, I don't know enough about those deliberations, during the constitutional convention, because I didn't really cover that. I never understood how a group of wise people, like the delegates to the constitutional convention, could set up the lieutenant governor's office the way they did, under the 1970 constitution.

Anyway, that's how I got to know Hartigan because Hartigan really went all out to seek out the media and become friends with the media. It was in that kind of relationship that I came to know him well. Then, he went on to serve

as attorney general and made one run, I think, for an attempt at running for governor and lost that and then…

Reynolds: He ran against Edgar.

Bradley: Yeah. Went back to Chicago and went into a law career. Did he end up on the bench somewhere, or…

Reynolds: It's possible.

Bradley: I can't remember.

Reynolds: It's possible. I can't remember now. I don't think it was the Supreme Court. I don't recall a Supreme Court judge.

Bradley: It might have been the federal bench, maybe.

Reynolds: Yes, right. The lieutenant governor discussion you brought up, brings up the name of Dave O'Neil.

Bradley: Oh. (laugh)

Reynolds: Who, apparently, was so bored with being lieutenant governor, he decided not to: he ran for the senate.

Bradley: He was under Thompson.

Reynolds: I believe, but…

Bradley: I don't even remember that.

Reynolds: He became…

Bradley: He was sheriff of whatever county, down there in metro-east. He was from Belleville, wasn't he?

Reynolds: I think so.

Bradley: What county's Belleville in? Is that Madison or…

Reynolds: St. Clair.

Bradley: St. Clair. I think he was, maybe, St. Clair County Sheriff when—I don't remember, now, how he even ended up on the ticket as lieutenant governor—obviously he ran and was elected during the primary.

Reynolds: I think he only served one term. Didn't he? I'm thinking that the reason that he left…—

Bradley: He resigned.

Reynolds: …he openly said, publically, that he was bored with the job and…

Bradley: There wasn't anything for him to do, yeah.

Reynolds: And I think that he was considering a run for the senate, or maybe he lost in a primary, or maybe he ran against…I can't remember—

Bradley: I think he ran and lost in the primary, maybe.

Reynolds: Maybe he ran against Dixon. Yeah. But then, George Ryan, of course, picked up. We'll talk about George Ryan in future interviews.

You remember anything about Mike Howlett? It's the first person he defeated, I think, wasn't it?

Bradley: Well, I remember a Mike Howlett; not sure who you are referring to.

Reynolds: The guy that was the secretary of state, and then, I believe that he was the first person that Thompson defeated. He was the Democratic candidate for…

Bradley: In '70…

Reynolds: '76.

Bradley: '76, yes.

Reynolds: I actually saw him at some appearances back then, and he seemed disinterested (laugh) in the whole thing. It was sort of like…

Bradley: The gubernatorial race, you mean? He only ran against Thompson because Mayor Daley was looking for a strong, a successful, well-known statewide name candidate to take out Thompson or, no…—

Reynolds: That would have been Thompson.

Bradley: Well, no, they took out Walker first.

Reynolds: In the primary.

Bradley: In the primary. That's where Dave…

Reynolds: You're absolutely right. It was a two-step process. They had to get Walker out because they didn't like him.

Bradley: Daley was more interested in getting rid of Walker than he was in Howlett winning the general election against Thompson. That's my recollection, that when the March Democratic gubernatorial primary, that year, was over, and

Howlett had defeated Dan Walker, taking him out, that's all the mayor cared about and really didn't pay too much attention to the general election after that because that was his goal.

Reynolds: Even though Thompson had put a lot of his people in jail. But later, as we've discussed, they became, sort of, the beginnings of this combine of people, you know, taking care of each other.

Bradley: It's funny how, when you start talking about some of things, you begin to remember some things. Howlett was state auditor, I think, under the old constitution and then, became secretary of state. He really wanted to run for secretary of state again, and the mayor leaned on him to run for governor and challenge Walker, who was seeking re-election. Because Walker was first elected in '72, took office in '73. And he beat Richard Ogilvie in the '72 election.

Reynolds: Probably, that was helpful, also, to Jim Edgar, down the line…

Bradley: I think so.

Reynolds: …because Howlett might have been able to just be secretary of state, kind of, like Jesse White…

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: …he would have just running and running and running—

Bradley: Exactly. Howlett would have been perfectly content to do that, clearly. I don't think there's any argument about that at all.

Reynolds: And the contrast between him and Thompson was just night and day in terms of charisma, outgoing personality, and all that—

Bradley: In that campaign, Thompson successfully painted Howlett as a product of the Daley machine, the old-time, Democratic ward politician coming out of the city of Chicago to run for governor. And he successfully painted Howlett with that broad brush of politician becoming governor of Illinois. No, this is not what you want—the white knight, six foot, six inches tall and successfully prosecuting members of the Daley machine, yeah.

Reynolds: Plus the Chicago suburban Republican vote was just growing like crazy during the Thompson years. So, he had a natural constituency for that anti-machine sort of…

Bradley: Especially out in DuPage County. Oh, yeah.

Reynolds: You remember anything about Mary Lee Leahy, who, of course, was the lawyer involved in the Rutan case?

Bradley: She was married to a fellow by the name of Andy Leahy, who was Dan Walker's chief of staff, I think, or—it wasn't press secretary. Norty Kay was the press secretary, and Victor deGrazia was a key mover and shaker in the Thompson administration in the governor's office. But, I think, Andy Leahy…

Reynolds: For the Walker administration.

Bradley: Yeah, the Walker administration. But, I think…I don't remember specifically what role, job, position Andy Leahy held or exactly what job position Victor deGrazia held, but they were both active members of the Walker administration.

Andy Leahy was married to a woman by the name of Mary Lee Leahy, who, I think, Walker appointed to be head of DCFS. Does that sound right, Department of Children and Family Services?

Reynolds: I think you're right.

Bradley: And I think she served in that capacity during the four years of the one term that Dan Walker was governor. Then, later, she had and—still, even today—has a very active law practice here in Springfield.

It was as an attorney, [she] took that case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court and won a favorable decision.

Reynolds: And she's been a really active activist for those, sort of, anti-patronage issues…

Bradley: And one who tries to, yeah.

Reynolds: …for many, many years.

How about Lee Daniels? Do you remember much about Lee Daniels, who, I guess, was… We should point out, also, during Thompson's fourteen years, that the Republicans and Democrats had changed control of the house and the senate a few times, so that people became speaker that… I mean, the Republicans had rarely had a speaker, although George Ryan was speaker during that time and Lee Daniels later.

Bradley: To go back a little farther, Bob Blair from Park Ridge was speaker.

Lee Daniels was speaker for two years. I remember reporting on Lee Daniels as the minority leader in the Illinois House of Representatives, when Mike Madigan, Democrat, and still speaker of the house…he's set all kinds of records in his service as speaker. Mike Madigan—

Reynolds: And it was interrupted by Lee Daniels.

Bradley: Yeah, just for two years. Then Mike Madigan was actually one of the delegates to the constitutional convention, and I was kind of bashing them a while ago in talking about not being able to understand why they dealt with… It's kind of like a bunch of them went to sleep one day, and they woke up, and that's how the lieutenant governor's office was left here in the State of Illinois.

But, Lee Daniels, I think, first made a name for himself in a protracted election for speaker of the house. A colleague of his—what county was he from?

Reynolds: I think he was suburban.

Bradley: Bill Redman was the Democrat, and that was at a time when Lee Daniels and Bill Redman were the two members of the House of Representatives and whatever the senate district was. Redman was a Democrat. Daniels was a Republican. Redman was running for speaker, and it went through I forget—fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty, ninety ballots, a hundred and some ballots? And what finally broke the log jam was Lee Daniels, a freshman, I think, Republican member of the house, crossed over and voted for a county colleague, Bill Redman, and won the speakership election for Bill Redman, which he got from a Republican vote. That's my recollection.

Reynolds: Wow.

Bradley: I think that's when…

Reynolds: I think I have heard that story before. I had forgotten about that. Lee Daniels would have been, probably, a Du Page County Republican, wasn't he, or from one of those suburban areas?

Bradley: Yeah, oh yeah, clearly. It was from the same county, the same legislative district as William Redman, who served then, what, two, maybe three terms as speaker of the house before…

Reynolds: George Ryan.

Bradley: Yeah. George Ryan served for what? How many terms as speaker, two terms, two two-year terms?

Reynolds: Sounds about right, yeah.

Bradley: …before he won election, then, as secretary of state.

Reynolds: Right. Or, actually, lieutenant governor, first.

Bradley: That's right, under Thompson, yeah.

Reynolds: He became lieutenant governor under Thompson.

You talk a little bit about Paul…

Bradley: See how those years get kind of foggy? (laugh)

Reynolds: Oh, I know. Although it's amazing how things come back when you start talking about these people. Paul Simon and Adlai Stevenson and Mike Madigan, we kind of talked about them on and off. Anything more you want to say about those three people, who were, obviously, pretty much giants on the Democratic side, during this period?

Bradley: They were. I never thought Adlai Stevenson was much of a campaigner. Now it's true, he was elected, he served as state treasurer for what? One term, maybe, and then ran for and was elected to the U. S. Senate. Adlai Stevenson's personality, to my way of thinking, better fit his role as a U. S. Senator than as Governor of the State of Illinois. It's true his dad was governor for what?…, one term?

Reynolds: I believe so.

Bradley: Adlai Stevenson, the governor? I know he ran twice for president. But I think he just served one term as governor. But clearly…

Reynolds: He was actually governor when he ran for president, wasn't he?

Bradley: Yeah. Adlai Stevenson III had a persona and just a more senatorial, you know. He just seemed to me to be a better personality to fit the role as a U. S. Senate. He left the U. S. Senate because he was, I don't know, tired of it, or he felt like he couldn't do anything more and laid out two years before he ran, the first time in '82, against Jim Thompson. And he almost won that election. I mean, trying to remember that, was there a recount in 1982, in that election? I'm thinking that he…

Reynolds: That's the one with the five thousand votes.

Bradley: Yes, yes. There was five thousand or less, less than half a vote a precinct in Illinois. Thompson won.

Reynolds: I would have to think, there had to have been a recount. I'm sure Adlai Stevenson called for a recount.

Bradley: But, even today, there's no recount mechanism, is there, in the gubernatorial race?

Reynolds: That's a good question. I don't know the specifics of that. I know they've interviewed Michelson, who was the election board guy on a lot of these issues. So, those of you that are doing research on that, check that oral history.

He [Michelson] probably…I'll bet he talks a lot about that particular race because I think he was the election guy at that point and ran a…

Bradley: I'm disappointed I can't remember more about it. I just remember how close it was. When people talk about the right to vote, and they kind of blow off an election, from time to time—well, a lot of people do because the turnout tends to be less than impressive from election to election. You hear people say a lot about, "Hell, my one little old vote isn't going to matter much." But there was an example in 1982, in that gubernatorial race, there was an example, as I've already said, that the margin of Stevenson's defeat came down to less than half a vote per precinct in the state. There are eleven thousand some precincts in Illinois, and it came down to less than half a vote.

Reynolds: I'm trying to remember why Thompson was so vulnerable at that point. It probably had to do with the tax issue, where he'd said he wasn't going to raise taxes, and then, because of the economic recession that we were in, he was forced to.

Bradley: Was that the October surprise?

Reynolds: Could be.

Bradley: That came to be known as—

Reynolds: Again, there were four elections, and you get them sort of blurred as to what happened in what election. That's when he brought up the pinstripe patronage. I think that was one of his big issues.

Bradley: He was elected to two years in '76, four years in '78, then, and then, the '82 election. But in '78, wasn't that the year that propelled Pat Quinn into notoriety, in terms of the legislature pay raise that came at the hands of a lame duck session of the general assembly?

Reynolds: Cutback amendment?

Bradley: Yeah, that lead to the cutback amendment.

Reynolds: It's possible.

Bradley: Thompson was a complicit in that conspiracy, as it were, because the legislature came back after the election, the leaned up legislature, and passed a pay raise for the members of the house and the senate. Thompson signed the damn bill. I mean, he made himself a party, although…

Reynolds: Getting back with his style with the legislature, he was, you know…

Bradley: But, I think, at the time, clearly, there was…he had conspired. I say, clearly. To my mind, he conspired to sign the bill, if they passed it. I mean, I think he

cut that deal. I can't tell you now what the trade-off might have been. He had to have gotten something from the legislature to do something like that. But that's how it went down. That's what led to the cutback amendment, which Pat Quinn was successful in putting an amendment on the ballot, citizens' initiative, to place that amendment on the ballot and that won. It was a cumulative vote, a cumulative voting process that became subject to that.

Reynolds: Which changed the dynamics of politics in this state, pretty much.

Bradley: Well, not only that, but in the House of Representatives, too, yeah.

Reynolds: Made it possible for somebody like Mike Madigan to be as powerful as he became, I think, more than anything else.

Bradley: Paul Simon: he lost the race for the gubernatorial nomination to Dan Walker in the primary of 1972. He retired to southern Illinois. Simon was originally from the metro-east area, served in the Illinois General Assembly, representing that area. But, after his defeat in that gubernatorial race at the hands of Dan Walker, he retired to southern Illinois, Makanda. It was during that two-year hiatus, before he ran for the U. S. House, that he put…

Reynolds: Yeah, he went to congress, then the senate.

Bradley: Then the senate, yes. He put together what we know, here in Springfield now, is that master's program, that public affairs reporting program at Sangamon State, now the University of Illinois in Springfield, a master's degree program for reporters covering state government, public affairs. He directed that program for two years, before he ran for the U. S. House from that southern Illinois district and then, represented—gosh, I can remember. He finally was elected to the U. S. Senate, took out Chuck Percy?

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: I forget what year that was. But he served six or eight or ten years in the U. S. House before he ran for the U. S. Senate and beat Charles Percy, who was the incumbent then.

Reynolds: And he actually had a presidential run, I think, in '88? And was taken fairly seriously, as I recall…

Bradley: Oh yeah.

Reynolds: …in that race with Michael Dukakis to run against George Bush. Remember, didn't he appear on *Saturday Night Live* or something like that, with the singer Paul Simon? (laugh)

Bradley: The singer/song writer, Paul Simon, yes (laugh).

Reynolds: How about Percy? You remember much about him?

Bradley: Not really. As a radio person, I remember Percy's voice. He had that deep, senatorial voice, as did Everett Dirksen.

Reynolds: Not to match Everett Dirksen, but…

Bradley: Well, (laugh) but earlier, I said Adlai Stevenson fit the role of a U. S. Senate, in my mind, certainly not from the standpoint of the voice, but his propensity to be long-winded. I remember, as a radio reporter, being frustrated with Adlai Stevenson because, when I was trying to edit out excerpts from news conferences or speeches that he made, it was difficult to edit him judiciously because he just went on and on and on and on. It was just hard to edit from an audio perspective, getting the sound bite just right, because we always liked to work with sound bites of twenty-five to thirty seconds in those days. Stevenson, you could never get away from him. If you made a decision you were going to lift an excerpt out, a sound bite, you better figure on forty-five to sixty seconds for him, when you could pretty much edit everybody else to twenty to twenty-five seconds. (laugh)

But anyway, Percy had that voice. I remember one year when he was running, one of his daughters tragically was murdered in her Kenilworth, Illinois home. I'm trying to remember—

Reynolds: It was during a campaign too.

Bradley: It was during that campaign with Simon.

Reynolds: Well, I'm trying to remember now. Chuck Percy, of course, is one of these guys that could have been governor. I think he ran in '64 for governor?

Bradley: He did.

Reynolds: And he got, sort of, caught up in the Goldwater problem.

Bradley: The Goldwater problem, yeah.

Reynolds: He might have made a terrific governor, really. He was sort of a… He'd be like a Mitt Romney type candidate, you know.

Bradley: But, he got elected to the U. S. Senate and chose to become an expert in foreign affairs. He became a very knowledgeable and respected expert in the area of overseas events, foreign affairs, served on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. If he was in the senate when Republicans had a majority in the senate—I don't remember if that ever was the case—if he wasn't chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he was certainly the minority spokesman on that committee. That's where he kind of distinguished himself.

Covering Percy, I just remember that one election. He had twin daughters. One of them was murdered in her bed in her Kenilworth room, and I'm trying to remember if Percy was even home that night because it happened in the middle of the night.

Reynolds: I think everybody was home. That was what was so perplexing about it, and it was never solved. It's an unsolved crime.

Bradley: That was in 1966.

Reynolds: Of course, the conspiracy people all had a heyday with, what's going on here…

Bradley: Sure.

Reynolds: …what's this about?

Bradley: It was out there, the rumor was out there that, heaven forbid, that the reason for the death lay at Percy's feet, from the standpoint of winning a sympathy vote. All kinds of wild rumors circulated at that time. The conspiracy theorists, you know, reveled in that kind of rumor mill.

Reynolds: And it seems like it was just before an election.

Bradley: It was. It was in the course of the campaign, certainly, yeah, just…

Reynolds: …one of those, sort of, perplexing sort of incidents—

Bradley: I think it was a twin sister to Sharon Percy…

Reynolds: …who married the Rockefeller…

Bradley: Who married Jay Rockefeller from West Virginia, a Democrat, yeah.

Reynolds: Describing Chuck Percy, orientation in the Senate, reminds me that that's kind of what Adlai Stevenson did. He kind of became an international, sort of expert on things and that kind of thing, sort of beyond the sort of the petty, domestic things that senators are…

Bradley: In issues of interest to Illinois voters back home, yeah.

Reynolds: Remember anything about Bill Scott, who was, I believe, the attorney general…

Bradley: Attorney general, yeah.

Reynolds: …a potential gubernatorial candidate. I believe there was a scandal regarding him that, maybe, derailed his political career?

Bradley: I think you're right. It's kind of interesting because what I remember about Bill Scott has to do with Paul Powell. Paul Powell, of course, was a Democratic secretary of state who died, and they found nearly a million dollars in cash stuffed in shirt boxes and shoe boxes in a locked closet in a hotel suite that Paul Powell occupied in the St. Nicholas Hotel, here in Springfield.

Now, Bill Scott was attorney general at that time. So, when you say Bill Scott, I remember being a reporter out on the street at that time going with Bill Scott and a bunch of his law enforcement types from the attorney general's office, to a bank, here in Springfield, where they, with great fanfare, opened up a lock box that belonged to Paul Powell and finding $55,000 in cash. This was after the $800,000 or a million bucks in cash that had been found in his hotel suite at the St. Nicholas Hotel.

I don't know why that sticks out in my mind because Scott, as attorney general, personally led several raids like that to some banks around the state, one of which was on West Jefferson, here in Springfield. I forget…that bank is still out there, I think. But, I remember going out there and…

Reynolds: Well, that's an interesting story. You can kind of…

Bradley: They served a warrant on the bank officials, and they brought that lock box out. They had to pry it open, if I recall right, because they didn't have the key. They found, among other things, $55,000 in cash in that lock box. (laugh)

Reynolds: You can almost, kind of, understand that, you know, he had all this cash. He probably was going to… Like, I knew a guy once, his mother was, like, putting money in all sorts of lock boxes in all these banks…

Bradley: Yes, yes.

Reynolds: …because they were, you know, suspicious of banks.

Bradley: The thing about Paul Powell, I think, eventually, they successfully demonstrated and proved that none of that cash found in that hotel suite was taxpayer money. My recollection is that, it was determined that, this cash represented donations, political donations, to Paul Powell. There was nothing—no legislation, no laws on the books at that time—that governed or regulated campaign contributions. It was not uncommon to see cash being passed to Paul Powell when you went to one of his fundraising events in the St. Nicholas Hotel, because there was a lot of that cash that had bands around it, names on the binder, initials on the binder. And they successfully were able to identify who these people were.

Reynolds: So, depending on your point of view, they were contributions, or they were bribes. (laugh)

Bradley: Well, there you go.

Reynolds: It just depends on how you view these things, and, in the context of the law, at that point, there was nothing, really… I mean, he was taking money from employees that worked at the secretary of state's office. He was taking contributions from associations that were…

Bradley: And you know, Chris, it was that kind of mindset that got George Ryan into trouble, I think, later on, when Ryan became secretary of state, because Ryan, in a lot of ways, was a product of that political era in Illinois, you know, good old boy politics and slapping people on the back with one hand and taking cash contributions with the other hand. That was a way of life. It was conduct that people, by and large at that time, were aware of and accepted it.

Reynolds: It goes back to our ongoing narrative about, during the Thompson years, the Republicans sort of learned everything from (laugh) the Democrats that had preceded them. It was kind of like everybody… it was this combine notion of, we do a little bit; you do a little bit; we kind of look the other way, you look the other way. That's interesting. Well, we'll talk about Ryan, maybe, at some point.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: That's interesting, you remember that about Bill Scott. I'd never heard that story about all these extra lock boxes. But you can see it, that he was smart enough not to put it into a bank, so…—

Bradley: Not all of those—and there were less than half a dozen, I think—but, not all of those turned up cash. I think they found cash on that bank out on West Jefferson, here in Springfield and, I think, in a lock box in one of the banks down in Vienna, which is where Powell is from and got into state politics. Well, he came up through the House of Representatives as a Democratic representative from down there and into leadership in the Illinois House. He was speaker of the house, once upon a time, but he was also mayor of Vienna. That's how he got his start in politics. They went down there and opened up a lockbox at the bank down in Vienna and found some cash too, if memory serves me. What year was that, 1970, when Powell died in Rochester, Minnesota? He'd gone up there for some health tests or some kind of a checkup at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester. Gosh, it was…

Reynolds: It would have been during Ogilvie's term.

Bradley: Yes. I think he was up there with his secretary, and she woke up and found him dead in bed. They covered up that death until they got all the stuff taken care of (laugh), cleaned out the office in the state capitol in the middle of the night, before they formally notified Richard Ogilvie that Powell had died.

Reynolds: Interesting. Just a few more names here. We talked about William Redman. You remember anything about Phil Rock, who just recently, someone has written a book about him, maybe?

Bradley: Phil Rock, yeah. Taylor Pensoneau, isn't that right?

Reynolds: Yes.

Bradley: I remember Phil Rock, only as an officer of the state senate. He was Democratic majority leader, served as senate president. He ran in a couple of statewide campaigns, once for U.S. Senate. I don't know that he ever ran for governor, but I think he did run for U.S. Senate once.

Reynolds: I think he maybe did consider running. Maybe he ran in a primary or, at least, considered it. He was being strongly considered.

Bradley: Well respected, considered very fair as senate president, the chief officer of the state senate. There again, it harkens back to that 1985 legislation I talked about, that created the granting program for public radio and TV. Phil Rock was the sponsor of that legislation in the state senate. Over in the house, Mike Madigan and Barbara Flynn Curry were co-sponsors of the legislation in the house.

Reynolds: So, they were champions.

Bradley: Oh, champions of public broadcasting. I remember some of the movers and shakers in public radio and TV, primarily public TV, at the time. I remember the University of Illinois and the big public TV station—Willian McCarter was the president and general manager—WTTW in Chicago. They were the two principal movers and shakers that brought all this together to create the legislation that created this granting program for all public radio and TV in the state.

Reynolds: The one guy, who I guess physically could have the same stature as big Jim Thompson, was Pate Philip I think. He was a great big, strapping guy and—

Bradley: Yeah. Wasn't as tall as Thompson, but he had that persona. He was a Marine veteran—

Reynolds: I guess he would have been speaker of the house, or the senate, senate majority leader?

Bradley: No, he was senate minority leader. He was a Republican from the suburbs. There was a period of time when Republicans were in the majority in the senate, and he was senate president.

Reynolds: Probably through Du Page County, as I recall. Right?

Bradley: But even as a minority leader in the senate, he successfully put the brakes on a lot of Democratic initiatives because he had just enough members to block any effort to… In the senate you needed thirty-six votes to override, need thirty-six votes, extraordinary majority, to pass some bills. He had enough to block that because the Democrats, not until very recently, had enough of a majority that they could pretty much control that. Thirty votes was the simple majority in the senate, but you needed thirty-six votes to override a veto, thirty-six votes to pass constitutional amendments, those kind of bills or resolutions in the state senate. Yeah, he drove Republican Thompson nuts. (laugh) I mean, he…

Reynolds: He was, kind of, harder to deal with, sometimes, than the other side of the aisle, wasn't he, for Thompson?

Bradley: Oh yeah, he was. The last Republican—I'm trying to remember—Bill Harris from Pontiac was a Republican senator. He served in the senate with Cecil Partee when Partee was Democratic majority leader and the first senate president, I think, under the new constitution.

I've lost track of how that fits into the timeline of some of these other personalities we've talked about.

Reynolds: I'm trying to think. Wasn't Pate Philip the guy that was just absolutely opposed to the ERA, the Equal Rights Amendment, even though Thompson…

Bradley: That was George Ryan.

Reynolds: Oh, have I got it wrong? Even though Thompson would have been sort of sympathetic with it, I would think, being a moderate Republican.

Bradley: I think Pate Philip was more outspoken about it. In Ryan's case—see I'm thinking ERA passed the senate, but not the house…

Reynolds: That's possible.

Bradley: …and that…

Reynolds: I don't remember the details of that.

Bradley: Well, there was a difference of opinion. Ryan, as speaker of the house, ruled that, in order to ratify the ERA, you needed a super-majority vote in the House of Representatives. But in the senate—and I remember this created a constitutional question—but in the senate, the ruling at the time was that only a simple majority was required to adopt the ERA. So, you had this dichotomy here of simple majority in the senate, passing ERA, but, over in the house, the battle was over the rules, initially. It came down to…Ryan ruled that, to formerly adopt ERA, he ruled that you needed extraordinary majority in the House of Representatives. And so…

Reynolds: So, Ryan would have been more an obstructionist to that than anybody.

Bradley: And he fell back on rules, rather than allowing it be voted up or down.

Reynolds: Yeah, because it seemed like the real…the protests and the battles were all in the house.

Bradley: Yes, and that's why. Because they didn't pass the senate.

Reynolds: That's pretty good recall on the details of that. Just a couple of minor people, Jerry Cosentino and James Donnewald. Do you remember anything about them?

Bradley: Just Cosentino, who won his fame and fortune as a trucking executive, was elected on the Democratic ticket to treasurer? One term, maybe?

Reynolds: Maybe secretary of state—maybe he ran for secretary of state against Ryan. But I think you're right. I think he maybe was…

Bradley: Served one term as treasurer and then ran—seemed to me like he might have bucked the machine a bit when he made the decision to run for secretary of state because, I think the powers that be, in the Democratic Party, at the time, wanted him to run for re-election as treasurer because they wanted to accommodate somebody else in a run for secretary of state.

Reynolds: Secretary of state would have been the perfect place for him to do his…because, coming from the trucking industry, yeah…to do his thing. I think there was a bit of a—wasn't there a bit of scandal with regard to his trucking company?

Bradley: Yeah, seems to me like…

Reynolds: Maybe they were getting people licensed and out-of-state, or something like that, which, of course, interesting enough, finally led to what brought George Ryan down, was this whole trucking license issue.

Bradley: James Donnewald, a Democrat member of the state senate, was from Breeze, Illinois, which is downstate Illinois. Didn't he get elected to one term in a statewide office?

Reynolds: Treasurer, I believe.

Bradley: Treasurer, yeah.

Reynolds: Either that or comptroller, one or the other.

Bradley: It was treasurer, I think. He served as… When Republicans were in the majority, Pate Philip, I think, was senate president, and I think Jim Donnewald was the—No, Donnewald was a Democrat. What am I thinking about, here?

Reynolds: I'm thinking that Donnewald…

Bradley: Donnewald was neve…

Reynolds: He wasn't secretary of state, was he, because who was it that Jim Edgar replaced as secretary of state? Boy, that's too fuzzy for me to remember

Bradley: Well let's see. Edgar was elected governor in '92?

Reynolds: Uh-huh, but he became secretary of state and got elected in—was twice as secretary of state?

Bradley: Then he served two terms as secretary of state.

Reynolds: And they got appointed…

Bradley: When was Ryan secretary of state?

Reynolds: …after Edgar became governor. He then chose to run for secretary of state. Remember there was…

Bradley: In '92?

Reynolds: There was sort of a who's going to run for governor after Thompson, would be either Ryan…

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: …or Edgar. And it was kind of decided that Edgar was the more attractive of the candidates. So, Ryan ran for secretary of state.

Bradley: Thompson had appointed Edgar secretary of state.

Reynolds: I'm trying to remember why.

Bradley: Was there a resignation or a death?

Reynolds: I'm trying to think whether there was a death. Somehow, I had linked Jim Donnewald, in my mind, to that. But maybe not.

Bradley: Well, it could have been.

Reynolds: I do have a list of the—Oh, Donnewald was…he was treasurer—

Bradley: What year?

Reynolds: Two terms, looked like—or, no, a four-year period, at least, under Thompson. So, maybe he lost to Jerry Cosentino in a primary because…or maybe he just decided he didn't want to do it anymore.

Bradley: But for Edgar to get in as secretary of state—or am I thinking back, when Paul Powell died—

Reynolds: So, Edgar replaced Alan Dixon, who, maybe, had run for the senate and needed to be replaced.

Bradley: Yes, maybe that's what it was. Yeah.

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: What year was that?

Reynolds: '81 or '82, the '82 election was probably…or, no. Yeah, he was secretary of state until '82 or '80.

Bradley: He was on Thompson's staff. He was chief of staff—

Reynolds: He must have run for the senate while he was secretary of state, and then, so, Thompson had to replace him. That's when Jim Edgar got appointed, and then, Jim Edgar—

Bradley: Edgar originally served as a member of the house, Republican, from Charleston. Then, at some point in time, Thompson hired him as chief of staff or somebody in his staff. Maybe Edgar got defeated in a legislative race? I can't remember now.

Reynolds: Well, we'll talk about Edgar later. Let's see, there's one other guy I wanted ask you about. Who was it? (Murmuring) Oh, Michael Bakalis, who ran against Thompson the first time. He was the secretary of education, I believe, and then, ran, the first time, after Howllett.

Bradley: He had the statewide candidacy experience under the old constitution. He ran and was elected as state school superintendent.

Reynolds: And then he was also comptroller, I think.

Bradley: Yeah. Then he ran, was state comptroller. Then he…yes, comptroller for one term at least, maybe two?

Reynolds: Just one, looks like.

Bradley: Thompson defeated Walker in '76.

Reynolds: Or Howlett, after Walker was defeated in the primary.

Bradley: And then, it was in ’78, when Bakalis challenged Thompson.

Reynolds: First term, his first re-election term—

Bradley: Yes. He was Democrat, yeah.

Reynolds: He wasn’t a very strong candidate, as I recall.

Bradley: He was on the faculty at Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, after his service as state school superintendent. It seems to me like, that in that campaign of ’78, Thompson successfully portrayed Bakalis as…

Reynolds: Sort of a technocrat.

Bradley: Yes. As an academic…

Reynolds: Yeah, out of touch.

Bradley: …who was out of touch, didn’t know or understand (laugh) how state government worked, let alone the politics, yeah.

Reynolds: Plus, he had a tremendously ethnic name, which, maybe, at that point…we talked about the LaRoucheis (laugh). What was the name of the guy that lost to the LaRouchies, Sangmeister? People didn’t like his name?

Bradley: George Sangmeister, yes.

Reynolds: Interesting. Okay, well, I’ve just about covered all—is there anybody else during that period that you can think of that—

Bradley: No, not unless mention of a name triggers memories of another name.

Reynolds: Well, I went through my list. Oh, I did have Tom Hynes down there, which was the father of the more recent treasurer. What was the son’s first name?

Bradley: Dan, Dan Hynes.

Reynolds: Dan has run for the senate and the gubernatorial. Tom was kind of a—he was a Daley guy, wasn’t he, when he was…

Bradley: He was a Daley guy, and he served in a leadership role in the state senate. It seems to me, like we talked earlier about a protracted election for speaker of the house, Bill Redman. Two years later—that was in ’75, the Redman election, by the way—two years later, in ’77, Hynes was involved; he was the Democratic candidate in a protracted election for senate president. I think—I forget how many—that’s when Thompson, then, as governor, had to preside over the election in the state senate of the senate president. Usually it was just a kind of a pro-forma kind of a thing. But gosh, Chris, I can’t…

Reynolds: Was there a transition going on, between these guys that were up for leadership, between suburban and sort of machine types or something or?

Bradley: Might have been. I'm trying to remember.

Reynolds: Because Redman was more of a suburban guy, wasn't he?

Bradley: But I think he was…—

Reynolds: Hynes would have been a machine guy, all the way.

Bradley: See, in the house, in '75, I think, believe it or not, the machine candidate was Clyde Choate who was a downstate Democrat from Anna, but closely allied with the Daley machine. He was the Daley machine's choice to be elected speaker.

Reynolds: Of course, remember this was after Walker had just absolutely devastated the Democratic Party, split it in half. So, those kind things were probably still simmering, you know.

Bradley: I can't even remember now who was running against Bill Redman for speaker in 1975, the Republican candidate.

Reynolds: I've discussed this with other people, but I can't remember now either, who it would have been.

Bradley: But Hynes, yeah, was the subject of a protracted race for senate president in the state senate at a time when Thompson was governor, because he had to—as governor, the 1970 constitution required that he preside over the election of the senate president, and it went on and on and on for like a month, and Thompson, being tied down to having to be the presiding officer. He couldn't hand the gavel to the lieutenant governor or anybody like that because, clearly, the constitution…

Reynolds: It was a new constitution.

Bradley: Yeah, it was the new constitution, and, clearly, it directed that the election had to be presided over by the governor.

Reynolds: That's probably the first time it had happened since the new constitution.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Final question on Jim Thompson. Again, unless you can think of anybody else you want to talk about. Your assessment of him, compared to other governors, the governors after and the governors before. He doesn't seem to get a lot of attention. Of course, the attention that our governors have been getting is not (laugh) very positive. But you don't hear people talking about Jim Thompson

much anymore. When I look back over my time in state government, he was gigantic figure for so many years—

Bradley: At the time, but, Chris, didn't that have as much as anything to do with the length of time he was in office? You know, when you talk about Jim Thompson now…When I think about Jim Thompson, I don't think—as a person or somebody who worked for so many years in radio news—I don't think, even so much as governor, as I do a federal prosecutor and his links to history in prosecution of another governor, Otto Kerner.

