Interview with Dan Walker

ISG-A-L-2007-015

Interview # 1 of 3: August 21, 2007

Interviewer: Mark DePue

DePue: Today is August 21, 2007. My name is Mark DePue. I'm the Director of Oral History for the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. I'm here with Governor Dan Walker. We're in his condominium in Rosarito, Mexico, and we have a gorgeous view of the ocean front here. Governor Walker, welcome.

Walker: I'm delighted to have you here.

DePue: I think we're probably going to have a lot to talk about. I know that I have plenty of questions to ask you, but I wanted to start with our standard questions. Tell me a little about your background and your parents, if you would.

Walker: My parents?

DePue: Yes.

Walker: My parents are Lewis Wesley Walker, and Virginia May Lynch Walker. L-y-n-c-h, that's her maiden name. They were both Texans. My father was East Texas, the Piney Woods country it's called, not too far from the Louisiana border. My mother was from the wide open spaces of Texas, more in the central part of the state. They used to say that my mother was born in Bugtussle and my father was born in Possum Trot, so when I enlisted in the Navy I put those down as the birthplaces of my parents taking it seriously. When my father found out, he was really kind of upset and laughing about it because there are such towns but my parents were not born in them.

DePue: So, after all those years you found out the truth finally.

Walker: Yes.

DePue: What can you tell us about the influences your parents had? First of all, what did your father do for a living?

Walker: He was a Navy man. When he started out he ran away from home and became a railroad telegrapher in Texas and worked out of railroad stations all over the State of Texas for several years. That was before World War I. In his last telegraphing job he telegraphed for Pancho Villa in Mexico right across the border from El Paso. Then he joined the Navy there and stayed in the Navy for most of his adult life. He was a Chief Radioman, and the Navy brought him in as a Chief. A Chief is an advanced enlisted mans rate, and it was very unusual. At that time chiefs were usually men who had served in sailing vessels, and he came in as a Chief, which was almost unheard of. But the Navy was desperate for telegraphers because of World War I He stayed in the Navy for quite awhile.

DePue: I might have heard it wrong. Did you say your father was a telegrapher for Pancho Villa?

Walker: Yes. Yes, the story is told by John Eisenhower, President Eisenhower's son, who was a colonel, I believe in the Army. He wrote about Pancho Villa, and he tells the story of Pancho Villa in the nighttime down in the Mexican town next to El Paso, I forget the name of it this morning.

DePue: Juarez?

Walker: Yes, Juarez. He took over this freight train and loaded all of his soldiers into the cars, kind of cattle cars I guess, and went into Mexico to load them up. Then he backed into the station at Juarez, which is right next to El Paso, as I said, a kind of, oh what's the ancient horse, a Trojan Horse kind of thing. In the middle of the night the men all climbed out of their cars and captured the town of Juarez. The role that my father played as telegrapher was to send messages to the Station Master in Juarez calming him down and saying that this was a routine maneuver with the train and so forth, so he handled the telegraphic for Pancho Villa on that episode. Eisenhower tells the story and mentions the telegrapher. He doesn't name him, but it was my father.

DePue: Was that just the one and only time that he performed that service for Villa?

Walker: Yes. As far as I know that's the only time he did anything for Poncho Villa, and it was right after then, whether it was related, that is they were trying to capture him or what I don't know. He came across the border and enlisted in the Navy.

DePue: Ok. So he spent some time before he was in the Navy in Mexico itself.

Walker: Yes.

DePue: He liked the Navy?

Walker: Oh, yes –yes. He served on the R-boats, they were called, the early submarines of the United States Navy, of which there were only a few at that time. This is before we came into World War I and during it, and he served on those submarines for several years and then spent most of his time on destroyers thereafter until, oh, 1930, '33 along in there. I don't recall the exact year.

DePue: When were you born?

Walker: I was born in 1922. I was born in Washington, D.C. My father was attached to the Navy Department at that time as a telegrapher. He also handled the radios on the President Harding's yacht at that time. He was a radio man for the President.

DePue: Did you spend very much time in D.C?

Walker: Well, it was only about –and of course this is all hearsay (both laugh) –I don't remember obviously, about a year I think. I got very ill with a distended stomach and nobody could do anything about it. They thought I was going to die so my father decided to take me down to Texas, his home, where I would die down there. And so, they went down there and doctor came over to see my mother, who was ill with something or other minor, and he saw me lying there with this really distended belly and he said "What's wrong with the kid"? My mother said "We don't know, but it's terminal and he's going to die so we're just waiting for him to die 'cause he can't tolerate food, milk or anything." And so the doctor said "Well, do you mind if I take a look at him?" So she said "Sure, all the experts back in Washington have tried but you go ahead and try." So he poked around and then he said to her, "He's got milk poisoning, so take him off milk. Don't give him any milk at all and give him a lot of castor oil, and he'll be okay." And so they took me off milk and put me on castor oil, and I came out of it.

DePue: So much for the experts in Washington, D.C. eh? (both laugh).

Walker: (laughing) So much for the experts is right, right. Yeah, it was very dramatic, very dramatic. And then my father got sent up to Alaska, up near Anchorage, Alaska, at a naval radio station up there for a year. And my brother, of course, was two years older than I, and so the whole family went up to Alaska for a year and then came back and my father ended up on destroyers in San Diego. Most of my life thereafter as a kid was in the San Diego area up till and after my father left the Navy.

DePue: He left the Navy in what year?

Walker: I think it was '34. It was right in the middle of the Depression. He was a cocky guy and he figured no problem in getting a job (chuckles), but he reckoned without the Depression, and he had one devil of a job getting employment. We were on pretty hard times for several years there. He got paid –I think it was $40 a month from the Navy for 16 years he had served – and I think it was $40 a month, and that was our income, which didn't go very far with two kids. We were poor folks, real poor, dirt poor, but we never thought that much about it, my

brother and I. Of course, as kids, we got enough to eat, and we lived outside a lot. We lived in the outskirts of San Diego, in the back country they call it, and we grew up that way with back country folks.

DePue: What's your brother's name?

Walker: His name is Lewis Walker, Jr., but his nickname is the same as our father's, Waco (pronounced with a short a - wayco) W-A-C-O. He was named after the town in Texas. Everybody has to have a nickname in the Navy, and so there were too many Texans so they called him Waco (pronounced wacko). They mispronounced the town, actually it's called Waco as I'm sure everybody knows, but he was called Waco (pronounced wacko). My brother inherited his nickname; I and not very many other people call him Waco (pronounced wacko) to this day.

DePue: Well, when you're growing up it's the kind of nickname that people say, kind of step back a little bit and give you some room, I would think.

Walker: Well, that's right (telephone rings), that's right.

DePue: Okay, we're going to pause now.

Walker: Pardon me.

(pause in recording)

DePue: Okay, shall we get started on this again?

Walker: Yep.

DePue: Okay. We're back at it after a little bit of a break. Governor got a telephone call that he needed to take, but I think we're not going to be interrupted here in the near future. Where I think we were before, Governor, was talking about your parents and specifically your Dad. He was out of the military; it was hard times in the Depression but almost everybody seemed like they were having hard times. I would guess for a while he wasn't able to find employment?

Walker: That's right, and as I was saying we were dirt poor. He took up dirt farming in the back country of San Diego. He was a very, rather stern taskmaster…tough love, I would call it, as a father. He had definite aspirations for his two sons. He earmarked my brother to become Navy, to go to the Naval Academy. He wanted that very badly, hoped he would one day become an admiral, and I would become a lawyer and, hopefully, become a judge or, hopefully, somewhere high in government. That was the role that was set out for me, but then I got sidetracked because after high school. I joined the Naval Reserve because my father said, "War is coming with Japan for sure," …this is 1939… "and, I don't want my son to get drafted and go into the Army. I want him in the Navy". So he said, "Join the Naval Reserves," so I did when I was 17. Then I got mobilized, and so I went

on active duty as an apprentice seaman in the Navy and worked my way and became a third class petty officer, yeoman third class, captain's secretary.

DePue: Oh. Your –

Walker: Minesweeper.

DePue: Your brother is older than you?

Walker: Yes, two years older.

DePue: Did he want to go into the Navy? Did he want to go to Annapolis as well?

Walker: Oh, yes, but it was foreordained. I mean it wasn't a question of want; that's what the old man set out for us and that's what we did. But willingly… I don't want to give any impression here of dictatorial. It was just that he conditioned us in a good way and we followed the path. Only as I said, I got sidetracked so I stayed as a sailor for a couple of years at sea on a minesweeper, and then I took the competitive exams and went to the Naval Academy.

DePue: What year did you take the exams?

Walker: I took the exam in 1941. It was open to all sailors in the Navy. There were 3,000 odd that took the exam, and I ended up number 3 out of 3,000 odd, so I got one of the 50 entrances to the Naval Academy Preparatory School back in Norfolk. I went to that, and then I had to take the exam to get into the Naval Academy; that's what that school prepared you for, and I did that, and I got into the Naval Academy in '42.

DePue: I know you graduated in 1945 so –

Walker: That's right.

DePue: –you were there for three years?

Walker: –I three years. Yeah, usually it's four, but in wartime they shortened it to three. I started out very high; I was an honor grade and I graduated 353 at the Academy. Someone told me the other day –I'd forgotten it –I was wrong in the book. I wrote I was at the bottom of the class, around 1,300, but I was wrong. I was number 353.

DePue: Where there 1,300 who graduated that year though?

Walker: Yes. Yes.

DePue: So they had greatly expanded the academy because of the war.

Walker: They did. Yes. Yes, they did.

DePue: Okay.

Walker: It was the largest class ever at that time.

DePue: Okay. So you weren't a bad student after all regardless of how you had portrayed it in the book.

Walker: Well, I was wrong about the standing. But I (laughs) I didn't really do very good, at least by my standards I did not do good. I didn't enjoy it. I didn't care for engineering, and the Naval Academy particularly was a three year course. I didn't have much social study, history or any of that. It was all engineering, and I didn't care for it.

DePue: So it wasn't the discipline or the structure or the cadet life that you didn't particularly like. It was the academics?

Walker: Yeah. I didn't mind that at all. I was raised by a stern father. The hazing that you get –as a West Point graduate you're familiar with that –didn't make any difference to me. I had been hazed (both laugh) by an expert, my old man (both laugh), so it never bothered me in the slightest. I didn't mind that part at all.

DePue: We haven't talked about your mother very much. Did your, was your mother able to find any work while you were growing up?

Walker: No.

DePue: Especially those hard years?

Walker: No, she knew my father wouldn't hear of that. No, no. Her place was in the home. That generation was that way and then these were Texans and they lived old fashioned life. My father, remember, was raised in a time when men down in Texas where he lived walked around carrying guns. This was not frontier but it was certainly much different than it became later. He was a character and a tough guy, a very tough guy but not a taskmaster at all. As I used the expression earlier, tough love, but he could be tough and he was a character.