Supposedly, Kerner's son went around the state holding a series of news conferences, after his father, Tony Kerner, had been convicted, sent to prison about the personal interest Richard Nixon, as president, took, and pursuing that prosecution with Thompson as U.S. Attorney. And supposedly, Thompson took a call from Nixon, after Kerner was convicted. Nixon, supposedly, called Thompson from Air Force One, flying over the country, San Clemente, California, who knows? –but that was one of the stories going around at the time—to be congratulated by Nixon on his successful prosecution of Otto Kerner. That goes back to the 1960 presidential election, I'm told.

Reynolds: And Kerner also had a role with that civil rights commission and had kind of left…

Bradley: Kerner came in. Well, Johnson appointed him to head up that commission and later appointed Kerner to the appeals court bench in Chicago, which is where he was sitting when Thompson successfully prosecuted him.

Reynolds: You know the words that come to mind when you think of Thompson are just impressive durability, when you think you could get elected four times. I know a lot of people were talking about term limits during that period (laugh) because he kept winning and winning and winning.

How he was able to stay so scandal free—no one ever really touched him, in terms of a scandal. Nothing came close to him, in terms of a scandal. And we all sort of know that he was building a machine, and the fact that he was able to.

Bradley: The only conclusion I can come to, with that background, Chris, is that he became very familiar with what you could do and what you couldn't do.

Reynolds: And he was a really bright guy.

Bradley: He was.

Reynolds: He knew what would fly and what wouldn't fly.

Bradley: Very intelligent, he knew the law, and if you look at—He was the attorney for George Ryan. Ryan got convicted and sent to prison, but Thompson served as his attorney in that trial. And he'd been involved, as the head of Winston-Strawn.

Reynolds: I think he's still there, isn't he?

Bradley: Yeah, I think he's still there, yeah. I'm surprised he never got appointed to a federal bench.

Reynolds: Yeah, you would think that would be something that would be—like, he would be a Supreme Court Justice type guy, you know.

Bradley: Yeah, and I don't recall that there was ever any rumor or speculation that he was under consideration.

Reynolds: It probably was because, during his prime for that, Clinton was president.

Bradley: Yeah, president.

Reynolds: But his timing and luck as a politician just seemed to be impeccable, over the course of those years. When you get elected four times, you got to have that. We've already talked a little bit about some of things he's done since he's retired. You know, defending his loyalty to George Ryan to defend him. And really, to defend a way of operating that he brought to the Republican Party. [It] was sort of a defense—I'm sure he saw himself defending what he'd done for fourteen years, in a sense, also. He also was on the 9/11 Commission, which brought him national attention. And he was always…

Bradley: He was the co-chair of that, wasn't he?

Reynolds: I believe he was, and he got a lot of… He was always a very interesting guy to hear interviewed about that. His, sort of, law enforcement, sort of, crime orientation, while he was governor, probably lent itself to that.

Bradley: And he married a woman who also an attorney, Jane Thompson, who had a distinguished legal career. Thompson was, he was the kind of guy, when he was governor, if you remember, during state fair time, he spent almost all ten days at the state fair, at the state fair at least sometime during every day. That included, from the ribbon cutting at the main gate on opening day, to going down that giant slide out there with his wife and with his daughter. Gosh, I can't remember his daughter's name now.

Reynolds: I can't think of it either.

Bradley: (laugh) She was very young.

Reynolds: She was born during his first election, wasn't it?

Bradley: Yeah. And I can remember later, when she was about six or seven or eight years old, she went down the slide with her parents. And then, Thompson went and he was instrumental in bringing a big Chinese exhibit to the Illinois Building at the State Fair…

Reynolds: This was his…

Bradley: Samantha.

Reynolds: Samantha, that's right.

Bradley: And I remember, one of our reporters at the time, was covering Thompson's visit to this Chinese exhibit set up in the Illinois Building there, interviewing Samantha, afterwards, to ask her about her impressions (laugh) of this Chinese exhibit. And I'll never forget. Her response was "boring." (laugh) And they allowed her, see, to answer media questions. But, that was her response to a question about what she thought of the Chinese exhibit, "boring." (laugh)

Reynolds: I wonder what she's doing now. I haven't heard much about her. They kept their private lives very private, very private, which is unlike many politicians.

Bradley: Those are the kind of things I remember, even when Edgar was governor, for example, his dog, jumping on one of our reporters in the driveway at the Executive Mansion there. The dog's name was Emmy. It growled and snapped at one of WUIS's reporters.

Reynolds: Well, Thompson started that thing about dogs. Didn't he have two really big dogs at the Executive Mansion and they used to roam all over the place.

Bradley: He did, yeah, Irish setters or something like that.

Reynolds: Unfortunately, one of the things I remember about Thompson, one of the last things he's done, was he was on the Blagojevich's transition team. I wonder what he now, (laugh) what he now thinks of that little role. Back in the days when we all thought Blagojevich might have been a superstar politician.

Bradley: Well, of course, at the time he agreed to serve on the transition team, there probably wasn't much evidence or hint around the direction that Blagojevich was going go; although, since then, we've learned, or have been told, that, from the day he was inaugurated for his first term, Blagojevich and his minions, his lieutenants, were already busy trying to…

Reynolds: Strategize how…

Bradley: …strategize how they were going to hustle everybody.

Reynolds: Well, I wonder if, knowing Thompson and his relationship with politicians on both sides of the aisle, whether he might have been a good friend of alderman

Mell, who had sponsored Blagojevich. Maybe even he had asked, "Could you help out my son-in-law here, and get him off the ground." I don't know that, but I'm just speculating.

Bradley: That's not beyond the realm of possibility, certainly.

Reynolds: Also, I noticed that Thompson still has a role with the Sports Authority, or maybe he created it, because recently there was a little scandal about something that went on Cellular Park. They were going to build a bar there. The Sports Authority was going to pay to remodel this bar, and all the profits were going to go to Jerry Reinsdorf, you know, with this bar, because he's got this agreement for the Sports Authority. I'll never forget, Thompson: they asked him, "Why have you…" You know, maybe he created the Sports Authority. I'm not sure that he's still involved with it.

Bradley: Well, he may have gotten involved in because of some of the things he pulled off during the White Sox, White Sox park—

Reynolds: Well, definitely close to his heart because he's the guy that, you know, cut the deal. His response was something like, "Have you ever negotiated with Jerry Reinsdorf?" This is Jim Thompson, one of the great negotiators of all time.

Okay great, Rich, Well we've got a certain amount of time in on this. I don't think we probably want to go on to Jim Edgar. We can do that again, if you don't mind doing an additional—

Bradley: Why don't we do it, it's…you know, we're almost two hours now, yeah.

Reynolds: Okay. So, we'll sort of end our interview about the Thompson administration and pick up with Jim Edgar in another interview.

Thanks again. I appreciate it.

(End of interview session #4 #5 continues)

Interview with Rich Bradley

ISP-A-L-2011-057

Interview # 5: March 23, 2012

Interviewer: Chris Reynolds

Reynolds: Good morning. This is Interview number five with Rich Bradley. I'm Chris Reynolds. I'm a volunteer at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Today is March the 23rd. It's about 10:00 AM, and today we're going to continue our discussion of the gubernatorial administrations. We're going to talk about the Edgar administration. What were your impressions or any knowledge that you had of Jim Edgar before he ran for governor?

Bradley: Of course, before he ran for governor, he served two terms as Secretary of State. Before that he was on Governor Thompson's staff, and before that, he was a state legislator.

Reynolds: What did he do for Thompson? I'm trying to remember now…

Bradley: He was chief of staff or…

Reynolds: Was he chief of staff?

Bradley: …or legislative liaison, or some capacity like that, where he, I think, served the Thompson administration in the relationships with the general assembly.

Reynolds: I think legislative liaison sounds about right.

Bradley: Yeah. I can't for the life of me recall why Thompson landed on Edgar because he served, at most, two terms in the Illinois House before he was hired by the governor to serve on his staff.

Reynolds: Seems like he had…he was in the legislature and had a pretty famous mentor in the legislature. I'm trying to see if I wrote the guy's name down.

Bradley: A pretty famous mentor? Really.

Reynolds: Sort of someone that he sort of had worked with earlier and then got into the legislature. Do you remember much about his Secretary of State runs? Of course, he was appointed to secretary…

Bradley: He was appointed by Thompson.

Reynolds: I'm thinking that he ran and didn't have really that tough of a race, maybe.

Bradley: I think he was appointed to his first term by Thompson. You know, memory fades me. Why was there a vacancy in the Secretary of State's office that required the governor to appoint a successor? (laugh)

Reynolds: I probably should have looked this stuff up before we did this. I do have a list of all the people that served. Let's see, Secretary of State, Alan Dixon maybe…

Bradley: Oh, he was elected to the U.S. Senate.

Reynolds: That's right. Alan Dixon was elected to senator.

Bradley: Dixon was State Treasurer before he became Secretary of State.

Reynolds: It looks like Edgar served several terms as Secretary of State.

Bradley: Well, at the most, it might have been two that he was elected to and then…

Reynolds: So, he started in '81, and then he ran for governor in '92. He was Secretary of State for quite a long time, actually.

Bradley: When did he become…

Reynolds: I'm thinking he ran against Jerry Cosentino at least once, I believe, for Secretary of State. Boy, he spent quite a little time…his big issues, I think, as Secretary of State were the drunk driving thing because…

Bradley: Yes, yes.

Reynolds: Was there a story behind it? Didn't he have a relative or something that had been killed by a drunk driver? I can't remember the answer to that at all.

Bradley: You know, Chris, I don't recall. I remember the first time I ever met Jim Edgar was when he was in the Illinois House. I met him, of all things, at some kind of summer homecoming get-together in Kansas, Illinois. I think Edgar was from the Charleston area, and the house district that he served, at that time, included Charleston, Paris, Kansas, Illinois. So, you might ask, what was I doing in Kansas, Illinois? Well, my first wife was originally from Kansas. Her parents were born and raised in Kansas, Illinois. Later they moved to

Terre Haute, Indiana. I met her when I transferred from the U of I to SIU-Carbondale in 1960. We married in 1962. I can't tell you what year it was, but by that time, I'd moved to Springfield, and I moved to Springfield in 1965. She and I had gone back to her hometown for this annual homecoming. It was in the summertime.

I think Edgar was campaigning at that time for—he was already in the House, so he was campaigning, apparently, for reelection—and he showed up at this thing on a Saturday evening, there in Kansas, Illinois and that's…

Reynolds: What were you doing at that point? You were in a local radio job?

Bradley: I was in Springfield by that time. If I could remember the year, I could tell you exactly where I was. I don't know if 1974/'75 is when I went out to Sangamon State to build the public radio station.

Reynolds: So, you had been dealing with the state house at that point.

Bradley: And the two years prior, I was with the Illinois News Network. So, where would that have put me?

Reynolds: He was in the House. I think you were probably just, maybe, with UIS, maybe, although he may have been already working for Thompson at that point.

Bradley: Well, if he was running for the Illinois House—they're two year terms—he might have been there in the summer of '74. There would have been an election in November of '74. The summer of '74, I was still at the Illinois News Network, and in the fall, October 1st, is when I went out to Sangamon State to go to work. Anyway, that's just a little tidbit of information.

Reynolds: Did you have any kind of conversation with him at that point? Were there just pleasantries? Hi, how are you?

Bradley: Just pleasantries. I had never met him before. I introduced myself. I remember him asking what I was doing over in Kansas, Illinois. (laugh) So then, I had to explain to him about my first wife's coming from Kansas, particularly her mom and dad's family.

Her parents came from large families, and they were acquainted and grew up and lived in Kansas, Illinois, and also down at Ashmore, Illinois, a small, little rural community in there. Some of her family, on both sides of her mom and dad's families, were from Casey, Illinois. Ashmore, Kansas, Paris, Marshall, I think, was down in that area too. That's the background there.

Then next thing I knew about Edgar was he was in the Illinois House and tapped by Governor Thompson to come and serve on Thompson's staff. I

think you're probably right. It was probably in a legislative liaison kind of capacity.

Reynolds: It looks like he was appointed to replace Alan Dixon, who obviously ran for the Senate, I think, at that point, gotten elected. He may have just had one election as Secretary of State, in terms of the years. I'm thinking it looks—in terms of Jerry Cosentino's involvement—I think it was, he ran against Jerry Cosentino…

Bradley: Wasn't Cosentino serve one term?

Reynolds: Donnewald was the Treasurer, and then, after the election in '86, Cosentino became the Treasurer, two years later—

Bradley: Oh, State Treasurer, yes.

Reynolds: So, he may have run against Edgar and then run again and won the treasurer's office after that. But, as I recall, Jerry Cosentino…there was always scandals about him.

Bradley: Well, yeah. He was involved in some kind of trucking company…

Reynolds: Well, I think he was… You know, it's interesting, the trucking thing keeps coming up over and over again in Illinois politics. But it seems to me, he was sending his employees over to Indiana, maybe, or he was working them out of Indiana because of workman comp, or something like that. It's kind of fuzzy.

So Edgar actually, because of appointments, served about a couple terms as Secretary of State.

Bradley: And then, of course, Thompson was elected in the fall of 1976. He beat Dan Walker?

Reynolds: First one was Howlett. He beat Mike Howlett.

Bradley: That would have been a two year term then.

Reynolds: Yeah, two year. And then, I guess '80, it would be, or '78…

Bradley: Would have been Bakalis, maybe.

Reynolds: Yeah, Bakalis.

Bradley: Yeah, because Thompson ran against… Well, Walker got nailed in the primary of '76 by Howlett. The mayor of Chicago at that time, the elder Daley, all he was interested in doing was defeating Dan Walker in the primary. The perception, as I recall it, was that the mayor of Chicago really, truly, genuinely wasn't necessarily interested in winning the general election

in November of '76. He was focused on getting rid of Dan Walker. And he asked Michael Howlett, who, reluctantly as I recall, agreed to run for governor and defeated Walker in the primary in March, probably, of '76, went on then…

Reynolds: That started Jim Thompson's very long career.

Bradley: Fourteen years, I think, wasn't it?

Reynolds: Yeah, we talked about Thompson last time, so I guess we ought to, probably, skip ahead to Edgar. Anything else you remember about him as Secretary of State?

Bradley: No, I think he was really a young guy at the time.

Reynolds: Was he big on the safety belt thing? I'm trying to remember if there were any particular programs that…the DUI stuff, stiffening those penalties…

Bradley: Yes, DUI and…

Reynolds: That was definitely one of them.

Bradley: I'm wondering if Edgar, maybe, wasn't a primary or a continuing advocate of buckling up. There was a campaign, somewhere back at that time, where they were trying to increase the percentage of motorists who were buckling up. They hadn't yet adopted legislation or enacted a law in Illinois that required you to be buckled up, like there is now. But Edgar may have been behind all of those or maybe…

Reynolds: At least safety-related.

Bradley: At least safety-related legislative efforts, as Secretary of State.

Reynolds: Do you remember much about…I'm just looking at this now and realizing that…and, at the time, I'm sure most people realize that there had to be a pretty good rivalry between George Ryan and Jim Edgar, as to who would run for governor after Thompson decided that he wasn't going to run again. Do you remember anything about that? And, of course, George Ryan got slated to be Secretary of State…

Bradley: To be Secretary of State.

Reynolds: And, of course, we all know the history of that, but a…

Bradley: He served, what, two terms as Secretary of State, Ryan?

Reynolds: Looks like it, yeah.

Bradley: And that was during the same time Edgar was Governor, wasn't it?

Reynolds: Right. The entire time that Edgar was Governor, with George Ryan. So, apparently, as I recalled…I mean, George Ryan was willing to…he had quite a bit of age on Edgar…was going to step aside and wait his turn.

Bradley: Well, he had been Lieutenant Governor under Thompson.

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: And I think—

Reynolds: You know, the Republicans are big on whose turn is it next.

Bradley: Yeah, yeah.

Reynolds: That must have been…the Secretary of State's job traditionally, sort of, led to a run for Governor. So, maybe that was enough to push Ryan aside.

Bradley: Except, in Alan Dixon's case, it lead… Well, did Dixon ever run for Governor?

Reynolds: I believe he did attempt a run for Governor, but decided not to. I think, during those Thompson years, or maybe even earlier on…

Bradley: Well, he didn't take on Thompson at any point in time. I know that. He was Treasurer, Dixon was. Also served as Secretary of State. I don't know, Chris, that he ever really ran for Governor.

Reynolds: He was in treasury for six years and then, of course, Secretary of State for almost a term, looks like. Yeah, I don't know. I think he was just talked about, maybe, a few times.

Bradley: Talked about, yeah. I think a lot of people were surprised when he ultimately decided to run for the U.S. Senate because…

Reynolds: He didn't seem like a Washington kind of guy.

Bradley: Well, yeah. His areas of expertise didn't really go to the national or international or those kinds of issues that you would usually associate with a U.S. Senator, rather…

Reynolds: Not like a Chuck Percy or a Dirksen or Paul Douglas or that kind of thing, who'd been the senators

Bradley: …because Dixon came up out of Belleville, served in the Illinois House and the Illinois Senate before becoming State Treasurer.

Reynolds: Treasurer, yeah. Do you remember anything about the person who ended up on the ticket with Jim Edgar? Bob Kustra?

Bradley: Bob Kustra, yes.

Reynolds: Because he was a professor out at UIS. I actually took a class from him one time. He was a pretty entertaining guy.

Bradley: Kustra, he's president of a university now, somewhere out in the northwest. But anyway, I think…wasn't Bob Kustra in the legislature?

Reynolds: I think, after he stopped being a professor, he did go up back to the Chicago area and may have run the legislature.

Bradley: In Northern Illinois University or somewhere up there, yeah. He was on the verge of resigning one time to become a talk show host at a radio station in Chicago. But all that happened about the time Edgar was having some cardiac problems. And he did, in fact, I think, undergo open heart surgery.

Reynolds: Well, this was during, when he was Lieutenant Governor.

Bradley: Yeah, when he was the Lieutenant Governor because…

Reynolds: He was thinking about a career in radio, rather than being Lieutenant Governor.

Bradley: …because I don't think he ever really said it, like Dave O'Neill did, when serving under Thompson. But, I think Kustra came to the realization that there wasn't much for Lieutenant Governor to do. Of course, that's still the case, but it's been a matter of, the Lieutenant Governor of Illinois, under the 1970 state constitution, is pretty much defined the job that they have, with the consent, I think, and approval of the governor. I can't recall that—unless it was Neil Hartigan when Dan Walker was Governor—Hartigan tried to capture and become an advocate for several issues. I think Walker shut him off a handful of times, and, of course, Hartigan was product of the Daley…

Reynolds: And a principal rival, necessarily, for reelection. I can't recall whether Edgar gave him some assignments. There has been some permanent assignments that have been given to the Lieutenant Governor. There's this Rural Affairs Council…

Bradley: Rural Affairs Council, which…

Reynolds: And they sort of run that out of the lieutenant. Also, during this period, both Edgar and Ryan, from time to time, assigned economic development as a, sort of a, lead role for the Lieutenant Governor. I think maybe Kustra was in that role. But, of course, Jim Edgar was not a huge economic development guy. He was…that was more under Jim Thompson.

Bradley: You know, Thompson served four terms. One of those terms was just a two year term, the first one, I think. And Edgar served two terms as Governor, but

he was seriously considering a third term. That's when he began to have these cardiac issues, cardiac problems. In time, Edgar had an open-heart surgery, and that's when Kustra opted not to leave the office of Lieutenant Governor because (clears throat) the Lieutenant Governor in Illinois is a heartbeat away from being Governor, as we saw when (laugh)…Not really a heartbeat issue, but the impeachment issue was, I think, the only time I can recall, where the Lieutenant Governor, at least under the 1970 constitution, succeeded the Governor and became Governor, when the office was vacated.

Reynolds: Sam Shapiro was…

Bradley: Yeah, but that was before, or was it…

Reynolds: Because of Ogilvie's problems? I mean Kerner's problems, excuse me.

Bradley: Well, Shapiro was Kerner's lieutenant governor for two terms. Now, Kerner didn't serve out a full second year term because Lyndon Johnson, the president, tapped him to sit on the Federal Appeals Court bench in Chicago.

Reynolds: And Kerner didn't get into trouble until after his term. But yeah, Sam Shapiro…Well, maybe a year, a year and a half, was Lieutenant Governor, of course.

Bradley: And then, the Democrats put Shapiro on the ticket in the fall of '68, and then he ran against Richard Ogilvie.

Reynolds: Yeah. In this particular chart that I have here, that has all the… When Dave O'Neill quit, it looks like they really didn't replace him for a couple of years.

Bradley: There's no provision for replacing the Lieutenant Governor if he dies or leaves office. Now, the Republicans probably identified…Was that when they identified Ryan?

Reynolds: Ryan then ran with Thompson in… I guess it would have been in '84.

Bradley: Two terms or one term?

Reynolds: He was with him for two terms. These are two year increments on the chart here. Just that…we can close down Kustra pretty quickly and move on to Edgar. But, toward the end of the second term, did Kustra not try to run for the senate?

Bradley: He did.

Reynolds: He had higher ambitions, and he lost in the primary to, like, an Al Salvi or somebody like…

Bradley: Yes, a real conservative, yeah.

Reynolds: I wonder if that was when he was still Lieutenant Governor. Or was that after Edgar had decided not to run again?

Bradley: I don't think Kustra ever considered running or ran for Governor, but he did take a shot at [the] U.S. Senate.

Reynolds: I think that was while he was Lieutenant Governor.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: But, you know, I'll go back and check, see if I was way off .

Bradley: Yeah, because, after his term with Edgar…they served two terms, that's when he went…Didn't he go down south, Tennessee or Kentucky, somewhere down there?

Reynolds: It was Eastern Kentucky University, something like that.

Bradley: Yeah, to become president. Then, I think, he's out in the Pacific Northwest somewhere now, Washington State or Boise—

Reynolds: So, he might have taken that new job, even before the end of Edgar's second term, just sort of moved on.

Bradley: Down to Tennessee, you mean?

Reynolds: After he lost the senatorial bid, he took that president of the university job while he was lieutenant governor, maybe. I can't…Anyway, the history of Bob Kustra is probably not tremendously well documented. (laugh)

Bradley: What year… who was Edgar's successor?

Reynolds: Well, George Ryan.

Bradley: Ryan.

Reynolds: Right, in '98

Bradley: Is that when Ryan was elected…went into office in '99.

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: So, you know, Kustra may have served out…

Reynolds: Maybe he did.

Bradley: …his term as Lieutenant Governor under Edgar and then took that job…

Reynolds: Or worked on it toward the end of the term…had it lined up.

Bradley: I don't recall that he resigned the office, although, you know, he almost did when Edgar had those cardiac issues.

Reynolds: Interesting. Did you have much contact with Kustra when he worked out at UIS as a professor?

Bradley: No.

Reynolds: No.

Bradley: No, well…no.

Reynolds: He didn't become kind of a Kent Renfield, sort of, comment on politics sort of guy when he was out there as a professor?

Bradley: Was it out there or…

Reynolds: No, he definitely taught at Sangamon State. I don't know how long I think it's been a few years.

Bradley: Probably teaching night classes. I don't recall that…He wasn't a full-time faculty member, I don't think.

Reynolds: He might have just been one of the people they hired as an adjunct to do a few classes here and there. It's possible that, maybe he had a job in state government or was in the legislature? Seemed like…maybe he had a job in state legislature. Anyway, we can go over it all. Kustra's kind of a peripheral figure really.

Bradley: I could be wrong, but I'm thinking Kustra served briefly in the legislature, probably the house or maybe the state senate.

Reynolds: I think that was out of the Chicago area.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Anyway, let's get back to the main subject here, which is Jim Edgar. So, Edgar gets elected and, sort of, is next in line for the gubernatorial-ship of the Republican Party. So, he gets elected and, as I recall…let's see, he ran, first time, against…who ran?…it was Hartigan. Did Hartigan run against him the first time?

Bradley: Yeah, I think he did. Yes.

Reynolds: So, that was a pretty hard fought race, as I recall.

Bradley: It was, because Hartigan had the support of the Daley machine out of Chicago. I think it was after that, then, that Hartigan, when he lost that election… He'd already served as Attorney General by that time, Lieutenant

Governor, then Attorney General. And I think, then, Hartigan never ran for public office again; rather he ended up as a judge in Cook County. Was it a state judge or a federal judge? State judge, I think, probably. He had to receive the Democratic Party's blessing.

Reynolds: He didn't go to the Supreme Court, did he?

Bradley: No, no. Michael Bilandic, a Democrat mayor from Chicago, did end up on the state supreme court.

Reynolds: You know, as I recall…now, as we bring these names up and we talk about that election, I recall that there was…seemed like there was an issue with the African-American population in the Chicago area, that Neil Hartigan and the machine had, sort of, upset them over maybe the Harold Washington thing that was going on at that point or a little earlier. Edgar was actually able to win a lot of African-American votes in that, just as, sort of, a protest to the machine. I don't remember the details of that.

Bradley: Nor do I. But you're right, Edgar was able to capitalize on that, and that's… Hartigan lost his support in Chicago and Cook County.

Reynolds: And I'd have to track the Harold Washington thing down here, but, you know, it was huge battles going on between the Harold Washington faction and…

Bradley: Well, it was after the old man Daley died that there was a guy by the name of Sawyer…

Reynolds: Tip Cook was the first guy—

Bradley: Yeah, that's because he was on the city council, right, like President Pro-tem of the city council up there? And then, Jane Byrne, and she got…Was it Jane Byrne that got burned, (laugh) heavy snow storm and wasn't able to…or was that Michael Bilandic, wasn't it?

Reynolds: No, I think maybe Byrne, maybe she—

Bradley: She succeeded Bilandic. Bilandic came after Sawyer.

Reynolds: Yeah, and then the snow storm did go on again, and then she got in, at least for a term. Then, Richie Daley—

Bradley: I can't remember if she…Where's Harold Washington in there somewhere?

Reynolds: Oh yeah. No, maybe it was then Harold Washington between that and the time. I ought to add the Chicago mayoral to this chart, here, so that I can keep track of that…

Bradley: Of course, then, Washington died in office, you know.

Reynolds …because, obviously, the mayor of Chicago and the politics of that going up there always had a lot to do with it. But, I think Harold Washington was mayor during the Thompson years. I think that that whole controversy spilled over into that first Edgar election.

Bradley: Well, even after Thompson left office, voluntarily, after fourteen years, he remained and still is, to some degree, influential in Republican Party politics in Illinois.

Reynolds: Well, and that's for sure. I mean, his two main mentor[ee]s were Edgar and Ryan, and they both became governor.

So, Edgar gets elected. His principle image was as a fairly credible moderate. He had a sort of an independent reputation. He was tremendously good looking. I can remember women saying to me, "Boy, he looks like a movie star or something," you know. He had a reputation for being a straight arrow, but very compulsive. He was not a great speaker, really not an orator in any sense of the word. But he was a very disciplined candidate. Are all those observations… seem on target, in terms of what you observed?

Bradley: Yes, and Edgar struck me as being very accessible.

Reynolds: To the press?

Bradley: To the press. And that was largely because he hired as his Press Secretary a guy by the name of Mike Lawrence. Mike Lawrence came out of the media.

Reynolds: Who was a journalist?

Bradley: Yeah, working for Lee Enterprises, was a bureau chief there, here in Springfield. Edgar hired him, and I think, one of the things Mike Lawrence did as Edgar's Press Secretary, when he was Secretary of State, was, he must have convinced Edgar of the importance of maintaining a good relationship with the news media because Edgar was, in fact, very accessible. I don't recall any difficulties at all.

Reynolds: But he certainly wasn't the outgoing person that Jim Thompson was.

Bradley: No, not like Thompson, not like Thompson. (laugh)

Reynolds: So, you had to work a little…

Bradley: But even, not at all like Ryan, as far as that goes. But Ryan was older and came out of the old guys' politics. Like the Daley machine, of course, Democrats, but Ryan came out of Republican politics and good old boys and back-slapping, you know: You scratch my back; I'll scratch yours. I think there's some of that going on. There's still an issue about whether or not Ryan, when he was Secretary of State, some of the things he later ended up

being convicted for…charged with and convicted for… I personally was never really sure…

Reynolds: Well, we'll talk about Ryan here. Of course, this stuff goes on during the Edgar years, but we'll talk about Ryan when we get into more detail with him.

But, even though Edgar was not as charismatic…although, I may ask you about what you thought, in terms of his charisma, as [compared to] Jim Thompson. You're saying he was still…he made a real effort to, sort of, romance the news media…

Bradley: The news media.

Reynolds: …become accessible. Was he good on his feet, in terms of answering questions?

Bradley: Yeah, although Thompson was, by far, the best. But Edgar was, and Edgar was considered, you know, his administration was… He was a stickler for ethics, letter of the law. He understood that he had to be deadly honest in order to serve the people of Illinois right. It just seemed to be a part of his fabric.

Reynolds: It seemed like it was almost as if he wanted to be the anti-Jim Thompson, in some sense, because Thompson was so gregarious…

Bradley: And outgoing.

Reynolds: …and outgoing, and everything was big show. He wanted it to, kind of, really tap it down.

Bradley: Edgar came out of the legislature. He had good relations with the leadership in the House and the Senate, both Democratic and Republican. But he wasn't the open, outgoing, gregarious type personality that Jim Thompson was. It was just human nature. I mean, he was just different than Thompson.

Reynolds: Personality wise.

Bradley: Yeah, it really was, but he still got along with the legislature. And I'm trying to remember what his big legislative issues were—safety, I think—coming out of the Secretary of State's office. But, there was a bit of a scandal that was dealt with in his administration.

Reynolds: Well, we'll get to that a little later in his administration. It seems like he was almost immediately hit with budgetary issues, tax issues, because of, sort of, the over-reach of the Thompson administration. And he felt like he had to be kind of the fix-it guy…

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: …to kind of get things back in line.

Bradley: And he can rightly claim a lot of credit for getting the state back on track from a budgetary point of view. I'm trying to remember, there was a temporary increase in the income tax in Illinois on both individuals and on corporations. There was a sunset date, but I can't remember if that happened during George Ryan's…

Reynolds: I'm thinking that, as I recall that…

Bradley: …or Ryan came and served after Edgar…

Reynolds: …it was an issue in the campaign when Edgar ran, and Edgar was honest enough to say, in the campaign, that that would have to be extended.

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: Now, I hope I'm not wrong about that, but, as I recall, that was an issue and Edgar, which…

Bradley: Was that his first campaign or his second campaign?

Reynolds: I think it was his first. I think there was a temporary…and he said, "Listen, I've got to be honest with you: Because of the state of the budget and state government, I'm probably going to have to extend that income tax." I'm not sure whether he said he would make it permanent or not.

Bradley: Well, it did become permanent.

Reynolds: Yeah. So, maybe he did. Maybe he said, this, you know, is going to have to be permanent, and at that point, was maybe from 2 percent to 2.5 or, you know, we're kind of…

Bradley: It's at 3 percent now, isn't it?

Reynolds: Well, I know. That was back when it was even lower. As I recall, that was part of what made him, sort of, you know, I'm going to tell you because… Remember Thompson, a couple of times, had campaigned and said, "I'm not going to raise your taxes," and then he came in and he looked at what the…

Bradley: The October surprise.

Reynolds: …and "Oh my god, we got to do this." So, it was again trying to be, sort of, the anti-Thompson, that he said, "Hey, I'm going to be honest with you. We're going to have to probably make this permanent." I can't recall how Neil Hartigan came down on that, but, whether he took the opposite view to kind of get an edge…

Bradley: Yeah, I don't recall either, but it would have been hard for Hartigan to do that as a Democrat because the old man Daley—well, the Democratic mayoral administration in Chicago—had a reputation, whether rightfully so or not, of trying to get everything they could get their hands on in the legislative process.

Reynolds: And Thompson and Daley, of course, worked pretty well together. But now, of course, we're moving into the Harold Washington period and Jane Byrne. I'm going to definitely add that to my little chart here, so I can keep track of that. That's a main, sort of, issue.

Some of the other words that have been used to describe Edgar were stubborn, tenacious, very cautious, very modest, very stiff in public, very non-flamboyant and frugal. And again, we kind of touched on this, but it seemed like he wanted to distance himself from his mentor, Jim Thompson, and sort of create his own style and his own certain set of policies. Does that seem about accurate?

Bradley: It is. Earlier, I said Edgar was accessible. But, you know, Chris, I don't recall… There were several times when Thompson came out to WUIS for interviews. We even, one time, had a statewide call-in for the governor. We hosted it there and distributed that program—I think it was a two-hour program on a Saturday morning, statewide—to all the other public stations. Edgar never did anything like that; the lack of doing something like that is what kind of sticks in my mind.

Reynolds: Well, it's almost as if he understood the importance of a relationship with the news media, but it was highly managed. He wasn't the kind of guy that would bolt into a crowd of people and start shaking everybody's hands. I mean, like Thompson would just, like, wherever he saw a crowd of people, he was in there, you know. At the end of the thing, you thought he was your best friend. Edgar was more stand-offish.

Bradley: I think Mike Lawrence probably had a lot to do with that, and I'm not so sure but what maybe Edgar's wife, Brenda, didn't also have something to do with that.

I'm trying to recall: Before Edgar had that open heart surgery, he had some known cardiac issues. I know his wife really leaned on him to take care of himself. Maybe even she may have been opposed to his run for a second term. I think she ultimately agreed to support his decision to run for a second term, with the promise, privately, that, after that second term, there would be no more. And, in fact, that really kind of governed later on, elective decisions that Edgar made, because the party came to him a couple, three times for not only governor, but for U. S. Senate, as I recall.

Reynolds: He also had a fairly, not evangelical image, but as a strictly, sort of, religious guy, who was opposed to drinking. So, that was…

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: …very different than Thompson, who would party with the guys, invite them over to the mansion to have to drinks, and all of that stuff.

Bradley: You know, wasn't alcohol banned in the mansion when Edgar was there, I'm thinking…

Reynolds: I think it was.

Bradley: I'm thinking at functions…

Reynolds: They'd have grape juice or something like that, you know. There was a lot of grumbling. I think Pate Phillips probably grumbled about that quite a good deal.

But, when you look at his relationship with the legislature and the press, it was…you're saying it was good. He was very accessible and probably, I don't know, did he do regular press conferences and things like that?

Bradley: He did, yes.

Reynolds: But it was very, very different than Jim Thompson's approach to both of those.

Bradley: Almost a hundred and eighty degrees different, really, in terms of his personality. I always wondered what it was that Thompson saw in Edgar that led him to decide to hire him to be legislative liaison. There surely were other members on the Republican Party in the House or the Senate, in the legislature, who could have served that function. But of course, Thompson was a federal prosecutor, so he had this ability, I think, of being able to make judgments about people.

Reynolds: Well, just to go back to Thompson…I mean, early in his early careers, he did a really good job of hiring really good people. Now, as things went along, it became more loyalty than it was anything else.

Bradley: Yeah, yeah.

Reynolds: He kind of slipped in terms of that kind of thing, but he seemed to be a very good judge of people. You know, that might be because recently, which is kind of curious, Madigan, earlier this year, was interviewed somewhere and sat down with a reporter. They asked him to make observations about each of the governors. Did you read that?

Bradley: No, I don't remember that. That was in the paper?

Reynolds: I think this was in the *Journal-Register*. This is what Madigan said about Edgar, "Edgar was a little more strident than Governor Thompson and was a student of government. He made himself a student of government, and so he'd be far more interested in a heavy discussion about government policy, government operations. He'd be far more willing to engage in protracted negotiations." So, he was almost saying that Edgar was more like a policy wonk.

Bradley: He was.

Reynolds: He really enjoyed the process of government. These other people were more—you know, Thompson was a lawyer, so, you know, it was kind of big picture kind of things. But Edgar would dive into the details.

Bradley: Edgar may have gotten a master's degree from Sangamon State because I think he was one of several…

Reynolds: I think he got a bachelor's degree in Eastern. They may have given him an honorary degree since then, but…

Bradley: Well, he was in a… you talk about…

Reynolds: Oh, he might have been in an internship.

Bradley: …an internship, a legislative internship or a state government internship…

Reynolds: …the early years before he was in the legislature.

Bradley: Yes. I can't remember if that was an internship through Sangamon State or maybe with Samuel Gove over at the University of Illinois in Urbana.

Reynolds: Either that, or maybe through Eastern Illinois University because that's where he graduated from.

Bradley: Well, I know he graduated from Eastern, but I don't recall that Eastern ever ran any internship program that extended to Springfield. Sangamon State did, and the University of Illinois did later, under Robert Ridge. But then, Sam Gove, who was over there for years.

Yeah, Edgar had that interest and, as you indicated, became known to a lot of people and considered to be a policy wonk and…

Reynolds: …would really dive into issues, especially the budget, obviously…

Bradley: Yes

Reynolds: …which predominated the discussion through all of his terms.

So, Madigan: I was really surprised at how complimentary Madigan was. He really didn't say anything negative about him, except that he was kind of hard to negotiate with…

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: …because he had this sort of…

Bradley: That's probably during the same years when Madigan, who is still, of course, speaker. But maybe, I think, Phil Rock was the head of the Senate back at that time. And then…

Reynolds: Pate Phillips probably was still the…

Bradley: …yeah, minority leader, but…

Reynolds: …Lee Daniels, maybe, was a Republican minority leader…

Bradley: …in the House.

Reynolds: Right. You know, one of the things Madigan points out is that he didn't seem to mind having long, protracted negotiations over the budget, and, as I recall, there were several sessions that went way into the summer. During his administration, he became known as the "Governor of No".

Bradley: Yes. (laugh)

Reynolds: And he had trouble mobilizing public support for many of his policies. I mean, did you have that impression? I mean, Thompson was the kind of guy that would just…he'd take his issue public and go out, campaign. Edgar, on the other hand, it was a more insider sort of approach.

Bradley: Yeah, although Thompson… I don't discount for a minute Thompson's knowledge and familiarity with the inner workings of state government and the budgetary…

Reynolds: He's a brilliant guy.

Bradley: …and the budgetary process. But I think Edgar was more into it.

Reynolds: Hands-on.

Bradley: Yeah, hands-on, because Thompson… Trying to think who his budget guy was.

Reynolds: Mandeville.

Bradley: Bob Mandeville, yes. Thompson kind of backed off and let Mandeville run a couple of things. Joan Walters was Jim Edgar's budgetary…

Reynolds: The guy from Jacksonville was also, I think, his chief of staff for a while, wasn't he, Riley?

Bradley: Jim Riley, yes, came out of… Well, Riley was a state rep and now is involved with, or was involved with, McCormick Place, up in Chicago now.

As I sit here and think about Edgar, there's not a whole lot about his two terms as secretary of state and two terms as governor that seem to me, right now, to be remarkable. (laugh) That may be a terrible thing to say.

Reynolds: It seemed like it was always budget-related. Almost every year, it seemed he was working the state out of a financial crisis, which, of course, was blamed on Jim Thompson, for the most part, the smoke and mirror of the Thompson administration.

Bradley: And I remember, in Edgar's first campaign that was kind of an issue. It put Edgar on the hot spot because there seemed to be pressure, in the course of that campaign, for him to place the blame on Thompson. Of course, he was reluctant to do so because Thompson, in many ways, was his mentor.

Reynolds: But, there was definitely a… They wanted to separate his image from Thompson's.

Bradley: Yeah, yeah. He had to distance himself.

Reynolds: He was a very different kind of guy. But you're right. I'm trying to think… For instance, when you think about Thompson, you think about strengthening the laws the, you know, the…What was it called, the x-laws or the…? I can't remember…

Bradley: The class action criminal justice…

Reynolds: Class action laws, building a lot of prisons. And he was very, you know, tough on law enforcement, and economic development was another thing Thompson did a lot of time on.

But Edgar: When you think about it, you can't think of over-riding sort of policy direction; although, I'm sure that he concentrated on education a lot because it's always a big issue.

Bradley: Well, I think Edgar can rightfully claim credit for getting the state budgetarily back on track. He was really kind of a caretaker governor, I think. I think that would be fair and accurate.

Reynolds: And he was governor during a time when the economy was doing very well. Thompson, obviously, survived a very long recession during the '80s, a very difficult time, sort of spinning positive economic news and had to really work hard at producing jobs and letting people know that.

But Edgar was there during the Clinton years, when it was this huge economic boom…

Bradley: Yeah. Well he capitalized…

Reynolds: Well, along with his frugal nature and a bettering economy, the state really did kind of come out of their economic problems, yeah.

Bradley: But I don't recall that Edgar really had any single, big initiative. It was more care-takerish…

Reynolds: Yeah, but he tried to repair the… You have to give him credit for at least trying to repair the pension system, which he foresaw as a huge problem, if we didn't do something with that.

Bradley: See, I don't recall that at all.

Reynolds: Yeah, I recall, because we lost a raise one year to help fund the pension system. They locked in that deal, where the contributions were going to be so much. Well, of course…

Bradley: In the interest of disclosure, of course, you were a state employee. Well, I was a state university employee, but, gosh, I don't remember Edgar being associated with pensions at all.

Reynolds: They locked in a formula for funding it…

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: …which, of course, got thrown out, almost immediately after that. But, that was early in his term.

Although he had this image…and you've already mentioned the fact that ethics was a big deal with him. I think he was again trying to separate himself from Thompson, who had more… you know, there were a lot of… Adlai Stevenson had run against him twice on this pinstripe patronage deal. So, you got the impression that there was looseness in the Thompson administration, which, maybe, continued with Ryan.

Toward the end of Edgar's term, there was an increasing level of scandal that sort of began to surface. There was an issue as to whether he had received a laptop computer, free of charge, from somebody. And there was that MSI deal [Management Services of Illinois, Inc.]…

Bradley: Yes. That was another consulting…

Reynolds: …and also the toll road authority, I think, had also gotten into some problems with some deals.

Bradley: But it was the MSI that sticks out in my mind because Edgar…that was brought to his attention, and he took a leadership role and initiative in launching whatever…I can't remember, now, what the issue was…

Reynolds: Well, I think that he immediately, when it became an issue, addressed…didn't try to cover it up, obviously…

Bradley: He called a news conferences or maybe…

Reynolds: …and so started a media investigation of it. Although you know, I think I saw somewhere, where he was the first sitting governor in fifty years to have to testify at a criminal trial and…

Bradley: Was that in the state courts or the federal?

Reynolds: State courts.

Bradley: State court.

Reynolds: Oh, no, no, it would have been federal, but the difference was, it was prosecuted down here in Springfield, rather than in Chicago.

I'll tell you what I remember about it, is that…

Bradley: Is that when Bill Roberts was U.S. Attorney here?

Reynolds: Could be, could be. They used the regular sort of process of going after lower level people, to begin with, to try to get them to kind of spill their guts, and then go after higher and higher.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Then they went after a guy in public aid, a fairly low-level manager, who'd been involved in it and put him on trial here in Springfield. That's the trial that Edgar testified at. He was exonerated, and that kind of stopped it, you know, stopped it in its tracks. Now, they got the guys at MSI. I think later there was a trial of the managers at MSI. Those people were prosecuted.

Bradley: You remember what MSI stood for? That was a private firm.

Reynolds: It was a consulting firm of some kind.

Bradley: Working under contract. Public aid?

Reynolds: Seems like they had something to do with a building, maybe, data systems to track public aid fraud or something like that. But yeah, it's a little fuzzy.

Bradley: (laugh) It hurts when I try to think about…

Reynolds: It was a pretty big…I mean it was toward the end of his second term. It got pretty hairy. If they had gotten the lower level manager, they would have, you know, kind of worked it up, like they did with Ryan.

Bradley: Yeah. History has since treated Edgar appropriately. I mean, he really kind of became a hero in that respect, I think, because…

Reynolds: He didn't go to jail. (laugh)

Bradley: Well, yeah, as a governor, he didn't go to jail. But, it was brought to his attention, and he didn't try to participate in any kind of cover-up; rather he opened it up and exposed it, like prying the lid off a can, you know, a rusty old can opener, and letting all that out. To his credit…

Reynolds: Yeah, which is much different than Ryan attempted to do, which was the other thing, you know, to cover it up, which is what eventually got caught up with him.

But the way of doing business, which was criticized by Adlai Stevenson, when he ran against Thompson, really kind of continued during Edgar on a much smaller level. Then, it kind of caught up to Edgar at the end. But you're right, he confronted it right away and was willing to admit that whatever had…

Bradley: I think it was unbeknownst to Edgar.

Reynolds: Well, yeah, I'm sure. That's probably true. He didn't…although it was all part of the reason that this was scandalous was because of campaign contributions.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: MSI was making campaign contributions to the Edgar campaigns and also getting these big contracts, which was…

Bradley: I don't recall. Did he give any of that money back?

Reynolds: He may have. And that may, again, [be] why he was able to kind of weather the thing so well, because he came right out in front, "Okay, we found wrong doing here. We need to investigate it. We'll give any money back. I'll admit to…" whatever it is. I think he had a couple of meetings with them or something.

Bradley: Yeah, I think he took responsibility, as the governor. Not that he knew, but that he was governor, and thought that was the right and the correct and appropriate thing to do.

Reynolds: The thing that didn't happen, I don't think, was, there wasn't a tremendous amount of legislation introduced, in terms of ethics and that kind of thing. I

guess because the prosecution kind of got stalled, you know, when they couldn't get the lower-level bureaucrat, that it didn't kind of become a huge, big thing. It didn't spawn the kind of legislative of outcry that always happens when we have these scandals.

Bradley: I assume that Edgar, left to his own devices, when this MSI stuff was brought to his attention, would have opened that up.

But I also believe, very strongly, that his press guy, Mike Lawrence, who was a highly ethical individual, and went on later to distinguish himself to head up the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at SIU Carbondale. I personally don't, for a minute, take away the impact that Mike Lawrence, I think, had in maybe supporting Edgar, pushing even maybe.

Reynolds: Giving him the right advice during that period.

Bradley: Yes, yes.

Reynolds: And possibly the guy, Jim Riley, too maybe?

Bradley: Yes, yeah.

Reynolds: He had good people around him that gave him good advice about how to deal with it.

Bradley: And, you know, he came by that honestly and naturally because he was one of those types when working for the Thompson administration, before Thompson appointed him to be Secretary of State.

Reynolds: I got a list of some of the people that worked for Edgar here. We can, maybe, when go back over those, we'll remember more about what some of those guys' roles were in all that. It did seem probably, the citizens of the State of Illinois liked the way he managed the whole thing. I mean, he got through it.

Bradley: They were honked at him or pissed at him about making that temporary income tax increase permanent. But he weathered that, and I think, in time, discerning voters… There are voters in this state, any state as far as that goes, Chris, and you know this well, will take any politician to task for increasing taxes, whether they be Republican or Democrat or whether it was warranted or not. But anyway, I think Edgar did the right thing and, in time, discerning voters accepted, recognized his honesty and his interest in good government and gave him credit for it.

Reynolds: It's almost like he promised them, in that first campaign that, if you get this income tax increase, I will not raise your taxes again. I'll work within that, to try to straighten the fiscal situation out. And he kept his promise on that. He never raised…and he worked at it; although, again, the economy helped him a lot. I mean, sometimes you just got to be lucky. The economy helped him a

lot, but he did work and work and work at the state's fiscal condition over the course of those terms.

And that brings up the point: Many believe that Edgar, as a politician, had a real knack or luck of good timing. We talked about the national economy boomed for his two terms. He got appointed to the secretary of state's office, which, you know, was a great opportunity. Oh, his mentor was Russell Arrington.

Bradley: Russell Arrington, W. Russell Arrington. He was the Republican minority leader.

Reynolds: And Robert Blair.

Bradley: Bob Blair.

Reynolds: And, of course, Jim Thompson were three of his mentors, which, all three of those were real heavy weights. So, he did have a, sort of a, knack for being at the right place at the right time and kind of lucking out on a lot of things.

Bradley: Yeah, timing is everything. (laugh)

Reynolds: Yeah. Did his being a downstate politician affect his performance as governor in any sense? I would imagine he was fairly popular in the suburbs of Chicago. He actually, I think, probably, had a real strong support downstate.

Bradley: Well, yeah. I'm just sitting here thinking. I don't recall that the fact he was from eastern Illinois, around Charleston, Paris, around there. I think he was from Charleston. That's where he was born and raised. I don't recall that that worked against him in any way. Being a Republican, certainly Republicans in downstate Illinois—for that matter, Democrats who [live] outside of Cook County—weren't really all that enamored with Democratic politics in Chicago and Cook County, but recognized what side of the slice of bread the butter was on. But, being a Republican, I think Edgar was well received as a governor, a down-stater, yeah.

Reynolds: Again, it gave him a whole different image from Jim Thompson, which had come out of the Chicago area. He, again, was a lot different because he was a down-stater.

Bradley: Well, Thompson spent a lot of time moving around the state.

Reynolds: He did. And Thompson, of course, could act like a down-stater whenever he wanted to.

Bradley: I remember Thompson. I'm pretty sure he was governor when they bought that big, fancy jet helicopter that allowed Thompson and subsequent

governors to take off and go and land just about anywhere in the state, you know. And Thompson used it for that purpose (laugh).

Reynolds: Of course, Edgar, again, the way he ran state government was much more frugal than Thompson. Even when the economy started to improve quite a big deal, he still kept state government pretty tight. Remember there was a state airline, and he didn't use that as much. I don't think he did much out of state or out of country traveling, which was another thing.

Bradley: Not out of the country. Maybe he did some out of state, but…

Reynolds: Not much out of country traveling.

Bradley: Thompson did a lot of overseas marketing of Illinois. Of course, Ryan went to Cuba. (laugh)

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: You remember that?

Reynolds: Yeah, and Edgar didn't really have any huge initiatives which would increase state spending or would do something the state had never done before. You're absolutely right—

Bradley: And people liked the fact that he and his wife and kids lived in the mansion too in Springfield, which, after he left office of course, became an issue with some governors, Blagojevich. Ryan and his wife lived there. Of course, they were older, so there weren't any kids running around.

I do remember Thompson, and Edgar too, had dogs that they kept at the mansion, (laugh) running around the yard and had a fence, I think, to keep them all contained.

Reynolds: In terms of his personal life, it never really became much of an issue at all.

Bradley: No.

Reynolds: His kids went to school in Chatham, maybe. Was it?

Bradley: Well, yes. See, when he was Secretary of State, yeah, he owned a house out around the lake and was in the Ball-Chatham School District. That's when he was secretary of state.

Reynolds: I see.

Bradley: By the time he was Governor, I think his kids were out of high school and were, maybe, college students.

Reynolds: I think he had just one daughter left in school or something like that.

Bradley: Well, he only had a boy and a girl, didn't he?

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: Two kids.

Reynolds: I kind of remember that the daughter was going to school out at Chatham for some reason. That probably was because she was initially in the school system there.

Except for the policy against alcohol, he really didn't…there was very little ever said about…he was a pretty private guy, actually. When you think about it, he didn't put it all out there for everybody.

Bradley: He bought a log cabin…

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: …north of town, north of Sherman.

Reynolds: Right. We kind of touched on this several times, but what would be your assessment of him, compared to the other governors that we've, kind of, talked about? Then we can talk, maybe, about what he's done since he left being governor.

Bradley: Well, I think I alluded to this earlier. Edgar's two terms as governor was one of, in my mind, a kind of a caretaker. He was very much in, and we referred to him being a policy wonk. How good he was as an individual, with budgetary issues, is not all clear to me. I think Joan Walters, his Bureau of the Budget Director, is a person who's really sharp on that.

Reynolds: I think that was his main focus during two terms, was just keeping the state…

Bradley: Yeah, just like I said early, what primarily comes to my mind is kind of unremarkable, his two terms as governor.

Reynolds: But, you know, when you think about it, considering the governors that we've had and the problems we've had (laugh) with governors, I think people look back at that and say, that's the kind of governor we want, somebody that just takes care of things and manages things.

Bradley: I have heard Edgar, at the time he was governor anyway—this may have been out in the public, anyway—but Paul Simon, we all know, was considered a really straight arrow, a clean and ethical politician. I can recall Edgar being—when he was governor, maybe even secretary of state too—being compared, from an ethical point of view, with Paul Simon.

So, those are the things, plus his hairspray on his hair (laugh). He'd be out in the wind at the State Fair, and his hair wasn't blowing, but everybody else's hair was. (laugh). That's terrible, isn't it.

Reynolds: He always looked perfect. Yes, so did his wife, Brenda, as I recall. She was a good looking woman and always looked perfect.

What have been your impressions of him since he's left being governor? I know he's taken a role with the foundation here at the museum and library, and it seems like he works for the University of Illinois, doesn't he?

Bradley: Yeah, at Urbana-Champaign; he's been interested in academics, in making his experience and knowledge of state government and politics available to any student interested. Although the party has come back to him on a couple of occasions, I think, maybe putting some pressure on him to reconsider getting back into politics. But, I think he never did do that simply because I'm convinced that, late in his second term as governor, he promised his wife that he would not ever seek public office again. I really believe that was a promise he made to her. To have done otherwise, when the party came back to him, would have meant breaking that promise.

Reynolds: Really, he was a pretty young guy when he…

Bradley: Yeah, he was.

Reynolds: Then, I can recall, when he announced that he was not going to run for a third term, there were tremendous number of people **very** disappointed…

Bradley: Yes, sure.

Reynolds: …that he didn't run again. It sounds like you think that the main reason he didn't run for a third term, or hasn't considered running again, is the health thing, rather than the scandals or the pressure of the job. Well, the pressure of the job, obviously, has a lot to do with the health part of it, the health scares he had during the time he was governor.

Bradley: Yeah, my recollection is that, more health-related and personal relationship, understanding between him and his wife and his family. Those are the things that come to my mind about his decision not to seek a third term at that time and also his decision not to exceed to the party pressure to run. I think it was as a candidate for the U. S. Senate.

Reynolds: That's right. Now we'll have to stretch our memories as to who he would… Was it Carol Mosely Braun, maybe, that they wanted him to run against?

Bradley: Of course, at the time, Alan Dixon would have been the incumbent U.S. Senator. She was the one who defeated Dixon in the primary. I'm trying to

recall, had Dixon won the primary, would that have potentially pitted him and Edgar against one another in the general election?

Reynolds: Yes, see, this doesn't have the senatorial folks on this [referring to his list], but yeah. I'm a little murky on what the circumstances were, but, when he was deciding on whether to run for a third term, there was also a chance that he would run for the Senate. He decided against doing that.

It all kind of comes back to his career since he left being governor. Really, I think, goes back to those comments from Madigan that he really has always seen himself sort of as a student of government, the guy that really loves the sort of intricacies of government, how government policy is created and the budget process and all that kind of stuff. So, for him to pick something to do after his term, the University of Illinois job was a perfect sort of…

Bradley: And Edgar was not a lawyer.

Reynolds: He was not a lawyer.

Bradley: Which is kind of unusual, I think. But Madigan, I think, is also a student of government. Certainly, Madigan is a student of the institution of state government. He's always been a guardian of the institutions in government. That's where he and Rod Blagojevich really got cross-connected, because Blagojevich had no respect whatsoever for the institution of the governor's office or the legislature or the judicial. Blagojevich had less influence, or less dealing with the judicial, but certainly, the executive and the legislative. But, Edgar and Madigan, I think, we're both students of…

Reynolds: Yeah, they were kind of alike in that sense, which maybe made it difficult to get things done, but eventually they would get things done. They would sort of see eye to eye about things.

Bradley: I think Phil Rock falls into that category, as well. Of course, Rock's name comes to mind only because he has a new book out right now, as we sit here chatting today, that focuses on his twenty-two years in the State Senate and, of course, he was a recognized leader in the State Senate and was Senate President for a period of time, when Mike Madigan, who is still Speaker of the House, (laugh) and has been…I can't remember…When was he first elected, '80, '82?

Reynolds: Well, he was out for a term and then came back.

Bradley: Yeah, but it was just a two-year term.

Reynolds: I think we're talking almost thirty years of service.

Bradley: Yes. He was a constitutional convention delegate as well.

Reynolds: Or more, yeah. I'm sure we'll talk about Madigan a little bit more.

A final thing I always like to do is run names past you, people that were associated with the Edgar administration, see if you have any memories of these. I can cross a few off the list because we've talked about Michael Lawrence in depth, and we've talked about Joan Walters a little bit.

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: Anything more you want to say about Joan Walters?

Bradley: Well, I've gotten to know Joan more and better in recent years, just in the two or three or four years since I retired because I've served with her on some committees with the Citizens Club of Springfield. So, I've gotten to know her more and more in that kind of capacity.

I recall that she was director of Edgar's bureau of the budget and really knew the details. She wasn't like Bob Mandeville. Mandeville was out and open and available to the media, not that Joan wasn't, at that time, but I think she had a preference for sticking to the description of her job. That's what Edgar expected of her, and that's what she did.

Reynolds: She's tremendously loyal to Edgar, where Mandeville, you never knew. He could come out and say something that (laugh) was his own opinion or his… He tried to lead, more so than…

Bradley: That's true, that's true.

Reynolds: Kirk Dillard, who, I guess, was in the legislature and then, maybe also… Could he have been a chief of staff toward the end, for Jim Edgar?

Bradley: I think so. If not a legislative liaison. It's difficult to ferret out, what's the difference between the chief of staff and legislative liaison. One person, I suppose, could serve both functions, but yeah.

Reynolds: Or was he… Again, it gets fuzzy to remember who did this, but one of the governors had these super cabinet people, and they would put agencies under a super cabinet.

Bradley: That sounds more like Walker, doesn't it?

Reynolds: No, it wasn't that far back. It had to be either Edgar, or maybe Ryan did that. I'll look and see before our next interview. I thought maybe it was Edgar that had, like, main policy people for areas. Another name I have down here is… Where's his name?… Allen Grosball.

Bradley: Oh, from Petersburg.

Reynolds: It seemed to me, he was like a super cabinet guy, like he had two or three policy areas underneath him.

Bradley: Edgar hired him, back when Edgar was secretary of state. Allen Grosball was…

Reynolds: Maybe Dillard was one of those super cabinet policy guys?

Bradley: Could be.

Reynolds: Could be, yeah.

Bradley: To mention Kirk Dillard's name, now, what that brings to my mind is he's a State Senator. I have very little recognition, outside of the fact that the name I accept as being as someone who served in the Edgar administration.

Reynolds: I think he, maybe, also served in the Thompson administration for a while too.

Bradley: Possible.

Reynolds: And, of course, he ran for governor last time.

Bradley: He ran for governor, that's…

Reynolds: He came that close…

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: …to winning the nomination for governor. I think I heard somebody say a hundred twenty-five votes separated him and…

Bradley: Yeah, it was really close. Well, that was in the primary election.

Reynolds: The primary, yeah right. You remember Andy Foster, was the name…at all? I think maybe he was in the cabinet. I'll just run through these names, if any…

Bradley: Sure, that sounded…

Reynolds: Mike Pelletier. [Does that] ring a bell, at all?

Bradley: Yes it does, associated with education because, at the time, he was working for Edgar I think he was on the District 186 School Board, here in Springfield.

Reynolds: I think you're right about that…could be, yeah, although he probably became a head of an agency. I can't recall which ones, but. Gene Reineke.

Bradley: Gene who?

Reynolds: Reineke.

Bradley: No, it's not ringing.

Reynolds: Howard Peters?

Bradley: Howard Peters was corrections under Edgar? Later, health and human services, maybe.

Reynolds: He may have had several jobs.

Bradley: And I think, more recently, he's been the CEO of the Illinois Hospital Association.

Reynolds: Janis Cellini: Didn't she play a prominent role in the Edgar administration?

Bradley: Patronage, and I think she's sister to Bill Cellini.

Reynolds: We can talk more about Bill Cellini as we go along here, but his role in the Edgar administration was, he was probably his chief fund raiser, wouldn't you think?

Bradley: Yeah, I think…well, yeah, definitely.

Reynolds: They were very close, very close—

Bradley: But Janis Cellini, the only thing that comes to my mind with her name is political patronage. I think that was her job.

Reynolds: She was the personnel guy for the Edgar administration.

Bradley: Yeah, Edgar's administration, yeah.

Reynolds: Would that have been when Cellini's wife, Julie Cellini, started to get active under the Edgar years and became sort of the head person at Historic Preservation, in terms of that committee? That's something, maybe, I can go back and…

Bradley: Yeah, either Edgar or Ryan. I know—

Reynolds: …because the discussions of the presidential library and museum, which Julie Cellini, of course, had a lot to do with, I think started with the Edgar years.

Bradley: When he was Governor.

Reynolds: Yeah, and then, of course, Ryan sort of managed to find the money to do it, yeah. Okay, those are all the names I had. Oh, Dan Egler?

Bradley: Oh, Dan Egler. Gosh, did he work for Edgar?

Reynolds: I think so. I had picked that up as a name that…

Bradley: I know Dan from journalism. He was State House Bureau Chief for the *Tribune,* once upon a time.

Reynolds: Did Mike Lawrence stay with Edgar the entire time? Maybe he came in toward the end and became the press guy, or maybe he worked with Mike Lawrence.

Bradley: Yeah, I'm getting lost now here, in the timing. I'm trying to remember when Lawrence ended up going down to Carbondale to become…

Reynolds: Wasn't that was a few years after Edgar was out of office, that he went down to SIU? Or did he immediately go down to SIU? Maybe replaced Paul Simon, didn't he, as the…

Bradley: Yeah. Was that after Simon had died or when Simon went off…no, Simon had already served in the U.S. Senate.

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: I think Lawrence was already working for Simon down there. See, I remember…

Reynolds: Oh, so, maybe he got a job in the Center, and then, when Simon passed away, he then became the…

Bradley: …because there was competition between, at that time, Sangamon State and SIU Carbondale, to be the home of the Paul Simon Institute for Public Policy.

Reynolds: Yeah, because Paul Simon had a history with Sangamon State.

Bradley: Yeah. And I remember, Sangamon State and a lot of people in Springfield were very badly saddened, honked, even pissed—I think would be an appropriate characterization—when Simon decided on SIU Carbondale as the home for the Public Policy Institute, because a lot of people in Springfield, rightfully or wrongfully so, felt that such an institute belonged in the state capital. Of course, Simon represented that area of southern Illinois in the U. S. Congress; when he was a U.S. Representative, his home was in Makanda, which is a rough spot in a road south of Carbondale, up on a hillside, I remember. I think, when Edgar's term was up, Simon was down there and hired Mike Lawrence to come to work for him.

Reynolds: After he was done with the Edgar administration.

Bradley: Yes, and then Lawrence became the CEO or whatever, Executive Director, when Simon died.

Reynolds: There's a couple other names on here, I see. Andy Foster: do you remember him at all?

Bradley: No.

Reynolds: Gary Mack?

Bradley: Gary Mack, yeah. Gary headed up…well, I don't know that he headed it up, but I knew Gary, working at the Central Management Services, Illinois Information Service, which is that part of state government that takes care of media contacts and releases – print, radio, audio and television. Gary Mack was involved in that and has gone on to… I think he's, like, the head of his own PR company now, public relations and marketing.

Reynolds: Probably got his start during the Thompson years, I think, in that.

Bradley: Gary, yeah, Mack did.

Reynolds: Eric Robinson. Do you remember him at all?

Bradley: Yeah, he runs a consulting firm now, out of Lincoln. I think Eric… Didn't he come out of the…

Reynolds: More like a political consultant to Edgar, I think, more than anything, wasn't he?

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: Probably had a… Maybe he had a cabinet position.

Bradley: I don't think he had a cabinet position, but he was on Edgar's staff. But I'm thinking he went through the public affairs reporting program at Sangamon State.

Reynolds: That's a good possibility.

Bradley: But I know Eric, yeah.

Reynolds: Mark Boozell? Remember Mark Boozell?

Bradley: No.

Reynolds: Or Tom Hardy?

Bradley: Tom Hardy worked…he's now the chief spokesperson for the U of I. But, he was—

Reynolds: Oh, out here at the Springfield campus?

Bradley: No, no, the U of I system.

Reynolds: Oh, okay.

Bradley: All three campuses, maybe more so as a board of trustees person. But I think he's headquartered in Chicago. Tom Hardy was a reporter or a columnist for the *Tribune,* wasn't he?

Reynolds: Could have been.

Bradley: Before he took this job, yeah.

Reynolds: Could have been. A lot of the press people ended up… It looked like Edgar kept a lot of people from the press around him, which, of course, everybody tries to do that.

A couple of names: I know we've tried to touch some of the big names in our previous interviews, but maybe a couple that we haven't quite talked about was Dawn Clark Netsch, who ran against Edgar for re-election. That might have been the first time a woman headed the ticket in Illinois.

Bradley: I think so, yes.

Reynolds: She made a huge sensation with her pool commercial, but then…it seemed like the issue with her was taxes…

Bradley: Well, did…

Reynolds: …that we needed to raise taxes again. And Edgar—back to where we've were talking about before—you know, he had promised people, give me this one, and that's it.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Or maybe… Was she the first one to bring up the issue of property tax, income tax…

Bradley: Swaps.

Reynolds: …swaps? Maybe she was, sort of, the first one to actually, publically support that idea.

Bradley: Could be. I remember she was certainly of a policy wonk kind of person because she came out of the State Senate, a Democrat, was a constitutional lawyer. Even when she was serving in the legislature, she was still a professor or lecturer in a law school in Chicago, may have been a constitution convention delegate, back in 1970. But Dawn Clark Netsch always seemed to me like she didn't really fit into politics. She didn't strike you as a political person, per se.

Reynolds: She really was a professorial, more than anything.

Bradley: Very much so.

Reynolds: I'm thinking that not only was she the first female person to run at the top of a ticket, but she picked a lieutenant governor that was female too. Wasn't Penny Severns…

Bradley: Penny Severns from Decatur, yeah.

Reynolds: …her lieutenant governor candidate? So, it was an all-female ticket.

Bradley: Right, although after Dawn Clark Netsch…not Dawn Clark Netsch. Who beat Alan Dixon in the primary? Carol Mosely Braun.

Reynolds: Yes.

Bradley: She probably ran at the top of the ticket in that general election in the fall.

Reynolds: That's true.

Bradley: But that was after…

Reynolds: I think that was after the Dawn Clark Netsch run, yeah.

Pat Quinn pops up during the Edgar years, also, as treasurer, for a term.

Bradley: One term.

Reynolds: Do you remember much about him? Of course, he was always going in his own directions on things.

Bradley: Not so much during his term as treasurer. After one term, the Democratic Party tried to get him to run for re-election, and he wouldn't listen to them. And what was it he—

Reynolds: Why did he not want to run for re-election? Do you recall?

Bradley: As treasurer.

Reynolds: Oh, you mean as Secretary of State.

Bradley: He wanted to run for Secretary of State.

Reynolds: That's right.

Bradley: And got…

Reynolds: So, he would have run against George Ryan.

Bradley: Yeah. I think that's right, yes.

Reynolds: Which is unbelievable, that he wasn't able to capitalize Ryan's problems in that re-election campaign.

Bradley: Well, but that wasn't really that apparent at the time. See, it was during Ryan's term as Secretary of State that these things started to bubble out. He served one term as Governor, didn't he? The U.S. Attorney's office in Chicago was just beginning to investigate Ryan's activities as Secretary of State, near the end of his first term as Governor.