DePue: I got the impression from what I read in your book that he had very high expectations and was as much a teacher as he was a father sometimes.

Walker: Yeah, that's very true. For example, every morning at breakfast there was a… he used to call them sermons, on a subject that he chose and he would give us our sermon of the day, and it was all about life and learning and about life and your character and all of that. He was, well a tough guy and he used to say over and over again "Boys, it takes two things to succeed if you're basically intelligent: hard work and imagination." If you have those two things and have a decent mind, you're going to succeed. Hard work and imagination.

DePue: If you were to boil down a few of the other things, especially values or lessons that your father passed on to you, what would you say they were?

Walker: Well, certainly family. Family was very important to him, and I was reminded of that in the '04 presidential campaign when this word "values" was kicked around quite a bit. Kerry never really understood what they were talking about, that is, the people in the heartland of America, about that word "values." He just didn't get it. He thought it was religion and that's a part of it, but Mark, values to people in the Heartland is a big basket. It includes, yes, respect for God and belief in God. It also includes family, respect for the elders, dressing properly, dressing when you go to church, keeping your word, all of those things are in that basket called "values" and they're all mixed up together. I learned about that in depth. about how people out there in the Heartland felt about this when I walked the state because I spent every night with a different family, Mark. We would talk over supper and afterwards with friends and family members. I learned what values meant. People talked openly about their religion, about their belief in God. I found this interesting, Mark, that many of the families I stayed with, and you know in southern Illinois that's part of the Bible belt, feel pretty strong about that. But they're not like I read these almost caricatures of the right wing people that are referred to. They're people that are just like you and me, they have families and they care about their family. They're not extremists, they don't go around talking about abortion and all that kind of stuff. They just believe in old fashioned family values, as I was saying. So I find somewhat of a mystery that the liberals particularly have this strong dislike for what they call the Christian Right, The picture they paint of the Christian Right is nothing like the people I encountered in the Bible belt in Southern Illinois.

DePue: So the folks they're writing about can't even recognize themselves sometimes.

Walker: They wouldn't…they wouldn't…they just don't get it. Well, anyway …..

DePue Are those the kinds of sermons that your father would give you on a daily basis?

Walker: That and much more, that and much more. Yes, honesty and thoughtfulness and respect and all of those things…Yes.

DePue: You mention a couple of things here about your religious upbringing. Were you a church-going family?

Walker: Very little, very little, occasionally to church. That's all.

DePue: And what church was that?

Walker: Methodist.

DePue: Was your mother the Methodist or both?

Walker: I can't honestly say what they were at that time. They went occasionally to a Methodist church. I was not baptized until, gosh, I was at the Naval Academy and home on leave once, and I finally got baptized. My father asked me and my mother asked me to get baptized, so I did.

DePue: Okay. I'll kind of put you on the spot here.

Walker: Go ahead.

DePue: What traits do you think you inherited from your mother?

Walker: My liberal traits I inherited from my mother –the really caring about people. She made me at that time, a liberal Democrat. My father made me a Democrat; my mother made me a liberal Democrat. That's the best way I can put it. She was a great believer in love and respecting people and, well, that sums it up right there.

DePue: And from your father, traits that you inherited from your father's side?

Walker: Hard work, ambition…yes, hard work and ambition…yes, yes. Self-discipline is the most important thing. My father used to say the worst thing in the world is PLOM , poor little old me, feeling sorry for yourself. Never slip into PLOM, and boy, did I have to remember that when I was in prison. It's so easy to succumb to PLOM, poor little old me. He ground that into my brother and me…just never let yourself slip into PLOM. Keep fighting, and you can do it. If you have decent attributes, you can make of yourself what you will. And self-discipline…you've got to control yourself.

DePue: You mentioned you got off of your father's track for you, and apparently your own vision of what you wanted to become as well. I'm curious about when or whether you were interested in law at this time, or interested in politics at this time, in high school years?

Walker: Yes, definitely. Because I was, my father always talked about my becoming a lawyer. His brother was a judge down in Texas, and he had that kind of a life in mind for me and thought I had the mind for it. He thought I would become a lawyer. He said, "Don't ever become a police court lawyer. If you're going to be a lawyer, be a high-class lawyer and, hopefully, move into government at a higher level. A judge, yes, or anything higher, but government." So I got interested in government. At an early age I used to read *Time* magazine and try to follow what was going on in politics and government. I enjoyed it.

DePue: So even at that age you had some basic understanding of the way government, at least national level government, worked and an interest in that?

Walker: Yes, very definitely an interest in it, very definitely.

DePue: You mentioned at least part of the reason you went into the Naval Reserve was because your father kind of pushed you in that direction lest, God forbid, you should end up in the Army, of all places. (both laugh)

Walker: Yes.

DePue: What was the family's feeling, what was your feeling about the war that was going on? Certainly by '39 the war was going on in Europe and it looked bad in the Pacific as well.

Walker: Well, my feeling was the same as my father's. He had expected a war with Japan and so we expected that and that's what happened. So that was our feeling. We were very, my father was very patriotic, and that's another one of those values that I talked about. Patriotism was very strong, and respect for the military. Of course, he was a military man. But he used to descry the Marine way of thinking. The jarheads, people who just lived by regulations. He was an independent thinker, and he raised me to be an independent thinker. Very definitely.

DePue: So there's no question in your mind, in your family's mind, that the war in the Pacific, especially the war against Japan, was something that we needed to do?

Walker: Absolutely. It was…it was just going to happen.

DePue: You could certainly have stayed in the fleet. You were on a mine sweeper at that time?

Walker: Yes, yes.

DePue: What was the strong desire then to go to Annapolis? Is that echoings of your father again?

Walker: No, I was an enlisted man, a Yeoman on a minesweeper at that time in the Pacific, and it'… it's boring. There's no real room for advancement of the kind that I wanted, and I thought it a confining life. So I decided to take the competitive exams, as I said, and go to the Naval Academy to break away from that.

Walker: After I got into the Navy, I'll just close it out with this, I loved it, I loved the Navy, the sea-going part of the Navy But after a couple years of that I saw, you know this from your own Army experience at the lower ranks, initiative doesn't really get you much. There isn't room for initiative until you get up in the Navy. I don't know how it is in the Army. In the Navy not until you get to be a Commander is there room for initiative and individual advancement. Otherwise, it's kind of by rote. You go up with time.

DePue: Now you're saying that with respect to even being a naval officer?

Walker: Yes.

DePue: Okay.

Walker: Very much so. I think the Army's the same way.

DePue: It is to a lesser extent, but the difference in the Army, of course, is that oftentimes a lieutenant will find himself out there all by himself and he has no choice; certainly the expectation is that you'd better start showing initiative and take charge like these people do on patrol in Iraq right now. They're going out in small groups so…

Walker: That's very true. That opportunity is not as much there in the Navy if you're a junior officer.

DePue: I understand you met your first wife, Roberta, while you were still at the Academy.

Walker: Yes, yes. My roommate, Don Iselin, was from Racine, Wisconsin, and I went home for Christmas leave with him. There wasn't enough time to go all the way out to San Diego. It was a short leave. His girlfriend was a very close friend of Roberta, my wife, and introduced me. I went on a blind date with her and that's how it got started.

DePue: So you corresponded after that?

Walker: Yes. She came back to the Academy for Easter, dances, a weekend. Then she came for what's called June Week Graduation, and I spent some time with her, about a week I think, after graduation. She lived in Kenosha, Wisconsin. Then I went on into the Pacific, and the romance was mail thereafter, very little personal contact.

DePue: So you graduated in June of '45?

Walker: June of '45, yes.

DePue: And did you have some schooling thereafter, or did you go straight to the fleet after that?

Walker: We did 30 days of flight training down in Jacksonville, Florida. But again, that was flying. You learned how to fly the airplane in the air, you did not learn how to take off and land. It was really kind of humorous because these were the PBY's, the big workhorses of the Navy. You know what those are. Sea planes. The guys who flew them had all seen combat and this was easy duty. They knew that we were out partying because when you've been to the Naval Academy as at West Point for all those years, boy, you've got a chance to party…you partied. And (chuckles) so we were up at all hours, and the pilots would get us up there in the air and let us sleep for a couple of hours (chuckles), so it wasn't very serious.

DePue: Was there an expectation at that time that you were going into the flight service though?

Walker: Oh, no, no, no. Everybody did it. It was just flight indoctrination they called it. Learn how airplanes fly in the air. Learn what they do, that's it. No, it's not flight training at all. No expectation. Every officer did it.

DePue: So maybe 10 years before that time only a handful would have been exposed to any kind of flying time.

Walker: Yeah.

DePue: And, of course, with World War II the nature of the Navy changed dramatically and flight and flight school and...

Walker: Exactly.

DePue: And having flight status was much more important.

Walker: Exactly. Having an understanding of what the air part of the Navy does, and so that's what we did for 30 days. We already knew where we were going. I already knew that I was going to a destroyer in the Pacific.

DePue: And as far as you were concerned that was a good place to go?

Walker: Well, sure. I wanted to be a destroyer officer. I asked for that duty, and I got it. You know how it is when you're young, Mark. The war was winding down then in the sense that the invasion of Japan was looming to bring to an end the war in the Pacific. We didn't give it much thought; young people don't, but that was at the time the kamikaze attacks started on the ships and destroyers and the other naval ships over at Okinawa as a prelude to the invasion of Japan. My ship would have been, no doubt about it, a part of that invasion fleet. Destroyers were being knocked off, with some damaged severely, by the kamikaze pilots.

DePue: But you arrived too late to get to Okinawa, I would guess.

Walker: Well, I got to Okinawa right after the end of the war, immediately after the end of the war.

DePue: Did you see any combat or action while you were enlisted?

Walker: No, no… no.

DePue: And by virtue of when you graduated from the Academy and then a short amount of training thereafter, the war is over by the time you get to the fleet?

Walker That's right. The only combat actually I ever saw was during the Korean War.

DePue: We will get that in a little bit here. How long did you stay in the Navy after this?

Walker: Two years. That was the limit. I mean you had to serve two years. You could submit your resignation after two years.

DePue: What was it that you liked about service in the Navy?

Walker: Well, I loved the sea duty. I loved the sea duty, the ocean. There is absolutely no feeling like that. I never experienced anything that approached it in terms of feeling, being an Officer of the Deck of a destroyer, which is a pretty good sized ship, war ship You're in total command of night-time watch, the Captain's asleep and that huge piece of machinery is yours to command. You've got to know what you're doing in case something happens. You stand on the wing of the bridge and it's just a feeling that I never experienced in anything I've done, including being Governor.