Reynolds: And, of course, the significant thing is that Peter Fitzgerald got elected Senator and managed to bring…

Bradley: Patrick Fitzgerald out of the New England area.

Reynolds: And Peter Fitzgerald, of course, played a crucial role in just absolutely savaging all these politicians for their unethical…

Bradley: He only…

Reynolds: Just one term…

Bradley: One term.

Reynolds: And then they ran him out.

Bradley: (laugh)

Reynolds: They didn't want him around, that's for sure. I can recall him getting involved in this discussion about who was going to be head of the library and museum, and, you know, that kind of forced George Ryan's hand on that also, to pick a noted historian. That we could talk about at another time.

Bradley: But Pat Quinn…If you go back into the Thompson years, Thompson was party to legislation that increased salaries for members of the general assembly.

Reynolds: It's part of one of his deals that he cut.

Bradley: Now, that all happened in lame duck sessions, see. That's when the house membership was a hundred and seventy-seven, not the hundred and eighteen that it is now. But that's when Pat Quinn, who was just kind of like a political gadfly running around the state, really got things organized, because that made people angry, that, number one, the legislature waited until after a general election—in '78, I think it was—to increase their salaries, and worse, that Thompson was party to that because he signed the bill, and it became apparent that they—the leadership and the governor—worked all this out before the election, but waited until after the election to take care of it.

That's what spurred Pat Quinn into action. He led then, the state-wide effort to get the petitions, to get the cut-back amendment on the ballot, reducing the size of the Illinois House from one hundred seventy-seven to a hundred and eighteen. And by god, people passed it because they were still honked. One of the things that Quinn claimed—and it never did happen—he claimed that there would be huge savings in reducing the number of members of the Illinois House of Representatives. Didn't happen.

Reynolds: Plus, I think it—and, you know, people that have studied this thing would be more conversant on this than me—but, I think it almost consolidated the power of the Speaker of the House and—

Bradley: Well, except that cumulative voting, with a hundred seventy-seven members, in every district in Illinois, one political party or the other was guaranteed one seat [and the other party would get two seats].

Reynolds: So, in reality, it made a career like Michael Madigan's possible because he was able to consolidate power.

Bradley: I don't think that would have happened, if they'd retained cumulative voting.

Reynolds: Yeah, you wouldn't have had someone who could be just as powerful as he's been, for so long.

Bradley: Because, you know, in cumulative voting, people could get one vote or one and half votes or three votes.

Reynolds: Right. Just the last couple or two: Lolita Dickerson, you remember her? She was the comptroller during the Edgar years. I believe she ran for the Senate too, maybe, toward the end. [talk over]

Bradley: The U. S. Senate, yes.

Reynolds: Yes, the U.S. Senate, and I can't remember exactly…

Bradley: Was it Mosely Braun beat her? Was that when she ran?

Reynolds: I don't think so. She may have lost in the primary, the Republican primary, to a more conservative candidate, again.

Bradley: Coreen Wood, who was a …

Reynolds: She was the Lieutenant Governor under George Ryan. But Lolita Dixon served a term as comptroller, and I believe she tried to move up and may have lost in a primary for the U. S. Senate. Let's see, who was in the Senate at the time…oh, we don't have the

Bradley: I remember her from being comptroller.

Reynolds: Right, and then finally, Judy Barr Topinka. she just sort of got started under Jim Edgar, as the Treasurer. She's ended up being…

Bradley: She's the state comptroller now.

Reynolds: Yeah, and she ran, of course, for governor against George Ryan. Any Judy Baar Topinka stories? We can talk about her later, when she becomes more of a figure.

Bradley: Yeah, she's a funny lady. (laugh)

Reynolds: Always amusing.

Bradley: Yeah. I can remember…Was it the inauguration? All the newly-elected constitutional officers speak at the inauguration, the focus being the governor, of course. I think, maybe going back to when she was first term as State Treasurer, at the inauguration, she got up and was speaking and made reference (laugh) to traveling around the state, campaigning and somebody passing gas in the car. I forget the story now, but people eye's rolled. You know. (laugh) If you can imagine all these people, all gussied up, you know, with their Sunday best on, in the convention center, here in Springfield, at the inauguration, high noon on inauguration day, and that's what she talked about.

Reynolds: Always very earthy. That's the word for her, I guess. And, of course, that film of her dancing with George Ryan ended playing a significant role in her [unintelligible]

Bradley: I'd forgotten about that, yeah.

Reynolds: Okay, Rich. Well, I think we've probably covered… Anything else about Edgar that we haven't covered, that you can remember.

Bradley: No, except that I always admired him. That was a point in my career when, as I've told you before, most of my time was spent in a host, administrative capacity at the main radio station. I had two, sometimes three, reporters working out of the State House Bureau for Illinois Public Radio. I, maybe, as an individual, wasn't as attentive to policy issues, political issues going on in state government at that time, as I could have been. But I didn't worry about it because I felt like I had two, sometimes three, people very capable of taking care of that part of the news operation at the radio station and on behalf of the other stations that made up this cooperative venture.

Reynolds: Are we talking about previous stories – correct?

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Do you remember who was working for you during the Edgar years? Who were the main, sort of, reporters?

Bradley: Tell me the years, again, and I can tell you.

Reynolds: Well, he got elected in ‘90 and until ‘98.

Bradley: That would have been Peggy Boyer Long. That was her second term as State House Bureau Chief. She was here when we went on the air in ’75, for a couple of years, Mike Strand, then, for many years, Mary Frances Fagen.

Reynolds: These are names, very familiar names.

Bradley: Mary Frances Fagen left public radio to go to work for the last term of Jim Thompson’s last term. She was there during the transition from Thompson to Edgar as governor, because, I think, she was working out of the Chicago office. But Peggy Boyer Long and Jim Howard was in the state house bureau at that time.

Reynolds: What’s he gone on to do?

Bradley: He’s working for National Public Radio now, in Washington. He’s like an overnight news editor for the NPR newscast unit and is doing some on-air work as an anchor for NPR newscasts, at the top of the hour.

Reynolds: Great. Well, thanks again for agreeing to interview, Rich. We’ll pick this back up, as we work our way through the governors.

Bradley: Alright.

(End of Interview Session #5. #6 continues)

Interview with Rich Bradley

ISP-A-L-2011-057

Interview # 6: April 13, 2012

Interviewer: Chris Reynolds

Reynolds: Okay, before we start our sixth interview here with Rich Bradley, I wanted to clarify and correct some issues that we were discussing in the Edgar administration interview that we did a few weeks ago. I had done my original research on Edgar, maybe a year-and-a-half, two years ago for a previous interview, and I think I'd (laugh) kind of forgotten some of these things. So, we want make sure that we set the record straight.

One of the things—and Rich feel free to comment on any of this stuff—we had discussed what was the beginnings of Jim Edgar's involvement in state government, and we couldn't recall whether he was in an internship program and whether he'd gotten a master's degree, like at Sangamon State. Well, in 1968, he accepted a legislative internship, sponsored by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and was assigned to the staff of Senate President, Russell Arrington and did not get a master's degree, was just an internship. And then, in 19—

Bradley: Oh, he never got a master's degree?

Reynolds: Never got a master's degree. I double checked that with Mark [DePue]. In 1976, he wins a seat in the Illinois House, and he was reelected in '78. We were kind of discussing what years he was in the legislature. Then, in 1979, Thompson named him as his legislative liaison. That was another thing we wanted to make sure that we got right.

Bradley: We couldn't decide if it was chief of staff or what. Legislative liaison. Well, that makes sense because he came out of the legislature.

Reynolds: He, I think, probably, went right from that, from internship, right into staff at the legislature and then got elected to the legislature and then got elected to

the legislature twice. So, that was his background. In '79, Thompson named…oh, I already said that.

In 1981, he is named Secretary of State, when Dixon left to run for the U.S. Senate. At that point, I think that Thompson decided that this guy really had some potential as an elective official, was very electable. So, he named him to Secretary of State. He won his first election that year, against Jerry Cosentino, who, indeed, did have some trucking…he owned a company. There were some scandals regarding that, and it did involve employees out of Indiana and that kind of thing. I looked that up because I kind of remembered that.

The other thing that we were unclear about was the mayoral situation, as this was all going on. In 1983, Harold Washington became the Mayor [of Chicago], beating Jane Byrne in the primary.

Bradley: In the primary, yeah.

Reynolds: So, she ran for re-election and lost to Harold Washington, in the primary. And then, in 1987, when Washington ran for re-election, Neil Hartigan took a controversial stand and supported one of his primary opponents. I couldn't find reference to who the primary opponent was.

Bradley: In the mayoral race?

Reynolds: It might have been Hynes, this father of Dan Hynes.

Bradley: Tom Hynes.

Reynolds: Yeah. I couldn't find reference to that. So, here's another one we have to follow up on. But that hurt him, when he ran for governor, because he had endorsed somebody against Harold Washington. The African-American community was really pretty upset about that.

In 1989, Thompson passes that tax surcharge that went from 2.5% to 3%. Remember, we were trying to remember what the rates were. And then, he also decides not to run for re-election that year, and he encourages Edgar to run for Governor. I think he always felt that Edgar was a more electable kind of candidate than, maybe, a George Ryan or somebody else, just in terms of Thompson's perception of who could run and win. So, he really encouraged Edgar to run for governor.

Bradley: But Edgar didn't run for governor that first time out because Ryan got elected.

Reynolds: No, he ran, and then, in 1990. So, in '89, Thompson bows out, and in 1990, Edgar runs.

Bradley: So, when was Ryan Secretary of State?

Reynolds: Ryan and Edgar kind of decided, at that point, that Ryan would run for secretary of state. So, the whole time that Edgar was governor, Ryan was Secretary of State.

Bradley: Ok, right.

Reynolds: And Edgar had been the Secretary of State, up until that time.

Bradley: So, it was after Edgar's two terms that Ryan ran and was elected to one term as Governor. Okay.

Reynolds: We were kind of trying to remember, what were the campaign issues of that 1990 campaign. It was mostly restoring fiscal responsibility. He campaigned for more dollars for education, early childhood programs, and he did, in fact, campaign on making permanent, the income tax surcharge. But he promised property tax caps, which was something that we'd kind of forgotten about.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Which was a big issue for him, throughout his two terms. We also brought up Bob Kustra. Indeed, in 1994—so this would have been just after he'd been re-elected, maybe, for a second term—Kustra announces that he wanted to quit and take a radio show at WLS in Chicago.

Bradley: In Chicago, yes.

Reynolds: But Edgar convinces him to stay, and I think, as you pointed out, the health issue was an important factor in Kustra's decision.

We also talked about Mike Lawrence. In 1997—so pretty much toward the end of Edgar's term—he resigned and heads down to SIU Carbondale's Public Policy Institute and takes a job there.

Then also, in 1997, this MSI scandal broke. We were trying to struggle with what the name of that company was. It was Management Services of Illinois, Inc. And I had become confused about the outcomes of that scandal. Indeed, there was a public aid middle manager who was convicted, and he refused to plea bargain. He got convicted and got a short prison sentence. Then they went after the managers of MSI, and I think I saw at least a couple of names of people that were convicted.

Bradley: But there was only one State of Illinois employee who was tried and convicted, coming out of that?

Reynolds: I believe so. I could not find evidence of anybody else. So, the MSI management people went to prison, and the one employee went to prison. I think that Edgar testified in the… See, I'm not sure, so I'd better not say it. I was trying to think, which of those two trials he testified in.

Bradley: Was bribery the issue?

Reynolds: Yes, it was. It was a bribery scheme and contributions for state contracts kind of a thing.

Finally, I could find no evidence that [Alan] Dixon was ever interested in running for governor. So, I'll concede that one to you. I had sort of thought that he had talked about it at one point. You had said, "I don't remember Dixon running for governor." So, I will concede that. I saw no evidence in the research that Dixon had thought about it.

Bradley: No, Dixon went from the legislature to Treasurer, wasn't it, and then Secretary of State, and then to the U. S. Senate.

Reynolds: Right. That's correct. Okay. So, let's go to our sixth interview. Of course, this is Rich Bradley. I should have introduced him before we started talking here. This is April the 13th, 2012. It's about 10:00 AM at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. My name is Chris Reynolds, and I'm a Statecraft Oral History Program volunteer interviewer. Today we are going to talk about, primarily, George Ryan's career. It's almost really more than the Ryan administration because there's so many interesting aspects to his career. So, let's just go ahead.

Did you have any impressions, before you became aware of George Ryan, of the politics and the politicians from the Kankakee area? The famous governor, Lynn Small, was from there, and he got in trouble for embezzling state funds. And, of course, Sam Shapiro was from Kankakee. Ryan started out on the Board of Supervisors there. That's where he got his political start.

Bradley: I have no knowledge or recollection of any of that kind of biography, with respect to George Ryan. My recollection right now is, the first time I became aware of George Ryan, when he was in the Illinois House, he had been elected a Republican from Kankakee and had been elected Speaker of the Illinois House.

That was a prominent role for George Ryan because he was speaker at the time the Equal Rights Amendment was coming through the legislature, and he succeeded, essentially I think, killing ERA because he ruled—I think I'm right about this—in a parliamentary move, he ruled that, to adopt a U.S. constitutional amendment, you had to, in the Illinois House, had to be an extraordinary majority, in other words, three-fifths. But over in the Senate, the ruling over there was, just a simple majority is all it took. So, that really created an interesting issue, as I recall, because, if it passed in the Senate, with a simple majority, and then Ryan, over in the House, had succeeded in establishing a rule that it would take the extraordinary majority to pass ERA, then that became the battleground, was over the rules.

So, members of the Illinois House never ever really voted on the ERA, per se. It was always on whether or not to override the rule that Ryan had promulgated as Speaker of the House. He won that. ERA supporters were never able to get that three-fifths majority in the Illinois House to win ratification vote.

Reynolds: So really, George Ryan ended up sort of the major—

Bradley: Almost singlehandedly, yeah. That's my recollection.

Reynolds: …the major, sort of, obstacle to ERA because there was enough support in the Senate, maybe.

Bradley: Well, it passed with the simple majority in the Senate. So, the battleground over the ratification vote, then, went to the Illinois House. Gosh, it was around for…I've lost track now how many years that was an issue. But, as long as Ryan was speaker, he always ruled that it took an extraordinary majority, a three-fifths majority.

But then, there was a time limit on the proposed Equal Rights Amendment. It had to be ratified by, what, three-fourths of the states, within a seven year period. And that timeframe ran out then, before the vote was ever called. Well, it never got called, as a matter of fact, in the Illinois House.

Reynolds: Thompson would have been Governor at that point. Was he pro? I think he was pro-ERA.

Bradley: He was pro-ERA, yeah.

Reynolds: Which is interesting. That whole thing doesn't jibe very well with his image later on. Ryan was more of a moderate and someone who you could probably talk into something like that at some point. It's kind of a tough stand for him, at that point.

Bradley: And I don't know why. When I think back on it, I don't know why, if he had strong personal feelings about that, or if there was other, unidentifiable, political pressure being put on him as the Speaker of the House to maintain this ruling, that it took a three-fifths majority to vote to ratify a proposed amendment to the U. S. Constitution.

Reynolds: This is an interesting question, but because that was more of a conservative stand, and Thompson was much more of a moderate politician, why did he select George Ryan to be his Lieutenant Governor? Do you recall any of that?

Bradley: No, I don't. I don't recall that.

Reynolds: Maybe he wanted George out of the legislature, on his side on things. I can't remember for sure.

Bradley: See, I'm trying to remember. Bob Blair was a Republican in Park Ridge and speaker, I think, before Ryan was speaker. Blair got beat in a primary election, I think. That's why he didn't come back to the legislature. Republicans controlled the House, back at that time, and I think, after Ryan's stint as speaker. What year would that have been, the ERA?

Reynolds: Yeah, he was in the legislature from '73 to '83. He was the speaker for '81 to '83. Then he ended up on the ticket with Thompson, I'm thinking, in '84, probably, or ended up Lieutenant Governor in '84.

Bradley: Well, Blair served, I think, before Ryan. I was trying to remember when…it was in 1975 when…

Reynolds: The early years of when Ryan was in the legislature.

Bradley: Who was the Democrat from Bensenville who was elected Speaker by virtue of a vote from Republican, Lee Daniels, who…

Reynolds: Was that the Redman thing?

Bradley: Yeah. Redman, yes.

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: Well, we are getting off the track here.

Reynolds: And we'll start to not remember a lot of stuff (laugh) if we get too detailed. So, yeah, just to clarify that…

Bradley: William Redman, yeah.

Reynolds: Eighty-one to '83 was the Speaker and '73 to '83, he was in the House. Ryan then served as Lieutenant Governor, from '83. So, it was the '82 election that he got elected Lieutenant Governor on the Thompson ticket, after the exit of Dave O'Neal, who again, went to run for the Senate, but he was not successful. Alan Dixon was.

Bradley: There was no provision in the 1970 Illinois constitution for replacing a Lieutenant Governor if they died or resigned. So, the office was vacant.

Reynolds: Any memories or impressions of his two terms as Lieutenant Governor? Anything stand out?

Bradley: No, not really.

Reynolds: He kept pretty low key. Thompson was such a strong personality.

Bradley: Well, that's just it. See, Thompson was just such a strong personality, if he involved Ryan at all in any way, shape or form, it would have been in terms of

Ryan's influence in the legislative process. I'm sure of that because of his longevity in the Illinois House and his service as Speaker. So, I'm sure that's where Thompson made use of him and may, in fact, have been the big reason that he chose Ryan to be on the ticket.

Reynolds: Because Thompson, of course, went around and around with the legislature. He split Democrat and Republicans during his long tenure. So, he always was struggling with that, I'm sure.

Bradley: But you're right, Thompson took a more moderate stance as a Republican, primarily because, I think, he understood and recognized that that was required in order to accommodate a Democratic majority in one chamber and a Republican majority in the other chamber. You know as well as I do that it takes an affirmative vote by each chamber to pass a bill to be sent to the governor's desk.

Reynolds: And it could be that. We discussed a little earlier how the ERA thing branded Ryan, sort of as a bit more conservative. Dave O'Neal, as I recall, was a very conservative fellow. It could be he felt like he needed a Lieutenant Governor who was more conservative than he, or at least his reputation, was.

Bradley: But that's a long answer to your question about my earliest recollection of George Ryan, but it was in that capacity as Speaker of the House of Representatives, where he first surfaced on my radar memory.

Reynolds: And unfortunately, that's probably not something he wanted to be remembered for, I wouldn't think.

Bradley: (laugh)

Reynolds: Ryan served two terms as Secretary of State, in which the federal probe, Operation Safe Road, had its beginnings. What were your early impressions of that investigation? When did it kind of come on your radar screen?

Bradley: Well I think…

Reynolds: For instance, were you assigning reporters to that early on?

Bradley: It seems to me like that story broke in some secretary of state offices, up in Chicago or suburban Chicago, where some of the inspectors up there were taking money, if I recall correctly, for just routinely handing out driver's licenses—and in some case, commercial driver's license—because that led to a trucking accident up in Wisconsin, I believe, where some…

Reynolds: Yeah, let's talk about some details of that. You can reflect on that a little bit. The story was, of course, the Willis family…

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: …was traveling in a van on a Wisconsin highway…

Bradley: Six, seven or eight kids…

Reynolds: …yeah, six kids, and got into an accident with a truck driver by the name of Ricardo Guzman, who had attained a commercial license, acquired in Illinois with a bribe. And all six of these children were killed. I'm not sure that that surfaced in the press immediately, whether that was reported much around in the state.

Bradley: Guzman, you mean?

Reynolds: The accident itself. It might have gotten some play in Chicago, I would think, but…

Bradley: It got played statewide. I do remember that there was…You know, that happened in Wisconsin, is an Illinois family, and I remember a wire story, which would be…as a radio station Springfield, that would have been our access to that story, six kids dying, you know. I remember that because I wondered at that time, how is it that this accident could happen and that the parents survived, and all six kids in a van perish?

Reynolds: Yeah, I read a little bit about the accounts of the accident, and the older son was able to get his parents out of the van…

Bradley: …because it caught fire.

Reynolds: …because it was on fire. But he was unable to…there may have been a surviving son. I'm trying to think, were there all six kids, or…Maybe you're right, there were seven kids. There might have been one survivor. Now I'll have to go back and read the details of that, but there was the parents were gotten out, and then they started to save the kids, and they couldn't and it was just a—

Bradley: It seemed to me like the Ryan trouble with law enforcement story first broke when some inspectors—Secretary of State employees in driver's license facilities, somewhere in the Chicago area—were investigated, arrested, charged with accepting bribes in return for driver's licenses, commercial driver's licenses even, maybe, as a bribe. And, of course, Ryan, as Secretary of State, that's how he got snagged.

Reynolds: Do you remember thinking that at the time, when you kind of…and, when I first remember it, the story, was when the lawyer for the Willis family went public with this and had done the research to find out that this guy had gotten a commercial license plate illegally, and that sort of started the… His name, I think, was Joseph Powers. I wrote down his name.

Bradley: Yes. See now, that doesn't ring a bell—

Reynolds: I remember him holding a press conference, and that sort of got the ball rolling. I kept thinking, boy, wish that guy… He's a good lawyer to have dug that up. But, when that all started to happen, did you have any sense that that would eventually bring George Ryan down? Did you?

Bradley: No. I think, almost, right up until the time Ryan was indicted, I believed that these were probably things going on in the Secretary of State's office, well below his administrative radar. I really did, in fact, believe that. I thought it was kind of a witch hunt.

Reynolds: That was sort of your first, early impressions of what was going on here?

Bradley: Yes. But that was just a gut feeling, you know, based upon what I knew about George Ryan at that time. That, as I indicated earlier, went to the days he was in the legislature and then speaker of the House. Ryan left me with an impression, from those days, that he was a back-slapper, good-old-boy politician, who came out of what I always referred to as the "old school," you know, in the late '40s, early '50, maybe, into the '60s.

Reynolds: We can talk a little bit more about him later.

Bradley: I always assumed that these are things going on in driver's licenses examining stations. I forget how many there were, all around the state, at the time. But I just assumed these were going on, well under Ryan's radar, and these were people, working in those offices, who were using George Ryan's name, as Secretary of State, as the lever, as it were.

Reynolds: To raise campaign funds.

Bradley: To raise campaign funds, yeah.

Reynolds: I want to talk about this a little bit later. But there's almost…if you've lived in Illinois your entire life and covered politics, like you have, you almost kind of expect a little bit of that, (laugh) you know. You hear about…well, you know, you're going to find that in Illinois state government…It comes and it goes…It's that kind of thing—

Bradley: And I remember thinking a lot, it's kind of like déjà vu from the Paul Powell issue, back in 1970, or whenever that was. Of course, all that money they found in Powell's closet turned out to be campaign cash that had been handed to him. I don't think they ever, ever—if memory serves me correctly—proved that that was money Powell had taken from the State of Illinois. It was just… There were no campaign disclosure laws back in those days. People could go to fundraising events and just hand Powell cash. And that's what it was.

Reynolds: After our interview, I started talking to people about Paul Powell. We went on this bus trip, and Wayne Temple was on the bus trip. He told a story…and I wanted to check this story out with you, to see if you'd ever heard this… he

said that all that cash was in safes at the Secretary of State's office, and when the staff found out that he was dead, they put it in his apartment because they didn't want to have to explain what all this cash was in the safes over at the Secretary of State's office. Now, I don't know, but it's an interesting story. And it makes some sense, in the context of Illinois politics (laugh).

Bradley: It makes sense to me because I do remember the flap around Powell's death.

Reynolds: Was there a delay in him?

Bradley: Yeah, it was twenty-four hours before they notified Ogilvie, who was Governor then, that the Secretary of State was dead. Then information surfaced about activity that was going on at the state Capitol building in Powell's office. Staff people were there because, after his secretary woke up and found him dead in bed in Rochester, Minnesota, the first person she called was Powell's chief of staff in Springfield, a guy by the name of Joe Ciaccio.

He flew up there on a state airplane to Rochester, Minnesota, before they ever called the local authorities in up there, and Powell was in bed dead. They wanted to get back to Springfield and get whatever there was cleared out of Powell's office in the state Capitol and taken somewhere else.

I had never specifically heard the story that all that cash—about $800,000, if I recall right—was originally in Powell's office, in a safe. I've never heard that, but it seems perfectly logical to me.

Reynolds: It seems feasible, doesn't it? Yeah.

Well, let's move on to the election of 1998. In a rather highly contested primary, Democratic primary, Glenn Poshard from southern Illinois won the right to run against Ryan. I think Ryan went unopposed in the primary.

Poshard was a very interesting Democratic candidate because he had very conservative views on things like abortion and guns and gay rights. Do you have any memories of that campaign and how that may have hurt Poshard? I remember somebody telling me that he was a great orator…

Bradley: He was.

Reynolds: …that he could really, really fire up the voters.

Bradley: He came out of service in the Illinois legislature, went to Congress and represented a district in southern Illinois, I think, that once was represented by Kenneth Gray from West Frankfort. But now, gosh, I just don't remember the specifics of that campaign in '98. That would have been for Ryan's first term?

Reynolds: Right. And Poshard, of course, pressed the issue of the Operation Safe Road investigation…

Bradley: Yes, I recall that.

Reynolds: …quite a good deal, but didn't get a lot of traction on it at that point.

Bradley: Well, there wasn't much around at that time. I think federal authorities were still in the process; they were just beginning to probe, to investigate because…

Reynolds: Again, it was seen as a lower level sort of scandal, and it was unclear whether it was going to touch the upper level.

Bradley: Ryan only had one term as governor. But that broke early on…Well, in the campaign, Ryan was still elected governor, but that investigation then began to touch him, to the point, to the extreme, where he decided not to run for re-election because it was perfectly clear to him, by that time, that there was no way he was going to win re-election.

Reynolds: But he managed to skirt the whole thing in the Poshard election.

Bradley: For a long time, yeah.

Reynolds: Here's a little thing I picked up from some of the research on Ryan, which I thought maybe you might remember, but maybe…we'll see. Do you remember about a campaign strategy memo? It was like a long, fourteen-page, and talked about how they run against Poshard that got faxed…

Bradley: It was inadvertently faxed to WILL, yes.

Reynolds: Right. Do you remember that?

Bradley: I remember that happening, yes.

Reynolds: Do you recall what the reaction of the station was there and whether—since you were back here running the network—did you cover it or…?

Bradley: That was in '98?

Reynolds: Un-huh, must have been during, maybe, the spring of the campaign.

Bradley: Well, we, meaning WUIS, didn't cover it, but that was a part of this loose cooperative that we called Illinois Public Radio at the time. All of the member stations of the Illinois Public Radio Network—and that included WILL during political campaigns and so forth—were contributing stories, sending them to Springfield for distribution, back by satellite, to all of the member stations. So, the coverage for that story was going on in the newsroom of WILL.

Now, under this loose cooperative that was Illinois Public Radio, I never ever served as—and I refused to, although some wanted me to— serve as editor for stories that were coming from member stations and being sent back out, statewide, under the umbrella of IPR. I always took the position that—as an example—if a story in WILL's newsroom got on their air, it had been sufficiently flushed out and edited in their local newsroom before they even put it on their own air. So, I wasn't afraid of those stories going out over the network, as it were. But I remember that story; specifics, I don't.

It seems to me like—I can't swear to this—but there was a morning talk show host over there by the name of Celeste Quinn, who as a student, had worked for me, here in Springfield. [She] was the first one to have of seen that memo, when it came in on the fax machine over there. But beyond that, that's about all I really recall about…

Reynolds: It's really a bizarre thing to have happen, huh?

Bradley: Well, yeah.

Reynolds: Why WILL…or, you know, what…Yeah, the little blurb I saw about it, said it was fourteen pages. (laugh) That really got the fax machine going, and it must have been…it was their entire campaign strategy…

Bradley: Yeah, I'm trying to remember…

Reynolds: …to run again Poshard. So, it had to been late in the spring or summer or something like that.

Bradley: Yeah. I'm trying to remember if that was viewed as an accident, a mistake or if it was deliberate, on the part of a political campaign staff person.

Reynolds: Now, that's possible, campaigns do leak things like that to get more publicity. Anyway, I thought was pretty interesting. I bet you were… Do you remember being completely astounded that that happened at the time, or is that something you've experienced in your career before, mistaken faxes of inside information like that?

Bradley: Yeah, inside information getting out into the media, but never held out as being accidental. It was usually, always deliberate on the part of a campaign staff member who…

Reynolds: …had an agenda.

Bradley: Yeah, feathers had been ruffled about something. And, of course, at the time that happened, I was pleased, from the standpoint that it happened to involve a public radio station in Illinois, and some parts of that reporting, the sourcing was to Illinois Public Radio. So, I was pleased with that kind of association

with that story. But much beyond that, I don't remember a whole lot of details.

Reynolds: As a seasoned reporter, could you tell when something was being leaked on purpose, versus a mistake, pretty quickly? I mean, if that fax had come into your office, how would you have sensed that it was being used? Would you have thought, first of all, maybe somebody was leaking it to get additional coverage or?

Bradley: Well, I think, and I'm sure WILL did this, but I would have…See, in those days, with faxes, you could see the transmitting number. I think I probably would have seized upon that number to try and track it back, find where that number was located. It wouldn't have been too hard because, in those days, you had an area code; 312, for example, would have been the Chicago metro area, 309 is in the Peoria, Bloomington-Normal. So, I'm sure I would have tried to check the source of that number, backtracking that way to make…

Reynolds: Normally they have a name on a fax too.

Bradley: Yes, that's true.

Reynolds: …unless it just said the Ryan campaign or something like that.

Bradley: Yeah. Well, I'm sure I would have pursued it from that point of view too. Number one, verify that what I was looking at was a legitimate document from the campaign people.

Reynolds: I would guess that that story got broke first by WILL, and then your network, so that even the Chicago stations were reporting on your story, right?

Bradley: Well, then from WILL to IPR, I would have gone to the wire services. The wire services, then, would have distributed it statewide, making it available to commercial radio and television and newspapers.

Reynolds: So, someone at UPS or, not UPS, I mean…

Bradley: UPI or AP.

Reynolds: …UPI, AP would have written a story about your story, and then it would have gone out, and everybody would have picked up on it. Yeah, yeah.

Bradley: Yeah, because, you know, there would have been stringer fees if it were AP. WILL was an AP subscriber—I happen to know that for a fact—at that time. But they would have given the story to AP, and AP would have used the story. They may have done some their own fact checking, but they would have referenced WILL Illinois Public Radio as the original source, the disclosure of the main story, in the story they sent out statewide.

Reynolds: Did you ever have a chance to talk to your old intern that was in the middle of this story when she was over at WILL, about it?

Bradley: No. I don't recall really ever talking to anybody over there about the specifics of the story itself. Rather, I'm sure we talked about how the story was distributed to the IPR stations first.

Reynolds: Interesting. Do you remember anything about Corinne Wood, who, I guess, really, in terms of history, she was the first elected female Lieutenant Governor?

Bradley: Under Ryan. Yeah. She came out of the legislature, I think. Is that right, as a State Senator?

Reynolds: I believe so.

Bradley: From the Chicago area? I remember when…

Reynolds: Northern suburbs, I think.

Bradley: Yes. I remember when Ryan made the decision he wasn't going to seek re-election to a second term. I'm trying to remember if she then declared her candidacy and ran in the primary, or was…

Reynolds: I don't recall that at all because Jim Ryan, of course, became…

Bradley: Did Corinne Wood run for U. S. Senate in the primary? I was thinking she ran for another statewide office, after her service as Lieutenant Governor.

Reynolds: She kind of fell off the political map after that. I was even trying to think of things that would have distinguished her as Lieutenant Governor, and I don't recall much at all. Maybe because she came from the legislature, maybe she was helpful to Ryan, in terms of dealing with the legislature, but, yeah. I couldn't find a lot on her.

Bradley: I don't even remember how Ryan landed on her as his running mate. Well, of course, that was at a time when the governor and lieutenant governor didn't run as a team in the primary. They ran as individual candidates in the primary, but then, the winner of the primary then were paired, and ran as a team in the general election.

Reynolds: The only factor I can think of right now would be…When Edgar ran for re-election, he ran against Dawn Clark Netsch, which had been, probably, the first female candidate for governor. And she picked a female to be on the ticket with her.

Bradley: Penny Severns.

Reynolds: Penny Severns. So, sort of a precedent had been set, and maybe Ryan felt the Republican Party needed to kind of do that.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: So that may have been it. But you're right, I don't remember much about Corinne Wood anywhere and couldn't find a lot about her in the research that I did. So, I was just wondering whether you had any impressions of her at all?

Bradley: No, and when I say, there may have been speculation in the media about her and another statewide run, whether for governor or a U. S. Senate seat. That may be rumbling around in my head, and that could be totally untrue. (laugh)

Reynolds: What you may be thinking of is, as I recall, there was another female in the Ryan cabinet, Lolita Dickerson. She made a run for the Senate.

Bradley: That's good; there you got her. I think she came out of the legislature too, didn't she?

Reynolds: She could have, yeah. She was a north shore…

Bradley: Republican.

Reynolds: …politician, also.

Let's get back to Ryan's image, which is pretty interesting. I like to sort of look at a bunch of research and copy down the observations that people have. His image was, sort of, as the ultimate insider, a very politically savvy, obviously, a wheeler-dealer, pragmatic middle-of-the-roader, really the son of a political machine in Kankakee. That was his experience. He also had a reputation for pursuing consensus over partisanship. Does all that sound right, in terms of your observations of him?

Bradley: Yes, because probably two big issues stick out in my mind with respect to Ryan's one term as governor. One was the capital punishment issue, the death penalty. The other is this huge public works program that he proposed. Was it "Build Illinois" or…

Reynolds: Illinois First.

Bradley: …Illinois First?.

Reynolds: Illinois First, yep.

Bradley: And that was at a time when—I think I'm right about this—Democrats controlled one legislative chamber, and Republicans the other. He had to marry that to accept this huge public works program that he conceived of and presented to the legislature because it did, in fact, become law. And I think

there were some capital projects in that program that satisfied everybody's legislative itch—I'm talking about—wherever in the State of Illinois.

I think, if that investigation into the bribery over driver licenses had not caught up with him, that he would have been re-elected governor because Build Illinois was extremely successful.

Reynolds: Or Illinois First. Build Illinois was Jim Thompson's.

Bradley: Jim Thompson's, yeah.

Reynolds: Which just sort of took the same theme and sort of…

Bradley: …renamed it and just extended it, yeah.

Reynolds: Just to kind of put that into context, Ryan becomes Governor after Edgar had put the state through (laugh) eight years of painful budget tightening, so that, I think he maybe even had a surplus, or the state, at least, was running balanced, truly balanced budgets, when he came in. Plus, the economy had really picked up by that point. So, Ryan comes in and the economy's good, the state fiscal condition is in much better shape. So, you know, a pork barrel program like First Illinois was just—as we described his political skills or political style—that was just like right on. Right on.

Bradley: Yeah. Now, Ryan's problem with federal investigators: the FBI started at the tail end of his service as Secretary of State. But he was able to wade through all that—and you're right, Glenn Poshard raised that as an issue during the campaign—and win election as governor, then. But, by the time a decision had to be made about seeking re-election, that's when this whole investigation was about to blow up in his face because he wasn't indicted until after he left office.

Reynolds: That's correct.

Bradley: And I can remember, even at the time he announced his decision not to seek re-election, it was apparent that he was going to be indicted. But you know, Chris, even at that time, I remember thinking, even if he is indicted and goes to trial, I couldn't myself conceive…

Reynolds: Well, let's hold off on that, and we'll talk about it in a little bit. But the Illinois First program was, again, the ultimate pork barrel, sort of old time politician, sort of thing.

Bradley: Yes

Reynolds: Do you remember any of the stories surrounding the deals that were cut for that? I know he didn't raise taxes, but he raised a lot of fees to pay for it. And, of course, they bought a lot of bonds, you know, to get this thing going. Do

you remember anything about the deal-cutting, the wheeler-dealer things that went on?

Bradley: Not specifics, only aware that those kinds of things were going. My recollection is, it was probably business as usual.

Reynolds: Oddly enough, I don't recall any scandal. Even Build Illinois had its little scandals here and there, where funds were used to do kind of weird, quirky things and people, you know. But I don't recall much from Illinois First. I think it was pretty clean. And actually, because of the investigations going on, Ryan kept the whole political patronage contributions thing pretty clean while he was Governor because he knew people were very closely watching what was going on.

You don't remember anything particular about Illinois First that we could talk about? Well, let's discuss one more thing about his personality, since you probably got to see him operate, obviously, a lot. It was written about Ryan's personality that he was very approachable.

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: He could be a very jolly sort of guy. Grandfatherly, I guess, would be one way that he was described. But sometimes he was real grumpy and sour…

Bradley: Sharp-tongued.

Reynolds: …and gruffness was a word used to describe him. But he also had a very sentimental, kind of a softie sort of image, among certain people. But more than anything else, he came off as kind of an unpolished, sort of regular, kind of guy.

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: Does all that sound true, and do you have any memories of his behavior that fit into that?

Bradley: Very much so. I think very accurate. The only time I really, personally, came in contact with him: On a one-on-one, he came to the studios at WUIS to sit in the studio and be interviewed by Bob Edwards, who was the original host of NPR's *Morning Edition*. Edwards wanted to interview him about his moratorium on capital punishment, on the death penalty in Illinois. Ryan was getting a lot of national press at that time because it was pretty unprecedented, what he did. Anyway, Edwards wanted to interview him.

We had the technology. We could put Ryan in a studio at WUIS, in Springfield, Illinois, in front of a microphone, set of earphones on; Bob Edwards was in a similar setting at NPR in Washington. And over a satellite hook-up, back and forth, he was able to conduct that interview with Ryan.

Everybody at the station got a chance to meet Ryan one-on-one that day. He got there in plenty of time, with his state police escort, and he made a point of going around the station, introducing himself to everybody who was there. Of course, we were all aware in the newsroom that he was coming in for this interview. We were pretty excited about Bob Edwards wanting to interview him in our studios because we knew that the next day when Edwards ran the interview on the air, he would give us on-air, network credit that the Governor was in the studios of NPR member station WUIS in Springfield, Illinois.

Rich Bradley, 2009, anchors a WUIS newscast during the broadcast of NPR's ***Morning Edition****.*

I always had an ear out and an interest in hearing that kind of exposure for the station at the time. I remember that visit and the grandfatherly kind of glad-handing, back-slapping, good-old-boy kind of routine. But, Ryan, if you were around him, you could be aware that—even as a grandfatherly image—he could be kind of grumpy and harrumph (laugh) kind of personality.

Reynolds: A lot of small talk, in terms of his discussion with you and the staff, just sort of pleasantries?

Bradley: Yeah. Just pleasantries, yeah, nothing to do with the issues. I'm sure he knew, but he seemed to be interested in the technology. He was asking about that. I remember being in the studio, explaining to him how all this was going to happen. I think, initially, when he came there, he thought he would be meeting Bob Edwards in person, there in our studios. That was the impression I had, initially. But when I explained to him that, no, Edwards was still in Washington, then Edwards got on the circuit, and they chatted up then, before they finally got the real interview rolling.

Reynolds: He was probably less comfortable with that remote sort of thing…

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: …than it would have been, if it was person-to-person.

Bradley: Once they started doing the interview, Edwards kept it pretty much on point and deadly serious, in terms of the issues of what Ryan had come to believe about the death penalty.

Reynolds: Do you remember, from that interview, your sense of his sincerity about the whole moratorium on the death penalty and his, sort of, moral groundings with it and…

Bradley: I don't know about the moral groundings, but…

Reynolds: …his explanation of why he was doing it and that kind of thing?

Bradley: I accepted, at face value, his sincerity. There was nothing in the way he comported himself on that visit to the studios that day that lead me to believe otherwise. If memory serves me at all—and it doesn't always serve me well or accurately sometimes—but I think the death penalty issue influenced Ryan because, as governor, he was confronted with issues of a… What's the term?

Reynolds: Life and death.

Bradley: Well, literally life and death and whether or not to…

Reynolds: Pardon people?

Bradley: Pardon, excuse or…

Reynolds: Clemency?

Bradley: Clemency, yeah. That whole area, because I think he was confronted with some of those issues. I was trying to remember if…

Reynolds: There was a particular, I think, decision that he had to make, which bothered him the most and got him sort of started on that sort of thing.

Bradley: Yes. And I can't remember who. It was a death penalty case…

Reynolds: I probably have the name written down somewhere, but I can't…

Bradley: …and he let it go forward. He didn't halt the execution; he let it go forward. And I think, yes, that having to make that decision, I think really kind of brought that whole process home to him because here he was. I think it maybe was the first time that he was confronted with…

Reynolds: I think you're right.

Bradley: …the task, the issue of a life or death decision.

Reynolds: Which certainly highlights his more sentimental sort of… the old, softy part of his personality, that he was not just, sort of, real tough. A lot of these governors, (laugh) like the governors of Texas, you know, they just say, I don't care; everybody's going down, you know.

Bradley: I'm trying to think, and I don't know how accurate this is, but it may very well have been: I can't remember when Illinois enacted the death penalty. But I'm thinking Ryan might have been in the legislature at the time that happened.

Reynolds: Well, he was a strong advocate for the death penalty, its deterrence and all of those kind of issues.

Bradley: It was that sudden confrontation with having to make a life or death decision. He, as governor, had to make that decision about another human being, that I think really drove the point home with him and forced him, I think, to come to terms with the realities of that kind of a decision that the death penalty demanded.

Reynolds: At the point of that interview, had he been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize? Or was that later?

Bradley: I don't remember, specifically?

Reynolds: The other thing was, he made a pretty prominent, international speech in Geneva…

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: …at the—I think it was an organization that the U.N. had for human rights—had asked him to come speak in Geneva, and it got international coverage. He was getting international coverage, which is tremendously ironic because of the stuff that was happening to him, here in the State of Illinois.

Bradley: I'm trying to think of the nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize. Didn't that come from a professor at the U of I?

Reynolds: I believe so. I think that original Innocence Project was up in Northwestern, wasn't it? Because they had started the ball rolling also on doing all the research on these guys that were on death row and had proved many of them to be innocent or questionable.

Bradley: Oh yeah, fifty percent.

Reynolds: Yeah, and that, of course, influenced Ryan tremendously.

Bradley: But I don't remember if he had been nominated, at the time he came to the station for that interview, or not.

Reynolds: Maybe that had even prompted the…

Bradley: Probably it was before, because I think his announcement of the moratorium led, within a very short period of time, to the interview that NPR, Bob Edwards, did with Ryan. That Nobel Peace Prize nomination wouldn't have come until after Ryan had announced the moratorium.

Reynolds: So there was a build-up. Maybe he made the speech and, you know, had gotten so much international attention.

Did you make anything of the jury pool theory, which was, of course, that, by emptying death row, and giving clemency to a number of mostly minority, African American, people that sat on death row, that it was a strategy to influence the jury pool, up in the Chicago area? Did you think that had made any sense to you, or did that ring true to you in any way?

Bradley: See, I don't recall that speculation in the media. That's not to say it wasn't there, but I don't remember that. And even if I did remember that…

Reynolds: This would have been much later, of course, after he was Governor. But just before he left being Governor was when he emptied death row and a lot of people gained clemency and reduced sentences and that kind of thing. Dozens and dozens of people.

Bradley: Yes. Yes. I do remember that action, and I'm beginning to remember bits and pieces of the subsequent speculation in the media, but I don't remember… I can't recall…

Reynolds: You don't recall having a… You had said earlier that you felt he was, you know, you were convinced that his convictions were morally driven…

Bradley: Yes, yes.

Reynolds: …and he was very sincere about the whole thing. We'd talked about why you think he got involved in the issue and all of that. Probably was not something that raised skepticism in your mind in any way, after he was prosecuted and that kind of thing.

The trip to Cuba, do you remember anything about that?

Bradley: Did you cover it or in any way?

Bradley: We did…

Reynolds: Did you send a reporter to Cuba?

Bradley: Sent a reporter to Cuba. That was kind of interesting because, actually, Bill Wheelhouse—who is now the general manager of WUIS—took over after I retired or right before I retired. He was a State House Bureau Chief at the time and made that trip down to Cuba. Of course, I was consumed with the technology, having to deal with archaic technology down in Havana, Cuba, telephone systems and the cost. There was just a horrendous cost to make a long distance phone call, especially if it originated in Havana.

Reynolds: This was pre-satellite days or whatever. Would it have been?

Bradley: Well, no, not…What year was that?

Reynolds: Well, it had to be in a…

Bradley: The first year of his governorship.

Reynolds: Yeah, maybe ’96. No, no. I’ve got my years are all screwed up here.

Bradley: No, because we fired up the satellite interconnection in ’87.

Reynolds: Let me get my years straight here, so we know what we’re talking about. Yeah, it had to be ‘99, 2000.

Bradley: Yeah. See, we were already using satellite technology ten years, at that point in time. I remember now, that when I looked into that, there very, very few input points for satellite uplink down there. And where there was, the cost was just absolutely prohibitive because the satellite uplink technology, at that point in time, accommodated television, which was really more sophisticated in the technical sense, because you had to deal with the video part, whereas radio only dealt with audio. To rent or buy satellite time intended for TV distribution, was prohibitively expensive for radio, when all we were interested in was the audio. So, we had to deal with dial-up telephone communications, back and forth between Springfield and Havana, Cuba. Technical quality was…

Reynolds: And an antiquated infrastructure in Cuba.

Bradley: In Cuba, yeah. So, the technical quality left a lot to be desired, in terms of what was transmitted back to Springfield. We were up-linking out to the member stations in Illinois by satellite, shitty quality audio (laugh). But we had no choice. At least that was something that we was able to do for Illinois Public Radio, for all the stations, was be able to present them with stories about Ryan’s trade mission to Havana, Cuba.

Reynolds: Do you recall that the Ryan administration because…Obviously, they wanted this covered because this was a big deal for him to have done that. I don’t think any governor had been to Cuba. He was the first in fifty years. I don’t know, it was some precedent like that set. Did they do much planning with you beforehand to discuss these kinds of technical issues and to assist you in any way to make sure that they got the coverage that they wanted on this?

Bradley: My recollection is, about all they did was to make arrangements for media to be on buses going wherever they went.

Reynolds: So, they were accommodating, probably, the print media more than anybody?

Bradley: Yeah, and television.

Reynolds: Well, the television people probably had the same problems, wouldn’t they, that you had?

Bradley: Well, but television budgets, news budgets, and we're talking about Chicago TV stations. I don't recall any TV stations from Springfield, Decatur, Champaign…

Reynolds: Sending somebody down.

Bradley: Because I think there was probably some national exposure. Ryan went down there, even in the face of a State Department warning or request that he not do that.

Reynolds: Clinton would have been president at that time, a Democrat, who maybe would not have helped him much to make that happen.

Bradley: I think there was resistance in Washington, but they were loath to just flat out tell a Governor of one the United States that they couldn't go down there and do that. But I know that the State Department, if memory serves me right, was not at all happy about the trip.

United Airlines' home base is in Chicago. They provided the passenger jet that made this trip down there. I'm thinking Ryan was successful in getting United to donate those services to the State of Illinois, to put the plane down there for two or three days and then bringing everybody back.

Reynolds: That reminds me that Ryan was very tight with United Airlines. They were tremendously helpful in getting the Boeing headquarters…

Bradley: Yes, yeah.

Reynolds: …which was probably one of Ryan's biggest accomplishments in the economic development field…

Bradley: Getting the home office moved to Chicago, yes.

Reynolds: …because United was one of Boeing's biggest customers.

Bradley: Right.

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: But I'm sure I'm right about Ryan getting United to foot the bill for…

Reynolds: Sounds about right.

Bradley: …as a gift to the State of Illinois.

Reynolds: Do you recall what kind of story… Were you doing daily stories from Cuba while he was down there, and what kind of stories were coming out of the visit, anything? Was it all pretty puffy political stuff?

Bradley: No. I think Bill reported on…Of course, the members of the media weren't allowed to strike out on their own. I do remember that, that wherever…

Reynolds: This is really tight reins.

Bradley: They had control on their movements. I know we reported on how the Castro regime went out of their way to try and get us, as a media, to focus on what they wanted us to see, but that we were, in fact, report… They didn't try to censor any of our reports because…

Reynolds: About a dog and pony show, except in Cuba, huh?

Bradley: Yeah. Castro even met with Ryan, and I remember that…

Reynolds: Were you able to air any kind of audio…

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds …of Fidel Castro?

Bradley: …because there was a reporter from Copley, *State Journal-Register*, Adriana Colindres, who was a Hispanic and spoke Spanish, spoke English, and she worked out of the State House Bureau for the *State Journal-Register*, here in Springfield. She did our translating for us. Whenever Ryan was talking to Castro, and Castro was responding in Spanish, and so, they had their own translators. But Adriana, then, was translating for Illinois Public Radio.

Reynolds: So, the audio would not have a translator on it, so that you had Ryan talking and then him talking in Spanish?

Bradley: They did afterwards, yeah.

Reynolds: And you had to translate it yourself?

Bradley: Well, we had to record the translation, and then lay it on top of… We would establish Castro's voice, fade it down and then bring the English translation in. That was Adriana.

Reynolds: Was there a set way to do that? I mean, did you sort of have a procedure for doing that or you just…

Bradley: The production technique, you mean?

Reynolds: Yeah, a way to present that to the public, so that they could understand what was going on.

Bradley: The model for that has already been…

Reynolds: You'd sort of hear Castro in the background…

Bradley: In the background, yeah.

Reynolds: Spanish, so people knew it was him talking?

Bradley: The model for that had already been well established by National Public Radio, so it was a technique that I had heard NPR do a lot. Public Radio in Illinois just didn't really have that opportunity, but this was an opportunity that presented itself. That's how it was done. And I think there was a one-on-one session with Ryan and Castro, but then, I think…

Reynolds: [Did] His brother get involved?

Bradley: Raul?

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: Not that I recall. But I remember Ryan speaking to, maybe, a university crowd down there?

Reynolds: [He] made a speech.

Bradley: Made a speech, yeah. I don't know.

Reynolds: You covered the speech?

Bradley: Yes, but Ryan was speaking in English, of course. I don't remember if Castro was a part of that or not.

Reynolds: Were there meaty issues that were covered? I'm trying to remember whether there was actually a trade agreement signed or anything. Must have been.

Bradley: I'm thinking there was.

Reynolds: I'm sure that Ryan left with some sort of a…

Bradley: I'm thinking that there was, but there were some issues with the federal government because there was, in place, an embargo. I think that was another thing, maybe, that Ryan kind of ruffled some feathers in Washington. He worked out some deals, maybe Deere and Company from the Moline area, maybe some grain issues, sales. I can't remember the specifics today, but—

Reynolds: All that would have been outside of federal policy…

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: …which that was an embargo on.

Bradley: It was done through the auspices of the State of Illinois, with whoever the trading partners were in Cuba.

Reynolds: And I can't recall whether the Clinton administration had sort of lightened their attitudes toward Cuba or not, whether that was an issue or not.

Seems like Clinton had to deal with a lot of refugees from Cuba, you know, people showing up on those rafts and things like that. So, it was kind of a difficult…

Bradley: Off the coast of Florida, yeah.

Reynolds: It was kind of a difficult issue for the Clinton administration. But that must have been…I mean, for your shop, that must have been really cool to…and you were supplying the stories for the entire network, then.

Bradley: Yes, yes.

Reynolds: On that, and it went on for, what, a couple weeks, or was he there…

Bradley: Well, no, no. He was only there, like, less than a week.

Reynolds: Oh, less than a week?

Bradley: Yeah. That's my recollection, yeah.

Reynolds: So you had stories.

Bradley: Three or four days, I'm thinking, is all that trip lasted.

Reynolds: Did you recall having to do a lot of background stories on Cuba…

Bradley: No.

Reynolds: …to get the public up to speed on all of this, all the surrounding stories?

Bradley: No, we didn't, other than maybe just in the last couple, three days before the plane took off. We just reported matter-of-factly in newscasts, that Ryan was going on a trade mission to Havana, Cuba, and that Illinois Public Radio's Bill Wheelhouse would be among the media contingent going along, and that we would be reporting, carrying his reports from Havana.

Reynolds: Did Wheelhouse have any good stories when he came back, about things that maybe went on while they were down there?

Bradley: I'm thinking that he did. I don't recall, believe it or not.

Reynolds: Did he come back with cigars?…

Bradley: No. I don't…

Reynolds: …which…I think that's a touchy subject too, because—

Bradley: Yes it is.

Reynolds: …it was illegal to bring cigars back.

Bradley: Gosh, I don't remember that that was… Those kind of issues just are not ringing a bell. (laugh)

Reynolds: Yeah, yeah, okay.

Bradley: Well, that's age. See, that's what happens when you get old, Chris.

Reynolds: I know. I know. Well, the last thing I kind of wanted to talk about was the Ryan trial, since this really went on after…

Bradley: Yeah, that was all in Chicago.

Reynolds: …after he had been Governor. The defense, and it was a high powered defense, obviously Thompson's firm.

Bradley: Dan Webb.

Reynolds: Dan Webb was the main lawyer, and there were other lawyers involved. I've got the names of some of the other people that were involved and indicted. We may or may not remember much about them. They're kind of obscure names now. But, the defense that they mounted, and were very confident about… In fact, I don't think Ryan ever thought that he did anything wrong. He never expressed any contrition.

Bradley: I believe he thought that.

Reynolds: Yeah. And they were always very, very confident that they were going to win this thing. I mean, these are the best, the most high-powered lawyers in the nation, really. Dan Webb is a nationally known. But their defense was that Ryan was engaging in ordinary political transactions, that these were actions that were in the fabric of what goes on in Illinois politics.

Bradley: Yes, yes.

Reynolds: This, of course, all fits in with, sort of, this culture of corruption that we have here in Illinois, that this kind of brought to light. I think, somewhere in a book, I saw that there's this trinity of states that have this reputation. Illinois, Louisiana, New Jersey are kind of the trinity of (laugh) corruption in the United States.

Bradley: Delong family, down in Louisiana, yeah.

Reynolds: Yeah. And it's really nurtured. Some experts say that is sort of nurtured by a political culture, where your, sort of, average voter in Illinois kind of tolerates this. They kind of expect it.

Bradley: Yeah, yeah.

And, what began to change was, the media started reporting on these things more…so, this thing with the van and that kind of thing… Then the rules started to change, and Ryan got caught up in that. So, I just kind of wanted to hear your views about that; you know, the state's reputation and how Ryan got sucked into this thing.

Bradley: You know, I think all that is accurate. I would even venture to say, if there had not been any fatalities in that accident in Wisconsin, there wouldn't have been…

Reynolds: And if the Willis family's lawyer hadn't been sharp enough to do the research to find out that this guy had gotten a commercial license plate with a bribe.

Bradley: Yeah, and if nobody…

Reynolds: And there were some whistle blowers involved. It kind of snowballed, after a while.

Bradley: A couple of secretarial types, maybe women who were aware.

Reynolds: Well, I think a couple of these people in these offices up in the Chicago area, who had tremendous pressure on them to collect political contributions, kind of blew the whistle on this thing, as it went along.

Bradley: Yeah. But, you know, I've wondered, from time to time, if the Willis children had not been killed in that accident, if they had survived, I'm not sure George Ryan would be in jail today.

Reynolds: And that's what I'm trying to get at, is a sense of what the public will tolerate. There's a sense—and people that theorize about this corrupt culture here—is that voters in Illinois have gotten kind of used to this, over the years. So, a certain level of corruption is sort of accepted, and we just kind of figure they're going to do it. But when people start to die, it's the public safety sort of line. That's when people became outraged, and it just had sort of a snowball effect.

Bradley: But not outrage to the point that they would kick Rod Blagojevich out of office after his first term…

Reynolds: That's a subject for the next interview.

Bradley: …because the same kind of thing was kind of going on: rumors, reports of a federal investigation into Blagojevich, when he ran for second term as Governor. And the people of the State of Illinois re-elected the guy.

Reynolds: Yeah. So, the culture continued.

Bradley: It did. It did.

Reynolds: The one thing about Ryan is—and we'll, again, talk about this when we talk about Blagojevich—is, when he was sentenced to prison, there were a lot of people that just thought that was terrible because this was a guy—back to the grandfather image—the soft side that he'd shown to people. People just loved the guy. And not just people from the Republican Party, but both sides of the aisle, just really had a sentimental feeling about the guy. It was really, really tough when he got convicted and sent to prison. Now the feeling—and, again, we'll talk about it when we talk about Blagojevich— was totally different with Blagojevich.

Bradley: It was, but it was kind of interesting too, in that, there was a guy by the name of Peter Fitzgerald, who was elected U.S. Senator in Illinois. As it turned out, he only wanted to serve one term, a real conservative.

Reynolds: Well, they probably drove him out of office, to an extent.

Bradley: Yeah, I could accept that. He was instrumental in bringing a guy in from the New England states area…

Reynolds: Patrick.

Bradley: Patrick Fitzgerald…

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: …no relationship, but as an U. S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois. That was his first big case, this Ryan case. I always…I did wonder…I remember now, thinking at the time that, if somebody in the Republican party was really pissed at Ryan, that they were able to connive and get Peter Fitzgerald to bring in a real bulldog…

Reynolds: Looking to make a reputation as a prosecutor.

Bradley: …looking to make a reputation, yeah.

Reynolds: Yeah, I think Peter…and Peter Fitzgerald not only took on Ryan with regard to this type of corruption, but he was also very public about the stuff that went on with this museum and library.

Bradley: Right here in Springfield, yeah—

Reynolds: I think we've talked about how they appointed the first director and the political shenanigans that went on with your old university…

Bradley: Sangamon State, yeah.

Reynolds: …and one of Ryan's old cronies, that they were going put in charge of this thing. Fitzgerald was very, very vocal about that, was one of the few politicians that really would challenge…And that comes from the right wing of the Republican party, which every so often, has a little bit of luck getting Al Salvi and Peter Fitzgerald.

Bradley: Because, I think the accusation leveled at Ryan was that he was trying to find places and niches to put his staff people before he left office. That's what was going on. I remember that it was right about that time that I began to wonder about Ryan's sincerity about patronage politics because it was pretty clear. And I don't recall there was any denial on his or his administration's part, that that's what they were trying to do, is to find places to put key people in his administration, since, by that time, he'd already made the decision he wasn't going to run for re-election. Once he finished out that one term as governor, his days as a public official were probably over.

Reynolds: He was, at that point, I think, thinking about his legacy and this museum and library, which he really…He is really the guy who put together the money to make it happen. He did the wheels and the deals to make it, and he wanted this to be a crowning sort of accomplishment because before he left, they had a huge ceremony.

Bradley: There was a big rush to do the ribbon cutting before he left office and get his name on the cornerstone out here. I mean, there was a bit of a flap over that too. Even after he went off to prison, occasionally, stories crop in the media or letters to the editor, about taking that cornerstone out, (laugh) here at the library, part of the combination. Anyway, go ahead.

Reynolds: Well just this. The whole culture of corruption that was uncovered with the Ryan scandal, over your years of reporting, do you sense that it's pretty consistent and that people from all parts of the state—well, let's just not single out Chicago, because it appears that the entire state is willing to tolerate these kind of… We first of all talked about Ryan's machine up in Kankakee. I mean, there are all these little machines, all the over the state.

Bradley: All over the state. But, yes. The big answer to the question is yes. In my recollection, politics here in Springfield goes back to when Otto Kerner was governor. He was a product of the old man Daley machine in Chicago. He, of course, was appointed to the federal bench. And Jim Thompson, who later became governor, was the U.S. Attorney who then pursued Otto Kerner, indicted him and tried him and convicted him and got him sent off to prison. So, that culture started right about that time, or at least my recollection of it.

Reynolds: As a reporter, that's when you started to become attuned to it.

Bradley: Because I came here when Otto Kerner was governor. But people accepted it. I think there was as much surprise that Otto Kerner was indicted and tried and convicted and sent off to prison as there was when it happened to George Ryan.

Reynolds: And even Scranton, the guy before him had been prosecuted on charge. I mean…

Bradley: Income tax evasion or something like that, yeah.

Reynolds: …regarding political funds, using political funds.

Bradley: Right. But that was after he left office. Well, in Kerner's case, it was after he left office too.

Reynolds: It just seems to crop up with every (laugh) governor, almost.

Bradley: It just seemed to propagate and promulgate that culture of corruption. People here in Springfield…you used to hear it a lot, and you still do to some extent, even today, that that's business as usual. It's politics as usual and acceptable to most people.

Reynolds: So, the Ryan defense was very convincing to you, that these were ordinary political transactions that the people kind of accepted, to an extent.

Bradley: I think, if I had any surprise at all about that strategy, [it] was that they were talking so publically about it. I recognize too that they had to put together some kind of defense to convince a jury. But the prosecution was able to convince a jury to convict him.

Reynolds: What do you make of this, and we'll close off this discussion of corruption here; although, I think it's a fascinating subject to somebody who has worked here for thirty years, as you've covered it, why it is that we're so… (laugh) why this state sort of stands out with those others. But there's a columnist up in the Chicago area, John Kass, which I follow regularly; he has this theory about the combine, which is more a description of Illinois' corrupt state as a sort of Democrats and Republicans worked together to make sure that everybody gets their piece of the pie (laugh) …

Bradley: Well, I always believed that.

Reynolds: …and you kind of saw it very well. It comes up when people make the statement that the mayor of Chicago would rather have a Republican governor because they can kind of work together.

Bradley: Wheel and deal, yeah.

Reynolds: Of course, Walker ran afoul of all that. Thompson was very nonpartisan. Edgar was probably a little bit of an aberration of that. He was more a partisan, in a sense. But Ryan was like the ultimate, sort of, that guy. Do you prescribe to that theory, that sort of the corrupt culture is not necessarily partisan. It's a sort of a wink, wink, everybody gets a piece of the action, kind of thing.

Bradley: Yeah, because it was pretty clear to me from the time I first came to Springfield, that the Mayor of the City of Chicago had a considerable amount of influence in the legislative process here in Springfield. That was largely because those people who ran and were elected as Democrats to house districts and senate districts did so at the bidding of the Mayor of the City of Chicago, sent to Springfield. They were a combined force to deal with, and the Mayor of Chicago recognized that, and the Governor, sitting in Springfield, also recognized that influence was there, but that the combine up there needed the downstate support to follow through. And so, yeah.

Reynolds: Well, it's almost like there's a sort of dividing line between partisan issues that the public identifies as either Republican or Democrat, and let's cash in on state government, sort of issues...

Bradley: Yes, yes.

Reynolds: And, when it comes to people making money off of state government, there is a combine of interest, and if you're a smart governor—and Walker found this out—you make sure that everybody gets their piece of the action and that keeps things rolling.

Bradley: And his deliberate and almost flaunty way of pushing their faces into it is what got him into trouble. So much so that, in 1976, in that election, the Mayor of the City of Chicago, his goal was to get rid of Walker. His strategy was to do it in the primary. That's all he was focused on. He tapped one Michael Howlett who, at that time, was a very popular public official in Springfield, first as a state auditor and then later, as a—

Reynolds: Which is…We've probably discussed this before, but it's interesting, because what he got was Jim Thompson, who in Ryan's image, was the same kind of politician that would play ball, but Thompson had spent the last, I don't know how many years, putting in jail from the Democratic Party.

Bradley: So, he learned a lot.

Reynolds: Almost in a partisan way. Yeah. It's a fascinating (laugh) political environment here. What's your sense of the corruption tax idea that we all pay? Now, of course, we're in the midst of huge fiscal crisis. Do we pay a price for this kind of politics, this way of doing business, that we all seem to have accepted over the years?

Bradley: Well, I suppose there are arguments that would tend to prove that. You know, in a lot of ways, that's kind of like water under the bridge, I think, to my way of thinking. I don't think about it all that much or dwell on it, without being able to point to anything specific. Since I've retired, when something crops up in the news now, I have two different reactions. One is, well, there it is, politics as usual.

Reynolds: You've seen so much.

Bradley: Well, I just kind of instinctively react that way. I don't know how often I'm correct, but I am aware that I react that way.

Reynolds: We're going to talk about it with Blagojevich, but the level of corruption was almost kind of shocking, even to those that, I think, follow this year's and just sort of have that reaction when things happen like this. So, we can talk about that a little later.

I want to go through some of these names, but any final sort of… What do you think George Ryan's legacy's going to be? He's pretty old when he gets out of prison. Do you think he'll make an attempt to turn his image around and make for a more positive legacy, because there's a lot of positive stuff there, and the skepticism about his prosecution is out there.

Bradley: I don't know, Chris. I think a lot of it has to do with what level of energy he has as a person when he finally does get out of prison. He's already lost his wife while he was in prison. His kids, and especially grandkids, are growing up, not knowing their granddad. They're forever going to be saddled with his legacy as a convicted felon, I'm afraid.

The capital punishment issue is, I think, really been buried once and for all, because the death penalty has now been repealed legislatively, by state law, in Illinois. So, it's not an issue anymore. If it were still on the books and Ryan were getting out of prison, then maybe, yeah.

Reynolds: He could become a local advocate for that again.

Bradley: Yep. But it's all happened now, and whether or not he can or will try to take credit for the repeal, when he gets out, I don't know. I really think that it's probably a dead issue by that time. Unfortunately, he's going to probably go down in history like Stratton, Otto Kerner, Rod Blagojevich.

Reynolds: As one of the governors that went to prison, was corrupted.

Bradley: I know that there are people who, today, work for George Ryan, still can't accept, don't want to believe, that he is a corrupt man.

Reynolds: He is still beloved by most of the people that worked for him.

Bradley: Yes. You know, I'm not sure, but what maybe there isn't some residual feelings like that among the populous downstate in Illinois. Reynolds: I think people were tremendously sympathetic when the issue came up of him being released to visit his wife.

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: You could hear people say, well, you know, they ought to let him spend some time with his wife, which I think they finally did, didn't they? I believe that he was able to…

Bradley: They let him out. They took him up to Kankakee from Terre Haute, two or three times, I think, but only for like a day or two at a time. It was done strictly on the q-t. The warden of the prison over there had that authority to grant that kind of leave. He was closely guarded all the time.

I'm surprised, because once he was convicted and sent to prison, then Jim Thompson became his attorney of record, because Dan Webb went on to representing other people, one of which, Bill Cellini, hasn't come to trial yet. But Thompson took over the…

Reynolds: Oh no, Cellini has come to trial, and he's been prosecuted. He's awaiting sentencing.

Bradley: That's right, that's right. That's what it is. But Dan Webb was…

Reynolds: We may be able to talk more about Cellini when we talk about Blagojevich.

Bradley: …Dan Webb was his attorney, yeah.

But Thompson became George Ryan's attorney. I was surprised that they were never able to get Ryan released from federal prison after serving a couple of years. His sentence was only for six years, and then Blagojevich gets fourteen. (laugh)

Reynolds: You would've thought that they would, maybe have had some success with an appeal.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Or maybe even with… Let's see, would this have been timing so George Bush could have granted him a pardon? Let me see, it probably was right at the end of the…

Bradley: But I think his wife did, in fact, make contact with the Bush administration.

Reynolds: You would have thought that Thompson would have had some influence with the Bush administration.

Even Obama might have been sympathetic, although the idea of Obama staying sort of separated from all the corruption in Illinois is obviously a theme that he doesn't want to remind people of. So, I can see, maybe, why he stayed away from it.

Bradley: But it looks like Ryan's going to have to stay in prison right up until the last day, unless he gets really sick and ill and dies, while he's still in prison.

Reynolds: Well, and I think he's probably…Would you think he's in his mid-seventies by now...does that sound about right?

Bradley: Ryan? No.

Reynolds: Even older than that?