DePue: There are obviously some things you didn't particularly like about the Navy. What were those?

Walker: Well, the lack of room for initiative. That was the main thing, and that drove me out of the Navy. You just had to, what was the old saying, you had to keep your finger on your number, keep your nose clean, and go up the ladder that way.

DePue: I would guess that you probably had so many young officers, more officers than the Navy really needed, so they were looking to thin the ranks, were they not?

Walker: Well, I think, yeah, but they didn't have to because the war was over and people wanted to go home.

DePue: Okay.

Walker: They wanted to get out so they didn't have to look. Everybody wanted out. Not everybody, but most people, most officers wanted out at that time.

DePue: Then your options are to go back to school, but specifically to law school?

Walker: Yes. I wanted to go to law school.

DePue: Why did you want to go to law school?

Walker: Because I was going to become a lawyer.

DePue: What was it that fascinated you about a law career?

Walker: Well, I was foreordained to go on that path by my father as I indicated (chuckles) earlier, Mark. That was

DePue: Well, you're not budging on that, that's very good.

Walker: That's where I was destined to go, and I did. It happened that I was suited for it. It worked because while I detested – that may be too strong a word but not too

much –the engineering courses. When I hit law school, I loved it. I just loved it, and I did damn well in law school.

DePue: Would it be fair to say that you had more enthusiasm about the notion of going to law school than you had about going to Annapolis?

Walker: Oh, definitely, definitely. Oh, yes. This was what I wanted to do, and I also always thought from the very beginning about law being an entrée to government.

DePue: Okay. But now we've got to wrestle with the question of why Chicago, why Northwestern?

Walker: Well, Northwestern was just accidental really. I wanted to go to Stanford. Stanford, Harvard, Northwestern, those were amongst the top five law schools in the country at that time. They were the top, among the top five. And so I applied to those three. The ship was supposed to go to the Mediterranean and the admission papers, application papers, came in only for Northwestern before the ship got underway. So I applied for Northwestern. The papers for Harvard and Stanford came in too late. And so I ended up going to Northwestern.

DePue: How much of that decision had to do with Roberta?

Walker: None.

DePue: Was she at Kenosha at that time though?

Walker: Yes, she was in Kenosha, but I had applied for Northwestern before we were married.

DePue: Okay. Did you strike up the relationship again after you got there?

Walker: Well, with Roberta it was a long distance wooing. We got engaged while I was in the west Pacific. Immediately after I got back, I guess, to San Diego, we got married. But there was no mixture between my marrying her and Northwestern. They were two separate decisions.

DePue: So that was just a happy coincidence that you ended up going to law school very close to her family then?

Walker: Yes, that's right, that's right.

DePue: You might have just said this, but you were married then shortly after you got out?

Walker: Yeah. I left the Navy. Yeah, shortly before I got out. We were married in March of '47 and I left the Navy in June of '47.

DePue: Okay.

Walker: Yeah, that' right

DePue: The wedding was…

Walker: It's all kind of about the same time.

DePue: The wedding was in Kenosha?

Walker: Correct. The wedding was in Kenosha, and my brother and my mother came to the wedding. Yes.

DePue: But your father wasn't able to make it?

Walker: Well, it wasn't that he wasn't able to. My father was not exactly happy about my selection of a wife. She was Catholic, and he had some of the prejudice that goes with being Texan, against Catholics, that goes way back in the history of America. I'm sure you're familiar with that. So he did not agree with my choice of a wife at all.

DePue: Why don't you tell us a little about what it was that you found so stimulating, so exciting about going to law school.

Walker: The subjects, I loved them. I just…what can you say? You encounter a subject of learning, an area of learning that turns you on, and that turned me on. I thoroughly enjoyed every legal subject that I took, and, of course, the top flight law schools do a lot of teaching, not a lot but some teaching, about the history of the law and how the law developed in the Anglo-Saxon system, and I found that fascinating. And so I enjoyed learning about the law, every step of the way, Then I became Editor-in-Chief of the Law Review, which was a very prestigious job for a law student to have, but I was also Editor in Chief of the Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology and working two jobs, first three and then down to two, because I just couldn't keep it up. We had to have a job because I started having children like mad, or my wife did. We had a child every year, so by the time I graduated from law school there were three. The third child was born that year.

DePue: I'm sure the GI Bill paid for a lot of the school but obviously not enough.

Walker: No, no. We got no money for living. You got tuition, that's all. I don't mean to deprecate it; it was damned important. The GI Bill paid for your tuition and books, but living expenses I had to work for, so I took part-time jobs.

DePue: Were there a lot of students in the law school who were veterans like yourself?

Walker: Yes, yes.

DePue: Would it be a majority maybe?

Walker: I believe so. I believe it was a majority, yes. I'm pretty sure it was a majority. And so it was hard work because law school is tough, particularly that first year and You have to work very hard and try to balance a family and jobs, and law school was not easy. But I found learning easy, and I got good grades with less work than most people. I don't say that with braggadocio. It just happened to be that way. I was suited for the law.

DePue: That you had a real affinity for the subject.

Walker: Yes, yes. I thoroughly enjoyed it.

DePue: Had you given any thought to the Naval Reserve? Was that not an option?

Walker: Yes, I did join the Naval Reserve. But that didn't bring in very much money. But I stayed active in the Reserves for several years.

DePue: And I also know that you started getting involved with campus politics at the time.