Bradley: Older than that, I think.

Reynolds: So, depending on his health, he may have a chance to write a book and tell his side of the story, which would be very interesting. I know Mark has been trying to get an interview with him for the Oral History Program here.

Bradley: With Ryan?

Reynolds: Yeah, Mark DePue. There may be more of a story to tell. At some point, he may have a chance to sort of tell his side of the story and maybe express some contrition for what happened.

Bradley: If he's still in relatively good heath when he gets out of prison, there's going to be a media stampede to him because I don't think that, in federal prison, they grant interviews with inmates. That's an impression I have. I don't know if that's completely accurate or not.

Well, in Otto Kerner's case and in George Ryan's case, I know Rich Bradley, personally, was surprised that they were people who were tried, convicted and sent off to prison, because I never really believed in their guilt. That may be a terrible thing for a reporter to say. I remember thinking in each of those cases that it was almost unbelievable that a governor would be convicted and sent off to prison like that. I didn't have a sense that they had done wrong, based upon what they were tried and convicted of.

Reynolds: Well, it was that was those six kids burning up in that van, I think. (talk over)

Bradley: Well, in Ryan's case, yeah.

Reynolds: I think that made the difference, and it just sort of snowballed.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Yes. Well, it will be interesting to follow up on that. That's great to get your thoughts on that.

Now, I've got a series of names here, some of which we've already talked about. See if you have any remembrance of some of these people. We've talked about Joseph Powers, who was the lawyer for the Willis family. We talked extensively about Patrick Fitzgerald; did you cover any of his news conferences or have any personal contact with him?

Bradley: No, he was always…He pretty much stayed in the shadows of the U. S. Attorney's office, up in northern Illinois.

Reynolds: The first guy to go down in the Ryan scandal was Dean Bauer, who was his Inspector General.

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: Remember anything about him or had any contact with him?

Bradley: No contact with him, but just that he was… Didn't he eventually plead guilty?

Reynolds: Yes, and he was the architect of the cover-up, I believe…

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds …that started the ball rolling on all this stuff.

Bradley: I think that he initiated that on his own. I never had a sense of Ryan directed him to.

Reynolds: Well, either that or it was wink, wink, you know; take care of it for me.

Bradley: Yeah. No, I never had any contact with him.

Reynolds: And he was, I think, a close personal friend of Ryan.

Bradley: He was.

Reynolds: And I think it was pointed out in one of these biographies, that Ryan…all of his close personal friends were politicians.

Bradley: But didn't Bauer come out of the Kankakee area?

Reynolds: I believe so.

Bradley: Political…

Reynolds: I believe so.

Bradley: …background.

Reynolds: That Ryan didn't have a lot of friends outside of politics. His whole life revolved around people that were interested in his political influence and involved in his…

Bradley: But wasn't Dean Bauer also the chief of the secretary of state police?

Reynolds: Could be.

Bradley: Who then became his…

Reynolds: Inspector general.

Bradley: …Inspector general, yeah.

Reynolds: We can give Jim Edgar credit for establishing that office, but, of course, it didn't work (laugh) when Ryan put his buddy in the job, Scott Farwell; do you remember much about him?

Bradley: Scott Fawell, yes.

Reynolds: He was his chief of staff, ran his campaign and then kind of plea bargained and helped to bring him down.

Bradley: But his reason for participating had more to do with Scott Fawell's fiancé—

Reynolds: I had her name written down as kind of a foreign name, Petros [Andrea Coutretsis], or something like that?

Bradley: Yeah. But he agreed to cooperate, in an effort—well, I think it was successful—to keep her out of prison. Initially, I thought Scott Fawell was a guy who would never ever cave and would defend Ryan to the death. But I had no notion that his fiancée was wrapped up in all of this, either, until…

Reynolds: That was the hook that the prosecutors used. Yeah, he came from a prominent DuPage County family and was just—

Bradley: Wasn't his mother in the legislature?

Reynolds: I think that's right.

Bradley: Beverly Fawell.

Reynolds: Right, I think you're right.

Bradley: Right.

Reynolds: Robert Kjellander – do you remember much about him? He got himself entwined in all of this to an extent, but he didn't…I don't think he was ever prosecuted.

Bradley: I remember the name. He was Springfield based.

Reynolds: I think he's been a Bill Cellini partner…

Bradley: Yes, yes.

Reynolds: …and that kind of thing. Some of the other people that were prosecuted were Larry Warner, which I think was a close personal friend of Ryan, who had cashed in on some state contracts. Roger Stanley. Any of these names ring a bell?

Bradley: Just vaguely ringing bells, yeah.

Reynolds: Of course, we've already talked about Dan Webb and his prominence in all these activities.

What was Ryan's relationship with Michael Madigan? We've, of course, discussed Michael Madigan on and off in all these interviews (laugh) because he's a prominent figure. Did Madigan and Ryan get along real well? They work well together, from your observation?

Bradley: Well, I guess the short answer is, I don't know, because I'm not aware… I don't recall any issues that brought them head to head, at least not in the legislature. Ryan was…How many years did you say he was in the legislature, ten years?

Reynolds: Ten years, yeah. Two years as speaker.

Bradley: Just two years only?

Reynolds: Un-huh.

Bradley: Madigan was—

Reynolds: So, Madigan may have sort of, almost succeeded him.

Bradley: I'm thinking Ryan's Democratic counterpart in the legislature in those days would have been people like Gerry Shea, Clyde Choate from Anna…

Reynolds: Downstate?

Bradley: …downstate, well Gerald Shea was a product of the Daley machine. He was like a House majority leader.

Reynolds: Madigan's became speaker during the Thompson years, for sure. Then he was out for a term and then came back in and through the Edgar years. Probably, the comment we can make about Madigan and Ryan is, they must have worked well together to get that Illinois First program done. I can't recall what… did he have a Democratically controlled, I think, maybe, for two years, at least?

Bradley: Well, yeah, there was Lee Daniels. There was just two years of Republicans gained control.

Reynolds: Maybe the first two years of Ryan's term…

Bradley: Because Lee Daniels voted for Bill Redman in that speakership battle, back in '75. He was a Republican and Redman was a Democrat, both from Bensonville area.

Reynolds: There is a legendary sense that Ryan and Richie Daley were good buddies. You did see that…

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: …pop up during the Ryan term. I think there were several things that were done for Rich Daley, I know, personally; they worked on the Boeing…we talked about the Boeing project. The mayor's office and the Ryan people worked tremendously closely on that. In fact, a lot of people from the Ryan administration went to work in the Daley administration afterwards. So, there were a lot of tie-ins. Did you sense there was a chummy relationship between Rich Daley and George Ryan?

Bradley: I just assume that there was. I don't know of anything, and I don't recall of anything, specifically, to support that. But I would accept that as truth.

Reynolds: Yeah. Remember the political favors list that came up during kind of an outshoot of the Operation Safe Roads controversy. When they started to get in all the stuff that was done during the gubernatorial years—and that list surfaced in the public—of everybody that Fawell, I think, was the keeper of the list. They kept track of everybody who had asked for stuff and who had gotten what. Remember that?

Bradley: It's foggy. The more you talk, the more the fog is clearing. I vaguely remember, but specifics, no.

Reynolds: No specific stories that popped up, because there [were] a lot of interesting people on that list; Democrats, Republicans, reporters, I believe, even were on that list.

Bradley: Really, like who?

Reynolds: Well, the guy that this library is named after, Neal, who was columnist up in the Chicago area, I think, was on that list.

Bradley: Neal, Neal. Yeah.

Reynolds: I'm trying to think of what his first name is. This library is actually named after him. We talked about, I think—maybe not on interview—but why this place is named after him. He was involved in the whole thing about who became the director of this library.

Bradley: Was it Richard Neal?

Reynolds: Yeah, committed suicide.

Bradley: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

Reynolds: There was an interesting story about him. But anyway, I remember when that happened, there were a lot of interesting names on that list that prompted stories that went on for weeks and weeks and weeks. I don't think it ever…

Bradley: I have vague recollections now of the list and that Scott Fawell was the keeper of that list. I don't have any memories of my own about the people who were on that list.

Reynolds: Okay. Thought I'd ask.

Bradley: I don't know why.

Reynolds: Always want to prompt your memory to see if you… Jesse White, of course, became a more prominent politician during this period. Any thoughts about Jesse White and his role as Secretary of State? I guess he would have been the guy that took over as Secretary of State after Ryan. I guess he has stayed pretty much scandal free. And to an extent, I guess, has had to clean up the secretary of state's office to an extent (laugh) that anything gets cleaned up in Illinois.

Bradley: Didn't he come out of the legislature? I'm sitting here trying to recall his political background, beyond his first election, first term election as Secretary of State. I'm thinking he was a member of the Illinois House? Does that…

Reynolds: Seems like that's correct.

Bradley: But, as a person and political background, I don't have much recollection.

Reynolds: Any personal contact with Jesse White over the years?

Bradley: No, not really. An impression I have of Jesse White is that he seemed to want to avoid one-on-one contact with electronic media.

Reynolds: To fly under the radar, as it were.

Bradley: Yeah, but that had more to do with—in my mind, anyway—the fact that he wasn't necessarily very articulate. You and I both know there are lots of people who, in a public setting, aren't able to really…

Reynolds: Discuss things in-depth or even make them simplified.

Bradley: …yes, be very articulate about it. I think there's some members, unfortunately, of the Illinois General Assembly who are like that. They get up on the floor of the House or the Senate to address a bill and try to debate, and you think, my god, where do all these people go to school? Or did they go to school? But, you know, what I'm talking about. I think Jesse White, in my mind, maybe fits into that now. That sort of thing doesn't come through in one-on-one contact or interviews or stories by print people. It rarely does come through. But, in the electronic media, when you show video or an audio clip and people can hear or see, I think he's aware of that and it seems to me like he avoids those kind of opportunities. (laugh)

Reynolds: Yeah, his publicity is always staged, tremendously staged. I don't think I've ever seen him in a debate. He, maybe, has never had serious opponent, I don't think.

Bradley: No, he hasn't.

Reynolds: He's been a tremendously successful politician, getting re-elected and re-elected.

Bradley: Well, he has this tumbling team that he founded years and years ago, up in the Chicago area. Bring kids out of troubled areas of the inner city up there and get them involved in tumbling and being a part of the Jesse White's Tumblers. So, he has a legacy.

Reynolds: He's got, like, a well-managed, manicured image. You are right to point out, you've never seen him talk, be interviewed or speak in-depth on a talk show or anything like that.

Bradley: He just avoided those kind of situations.

Reynolds: Which is smart, probably, for him.

Bradley: Yeah, but is there somebody helping him to call the shots in that respect? I don't know. I don't know if he has…

Reynolds: Maybe he's got good people around him that, in other words…

Bradley: I'm sure that's probably the case, yeah.

Reynolds: He, of course, is involved in this latest deal. One of the people that he has mentored is the guy that took that bribe, up in the Chicago area.

Bradley: Oh yeah, that state representative.

Reynolds: Smith, I think is his name.

Bradley: That freshman representative, yeah.

Reynolds: His name's been mentioned in stories, but notice again, you don't hear him talking about it or making any statements about it.

Bradley: It's always somebody in his office quoting, providing the information, the source, to name the source.

Reynolds: Final name I had on here was Dan Hynes, who pops up as a state politician during this period. His father, of course, is very famous. I still want to link his father to the stuff that went on during the Harold Washington period and the Neil Hartigan thing. Any impressions of Dan Hynes? He's tried to move up the…

Bradley: Yeah, he had what, one term as, or two terms as, comptroller?

Reynolds: Think so. I can look that up. Then he's tried for higher office a few times too, the Senate and, let's see…

Bradley: But he, early on, I suppose, drew his political life blood from his dad. In a lot of ways, I know more about—and remember more about—his dad than I do him. I remember him, because a woman who worked for me in the newsroom at WUIS, was married to a guy who was press spokesman for Dan Hynes, when he was first elected comptroller.

Reynolds: And that's the only… It appears to me he's been comptroller for at least a couple of terms…

Bradley: For at least two terms.

Reynolds: …maybe with two terms, maybe through George Ryan's term and through both Blagojevich's terms. That's the statewide job he's held, even though he's run, I believe, for governor. Didn't he run against Blagojevich, maybe one of those primaries?

Bradley: I think he did. He made one run for the U.S. Senate too.

Reynolds: Yeah, and this last time against [Alexi] Giannoulias.[3]

[3] Giannoulias won the Democratic primary for the U.S. Senate 2010 but lost against Republican Mark Kirk in the general election.

Bradley: I think Obama beat him in the primary…

Reynolds: That could be.

Bradley: …as a U. S. Senator.

Reynolds: That could be, yeah. So, he's tried several times, but just hasn't been able to… Very low key guy, not a tremendous amount of charisma, I wouldn't think.

Bradley: Harmless, I guess, (laugh) in some people's eyes.

Reynolds: Yeah. Okay, that's all the names I've got. This has been a great interview. Anything else? I always ask to see if there's anything else you want to…

Bradley: I think anything I've talked about today just kind of reaffirms the point I made at the beginning of our session today, that there's not a lot of minutia or detail that I really recall, primarily because, at the time, I didn't really believe in or see the value.

Reynolds: You weren't writing stories down, diving into the detail, probably.

Bradley: That's exactly right. I was just overviewing it. A lot of my job, in the later years, as News Director and also as overseer of Illinois Public Radio, was very administrative in nature, as opposed to daily, hands-on kind of work.

Reynolds: Yeah, and we've been…that's what I've been trying to do, is just pull all these studs out there to see if I can get some remembrance that you had of individual people and personalities and stories. I think we've done a good job of that. [I] appreciate it. We'll do one more interview. We'll try to tackle our former governor who just went to prison, Rod Blagojevich, and touch a little bit on Pat Quinn. It's probably a little too early to assess him, but we'll at least talk a little bit about that.

Bradley: I don't know that I will have a lot to contribute in terms of Pat Quinn as governor because I'd have…

Reynolds: I'd be interested in your sense, because you were very close to the impeachment…

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: …so, sort of, your feelings from him during that period, and how he… you know, that was kind of a tricky thing to maneuver.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Well, thanks again, Rich. We'll do one more with you. Thanks.

(End of interview session # 6. #7 continues)

Interview with Rich Bradley

ISP-A-L-2011-057

Interview #7: April 27, 2012

Interviewer: Chris Reynolds

Reynolds: This is the seventh interview with Rich Bradley. This is April the 27th, 2012, 10:00 AM at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. My name is Chris Reynolds. I'm the Statecraft Oral History Program volunteer interviewer. So, we're going to go ahead and cover the Blagojevich administration.

What were your impressions of the former governor's activities in the Illinois House or as a congressman for three terms? Do you remember anything about him?

Bradley: I don't remember anything about Rod Blagojevich being a state representative in the Illinois House.

Reynolds: Sort of a back bencher?

Bradley: Yeah. I guess it would be fair to characterize him as, he was a Democratic member of the Illinois House, but that he was there to do the bidding of the Democratic leadership in the general assembly. But, I suspect also, he was there to help carry out the Democratic Party Mayor of Chicago's agenda in the legislature. The mayor and the city of Chicago, historically, has been Democratic, or at least, insofar as you and I and recent history is concerned. My view of who was mayor of Chicago goes back to a fellow I refer to as "old man Daley." I can never remember the middle initial of…Richard M., is that the younger one, or Richard J., was the old man?

Reynolds: I believe so.

Bradley: Richard M. Daley was the son, the most recent Daley, who was mayor. So, Richard J.'s term of mayor goes all the way back into the late '50s? Is that possible? Have I got that right?

Reynolds: Yes.

Bradley: I was born in 1940, so I have no recollection of the mayor of the city of Chicago, beyond the old man Daley.

Reynolds: That's the guy in the prohibition era, maybe, who was (laugh) in with Al Capone and all those guys. Bill Thompson, I think, was in there.

Bradley: Well, I know the name, but not like I had a personal recollection of the Mayor of the city of Chicago, like I came to know as a reporter, reporting news in Illinois, and then Southern Illinois, when I was in college, and then, later in my long career here in Springfield.

Anyway, Blagojevich, as a state representative, no recollection at all. I really don't have all that much recollection of Rod Blagojevich as a U.S. Congressman from Illinois, although he was elected to…

Reynolds: Three terms.

Bradley: …three terms, three two-year terms? He represented a district up in Chicago, the greater Chicago area…

Reynolds: The northern end of Chicago, I think.

Bradley: …the northern, on the north side. Outside of being a member of the Illinois congressional delegation, that was the only context in which I recall or remember Rod Blagojevich. That, coupled with a weird name, that kind of made him stand out a little bit. I really have no working recollection, Chris, of how Rod Blagojevich came onto the gubernatorial scene. His father-in-law was a Democratic powerhouse in the city of Chicago. He was a member of the Chicago city council, the leadership, I think, in Chicago. So, he might have been floor manager or something like that. So, he had that as a background. His father-in-law may have been somebody who was pushing him out there to the statewide fray in politics.

Reynolds: Do you remember the trip that he made with Jesse Jackson to try to negotiate the release of some captured soldiers during the '90s?

Bradley: No. Specifically, no, not Blagojevich going on the trip. I remember the incident, Jesse Jackson going. Blagojevich has Serbian heritage. I don't know why that doesn't stick in my mind. I really don't know. I just remember Jesse Jackson, who had a track record of doing these kind of humanitarian trips. I always assumed that Jesse Jackson made those forays, those kind of trips, with the blessing—although not publically announced—with the blessing of the U.S. administration.

Reynolds: Could have been the Clinton administration during this period…

Bradley: Yeah, yeah.

Reynolds: …when he did most of his…

Bradley: But clearly, Jesse Jackson was the name that I could relate to and that I—

Reynolds: …by publicity for the whole thing.

Bradley: For sure, past publicity, yeah. If you had asked me, did Rod Blagojevich go on that trip, I would have said, no, why would he go on that trip, on such a trip, unless…

Reynolds: It was his Serbian heritage, I think, was the only reason. He probably…I don't whether he, maybe, was connected to the Jackson family, although always was talks of feuds with him and the younger Jesse Jackson.

Bradley: Until today, when you prompt what his main heritage is: Serbian. I'm sure I heard it at the time, but it's something that didn't stick.

Reynolds: So, the former governor bursts on the scene as a sort of an earthy, glib, unconventional politician, with a blue collar background. His dad worked in the steel mill, his mom for the CTA.

Bradley: And listen, he beat that dead horse, let me tell you, throughout all his political career. Every time he was on the stump, he always went back and repeated. It was almost like a broken record. Sorry for the interruption.

Reynolds: Well, and I think he announced his run at the steel mill, where his dad lived, out in front of it.

Bradley: Where his dad worked. Yes, it was an empty shell of a steel mill then, the building was, anyway. I remember getting really—this is off the track a little bit—honked, because I think his first campaign headquarters, election night, he set-up in that place. It was way out. I don't know, somewhere where it wasn't easy to get telephone lines and stuff like that for broadcast coverage of election night returns, let alone the terrible acoustics inside this big, old empty, steel building. Well anyway…

Reynolds: Well, that the kind of stories that are interesting, that you even covered it, maybe, is interesting. Because he was so obscure.

Bradley: Well, but not his speech, but election returns, yeah.

Reynolds: Oh, night of the election, he went back to that plant.

Bradley: That's where his election night headquarters was, was in this warehouse, this empty building. Yeah, that's what I was referring to.

Reynolds: By that time, you had to cover him. He kind of portrayed himself as a self-styled sort of populist, who was going to shake things up and change things.

Did he remind you of any other gubernatorial candidate or politician in the state? Was he fairly unique in that regard?

Bradley: Well, not unique; it sounded a lot like the story we got from Dan Walker, when he started his campaign for governor. Now, Walker had no prior public service in the state house or in congress, like Blagojevich did. Walker, I think, probably had blue collar upbringing, but he went on to college, got his degree, went into law, got his law degree and was a CEO. He was chief legal council, I think, for Montgomery Ward, at the time he declared for governor. Do you remember or recall that Walker served on the staff of Governor Adlai Stevenson?

Reynolds: Yes, I do. That's correct.

Bradley: I think he was a legal intern at that time, but that was Dan Walker's first exposure.

Reynolds: He also worked on the commission that explored the 1968 riots.

Bradley: No, that was Kerner, the Kerner Commission.

Reynolds: The Kerner Commission. Well, what was it that Walker worked on, the thing with the convention? Didn't he come up with the police riot? Well, of course, we're talking about a former governor, so we probably ought to move on. But, it seems like he'd claimed some fame on a commission that he had been appointed to, the Walker Commission, I recall.

Bradley: Well, I think you're right about that. But maybe there were two different…

Reynolds: I think it was, which kind of gave him that anti-machine thing, because he did this report on the police riots around the 1968 conventions and that really—we were talking about old man Daley—that really…

Bradley: Yep, in the '68, yep. But didn't Walker also, I think, in his…

Reynolds: A Good Government Commission, at some point, maybe with Adlai Stevenson or Kerner. It was kind of floating around the state bureaucracy at times.

Bradley: Didn't Walker come to believe that state government could be run a lot like business? He was a CEO and legal council for Montgomery Ward, so he had that exposure to big business and how big business was run and operated. He may have come to believe that there wasn't really, in fact, much difference between a governor running a state and a CEO of a corporation, like Montgomery Ward. Maybe he saw himself as having the skills to do that. Anyway…

Reynolds: Anyway, back to the former governor. The comparison is an interesting one, again, because of the irony of him building sort of a self-styled populist, like Dan Walker, but in reality, he had this machine mentality, which he had grown up with and that his father-in-law was involved in. That slightly different than Walker, who had, you know, he was battling the machine…

Bradley: He fought it tooth and toe nail, yeah.

Reynolds: …every inch of the way. So, he gets into the primary, the Democratic primary, and he has two opponents, two principal opponents—there might have been some secondary candidates there—Roland Burris, a downstate African American politician who had had a lot of success…

Bradley: He was attorney general at that time, wasn't he?

Reynolds: …I believe so…and Paul Vallas, who had worked for the Daley administration—I believe the Daley administration—as the head of the school district and had developed a real reputation as a progressive sort of person in the educational field. In fact, to this day, he's still is doing that.

Bradley: He may have been a mentor too for Arne Duncan, who now is with the…—

Reynolds: Secretary of education.

Bradley: …secretary of education, with the Obama administration. But Arne Duncan was also the head honcho in the Chicago public schools system, too. But that's where Vallas first distinguished himself.

Reynolds: I think Daley kind of made that position like a CEO position, which was kind of unique. He was like the CEO of the Chicago public schools, which at one point, was called the worst school system in the country.

Bradley: It was. His job was to achieve some success in running it like a business. I think he was very successful. Certainly. He distinguished himself and earned a lot of respect as an educator, a professional educator, yeah.

Reynolds: So these are his two principal opponents, and what was tremendously surprising about that primary, was that he won it in a squeaker, and he won it with downstate support. This is the son[-in-law] of a machine politician, with a funny name, and he decides that the way he's going to win this thing is to go downstate and campaign, and he wins. Did that surprise you at all, that he was able to make those kind of inroads to downstate?

Bradley: Yeah, because down-staters were suspicious of people with funny names. If you go back to the '86 campaign, when Lyndon LaRouche had a ticket, and he had people running in all offices on the statewide ticket. Two of those people won the Democratic primary. I think one for lieutenant governor and one for…was it secretary of state, Janice Hart? Very much a common English,

Anglo-Saxon name, and the other was Mark Fairchild, also a pretty American-like name, unlike Putchensky or Sangmeister—

Reynolds: Sangmeister was the name that…

Bradley: Blagojevich. Interesting comparison, but because…was it Fairchild who was the lieutenant governor?

Reynolds: Either that or secretary of state. Well no. You're right; it was lieutenant governor, which just corrupted the Adlai Stevenson ballot.

Bradley: Yeah, because he was looking at the prospect of having to run in the general election with a LaRouche as his running mate, I think.

Reynolds: Janice Hart, I think, was the secretary of state.

Bradley: Secretary of state, yeah. Anyway, that burned a lot downstate voters, I think, because they stayed away from funny names to vote for more familiar names, which turned out to be radicals, LaRouchies. They learned from that experience, I think, that maybe having a foreign sounding name, like Putchensky or Sangmeister, wasn't all that bad. I can only surmise that they were a lot more willing to vote for somebody with a name like that. And it may have been—he was a good looking guy with a…

Reynolds: Yeah, we mentioned the fact that it's been mentioned that, of course, his father-in-law was very close with the guy who ran the County Board Association.

Bradley: This was Trouser or…

Reynolds: No, out of Rock Island, Illinois.

Bradley: Oh, Rock Island.

Reynolds: And that seemed to be a significant, sort of, element.

Bradley: He was the chairman of the County Chairman's Association.

Reynolds: Yes.

Bradley: The Democratic County Chairman's Association.

Reynolds: Yes, and that helped him organize downstate.

Bradley: Well, didn't Blagojevich pull that guy into his administration too?

Reynolds: I believe you're right, or at least people that he recommended too. He became sort of a…

Bradley: Well, I think he was kind of like head of Veteran's Affairs or something else. Anyway.

Reynolds: I think you're right about that. I had a friend who went to one of his rallies during the primary, and he literally hugged everybody that came into the rally. So, he seemed to have some real good one-on-one skills as a politician.

Bradley: Talk about kissing babies, he hugged them all. (laugh)

Reynolds: So, he seemed to have some real political skill in that, and he apparently flew all over downstate and made a real impression.

Bradley: I remember in the campaign, him doing a lot of flying. I'd never heard the story, the characterization of him hugging everybody like that, which, after he became governor, certainly didn't fit what we came to learn about Rod Blagojevich.

Reynolds: So, he wins this primary in a close race. Then he gets to the general election, and his opponent is Jim Ryan, who had been the attorney general and is saddled with the last name of the previous governor who was in…

Bradley: Yes, George Ryan.

Reynolds: …who was heavily being investigated, and maybe even… I can't remember whether he was indicted at this point or was close to being indicted?

Bradley: He wasn't indicted until after he left office, was he?

Reynolds: Yeah, I think you're right about that, so it was probably in the wind.

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: In the wind.

Bradley: Although George Ryan, his whole four years, the one term as governor, there was always this case, this corruption issue…

Reynolds: Hanging over him.

Bradley: …hanging, and led directly to him making the decision not to seek election to a second term, because, I think, it became clear that something was going to happen and that there was no way that he could win re-election. Although, Blagojevich, later (laugh) proved that isn't necessarily always the case. (laugh)

Reynolds: It's always something new in Illinois politics. So, he's got the last name of the former governor. He's got all these scandals surrounding the Republicans,

twenty-six years of Republican control. I think Jim Ryan had had a lot of health problems .

Bradley: Not only personally, but his family.

Reynolds: His family, and the enthusiasm of his campaign, I think, had been doubted by a lot of people, a lot of Republicans. From you're observation, was this just too much to overcome? That's why the former governor had the edge in this campaign.

Bradley: My belief is he had the edge because he was a Democrat. You just mentioned that there had been almost thirty years of Republican control in the governor's office. And people in Illinois, Chicago and downstate, were ready for a change from Republican to Democrat. Whoever won the primary in 2002 would have been elected governor in November; I'm pretty sure of that.

Reynolds: Could have been Roland Burris, it could have been Paul Vallas.

Bradley: It could have been Roland Burris, Paul Vallas. I think Vallas became pretty popular with down-staters.

Reynolds: Well Vallas was… as I recall, one of the criticisms of his campaign in the primary was, he didn't like to fly in those little planes. So he wasn't even going downstate, and that sort of gave the opening for Blagojevich.

Bradley: And whatever Roland Burris was able to glean from the downstate Democratic voters, because he came out of Centralia and was always considered a down-stater because of that.

Reynolds: He'd built inroads to the Chicago African-American community.

Bradley: Oh, yeah. And in later years, was considered to be a Chicago area person. He was only a down-stater so long as he got out of high school, because once he got his law degree, then he was in and around the Chicago area.

Reynolds: I think his future mausoleum is in Chicago. Maybe we'll talk about that a little later.

Bradley: (laugh) I'm not too familiar with the background of that, I know it exists, but…

Reynolds: Yeah. So, Blagojevich wins the general election, and I'm recalling that it wasn't tremendously close, but it wasn't a landslide either. But he wins that. He comes into office very self-assertive, very combative. His slogan was "We're going to change the old ways of doing business in state government." Then he pledged not to raise major income taxes and had very large initiatives in mind that he came out with—in both healthcare, where he wanted to cover everybody, and in education, where he wanted to raise the contribution, to

individual students—that the state was making, tremendously. Did it seem like a realistic sort of program that he came into office with, from your point of view?

Bradley: Realistic, yeah.

Reynolds: I guess, from a political, strategic point of view, it makes a lot of sense.

Bradley: That's the reality that I'm referring to, anyway. I was always suspicious of Blagojevich's intelligence. That's a terrible thing to say about somebody like a former governor or somebody who served in Congress. But, he brought a lot of out-of-state people of his age into Illinois, into his administration. I always suspected that all of these ideas were more of other people's than Rod Blagojevich's. Rod Blagojevich specifically: I just think he was, as governor, fronting for a lot of other people's ideas.

Reynolds: And I think, to put it in context too, he actually believed—as did, I think, Dan Walker, we were talking about him earlier—that he could be a presidential…

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: …candidate, and so his selection of issues, especially the healthcare, had a lot to do with him building some sort of a reputation as a…

Bradley: It really stuck in his craw that Barack Obama suddenly emerged as the Democratic candidate for president. Yeah, I remember Blagojevich and his people: there was behind the scenes speculation that that's what he was looking at, was to put in his due as governor of Illinois, and that would clear the way for his emergence as a viable Democratic candidate for president.

Reynolds: As we later learned, he really didn't like being governor very much (laugh) [and] was doing everything he could to find another thing to do.

Bradley: Well, I think he just saw it—as being governor—as one of the stepping stones on the path to the White House.

Reynolds: The other thing to put this into context is that, when Ryan was governor, the economy was fairly good, and he had a big public works program, and the state spent money pretty handily. But at the end of Ryan's term, there was that recession, where the technology bubble burst, and so there was a fairly substantial recession that put the state in some financial difficulty.

Bradley: Wasn't that driven too, in part, by what happened on September 11, 2001?[4]…

Reynolds: You're absolutely right.

[4] He refers to the destruction on 9/11 by terrorists of the twin towers of the Trade Center in New York City.

Bradley: …because the election came. Well, the primary—that happened in September of ’01—the primary was in March of ‘02, General Election in November of ‘02, so yeah.

Reynolds: It takes a while for these things to sort of ripple through the economy. So, you’re right. The combination of 9/11 and the tech bust, put the state in some difficulties. So, he comes into office with some budget problems, as many governors do, and with these big, big initiatives.

Bradley: And pledges not to increase taxes of any kind, anywhere; although, I can’t remember where, but it seems to me like he fudged on that in a couple of areas—it was during his administration—it began to sweep a lot of different accounts of extra money just sitting there that…

Reynolds: Yeah, he comes into the office and immediately challenges legislative leadership and battles the state bureaucracy, starts firing people and reorganizing people, challenges the State Board of Education, starts raiding those special funds and starts ducking the press corps in Springfield. This style, which evolved: Did you have any sense that it was succeeding at all, that he was going to have success with that kind of a style?

Bradley: No, and I didn’t think too much about it; rather I thought more in terms of—my reaction had more to do with the stories, the color and the copy being generated—by how he conducted himself, when he was in Springfield or not in Springfield, sneaking into the state house without reporters seeing him or leaving the state house. When he was in the state house, he kind of kept to himself in his office, literally. When he got ready to leave, he had this state police security detail around him. They moved like a clock, in and out of that building, just to provide the insulation from the media. Yeah, we get…

Reynolds: And he must have had several escape routes from the State House, where he could duck people.

Bradley: Oh, I think so.

Reynolds: Was it frustrating reporters that you were supervising?

Bradley: Yeah, because you might have a sense that he was about to leave the building but were never really sure which exit he would use, (laugh) because there were several. Some were underground from the Capitol. You go to the Armory into the Stratton Building, into the Howlett Building and the Archives Building—

Reynolds: There’s literally dozens of ways to get out of that State Capitol.

Bradley: Yeah, and you never knew exactly. He put a lot miles too, on the Illinois Air Force planes, flying back and forth. He sometimes would make the trip from Chicago to Springfield twice in a day.

Reynolds: Talk a little bit about his image in Springfield, where, I'm thinking, he had some bad experiences with crowds in Springfield, because he just did not make appearances anywhere. His wife was very scarcely seen in Springfield. I had an occasion to see him run down the street where I live, and he was surrounded by state police, did not work the crowd at all, even though there were people watching him. He just didn't want anything to do with the city of Springfield.

Bradley: Well, in a very short period of time after he was inaugurated for his first term, he announced that he and his wife were not going to live in the Executive Mansion. That put him at cross purposes with residents in the city of Springfield and downstate people generally, because there's something about the fact that Illinois provides this executive home for its chief executive, the governor, and the expectation always was, and still is, that the governor of Illinois will live in the Governor's Mansion in Springfield. That was people's expectation. When he made a point of not doing that—I mean, he didn't do secretively, much like Pat Quinn has been doing, apparently—but he was pretty open and almost flaunting about it. At that time, he had one daughter, I think, and a second daughter was born during his first term, I think, as governor, and made a big deal about how they wanted their kids to grow up and be educated in the Chicago Public School System, blah, blah, blah. It didn't endear him to the Springfield population or downstate voters. In that sense, yeah, he turned the crowd against him.

Reynolds: Plus, they'd had twenty-six years of Republican control of all the major jobs in Springfield. He was firing people and letting people go and attacking bureaucracies, and so there were a lot of angry people in Springfield, obviously.

Bradley: There were, because the expectation, at least on the part of Democrats, was that, after twenty-six years, we get a Democrat in the governor's office. We expect some spoils from taking over the titular head of the State of Illinois, in the name of a governor. So there was a lot of pressure on Blagojevich to produce, in that respect. But I think…

Reynolds: Plus, he was very clumsy at clearing out the bureaucracy. I'm sure he understood that he needed to do that, but he was eliminating jobs in Springfield, eliminating people in Springfield, not doing it in sort of a more rational or strategic way…

Bradley: A lot of grumbling behind the scenes, yeah, political scenes.

Reynolds: …and there was this tremendous sense that jobs were being eliminating in Springfield and being created in Chicago, because he was always up in Chicago, that I think created a lot of hostility.

Bradley: And, you know, he effectively—I think, from the standpoint of how he conducted himself—he essentially moved the state capitol to Chicago, in that sense, although not legally. Figuratively, it wasn't Springfield. It was literally Chicago, because he kept office hours in Chicago, and, as it turns out, he didn't really spend all that much time at the Chicago office, in the State of Illinois Building. He was just really home an awful lot, conducting…

Reynolds: As we found out after the trials.

Bradley: Yeah. So that really angered people, Republican and Democrat, when he treated the state like that, and the office like that.

Reynolds: And the city of Springfield like that.

Bradley: Well, yeah.

Reynolds: Disrespecting them. The other thing I recall about his dealing with the legislature was that there were, of course, tons of budget battles because of the fiscal situation. He wanted big, new initiatives approved so that, you know, created tremendous combative combat sessions in the legislature. But he was calling special sessions all the time…

Bradley: (laugh) Set a record.

Reynolds: …and then he was not around.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: He would make everyone come back to Springfield, and then he wouldn't be in Springfield.

Bradley: Calling the special session was his way of punishing them. He didn't really, I think, ever believe or have the expectation that special legislative sessions would produce anything. He saw it as a penalty or a punishment for the Democratic leadership for not granting him more access and supporting his notions of his legislative programs.

Reynolds: I believe, at one point, didn't Madigan sue him because of all the special sessions? It got so bad that he just said, I'm not…and people were not showing up. He would call a special session and nobody would come, and it just got…

Bradley: I think you're right. Didn't that go to the Supreme Court, maybe?

Reynolds: It's possible, yeah.

Bradley: Was there a finding by the Supreme Court?

Reynolds: I don't recall whether it got resolved or not, but it was part of the give and take on these things. Madigan was so upset with him that they took legal action against him.

Bradley: All Blagojevich succeeded in doing was solidifying the resistance from Democratic leadership in the House and in the Senate.

Reynolds: Upsetting people in the legislature, which did not help him as we go along here. It really hurt him.

The other thing was the big initiatives that he wanted to pursue. Some of them, he had some success on. But he would work around the legislature to fund these things. I remember JCAR was a big thing in this. He would [ignore] rules written…

Bradley: Joint Committee on Administrative Rules.

Reynolds: Yeah, or they were a problem with him doing these things, trying to steal funds from earmarked special funds to do what he what wanted to do, so that they weren't legislated in any way.

Bradley: He tried any way and every way that he could think of, or that people around him—of course, I always had my own suspicions about the people he gathered around him, about who was really running the place—anyway he was looking for any way and every way to get around legislative appropriations for funds that he wanted for his programs. And you made reference to some of the fees, like hunting license fees and stuff like that…—

Reynolds: Road fund – I think he raided the road fund.

Bradley: Some of these built up surpluses. All he could see was tons of money sitting in these accounts, not being spent, not being used, and he had some success…

Reynolds: Funneling them to the programs he wanted to fund.

Bradley: …they called it "sweeping the accounts" – but sweeping the surplus out of those accounts and then spending them on the programs that he was seeking legislative support for.

Reynolds: Plus he became sort of the king of gimmicks. Wasn't he going to sell state buildings, like the Thompson Center?…

Bradley: Yes, I believe…

Reynolds …which I don't think he every succeeded at that. Was he the guy that privatized the lotteries, sold the lottery franchise?

Bradley: I think so, yes.

Reynolds: Tried to sell casino licenses and all sorts of gimmicky sort of…

Bradley: Anything to generate money that he could access, without needing legislative approval. That was the whole goal, I think, that he was after. I don't think he necessarily had any particular belief that the lottery should be privatized.

Well, the other thing was—I can't even think about the governing entity for the tollway system up in Chicago—he wanted to farm that out, didn't he?

Reynolds: I believe you're right.

Bradley: He would sell off the whole tollway system and then…

Reynolds: Which is a big, big money maker.

Bradley: Oh yeah. Well, but there was a precedent for that, wasn't there? Was it Indiana?

Reynolds: I think Indiana has done that and maybe some other states, yeah.

Bradley: And he saw that…

Reynolds: And I think even Daley toyed with, and may have privatized, the Skyway up there, remember?

Bradley: Well, yeah. I think that is all private enterprise, I think, in the Oasis, there in the buildings above the tollway system. Anyway, he was looking for ways to get his hands on money to fund all of these special programs, ideas that he had, without needing legislative approval or support.

Reynolds: We talked about him ducking the press corps, here in Springfield. Was his media strategy unique in a way, because he was, maybe, only talking to the reporters that he liked in the Chicago area or going directly to people on radio shows? Was there something unique about the way he played the media, compared to previous governors?

Bradley: I think Dan Walker did some of that, if I recall right. But I think that his intent, of course, was to get favorable coverage by doing that. He and/or his staff obviously knew where the supportive reporters were and knew that they would be more than willing to access him. He was willing to do that, expecting and anticipating favorable reporting, so, yeah.

Reynolds: Do you remember any interviews that he granted downstate people or, for instance, your network? Did he ever grant any interviews that… We're all familiar with the scene in the Capitol, where the governor, comes out of the office and reporters rush up there and ask questions? I don't ever remember seeing that happen, unless it was very chaotic, and he moved right through the crowd.

Bradley: It may have happened, early in his first term. But you're right, I don't recall that, because that was always a platform for that—oh, what's the term I'm looking for? Not confrontation—but the governors went out of the way to talk to the media. I mean…

Reynolds: To get a leg up on the opposition…or to state their case or whatever.

Bradley: And the media expected the governor to react that way. Blagojevich may have tried that a couple of times, but he didn't like that kind of pressure, I don't think.

Reynolds: Seems like, to me, as though—both of us not living in the Chicago area, maybe weren't as exposed to it—but he would go to radio shows, up in Chicago or have, like, town hall meetings with, you know, radio talk show hosts and things like that. So, I think his image was a little better in the Chicago area than it was downstate, where it really soured well into his term.

So, we have the first, sort of, public indication that there might be something amiss, when Blagojevich's father-in-law goes public with his distaste for the way jobs and contracts are being let out through state government.

Bradley: Well, didn't…

Reynolds: Is that the first time that you sensed…and then, of course, there was some rumblings from Lisa Madigan and Patrick Fitzgerald that they might be investigating some hiring irregularities. Is that the first time you remember them…there being sort of a hint of large scale corruption?

Bradley: My recollection is, the hint came with Dick Mell. That was Blagojevich's father-in-law, who was a part of the Democratic machine in Chicago. He went public and raised the specter of Blagojevich handing out jobs as payment for campaign contributions—or, I'm not sure how he characterized them—but it surprised a lot of people. It had more to do with the fact that Dick Mell had his own agenda, in terms of jobs, in the Blagojevich administration.

Reynolds: Goes back to his connections at the county chairman's.

Bradley: Yes, yes and he even publically took the position that Rod Blagojevich wouldn't be governor if it weren't for my [Dick Mell's] influence in Democratic politics in the Chicago area and in the state of Illinois. He would not have been a Congressman, were it not for my [Dick Mell's] contacts and my [Dick Mell's] political knowledge and expertise, influence and clout. And he complained that Blagojevich, apparently, didn't want to grant him that kind of access. So, he was looking for a way to, in the public's eye, scold his son-in-law and get his attention. It may have been that he stumbled across (laugh) some stuff that he wasn't aware was really going on. Who knows? But yeah, that was…

Reynolds: I believe he started complaining about some of the people around Blagojevich, who were wheeling and dealing with all this. And he had no input to any of that or influence on any of that.

Bradley: That was the first hint, yeah. I don't remember at what point—it was during the first term, but I don't know how far into the first term that began to happen—fairly quick, wasn't it?

Reynolds: Well, the other thing I remember is that he had a buddy that ran a landfill, and he was looking for a permit. And Blagojevich turned him down. That was sort of the first thing that got Mell upset.

Bradley: That's right. I forgot about that. I mean, I remember it now.

Reynolds: Yeah. So, there was, like, a series of events—I think you're right—very early on in the administration. Did the media key in on that and the fact that Patrick Fitzgerald sort of hinted at an investigation, to the point where the media thought there was something there? There might have been some real juicy corruption that could be investigated?

Bradley: I think the media antenna went up. The collective media antennas went up at that time and stayed up because, by that time, they saw what was happening with George Ryan, in terms of when the two things happened.

Reynolds: I think, into the first couple of years' of administration, the Ryan thing was going on. That might have diverted the media's attention from Blagojevich.

Bradley: And it may be that Blagojevich and some of the people around him thought that, well, the media attention is focused over on George Ryan. We can pull some of these shenanigans, if we're careful, and get away with it.

Reynolds: Which, of course, we later learned, they had strategized about doing all of this stuff from the very beginning.

Bradley: Even before his inauguration in his first term. It began, apparently, in some forms, right after Blagojevich was elected in November '02.

Reynolds: So, the combination—in terms of your coverage—you had lots of interesting little personal things that Blagojevich was doing. And also, now, these little corruption things were popping up…

Bradley: Yep.

Reynolds: …that made him an interesting story for the press.

Bradley: And then, the guy got re-elected in '06, which really surprised me. Because, when it came time for him to decide whether or not to seek re-election, I think

there was a lot going on in the background, and some of that was beginning to find its way into the public market.

Reynolds: But he seemed oblivious to all of that, right up until the point when he was arrested. But we'll talk about that later.

Bradley: Well, yeah, that's true. I don't know if that was the public face he was putting on, or if, maybe, privately he took personal exception: How dare you. After all, I am Governor of the State of Illinois.

Reynolds: And this is the way we do business in Illinois, even though he said he was going to change the way we do business.

Bradley: Do you see Patrick Fitzgerald, who is the U. S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois…was recruited into that job by Peter Fitzgerald, who was a very conservative U.S. Senator from Illinois, served only one term. It was almost like Peter Fitzgerald saw his election as the means for bringing somebody like Patrick Fitzgerald—who was a real bulldog when it came to political, governmental corruption—into Illinois. He'd had some success with similar kinds of investigations in the New York area, was it?

Reynolds: You're right.

Bradley: It was like Peter Fitzgerald, maybe…

Reynolds: He was not a conventional Republican.

Bradley: No, he wasn't.

Reynolds: It was part of that conservative wing of the Republican Party that would pop up every so often and have success. He managed to get elected Senator.

Bradley: And he wanted to get Blagojevich, maybe because…

Reynolds: Well, he was after more, the people in his own party. He was after Ryan. He didn't like the way state government had been run for years and years, this wing of the Republican, yeah. This was sort of a combine too, of wink-wink and Democrats, Republicans.

Bradley: See, if Patrick Fitzgerald hadn't been made U. S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, the Federal Prosecutor's Office, I'm not sure if anything would have happened to Blagojevich, in terms of political corruption.

Reynolds: Or he was, of course, responsible for the Ryan, too, and hit on a lot of people, Democrats, up in the Chicago area too.

Bradley: Ryan may have run for a second term as governor and been elected, and we might never have heard of Rod Blagojevich. (laugh)

Reynolds: Well, back to his re-election campaign: he's running against Judy Baar Topinka.

Bradley: In the 2006 campaign.

Reynolds: I don't know whether people would consider her a strong or a weak candidate, but I recall that the Ryan thing was still going on, sort of, and one of the most famous commercials was a scene of her dancing with George Ryan. They ran that commercial continuously, so that his re-election even benefited from the Ryan corruption trial. Were you surprised that Judy Baar Topinka, who really is kind of an interesting character, she didn't do a better job at running against him?

Bradley: I am, and I don't know what the margin was in that election.

Reynolds: I think it was respectable. I don't think it was a landslide.

Bradley: Yeah, you're right. I remember thinking, at the time, that she had—she'd been what, state treasurer? She had two terms as state treasurer…

Reynolds: I think that's right.

Bradley: …ahead of that run. It may have been…was she in office as state treasurer when she ran for governor in '06?

Reynolds: She had been the state treasurer from '95 to the time Blagojevich got into office, no, through the first term. So, she had been in several terms as state treasurer.

Bradley: Three terms probably, yeah.

Reynolds: Right, through Edgar, Ryan and first term of Blagojevich.

Bradley: So, she was still state treasurer when she ran against Blagojevich.

Reynolds: And she was the only Republican office holder, at that point, I believe. Wasn't it?

Bradley: Yeah, I think you're right.

Reynolds: Yeah, because they were just…I mean, the '02 election just completely wiped the Republicans out.

Bradley: There had been more and more stories of Dick Mell outing. There had been more and more stories about federal prosecutors, or the FBI, investigating some going on things within the Blagojevich administration. I really thought that Judy Baar Topinka might take him out in the general election, for no other reason than the negative publicity that was out there about the federal

prosecutors and the FBI looking into some of his dealings. I thought that would be enough of an impact on his re-election campaign that it would take a measure, take the toll, and that Judy Baar would emerge as the winner.

Reynolds: First female…well, first Republican female candidate to run for governor. You know, Dawn Netsch was the Democrat. So that women haven't really broken that glass ceiling yet. She's an interesting character. She just—

Bradley: She's back in office now, of course, as state comptroller. But did you know that her background, before she got into politics, was journalism?

Reynolds: No, I didn't know that.

Bradley: Yeah, she was a newspaper reporter for, I think, one of the suburban papers.

Reynolds: Like the *Herald,* maybe, or the *Copley Group,* out in the suburbs?

Bradley: I forget the name of the paper, but I was thinking more that she may have reported for a weekly, but I can't remember. I just know that her background was in journalism.

Reynolds: She became a politician, actually, kind of late in life, didn't she?

Bradley: Yeah, she did and I think started out…

Reynolds: Maybe she started out in the legislature, though. I don't recall.

Bradley: Was she state senator?

Reynolds: Yeah, I think so. Interesting. Well, there's a cast of characters that start to emerge in the public, guys like Chris Kelley, who was a close, personal friend of him…

Bradley: Didn't he commit suicide?

Reynolds: He committed suicide. …Tony Rezko

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: Stuart Levine and Bill Cellini both bridged the Republican to Democratic side on these pension boards and others. When they started indicting people and putting people on trial, did…

Bradley: And winning convictions.

Reynolds: Yes, yes. …did you begin to sense that the governor would be in trouble? That this actually would, maybe, go to the…of course, we've just experienced the governor be indicted and put in jail.

Bradley: Sure. Well…

Reynolds: Did you begin to sense that this governor was in real trouble?

Bradley: Yes, because I assumed that Patrick Fitzgerald would be successful, like he was with Ryan, in getting associates to roll over. That happened with George Ryan. I assumed that…

Reynolds: Use the same old, exact strategy that he used for…

Bradley: I assumed that the same strategy would be pursued because Fitzgerald was going after some of these associates before tackling the main man, but it his was way of getting to. I think he created the road map with George Ryan and used again with Blagojevich. And sure, he won convictions of Stuart Levine, Rezko…

Reynolds: Chris Kelley got indicted on a separate item…

Bradley: That was income tax.

Reynolds: But he was part of the fundraising group, and his suicide was also kind of a shocking story on all of this.

Bradley: But anyway, yeah. Of course, the surprising thing about Blagojevich was the way in which Patrick Fitzgerald announced his plan for the governor. That was to arrest him…

Reynolds: Yeah, I mean, the day that that happened, were you shocked and surprised by that? Did that just kind of bowl you over, or did you see it coming?

Bradley: It bowled me over. I wouldn't say, shocked; I was surprised, yeah, because that happened right in the middle of one of my newscasts. I had my state house reporter on the line. When that story broke on the Associated Press wire, I was in the studio. Right there on the computer screen was the bulletin that FBI agents had arrested Rod Blagojevich. This was the 8:25 news. We didn't learn about it until then. This happened around 6:00 in the morning. All I could think about [was], this is great. This is happening while I'm on the air, with a Newsman. Now, that's a terrible way to put it, but from that standpoint, I was…(laugh) I remember Sean Crawford, when I was reporting this. I had him on the phone and was on the air, too. I said to Crawford, "What do you make of that?" He said, "Huh." (laugh) He was on the air. (laugh)

Reynolds: Did you have people that could cover it up there, while it was going on?

Bradley: No, because he'd already been taken into custody, taken him down to the Federal Building for booking. I'm trying to remember if… I don't remember now how the story got out. It may have been that word leaked out of the prosecutor's office.

Reynolds: Well, the Chicago stations were probably on top of it almost immediately.

Bradley: I'm sure of that, and we didn't… Our access to goings on in Chicago was through the public radio station in Chicago, WBEZ, which is a part of this cooperative of Illinois Public Radio that we had created in Illinois. So, that was our access to goings on. Of course, they were on top of it, and as soon as they had something, some meat that they could chew on, they shared it with us. (laugh) It was great! It was great theater.

Reynolds: Would that rank as one of your most interesting moments in covering state government…

Bradley: Yes, yes, yes.

Reynolds: …all these years?

Bradley: Ah yeah. I think his arrest in his home by FBI agents at 6:00 in the morning…

Reynolds: So, you had prepared your newscast for the day.

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: And in the middle of doing it, this story breaks.

Bradley: It's breaking on the AP wire, yeah.

Reynolds: So, did you just stop and read the AP wire?

Bradley: Oh yeah, it was right on the computer screen, right there in the studio, yeah.

Reynolds: Interesting.

Bradley: You know, I think I was more surprised and shocked by that than I was the impeachment. Now, once he got impeached in the Illinois House, in my mind, his conviction in the Senate was a foregone conclusion. It was going to happen.

Reynolds: Was it more surprising than the George Ryan situation, where he actually was indicted and then found guilty?

Bradley: Yeah, I was more surprised.

Reynolds: That was surprising to a lot of people.

Bradley: I never would have predicted it, and I…

Reynolds: So, it's right up on a level with the Ryan thing, even beyond that, probably, in terms of…

Bradley: Well, now, his arrest, anyway, was beyond the Ryan thing. But that had more to do with how Fitzgerald, the federal prosecutor, the federal government, went about it. I mean, they didn't go to George Ryan's home and arrest him. He was indicted first, I think, by a federal grand jury and then…

Reynolds: The whole thing was done fairly civil and over a length of time. But that whole experience, of course, even amplified this situation.

Bradley: Patrick Fitzgerald always said, the only reason that he and the FBI moved like that was because he claimed they were convinced that Blagojevich was about to sell off the U.S. Senate seat, I think. And wanted to…

Reynolds: I think he called it a crime spree. (laugh)

Bradley: Yes, (laugh) a political crime spree. It would make Abe…was it Abe Lincoln or somebody…

Reynolds: Turn over in his grave, yeah.

Bradley: …turn over in their grave. I think he was convinced, or at least he said he was convinced, that Blagojevich was about to pull off another couple of…

Reynolds: Well, he had a number. Let's just talk about, as the charges emerged, became public. There were some juicy ones. I'm wondering, were you surprised or shocked by some of this stuff? There was a shakedown of a children's hospital executive for contributions. There was the Tribune Editorial Board was threatened with the Wrigley Field, sort of an exchange…

Bradley: There had been hints of those in the media, yeah.

Reynolds: Were these things…the selling of the Senate seat, of course, was the big one. There were, of course, lots of stories emerging about how they had sold jobs and contracts. There was that racing track bill, where they held up…he was not going to sign legislation until they got a check. Was the array of charges…even though we'd been through the Ryan thing, and kind of seen every (laugh) form of corruption you can think of, this was like a new level.

Bradley: It was. It was almost unbelievable, but the specifics of them didn't come as a surprise because there'd been hints at every one of those…

Reynolds: Charges.

Bradley: …charges that had been in the media, to some degree or another. I think, by that time… you know, that information didn't come along till after his arrest. Once he was arrested by the FBI and arraigned, charged and then released on his own recognizance, anything that came out of the grand jury investigation thing was no longer a surprise. We may have been surprised by the fact that we hadn't heard about this yet or hadn't…

Reynolds: We didn't have the details of it.

Bradley: …heard the tips or details, yes. But the things that were starting to come out were no longer a surprises. It was just adding to, already, the body of…

Reynolds: Well, the other thing that was tremendously surprising to me was that he didn't realize that he was being wire tapped and that people were wearing wires, and his phone was wire tapped. One of the most interesting recordings that they played was…

Bradley: I thought he suspected about his phone because, didn't he make a…

Reynolds: Well, some staff person said, "You know, somebody might be recording this." (laugh) And he, like, hesitates. You can see it, that he's…

Bradley: Oh, that's right; that's right.

Reynolds: …really? Or that he didn't realize… I mean, he seemed oblivious to the whole thing, right up until the point he was arrested.

Bradley: Right, right, I remember. I recall that reaction, yeah.

Reynolds: Unbelievable.

Bradley: Because they called him that morning, before they went to the house, to tell him they were coming. He said, "You're kidding. This is a joke?" That was his response to the FBI agent in charge who was going out to make the arrest.

Reynolds: I think his staff tried to warn him ahead of time, but he just, you know… Was there much media coverage at all of this, because Barack Obama had gotten elected, so that he had a Senate vacancy. I don't recall there ever being much said about that. So, this was all going on. He didn't make any statements about it.

Bradley: The biggest surprise for me out of all of this was that Blagojevich was trying to leverage huge amounts of money for the appointment to that vacant Senate seat. We all knew that there was the provision, provided by the state constitution, for replacing a sitting U.S. Senator.

Reynolds: That doesn't happen very often. The point of your career, maybe it happened once or twice. I think, maybe, didn't somebody like a Paul Douglas or somebody die in office and had to be replaced? I remember the name, Ralph Smith, at one point got appointed to the Senate. But, you know, it hasn't happened very many times.

Bradley: Douglas was defeated though.

Reynolds: Oh, okay. Maybe it was Dirksen, maybe, died in office?

Bradley: Evert Dirksen, I think, yeah. He died in office, yes. That's who Ralph Smith, I think, was appointed…

Reynolds: …and then was unable to be re-elected.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: I think he just served a couple of years or whatever. But anyway, it doesn't happen very often. And so, the media coverage of all that, there was nothing. I mean, the governor would be asked about it, and he would say, we're working on it.

Bradley: Working on it, yeah. Because, I don't think…I'm trying to remember, did Obama resign the Senate before he took the oath of office as president?

Reynolds: I think he did, and I think he stayed out of the whole thing, also; although, obviously, we found out later, there was communication between Rahm Emanuel, who was his chief of staff and…

Bradley: Blagojevich was arrested early in December of '08. Is that right?

Reynolds: That's right.

Bradley: And Obama had been elected president in November of '08. So, yeah, Obama must have formally resigned…

Reynolds: …before he took the oath.

Bradley: Before…well, that would have been in January.

Reynolds: Oh, that's right. So he must have done it several months before, to allow for…

Bradley: Well, before Blagojevich's arrest.

Reynolds: So, he had an immediate, sort of, need to put somebody into office.

Bradley: Yeah, there was probably a one month window of opportunity there, where he resigned, between the election in November to the first part of December, when Blagojevich was arrested. So, somewhere within that one month.

Reynolds: So, when all this activity began.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Yeah. What did you make of the whole Roland Burris thing, which, of course, evolved after he [Blagojevich] was arrested? He was still governor, before he was impeached, and the struggle Roland Burris (laugh) had to be seated in the Senate. There were people… Durbin got involved and Harry Reed got

involved and, I think, Lisa Madigan and Jesse White, inadvertently, were involved because of the paperwork.

Bradley: But, if there had been no effort by Blagojevich or his aids to extract a bribe in return for selecting a successful candidate for the seat…

Reynolds: Well, it became part of the impeachment…

Bradley: Well, yeah.

Reynolds: …process, yeah.

Bradley: But, you see, Burris wanted to be a U.S. Senator—I'm going to say it this way—in the worst way. I don't know if he would have coughed up the money that Blagojevich's people were wanting for the…

Reynolds: Which, there was some indication that he had done some fund raisers, I believe, for the governor. So, that all became an issue in the impeachment trial.

Bradley: Because the appointment didn't come until after Blagojevich had already been arrested and indicted. They hadn't yet set the trial date .

Reynolds: And he wouldn't quit.

Bradley: Yeah. So, clearly, the authority rested with him. I'm trying to remember now when was he…

Reynolds: It was probably seen by the governor as a political move to extract sympathy, maybe even sympathy in a jury pool. We talk about George Ryan, maybe, being involved in that. It might even have been a strategy in that regard, with the African American community, picking somebody like Roland Burris. But that whole thing went on for weeks, with him showing up in D.C. and not knowing whether he…(laugh) people following him around and impromptu press conferences…

Bradley: I don't think Roland Burris anticipated that all this would happen. I think he assumed that Blagojevich would announce the appointment, and he could go up to Washington and maybe even be able to run for election to that Senate seat, in his own right. I think he really thought he could do that and badly underestimated it.

Reynolds: Well, and there were key votes coming up with the Obama administration. As they got into office, they needed that Democratic vote.

Bradley: Yes, that Democratic seat, yes.

Reynolds: So. Anybody's behavior during that period surprise you, even the fact that Jesse White got drug into the thing about the paperwork, and Durbin and Harry Reed were (laugh) put on the spot?

Bradley: Well, I think Durbin, anyway, and politicians from Illinois were pretty sensitive to any kind of connection to Blagojevich's arrest, indictment and probable impeachment. Even before all of this, Mike Madigan had set up this special task force in the House to explore…

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: …how, or if, Rod Blagojevich could/should be impeached.

Reynolds: This was going on while this was all transpiring.

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: There had been a special House impeachment investigation committee, which I remember reading some of the articles about that.

Bradley: It was almost up to a year before.

Reynolds: Well, shortly after he was arrested, I think, and Quinn, I think, at that point said, this guy's going to be out of office in a couple of months.

Bradley: I think there was even some kind of ad hoc legislative committee that Madigan had created as a working group, up to a year before all this stuff hit the air waves.

Reynolds: You could be right about that. But this House committee, it started investigating impeachment, potential impeachment. They started exploring all the grievances that they had against the governor because it came down to Bill Holland and JCAR and… Every single thing that he'd done over the last three or four or five years that had upset them (laugh)…—

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: …became an issue in this. Do you remember much about that committee and what went on with it?

Bradley: Well, I remember the hearings they conducted, because we broadcast the testimony before the hearing. Roland Burris, of course, appeared before that…

Reynolds: Now, this is before the trial.

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: This is the House hearings.

Bradley: The House hearings on impeachment, yes.

Reynolds: And you guys covered that?

Bradley: We covered the committee hearings and the testimony presented. I forget now, how many days that went on. Barbara Flynn Curry, who was the majority leader in the House, a Democrat, was named to chair this committee that conducted these hearings and take testimony of Mike Madigan.

Reynolds: Did you guys do live coverage of that?

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: Were you the moderator for that?

Bradley: I was anchoring it at the station.

Reynolds: Anchoring it.

Bradley: We had two people provide color from the hearing room at the State Capitol building. Then, that committee reported out its findings to the full House, recommending impeachment. Then, there was a subsequent presentation of this to the full House. We carried all that live, including the debate on the impeachment article, in the full House. The passage adoption of that…

Reynolds: Which I think, there was only one person that voted against it?

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: A side issue was Patty Blagojevich's sister, I believe, a Mell, one of Mell's daughter, was in on…

Bradley: She was a state rep.

Reynolds: …and she abstained?

Bradley: She abstained; she was a state representative.

Reynolds: …rather than vote for or against him.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Any highlights or observations on that House committee, how that went? Any witnesses that you recall? So, that was where Roland Burris came to testify.

Bradley: Yeah, see my recollection of that was more with Burris' appearance before that committee than anybody else.

Reynolds: He was kind of the star attraction.

Bradley: Well yeah, because that seemed to be the focal point of the whole arrest, the federal arrest of Blagojevich.

Reynolds: The crime spree. (laugh)

Bradley: The crime spree, yeah. Terrible thing to say, but I don't have my own recollection of who else might have testified; although, I know there were several days.

Reynolds: Well, there was the whole issue of some of the things he had done. Bill Holland, I believe, did testimony on some of the goings on in state government. Seems like the JCAR officials testified.

Bradley: I remember Holland testifying about his inability to get the Blagojevich administration to cough up some of the information that he wanted as auditor general and either their reluctance or refusal or falling short of completeness. Yeah, I remember that but…

Reynolds: What do you remember about the Burris testimony? Did he come off candidly, or did you sense that he was hiding something?

Bradley: I sensed that he was hiding something, because he brought his attorney. That kind of smacked of guilt, or association of guilt.

Reynolds: Since he's an attorney too, obviously.

Bradley: Yes. So, I thought it was possible that Burris wanted to be a U.S. Senator so bad that he would do next to anything to make that happen.

Reynolds: Well, I think he promised to cooperate with this committee, maybe before he was seated? I can't remember the sequence of events now. I think that whole thing with him going to D. C. was after this, because they wanted to…maybe even Durbin said, "Let's let him testify first, before we decide."

Bradley: I'm trying to remember if the Democratic leadership in the U.S. Senate held that out as a condition of accepting Roland Burris' credentials.

Reynolds: I think you're right about that. I think it was, where it was put out there as, let's see what this guy has to say. There were lots of questions about his activity, fundraising, that had come up.

Bradley: It seemed to me like, when Burris was testifying, that there was a lot he didn't seem to know, that I assumed he should know or did know.

Reynolds: A lot of information being withheld.

Bradley: Yes. Had more to do with what he wasn't saying, what he wasn't providing for the committee, when there was every expectation, every reason to expect

that he would be as open and above board and cooperative as he possibly could, which, I think, made the whole thing kind of smell. (laugh) And even, to this day, I don't think we know the whole story, because I don't recall that it came out in the two trials that Blagojevich underwent.

Reynolds: And he [Burris] got seated in the Senate and just kind of blended in and was not a high profile member, didn't go out of his way to attract attention to himself, which was probably pretty smart.

Bradley: And none of the sitting Senators…they kept their distance from him as well, as I recall.

Reynolds: It seemed like it was his African-American heritage also played a part in this, you know. He sort of played the race card…

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: …at some point: You really going to deny me this seat, after you've just elected an American…

Bradley: I'm not sure that the leadership appreciated that, of the African American community. Yeah, I don't recall that they welcomed Roland Burris' appointment with open arms, because there was an odor out there, you know, about what went on before the appointment was made.

Reynolds: I think the whole thing was pretty embarrassing to everybody involved, and it went on for weeks and weeks and weeks.

Bradley: If anything, you know, I think it was kind of surprised that Burris stuck to his guns.

Reynolds: Yeah, because I think there was a lot of calls for him just to, you know…let's have a special election, get out of this thing. In fact, I think Pat Quinn's position was that there should be a special election.

Bradley: But there's no provision for it in Illinois' election law.

Reynolds: Well, you're right. He didn't back down, and he finally got seated. That was another (laugh) interesting chapter to this whole thing.

So, we talk about the House investigation committee. So, let's talk about the impeachment trial, which you had a big role in. There was live coverage on your radio network. You were the moderator, or the anchor, of the coverage.

Bradley: I was the anchor. I had two reporters downtown, in the Senate chamber.

Reynolds: Were you physically in the Senate chamber? No, you were down—

Bradley: I was in the studio at the station.

Reynolds: Two reporters down there.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Your highlights of all of that. Were you sitting there listening [to] the whole thing while you were…

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Key witnesses that you remember? The main issues that were raised?

Bradley: The legal council for the House was the lead prosecution witness in the Senate trial. I'm trying to remember his name, David…

Reynolds: Baine is coming to mind or something like that. I don't remember.

Bradley: I can't remember now.

Reynolds: It was presided on by the Chief Justice of the Illinois Supreme Court.

Bradley: That's right, yeah.

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: But this legal council, who…

Reynolds: Who represented the legislature, the Senate. He was appointed by the Senate?

Bradley: He was. See, the articles of impeachment that have been adopted by the House of Representatives, had to be presented at the trial. That was done by Madigan, the Speaker's legal council. He made the presentation in the Senate trial.

Reynolds: Which, as I recall…when the Bill Clinton thing went on, the trial was in the Senate, but the House had to present the arguments because they… So, it's the same thing.

Bradley: Right.

Reynolds: So, Madigan would have appointed the legal council…

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: …to present the case, because his branch had voted to impeach.

Bradley: This attorney was known to us. I apologize for not being able to come up with his name. I think he's not working for Madigan now, as a matter of fact, wrote

a book about his role. Anyway, he had worked for Mike Madigan as legal council for the Speaker for a couple, three years, even before all this stuff came along. He presented the articles of impeachment in the Senate trial. The Senators invited the governor to speak, and he hadn't accepted until almost the eleventh hour…

Reynolds: He boycotted it, said it was a monkey trial or a kangaroo court or whatever.

Bradley: But he finally did decide he wanted to speak at the trial, to the Senate. I remember, he flew down from Chicago that day and spoke before the Senate, made a dramatic, almost tearful, appeal to the Senate, not to remove him from office. I don't recall that the speech…

Reynolds: Did he address, point-by-point, many of the charges that had been made against him, or did he just talk generally?

Bradley: I think he talked generally. Sounded more like, if I recall right, a campaign speech. We were talking earlier about when he was out on the stump, campaigning. His speech in the Senate mirrored that in a lot of ways. He went over the highlights of…

Reynolds: All the good things he'd done as governor.

Bradley: …all the good things he'd done as governor. The issues in the articles of impeachment, of what he had done and all this, did not rise to the level that the House was attaching to those issues in the articles of impeachment. I don't recall that he denied necessarily, just that he did not believe that what he was accused of in the articles, rose to the level that demanded he be removed from office. Was almost like he was saying, "Oh come on. You can't be serious about this."