Walker: Well, I got involved in 1948, that's the second year of law school, with Adlai Stevenson and Paul Douglas. Stevenson ran for the governorship, and Paul Douglas ran for the Senate; I worked with both of those campaigns while I was in law school. That was my first introduction to formal campaigning, but I also took a job as an Assistant Precinct Captain because I wanted to learn how the Chicago political system worked.

DePue: That was your second year in law school?

Walker: First year.

DePue: You just said that the first year of law school was very tough, so on top of going to law school and taking all those rigorous courses, you're involved in the political campaigns and being a Precinct Captain as well?

Walker: Yes. Yes. Yes. I (laughs), a workaholic? I suppose with the kids, but recognize, and I don't want to sound the wrong way on this, Mark, that I found the law just came to me, and I didn't have to work hard in law school in order to get top grades. Just kind of fell into it…my mind just worked that way. That's the best way I can put it. I didn't have to work hard to learn.

DePue: Versus taking engineering courses at Annapolis. (Both laugh).

Walker: (laughing) Big difference, a big difference. Yes.

DePue: Thank God there are people who thrive at engineering.

Walker: Thank God is right, but not me.

DePue: What did Roberta then think about all these activities, going to law school and all the other activities as well?

Walker: I think she was just too busy as a wife and a mother to even give it much thought.. You know how you are when you're very young, you don't really think about those kinds of things. You do what you're doing, and that's what we did.

DePue: Well, that particular generation was going after life with a gusto anyway, after just coming back from winning the Second World War and deciding to move on with their lives.

Walker: Well, yeah, it was different, totally different as you know very well, Mark. It was expected that you did this. She never went to a beauty parlor; we didn't go out to eat or anything while I was in law school. Never the money to do it, but she just did it, and nobody thought we were being, you know, bad off because of it. It was expected.

DePue: I want to ask you a little bit about why the Democratic Party versus the Republican Party at that time?

Walker: Well, I have always been what my father was, and that is what's called a yellow-dog Democrat down south; that is, vote for a yellow dog if he's running on the Democratic ticket. I've always been a Democrat, my father was always a Democrat, and that's the way a lot of people thought at that time. I actually think there's a lot to be said for it, that is, preference for party instead of individual. I know a lot of people don't think that way. I hear over and over again, oh, I don't vote for the party, I vote for the man. Okay. I want to say, Mark, that the Democratic Party is the party of the people. That isn't just words. We got social security because of the Democrats but the Republicans fought it. The Democratic Party is the party that fights more for people rights than the Republican Party, and that's historical. There's no doubt about it, and that's where I was. If you really believe that, as I did with great fervor at that time, then you believe that from Dog Catcher on up you're better off having Democrats elected than Republicans because if you have a Democratic Dog Catcher, you're more likely to have a Democratic Councilman, a Democratic legislator, a Democratic Senator, a Democratic Governor, a Democratic President. It helps all the way along the line. So I think voting for the party is honorable; not dishonorable, honorable. The right thing to do. We're much more likely to get the kind of government I want if the Democrats do it.

DePue: Would you describe yourself as a Roosevelt Democrat?

Walker: Well, certainly at that time I was, and I think that I didn't really understand the nuances, differences between liberals and conservatives at that time. But certainly to the extent that I did understand it, I would have been thought of as a member of the conservative side of the Democratic Party, the southern Democrats.

DePue: Conservative in what respect?

Walker: Well, conservative on economic issues. Liberal on what I call civil rights issues, those kinds of things, but on economic issues more conservative. Southern Democrats were that way at that time, and I have always been in the conservative ranks of the Democratic Party. I've never been what you would call a liberal in that sense, although I was certainly more liberal then than I am now.

DePue: Well, that's not an uncommon occurrence as we grow older.

Walker: Exactly, exactly.

DePue: What was it that drew you to both the Douglas and the Stevenson campaigns? What was it about those two individuals?

Walker: Well, they were exciting individuals. Adlai I knew; I'd met him at law school. He'd lectured there from time to time. I didn't know Douglas, but he was my kind of guy. They were thoughtful. At that time the Democratic Party, and still for that matter in Illinois, was not issue-conscious. Certainly the precinct captains didn't give a damn about the issues. They were concerned about jobs, stuff like that. On the issues, Douglas and Stevenson were where I wanted to be, and so they turned me on and I could campaign for them with fervor because I believed in their views on so many issues.

DePue: Do you recall the specific issues, the central issues that really got you excited about them?

Walker: I can't really remember the specific issues at that time, Mark, I'm sorry, but certainly on the liberal side insofar as human rights are concerned. Certainly civil rights is one that I believe strongly in so there's one issue that the Democrats stood out on, I thought at least. My kind of Democrats did, but not the southern Democrats, so I was divided. On economic issues I was a southern Democrat, on people issues, I call them, I was a liberal Democrat.

DePue: But these are all more domestic than they are foreign affair issues that you're speaking about?

Walker: Yes, at that time you remember, well you don't remember, you're a young man, Mark. Foreign policy, politics stopped at the ocean. Foreign policy was pretty much bipartisan. Democrats and Republicans viewed it as something that was above politics, foreign policy. So that was not a partisan issue.

DePue: And from what I gather by what I've been reading about you and what you've been talking about, you're much more motivated by what was going on at the state level anyway than necessarily at the national level?

Walker: I'm glad you mentioned that, Mark. That's very true. I've always been much more interested in state government than in federal government, and that's why I

was so attracted to Adlai because he was running for Governor. While I helped Paul Douglas get elected, I didn't put the kind of effort into Paul Douglas's campaigns that I did into Stevenson's. Of course, after I graduated from law school, I went to work in Springfield. Then, for the rest of my life I've had more interest in state government than in national government.