Reynolds: Which was his attitude in the media.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Up to that point.

Bradley: And some of that came through in his speech at his trial. But, it was clear that the Senate had already made up its mind, collectively. I mean, because reporters were talking to various members of the Senate, and nobody defended Blagojevich.

Reynolds: He didn't have any friends left.

Bradley: Well, yeah.

Reynolds: Because we've talked about his experience with the legislature all these years, and he really went into this thing with nobody to cover him.

Bradley: I don't know if he really thought he was going to get off or not. I know we speculated a lot in the media about whether or not he believed he had convinced members of the Senate in his appeal. It was almost unanimous. I'm trying to remember if was, in fact, unanimous.

Reynolds: I believe it was.

Bradley: Well, yeah, he had three-fourths a vote, isn't that right, in the Senate to be removed from office?

Reynolds: Yeah. The testimony of FBI people that had done the wiretapping, I think, that was allowed in the impeachment trial? Did a FBI agent come down and present testimony on what was on the tapes, because, if the recordings were an issue as to whether Patrick Fitzgerald would release the recordings for the impeachment trial or they would just…—

Bradley: You're remembering more than I am about this.

Reynolds: Well, I've gone through the news briefs.

Bradley: Oh, I see. (laugh)

Reynolds: Also, were there reporters that testified at the impeachment trial? Was there any of that going on?

Bradley: If there was, I don't recall that.

Reynolds: There was another little article—going through the news clips on this—about your coverage, that you had decided to stream the impeachment trial on the internet and that you were overloaded…

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: …almost immediately and what…

Bradley: You can listen to the station on-line now. But we had set up—in addition to that—one or two additional special streams. All three of those streams were overloaded.

Reynolds: Did it break the system down on you the first day?

Bradley: I think it did, yeah, because we were…

Reynolds: So, who was streaming it? Would it be the general public could stream, or other radio stations were streaming, or how was… What are the technical aspects of that? Why, just that…

Bradley: Well, even today, you can go to our website, to the WUIS website. If you want to listen, you can click on that button, and the station program will come back to you into your computer.

Reynolds: So, the system only allows so many people to do that.

Bradley: Well, yeah, I mean, that's predetermined. In our case, we knew that we could handle up to, I forget how many, simultaneously. In the first instance, less than a hundred, I think. But we added two more additional streams, fifty each. I can't remember the specifics.

Reynolds: Seems like there was a hundred and fifty, it said in the article, to begin with. And you had to expand that tremendously, because it was just, the system was overloaded.

Bradley: Because we were carrying it over the air on 91.9 FM, 89.3, which is our repeater, over in western Illinois. We were sending it to NPR Washington, and they were then distributing it back to the other Illinois stations. That's how they were getting access to it.

Reynolds: So, all the stations were covering it live?

Bradley: I think so, yeah. Certainly, we made it available to them, they were making their own local programmatic decisions about when they went live. I don't think all the stations carried everything that we were originating, live, but bits and pieces and parts of it. They may have… Certainly, I think they all carried the governor's speech and appeal at his impeachment trial in the State Senate.

Reynolds: And your role was, when there was breaks, you would come in, or on the hour, you would introduce interviews or?…

Bradley: Well, on the hour, we had to identify ourselves and provide a ten second break for member stations to identify themselves in their own local air. I had a couple of reporters who were assisting me in the coverage, and then, when there was a break in the hearings or in the trial, we would kind of wrap up with a synopsis, go back to regular programming until the lunch hour was over with. Then we would resume our live coverage when the trial resumed.

Reynolds: Did you have access to the main players in the Senate, like they had designated people to do questioning, I believe. Maybe both parties had designated key people to do the questioning?

Bradley: We had access to them, maybe, afterwards, but not during, because I don't recall that we interviewed any of the participants during the breaks.

Reynolds: People that presented testimony. For instance, did you get access to Roland Burris, back when he testified? Did he—

Bradley: Outside the hearing room, yeah. I mean, we carried his testimony live, before the impeachment committee. Any of the witnesses who testified were fair game. I can't tell you how many agreed to be interviewed or refused to be interviewed outside the committee hearing room.

Reynolds: The public was allowed in the impeachment trial, weren't they?

Bradley: Oh yeah.

Reynolds: How did they do that? Was there a lottery, do you remember?

Bradley: I don't remember, no.

Reynolds: People stood in line and there were probably just so many seats. It was in the Senate chambers, I imagine.

Bradley: Well, the trial was in the Senate chamber, yes. The House impeachment hearings was in one of the legislative hearing rooms.

Reynolds: So, it would have been limited.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Public access to that, I would think. Where the Senate chamber, they have a gallery, I believe, there.

Bradley: They have a gallery behind and at the rear, up on the sides. No, I don't think there's anything on the sides.

Reynolds: The Senate chamber, there's even less public access, probably.

Bradley: Than in the House. [There's] quite a bit of seating in the House.

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: I don't remember too much about any of those being issues.

Reynolds: What did you think of Blagojevich's lawyer, Ed Genson? Any impressions of him after? Wasn't he the main lawyer?

Bradley: In the trial.

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: I know I wondered why these people were… He and his son had made the decision to be Blagojevich's attorneys. They were high priced. I was aware of that, and I didn't know how Blagojevich was going to pay. I still don't know how he…

Reynolds: Even in the back of the trials.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: Yeah, he had two different trials. But it's clear, all of Blagojevich's financial resources went into the first trial. I don't know how he was able to finance the second trial.

Reynolds: I think the public financed it, to a large degree.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: They used…

Bradley: Public defender.

Reynolds: …campaign funds.

Reynolds: So, Gleason, his lawyer in the impeachment trial: did you think he did an adequate job of representing Blagojevich? Was he tremendously combative, or do you remember anything about his style or presence?

Bradley: Nothing, nothing comes to mind.

Reynolds: Yeah. Now Blagojevich, in the press, had all along said he was not going to participate in the impeachment trial.

Bradley: Yeah, that's true.

Reynolds: He was going to boycott it. Were you then surprised when he decided to provide, not really testimony, but they sort of called it – they would allow him to give a statement, I guess, was kind of what it was.

Bradley: Yes, that did surprise me. I wasn't surprised that he asked for special treatment, because that's really what happened, was that he asked to make an appearance before the Senate trial to make a statement. That didn't surprise me. I think I was surprised that he was permitted to do it, because…

Reynolds: Because it was unusual, although this doesn't happen all the time, obviously.

Bradley: …this doesn't happen all the time.

Reynolds: So, it, maybe, set a precedent in some sense.

Bradley: I think it may have set a precedent, because the Senate…

Reynolds: In other words, he didn't want to be questioned…

Bradley: Yes.

Reynolds: …by the Senate.

Bradley: That was it.

Reynolds: He didn't want to provide testimony and be cross examined and so on and so forth. But he was willing to come and just make a speech.

Bradley: Make a statement and then leave.

Reynolds: Which is what he did. He made a political speech, and then left.

Bradley: It was at that point that it was clear the Senate, probably, had already made up its mind, and they were going to permit him this one last hurrah.

Reynolds: See if he could pull a rabbit out of a hat, maybe, with a political speech or whatever.

Any other stories or impressions you remember from the trial?

Bradley: No, because a lot of when this was going—and this goes right to the heart of how we do things in broadcasting—[you] got to wear many hats, all at once. So, there I was. Not only was I serving as the anchor for the broadcast, but I was also running the technical controls. And when my microphone was off, I was hollering at somebody out in the newsroom to do this, that or the other. I was also on the phone, on a computer terminal, communicating with member stations. There was a lot going on behind the scenes, as it were.

Reynolds: You were kind of the director of the whole production.

Bradley: Yeah, it was distracting at best. And so, a lot of the nitty gritty of the details and the testimony, I really didn't have the chance to sit there with ear phones on and listen.

Reynolds: But you sensed that it was not going well?

Bradley: For him, yeah.

Reynolds: As it went on.

Bradley: Oh sure. You get a sense.

Reynolds: And your reporters were reporting back to you on, while this was going on, I believe this is when Blagojevich is out on a national media tour, going to the *Today Show* and *The Tonight Show* and *David Letterman* and *The View*.

Bradley: That was before the first trial.

Reynolds: Oh, was that the trial, okay. Because I can remember, when he was talking…I guess when he did that media strategy, was after he'd been impeached and left office. So he, obviously, had time on his hands (laugh).

Bradley: Yeah, he was no longer governor, but he hadn't gone on trial yet in the federal court in Chicago.

Reynolds: So, he had developed a media strategy for the trial. What did you make of it? Did you track all of that? Literally, he would go to New York and appear on every show for two days, then, of course, the reality shows came later. Did he crank out a book before the first trial? I think he did.

Bradley: I think so, yeah.

Reynolds: I think it did. What did you think of all that? That was pretty unique.

Bradley: I was not surprised. Well, by that time, here was a man, governor of Illinois, who appeared to be in trouble during his first term, and yet the citizens of Illinois, the Illinois electorate, got a lot of criticism because they got what they elected in '06 when he ran for re-election. But a lot of what he was doing, at that point in time, did not surprise me, because I think those of us in the media had already reached a point where we were ready for anything that might come out of his mouth.

Reynolds: It almost had transcended into sort of tabloid, sort of celebrity sort of coverage.

Bradley: What a joke, you know, now. But I think there was some anger too among some people in Illinois, that he would embarrass Illinois, embarrass my state that way.

Reynolds: Yeah, he did the Trump show [*Celebrity Apprentice*]. Was it during this period that he did the Trump show*?* Or was that after the first trial? Maybe it was after the first trial.

Bradley: Might have been after the first trial, because…

Reynolds: But, I mean, it was just a slew… His wife appeared on that reality show and…

Bradley: …he was acquitted of all charges, except one, in the first trial.

Reynolds: Right. Yeah, let's talk about the two trials then. I was kind of interested in what you thought about the whole media strategy, which, I guess, was designed to soften the jury pool, which succeeded in the first trial, I guess, to an extent; although, it was just one person. The media strategy that he pursued, the first trial, with the hung jury and the one juror, and his defense in the first trial was fairly unique. It was a non-defense, as I recall….

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: …and then, the prosecution sort of overdid it. What were your impressions or observations of the first trial? Was that surprising, that he got off?

Bradley: What surprised me was that they didn't put on a defense.

Reynolds: And that was the father-son that you'd mentioned earlier. Was it Sam Adams and his son, of maybe the same name, Junior, which were high priced lawyers.

Bradley: Yes. To me, that was the surprise. The stuff that came out from the prosecutor, we were already pretty familiar with, I think, in terms of the second trial. I think a lot of people were surprised that the jury voted for acquittal.

Reynolds: Well, they were a hung jury, that one juror holding out.

Bradley: Yeah, one holding out. Didn't they do a survey of the jury, the prosecutor's office?…

Reynolds: First trial.

Bradley: …on that trial to try and figure out what they had done wrong. And I think what they learned was that the case they presented was drawn out over such a long period of…

Reynolds: So complicated.

Bradley: …and complex and complicated.

Reynolds: There were lots of witnesses. It went on for days and weeks, and Blagojevich did not present a defense. He did not go on the stand, and it was just, you know, night and day different from the second trial.

Bradley: Yeah, when there was an expectation that he would testify in the second trial. You know, Chris, I think I was surprised that Fitzgerald went for a second trial. He got a conviction on the one count, enough to put Blagojevich in for…

Reynolds: You're right.

Bradley: …the same number of years he got a sentence to.

Reynolds: They got him on perjury, was it, or lying to the FBI?

Bradley: Lying to the FBI. He was convicted on that.

Reynolds: And acquitted on the other charges.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: How did you cover the trial? Did you have reporters up there every day?

Bradley: No, we didn't. I never sent a reporter from our shop to Chicago, rather we relied upon the coverage that was provided by WBEZ to the IPR stations.

Reynolds: They were the lead people on that?

Bradley: Yeah. Well, they were there, and they had a seat at both trials. They just reported directly from the federal courthouse, back to their studios, then out to IPR.

Reynolds: So, you were surprised that Patrick Fitzgerald went after him a second time?

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: And then, it was a totally different prosecution strategy in the second trial.

Bradley: They shortened it up.

Reynolds: Shortened it up.

Bradley: Considerably, yeah.

Reynolds: Summarized it, less witnesses. I think that they were able to turn some people to testify against him in that second trial. Which maybe…Well, they had him in the first trial, like Lon Monk and some of his close aids.

Bradley: Yeah, John Harris, his chief of staff.

Reynolds: Yeah, testified against him in both trials, maybe.

Bradley: Did Rezko and Lavin?

Reynolds: I don't think Rezko ever did.

Bradley: Lavin did, testified.

Reynolds: I think so, and his credibility was, of course, tremendously challenged because of his drug use (laugh). All of this stuff…

Bradley: Cocaine snorter, yeah.

Reynolds: Yeah. So, in the second trial, did you expect him to be just, you know… First of all, did you expect him to testify? Would you have expected that he would…

Bradley: In the second trial, I did expect him to testify because he seemed to have made such a big deal out of…

Reynolds: Yeah, tell my story.

Bradley: …I can't wait until I get the chance to get on the stand and tell my story. The people of Illinois and the jury will understand me, and I'll be able to better explain all of these questions that have been raised by the prosecution. And then, when push came to shove at the eleventh hour, he decided not to take the stand. That was a big surprise to me.

Reynolds: Why, I thought he did take the stand at the end?

Bradley: Did he?

Reynolds: Didn't he finally take the stand and didn't show a lot of… didn't apologize.

Bradley: Maybe you're right.

Reynolds: Yeah, it was a sort of apology.

Bradley: I guess it must have been the first trial that he didn't take the stand, because they didn't present a defense at all.

Reynolds: Right. But yeah, I think he took the stand in the second trial, and it was kind of on the borderline. He kind of said he was sorry, but really didn't admit that he'd done anything wrong and that kind of thing. And then, the jury went all out on him. He pretty much got, maybe, all the charges, except for one or two or something like that?

Bradley: All but…yeah. Well, he was ultimately convicted on one count in the first trial. I think that held. And then, in the second trial, they got a conviction on, what, seventeen out of eighteen charges, all but one, maybe two. Yeah.

Reynolds: Did your coverage remain constant throughout the first and second trial? Were people as interested in the second trial as the first trial?

Bradley: I think so. What we provided on our air is what WBEZ was providing to the IPR, the Illinois Public Radio Network. Their coverage, we used on our air and our local newscasts. There was none of that, that was allowed for live broadcasting from the trial. In Illinois; that's just not permitted. So, we were relying upon WBEZ having reporters in the courtroom, leaving, reporting back to their studios. Their newsroom, then, would distribute their reports, out to the IPR network.

Reynolds: So you were probably covering it on a daily basis?

Bradley: On a daily basis, yeah.

Reynolds: Right.

Bradley: Or whenever the trial was in session. I mean, if there was a non-trial day, nothing going on in the courthouse, obviously nothing to report, except that the trial's in recess for a day or two or three.

Reynolds: Yeah. Again, anything that came up in the trial that shocked you or surprised you? Or, by that time, you were just (laugh) willing to believe anything about this guy?

Bradley: Yeah, because what testimony was presented in that second trial—well the first trial and the second trial—was not much new, over what we'd already heard because it was a year or more—

Reynolds: Just presented in a more succinct fashion.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Yeah, and I don't think Tony Rezko ever did testify.

Bradley: You are right, he didn't.

Reynolds: Yeah, he held out, right till the end, even though he was facing some pretty steep sentences. The fourteen years, did that surprise you? Did three years more than George Ryan…think Ryan got eleven years.

Bradley: No, Ryan got six, didn't he?

Reynolds: Oh, was it six? Okay. I stand corrected on that, which he's pretty close to being done with, I guess.

Bradley: Yeah he is. Actually, it was more time than I thought he was probably going to get.

Reynolds: So, double what Ryan got?

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: A little more than double, yeah. I think I assumed Blagojevich would probably get about the same that Ryan got. Yeah, fourteen years was a surprise. I think it was a surprise to Blagojevich. (laugh)

Reynolds: (laugh) All of that stuff seemed to be a surprise to him. If you had to look at the Ryan thing and the Blagojevich thing, do you think, it's (laugh) kind of hard to say, equal level of corruption, or was one way beyond the other?

Bradley: I think, in my mind, the corruption in the Blagojevich administration was way beyond Ryan. Both guys were incredibly dumb. Blagojevich was dumber because of what had happened to George Ryan.

Reynolds: Yeah, that really puts a whole new, sort of, spin on the thing, if you look at: he's sitting there watching what's happening to Ryan and still running a machine operation, you know, the same old way.

Bradley: And I think George Ryan was surprised too that he was convicted. I understand where he was coming from, because he came up into politics from that "good old boy" system that was accepted, was widely accepted. I was surprised that a jury would convict him, when he didn't really believe he had done wrong.

Reynolds: And you know the people around him, you know, politicians in the state, and everybody, I think, were very sympathetic to George Ryan. Many didn't believe that he should have been convicted, where, when Blagojevich was convicted, I think there was a sigh of relief by everybody. I mean, he had no friends left, except, apparently, when he does these radio shows up in Chicago, people would call up and say…

Bradley: I think the sigh of relief came after he was impeached and removed from office. Being removed from office like that, he could never, ever in Illinois again run for public office. That's when there was a sigh of relief in Illinois. The trial, the two trials, is anti-climactic in a lot of ways.

Reynolds: Yeah. Well, and the first trial being a bit of a surprise. There was one juror who, I think she was a state employee, wasn't she?

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: And her attitude was kind of like, well, you know, they all do this stuff. He didn't do anything wrong, which was kind of back to the Ryan defense.

Bradley: And, you know, the Blagojevich trial really occurred after I retired from the station. I retired in October of '09 and…

Reynolds: So, you weren't there for the coverage of the trials, necessarily.

Bradley: Well no, but I know how the system works. The last thing I did, I was able to participate in, was anchoring the live coverage of the impeachment hearings and the impeachment trial and Blagojevich's big speech before the state Senate.

Reynolds: Boy, what a way to end a career.

Bradley: Well, that was the highlight, I think. But what came close to that was Barack Obama's announcement, on that cold day in February, that he was going to run, followed by, in July or August of '08, the other big event he held here in town, where he announced Joe Biden as his running mate. I anchored statewide coverage of both of those events. It was really the last thing—the very last thing that I did—before I retired.

Reynolds: Was the Joe Biden announcement?

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: The Vice President? Well, I know we're not here to talk about Obama, but when he announced, and I was at that rally too, it was just amazing…

Bradley: In February on that cold day?

Reynolds: …amazing event, freezing to death.

Bradley: Well, I was out at the studio, so I was warm. But I know my team down there were freezing.

Reynolds: And the national press was freezing to death too. Did you have any sense that this guy was going to become the nominee, first off, which was tough. He was running against the Clinton machine.

Bradley: Well, at the time he announced…

Reynolds: Did you think he had any kind of a chance at that point?

Bradley: …no.

Reynolds: Did the size of that crowd or the enthusiasm or his speech change your mind a little bit in that regard?

Bradley: Possibly, although I felt like that had more to do with treatment of Obama, kind of like a favorite son.

Reynolds: That was the effect that was going around?

Bradley: Yeah, that was my sense.

Reynolds: But the historic nature of him running…?

Bradley: The historic nature didn't escape me, no, not at all. I thought that there might be a chance he might win.

Reynolds: You know the odd thing, we were talking about the fact that Blagojevich was relatively unknown. I think Obama was not that… I mean, his rise to power was a pretty interesting thing, because he won the Senate seat against a fairly weak, kind of lucked out. I don't think people knew a lot about him, even in the State of Illinois, at that point.

Bradley: Well, he served for seven years in the state Senate, under the leadership of Emil Jones, who was an African-American and Senate President and the Democratic majority leader in the state Senate.

Reynolds: Was he on your radar screen before he became a U.S. Senator and that whole Senate campaign? It's an interesting question, because, you know, you said that Blagojevich really wasn't on your radar screen. Did he…

Bradley: Obama was, because I remember, a part of the format that we always pursued when we did a live broadcast of the governor's speech, the state of the state address or the budget address, we always tried to have a representative from both sides on for post-speech reaction and analysis. Now I remember, in one of those scenarios, Barack Obama as a state Senator was on the IPR broadcast. We had broadcast, I'm thinking it was probably a budget speech, by Blagojevich, and we had on, like, a Republican member from the House and a Democratic member from the state Senate, to provide that kind of post-speech reaction. And in one of those coverages, Barack Obama was the Democratic member from the state Senate who was on. But was he on our radar as a presidential candidate, then? No, not even on the radar as a U.S. Senate candidate. He was just a member of the Illinois State Senate.

Reynolds: A remarkable rise.

Bradley: Yeah, it was. It was a very short, short period of time.

Reynolds: So, the Biden rally was kind of the last thing that you covered.

Bradley: The last big thing that I anchored live coverage for.

Reynolds: And at that point, he had won the nomination, was picking a vice-presidential candidate, and the rest is history, huh?

I've just got a couple of questions left, and I want to go back to the former governor, who's the subject of the interview here. Looking back through the news clips, my favorite story was in the *State Journal-Register.* It appeared to be written by somebody for the *State Journal-Register.* It wasn't a wire service story, and the headline was, "*Is Blagojevich not crazy? Experts say Blagojevich is not crazy, experts say."* That was the headline, and then the article went on to suggest that Mr. Blagojevich had a narcissistic personality (laugh) disorder, and they went through all the characteristics of this personality disorder: It was things like a grandiose sense, an exaggeration of achievements, required excessive admiration, exploitive in his personality, had an excessive sense of his self-importance (laugh). I know you're not a psychologist, but does that all sound correct? Is that one way to explain what happened with this man over the course of (laugh)…

Bradley: In my mind, he's guilty of all counts. All of those characterizations that you just identified, in my mind, fit Blagojevich to a tee. That was him, because he had all those problems or issues or personality traits, quirks, however you want to characterize him.

Reynolds: Disorders, as it was described.

Bradley: I never thought about that kind of stuff being necessarily mental disorders, but they're certainly are all features of Blagojevich's personality, no doubt about it.

Reynolds: All of which contributed, pretty much, to what happened to him, I think, over time.

Bradley: Yeah, I think it got in the way of common sense, in his case. I think he gathered people around him who were reluctant to question him, to caution him. They seemed, Harris especially, I think what came out of the trial—if I recall right—he testified that he was reluctant because he didn't want to incur Blagojevich's wrath. Apparently he had a temper. I guess he had a temper. If they were afraid of triggering his wrath, that would suggest to me…

Reynolds: Nobody would stand up to him.

Bradley: Yeah. It would suggest to me that he had a temper, uncontrolled.

Reynolds: As did his wife, as we found out (laugh) from the wire taps.

Bradley: Yeah. But all those traits, those tendencies, I think, all manifested themselves in the personality of the man we came to know as Rod Blagojevich.

Reynolds: Well, you know, all politicians, to an extent, have these in moderate forms, but they were all excessive in his personality. They sort of evolved even more excessive over time, as he got into trouble.

Bradley: See, when he was a state Representative, I have no recollection of that at all. The only recollection I have of him as a U.S. Congressman—he served three terms there—was that he was one man with a weird last name, who was a member of the Illinois Congressional Delegation. So, I was aware of that. I wasn't aware of anything he did. So far as I knew, he was a back bencher on both counts in the Illinois House and the U.S. House. So, where these traits all started to manifest themselves, I think, probably began with his election as governor.

Reynolds: Success.

Bradley: Success, yes.

Reynolds: And sort of being in that right place at the right time and a lot of luck.

Bradley: I think, being re-elected in '06 only emboldened him. I think he probably saw his re-election as an endorsement.

Reynolds: That he could continue to be combative about the [unintelligible word] to the public…

Bradley: Yeah, exactly.

Reynolds: …and they would support him. It's a fascinating character. I'm sure that there will be lots of books written about him, as he gets through his prison term, as his hair turns gray, (laugh) he gets through his period as dishwasher and Shakespearean teacher, I understand .

Bradley: It would not surprise me at all if—he's now in prison—if he isn't still trying to sell off his cellmates on his goodness (laugh), "I didn't do anything wrong, you know."

Reynolds: And if he gets out of prison…although fourteen years, and what is he, in his mid-fifties? I'm trying to think of his age right now. He's going to be a pretty old guy when he gets out. Since he developed this celebrity sort of thing, (laugh) I wonder if he's going to be able to recover and become a sort of a radio-talk show host, because he definitely has a gift for gab.

Bradley: Oh he has that. But I assume there's an appeal of his federal convictions…

Reynolds: Yeah, he could still…

Bradley: …being made, that's underway.

Reynolds: And I think… Is there good behavior and rehabilitation or whatever?

Bradley: Whether or not…

Reynolds: …I think he could shorten that sentence, maybe, by a couple of years.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: So, he may be out in ten or eleven years or twelve years, rather than the fourteen. It'll be an interesting story to watch.

Bradley: If the appeal is successful in overturning some of those convictions, whether or not that might be then converted into a shortening of his sentence, who knows.

Reynolds: Yeah. But it's a story. I mentioned the two little things about his hair and what he's doing in prison now. Stories will probably continue to pop up every so often about him, because he has become a sort of a celebrity. I mean, he made the late night monologues on, you know, *The Late Show* and *The Tonight Show*. So, people may want to go back and pick up on him as a joke every so often.

Bradley: He may crave that kind of attention, whether it's inside a federal correctional center or not.

Reynolds: He has a knack.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: He has a knack.

Bradley: I really feel for the man's daughters.

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: I cannot begin to fathom or imagine what kind of life lay ahead for them, to have a man as your father who was once Governor of Illinois, being impeached and removed from office and then sent to federal prison. Hmm.

Reynolds: Yeah, you wonder if they will stay under cover all these years and not seek much publicity. Hopefully, his wife will have the good sense to do that because, with celebrity coverage, you can see children of celebrities pop up in the news when they have problems.

Bradley: But she kind of bought into that, because they wouldn't let Blagojevich go down to Central America for one of those reality shows…

Reynolds: She went down.

Bradley: …and she went down, ate a live tarantula or whatever.

Reynolds: You wonder whether she bought into that whole celebrity thing.

Bradley: Or if she was doing that. At the time, I had a sense she was doing that because of the money involved.

Reynolds Which a whole other aspect of this is, financially, they were not tremendously rich people. (laugh) They tried to cash in but did not succeed. Even the political contributions got used to pay for his legal defenses.

Bradley: And for a while, their house was put on the real estate market, for one and half million or whatever. [It] was finally taken off the market. Her background was in real estate, I think?

Reynolds: Yeah.

Bradley: She might—

Reynolds: I'm sure she…because that was one of the issues that came up, that they were trying to set her up in real estate. Eventually they got her job in a non-for-profit.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds I'm not sure whether she's got a license or not.

Bradley: I was thinking she had a real estate license, broker's license or…

Reynolds: Could be.

Bradley: …sale's license.

Reynolds: Because she had linked up with Tony Rezko on some projects like that.

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: One would think that her dad would take care of her…

Bradley: Yep.

Reynolds: …and the family pretty well. But interesting, interesting story.

I've got one more question. Anymore observations about the former governor, and his situation?

Bradley: No.

Reynolds: [Did] we cover just anything? Since you really didn't have a chance to cover Quinn much, as governor, I won't ask you much about his term. It sounds like you were gone by the time…

Bradley: Yeah.

Reynolds: …that he got re-elected and his campaign and all that. But, how do you view his role in all of this? How did he handle himself during this whole process?

Bradley: He was kind of out of out of sight, out of mind, right up until Blagojevich was removed from office. From the time the House adopted the articles of impeachment, until the Senate trial—I don't remember now how much time elapsed between the two—but by the time the articles of impeachment were adopted by the Illinois House, it became clear that Rod Blagojevich's days as governor of Illinois were numbered.

Reynolds He sensed the political environment almost immediately.

Bradley: Quinn did, yeah, because he took the oath of office later that same day that Rod Blagojevich was removed in the Senate trial.

Reynolds: Anything interesting about the way Blagojevich snuck out of town that day? Do you remember the coverage? Because he made his little speech, and then he was gone, wasn't he?

Bradley: Yeah, the state police took him to the airport to get back on the state of Illinois plane, and I'm thinking that…

Reynolds That was his last flight.

Bradley: Yeah. …did the vote come while he was still in the air, or maybe…

Reynolds: It's possible, yeah.

Bradley: Because it came…

Reynolds He was not in town, probably, when it happened.

Bradley: Yeah. Oh, he was long gone. He flew down that morning as Governor, made the speech, got back on the plane, and for some reason—my memory is kind of cloudy, fogged over in a lot of these instances—I was thinking that the vote to remove him, to convict him and remove him from office, happened while he was still in the air on the flight from Springfield back to Chicago.

Reynolds: That sounds right. I think that's right.

Bradley: Now whether or not he really thought he would be acquitted, I don't know.

Reynolds And then Quinn was immediately sworn in as Governor. Was that part of the coverage of the… Did that get done in a secondary fashion? But it was done immediately, wasn't it, after the vote?

Bradley: It was done almost immediately, within an hour or hour and a half. But I remember, yeah, we did broadcast that live. That happened over in the House chamber, where he took the oath of office and then gave a short speech, inaugural speech, whatever you want to call it, from the Speaker's podium in the House, in the Illinois House.

Reynolds: What was your assessment of Quinn? Did you think he was up to the job—his behavior during this period—did he do it in a graceful manner or a…

Bradley: He was low-keyed because he was kind of out of sight, out of mind, because there was no political affiliation, outside of being a Democrat, that he had with Blagojevich. Historically, in Illinois, after the 1970 constitution was adopted—because the lieutenant governor isn't provided with any responsibilities in the constitution—it only stems from state statutes that have been adopted since. But, since those two don't run as running mates in the primary and come together as a result of the primary, the governors never gave the lieutenant governors much to do. (laugh) They really didn't.

Reynolds Most of the Republican governors were able to pick somebody.

Bradley: Yes, yes.

Reynolds: It's always been a contentious thing in the Democratic…

Bradley: Well, Thompson's first lieutenant governor was David O'Neal. He quit because he said it was boring. (laugh)

Reynolds And we talked about the fact that Bob Kustra wanted to quit and become a radio… (laugh)

Bradley: …talk show host, yeah, on Chicago radio. Quinn was kind of out sight, out of mind. He was always considered a kind of political gadfly, even at the time he was elected State Treasurer. He served one term as Treasurer and tried to run for, what was it, Secretary of State?

Reynolds: Secretary of State, against George Ryan.

Bradley: Against Ryan, and leaders of the Democratic Party urged him to stay and run for re-election as Treasurer and then look at something higher. He didn't accede to their wishes or to their recommendations, and he lost in that election bid…

Reynolds: And he was a totally independent character in that primary…

Bradley: Yep.

Reynolds: …for governor, and so he was just a name. He had name recognition.

Bradley: I didn't really know if he was up to it, but I knew that he certainly was going to get the job. The expectation was that, as soon as he took office, that, within a very, very, very short period of time, a big, wide broom would come through and sweep out all of the Blagojevich appointees. That didn't happen. And when it didn't happen in a short period of time, and didn't happen at all, for all intents and purposes, Pat Quinn fell into disfavor, I think, pretty shortly.

Reynolds: Yeah, and, of course, just to finish this story, he barely won the Democratic primary to be elected, just barely, and then ran against a really, very conservative Tea Party-ish type candidate and barely won the governor's race, too. So, he's kind of…just by the skin of his teeth has kept his political career.

Bradley: It's kind of interesting because, as a political gadfly, he was directly responsible for the Cutback Amendment, back in 1978, which had to do with a lame duck legislature enacting a pay raise for themselves. Jim Thompson, who was governor, went along with the game plan and signed that damn bill. (laugh) And members of the general assembly all got pay raises, that period of time between an election and the swearing in of a new general assembly. Quinn went out with a petition. That made a lot of people mad, enough people mad that enough people signed the petition, calling for a reduction in the size of the Illinois House, from 177 to 118 and doing away with cumulative voting and got out on the ballot, and the voters passed that by a wide margin.

Reynolds And although, like you say, you left your job, so you weren't obligated to cover his gubernatorial time that much. But he's obviously muddled through, kind of struggled…I mean, he's been dealt a terrible hand. There's no doubt about that. I think everybody would agree with that, with the economy the way it is. The way Blagojevich left the state and that kind of thing.

Bradley: Some of his key staff people still, even to this day, are remnants of the Blagojevich staff.

Reynolds: That may be part of that whole notion that he was a political gadfly and really wasn't part of the machine. So, he's kind of…interesting.

Well, this has been a real pleasure. Seven interviews and we've covered (laugh) every governor, and we covered your career at NPR. So, thanks, Rich, for that.

Bradley: You're quite welcome. It was a lot of fun.

Reynolds Yeah, it's been very enjoyable.

Bradley: It's been, in a lot ways, a learning process for me, because you have successfully triggered a lot names, personalities, individuals that I'd long since forgotten.

Reynolds: Well, and you always find out the things you don't remember either, the things you forgot (laugh) and then don't know.

Bradley: Or the juxtaposition, you know. You and I both know that we've talked about, well, was this going on while this happened, or was this going on while this happened? I've got to confess to you that, I haven't done a very good job in keeping things in the proper order in my own mind.

Reynolds Just final, would you say that—and I think I asked this a little earlier, but—the impeachment trial was probably the highlight of your career, to be able to do that?

Bradley: Yes

Reynolds: And, of course, the awards that you won for the National Public Radio things. We, of course, talked about that in the first interview.

Bradley: You know, while I had a lot of fun doing the Obama events…

Reynolds Yeah, those were really something.

Bradley: …I think, as I look back on my career, clearly from a historical point of view, the impeachment, articles of impeachment, debate in the Illinois House and

then the Senate trial, convicting Rod Blagojevich, removing him from office, clearly from a historical point of view, were the highlights.

Reynolds: The most significant thing you covered, yeah.

Bradley: Yeah, no doubt about it.

Reynolds Well, thanks, Rich. It's been a pleasure

(End of interviews)