DePue: Was that position in Springfield the Little Hoover Commission then?

Walker: Yes. The Commission to Study State Government; it was called CSSG. It was popularly called the Little Hoover Commission because the Hoover Commission was a commission appointed by the president, Eisenhower –whoever, I'd have to stop and think –to improve the efficiency of the federal government, and it was called the Hoover Commission because he was the chairman of the commission.

DePue: You graduated from law school in '50?

Walker: Yeah, January of '50.

DePue: Okay. So that would have been, that would still have been Truman at that time.

Walker: Pardon me.

DePue: That would still have been Truman then.

Walker: Yes.

DePue: Okay.

Walker: Very definitely. I liked Harry.

DePue: And what was it that you got a chance to learn and discover about politics and government in the Hoover Commission.

Walker: Well, we studied state government, of course. The objective was to make state government more efficient, to cut down on the number of agencies and departments that reported to the Governor. There were 20-odd at that time. No, there were more than that, 30-odd. And because that was such a huge number of units reporting directly to the Governor, our objective was to simplify state government and, organizationally speaking, also to make it more efficient. So for example, I was assigned to work on the Department of Insurance, which I did, and wrote a paper and made recommendations for the commission to consider. So I learned a good deal. I don't mean that I was an expert on it, I wasn't, but I did learn a good deal about how state government works in Springfield.

DePue: And you would count yourself a quick study in that regard as well?

Walker: Well, I threw myself into it, yes. Yes, I did.

DePue: And not just the things on paper but the nuances of state government and politics?

Walker: Yeah, I did the same things I did as an Assistant Precinct Captain when I made up my mind I wanted to learn how that damned machine worked. So I did the same thing to the extent that I could in Springfield - what makes this thing work at the practical level.

DePue: Let's talk a little bit about being a precinct captain and trying to figure out what made the system work because I think you probably have some strong feelings about what you learned.

Walker: Yeah, I did, Mark. I was, I was raised in California, of course, and politics in Chicago (laughs) bears no relationship to politics as is practiced in California. Patronage was something that was new to me. The job of a precinct captain revolved pretty much around jobs, getting jobs, and, of course, as a captain, helping people. Get their garbage picked up, fix their traffic tickets, do all these little things where a precinct can be an interface between the people and their government. That was a very useful role that was played, but it also got pretty bad because votes are what counted and you had to deliver votes. How you did that was 'katy bar the door'. I learned how to vote the graveyard, I learned how to get people to the polls, and how to, well, do all the tricks of the trade when it comes to machine politics. I learned them all, not all but a good number of them. I'd volunteer to go to other wards and work just so I could learn more about it. At that time the law firm that I was working with was not very busy, and so I did have the time to do that.

DePue: So this would have been after graduation, obviously, when you came back to Chicago?

Walker: Yes… yes. In between, of course. I served as law clerk to the Chief Justice of the United States, and then Deputy Chief Commissioner of the United States Court of Military Appeals before I settled down in Chicago. In that connection I became an assistant precinct captain.

DePue: During the time you were in law school and you said you were a precinct captain during that time as well, did you not get quite as immersed in politics of the city as when you returned a few years later?

Walker: No, I think I actually got more involved then in terms of learning how the machine worked.

DePue: While you were still in law school?

Walker: Yeah. It was after I graduated from law school and did some of these other things and came back to Chicago to practice law that I served as the assistant precinct captain.

DePue: Okay. If you don't mind then I'd like to talk a little bit about going to the Supreme Court because this is not something that everybody has a chance to do.

Walker: True.

DePue: How did that come about?

Walker: Well, then as now, the justices look to the law schools' top graduates for their clerks, and they had preferences. I think that's still true now. Chief Justice Vinson was attached to a professor at law school, Bill Pedrick, and Pedrick liked me and recommended me to be Law Clerk to the Chief Justice, and that's how I got the job. But it only went to people who were Editor and Chief of the Law Review or number one in their class.

DePue: And were you both?

Walker: Well, I was actually number two in my class, but I was Editor and Chief of the Law Review, yes. I know it's because of that, of course, that I was able to become Law Clerk for the Chief Justice. It was supposed to be a two year appointment, but I only served one year because of the Korean War.

DePue: What was the thing that you most recall, most cherished about that experience and working on the Supreme Court?

Walker: Just that, working in the Supreme Court. The feel and the substance also of how the Supreme Court works and the role that it plays in our government. As I said, how it works. That was, I think, the most valuable thing that I came out with. Not the individual cases, although I did work on some exciting cases.

DePue: You've mentioned already that you'd generally had a preference for politics and government at the state level and the local level.

Walker: Yes.

DePue: And that gave you a window into governance at the highest level in our country. Did that cause you to become more interested in the national level of government as well, or did you still feel some desire to go back and work at the state level?

Walker: Always the state level I don't know why, what caused that. I guess the fact that I worked in state government with the Little Hoover Commission, and also I wanted to get involved in State Government That seemed much more doable than the federal level. What are you going to do, run for congress? It seemed more doable for a young person, and I enjoyed it, I enjoyed state government. How can I put it? You can get your arms around it more, better, easier than the federal government.

DePue: Yeah.

Walker: More understandable how it works.

DePue: But your tour out at the Supreme Court is going to be cut short anyway because the Korean War is going on now?

Walker: Yes … yes, yes.

DePue: And, do you recall when you were called back to service?

Walker: Yes. It was in January of, I believe January or February of 1950. I think that's right.

DePue: '52? The war started in June of '50.

Walker: Yeah. I'm '50. I'm trying to think…in '51 or. Let's see,'51.

DePue: Okay. And what was your posting then when you went back to service?

Walker: A destroyer in the Pacific, West Pacific. The U.S.S. Kidd, the pirate of the Pacific, DD661. I was designated the Communications Officer on the Kidd. We put it back into commission in San Diego. It was in the moth ball fleet, and we put it back into commission and sailed across the Pacific to join in the Korean War. The duty that the destroyer had while I was on board was Communications Officer, and the ship was on what was called a battle line. Battle line was the line, well you know that, between North Korea, South Korea. Between the commies and us, and the battle line, of course, moved depending on how the war was going. We were offshore firing five inch guns into the ChiComs [Chinese Communists] positions to provide artillery support from the sea. Of course, they shot at us, but a destroyer is a pretty fast maneuvering target, so they didn't get very close to us. The MiGs [type of Chinese aircraft] came over every now and then but never seriously went after us, although we went to general quarters whenever the MiGs came over. But it would have been pretty lopsided because these are older destroyers and they couldn't track a jet for the gunnery system, so it would not have been much of a contest dealing with a MiG if it was attacking. It never happened.

DePue: I would assume there were aircraft carriers in the vicinity, so your pilots were keeping the MiGs off your back anyway?

Walker: That's right. And what destroyers did was serve as a screen, a circular screen around one or two carriers or one or two cruisers and then a whole circular screen of destroyers to provide aircraft as support. I got this letter from the Chief Judge of the United States Court of Military Appeals; Green was the guys name, used to be Governor of Rhode Island. I got a letter from him saying I understand you're interested in taking a position of Deputy Chief Commissioner, and so please stop in to my office so we can talk. (laughs) It's kind of funny. How many thousands of miles away?

DePue: His office in Washington, D.C., I take it?

Walker: Yeah, yeah (laughs). So I laughed and forgot about it, then it was just a few weeks later I was up on the bridge one night –I was a Communications Officer – and the Chief Radioman came up to the bridge and had a clipboard with a radio message. We were a darkened ship, so he put a flashlight on the message so I could read it. He shouldn't have done that because he should have taken it to the Captain first who was on the bridge at the time, but he brought it to me first because I was his boss. I looked at it and it said, "Lieutenant Daniel Walker, detached immediately, first available transportation, report to Secretary of Navy, Washington, D.C." It just, you know, boggles your mind. The Secretary of the Navy is the absolute tops and here I am (laughs) a junior officer out there in the Korean waters. So I initialed it and then the chief took it over to the Captain. The Captain walked over and said, "Walker, you must be some kind of hot shit." (both laugh) I didn't quote that in the book. I didn't use that word. So that message meant exactly what it said. First available transportation. Well, a destroyer was the first available transportation (both laugh), so the Captain said to me, "Walker, send a message to the Task Force Commander," of course, he got a copy of this, "saying, in accordance with orders, Kidd detaches itself immediately and Mr. Walker" he turned to me and he said, "set a course for Sasebo Japan". So we left the Task Force and went to Sasebo. I caught a plane to Tokyo, caught a military plane, of course, to Andrews Air Force Base, and then reported to the Navy Department.

DePue: Well, there were a couple of long flights in there then.

Walker: God, yes. Those bucket seats … you've flown in them.

DePue: Yeah. They're reinforcing your love of flying, huh?

Walker: Oh, boy. Awful.

DePue: How long did you serve on this U.S. Court of Military Appeals then?

Walker: I served for … almost two years, wasn't it? I'd have to go back and figure it out. I'm sorry. I was called back to active duty like all members of my class at the Naval Academy, and we were told to expect to serve two years. I served about one year on the Kidd and then another year at the Court of Military Appeals, so that was about a year on the Court of Military Appeals.

DePue: So by that time the Korean War would have been over.

Walker: Yeah, yeah, I believe.

DePue: What were your duties on the Count of Military Appeals then?

Walker: I was Deputy Chief Commissioner, but actually it's a nice title. What I did was very much the same thing I did at the Supreme Court, only more advanced. I

wrote opinions for the Chief Justice of the Court on pending court martial appeals. And there were some fact-finding. Sometimes we would get a case where you had to do fact finding, and the Deputy Chiefs would do that. So, it was appeals from courts martial and writing opinions and that kind of thing. It was a pretty easy job, and I had time to write, so I wrote a book on military law at that time. Case book, it's called.

DePue: Wow.

Walker: A textbook for students in law school taking military law, which there was quite a bit of at that time, of course. So, that was fun, writing a book.

DePue: What was Roberta and the family doing during all of this? You went to D.C. and worked with the Supreme Court and now to the Pacific and then back to D.C. again.

Walker: We had a lot of kids (laughs). She was busy raising kids. So that's what it came down to.

DePue: Did she stay out in the D.C. area the whole time?

Walker: Yes, well, when I first went to the court, she stayed at home in Kenosha for a while she learned how to drive. She didn't know how to drive. But, otherwise, yeah she stayed in Washington and was a housewife with, let's see, number 5, Robbie was born. I left the job as Deputy Chief Commissioner when Adlai Stevenson ran for the presidency. Adlai called me one day and asked me if I'd join his presidential candidate staff in Springfield. Of course, I badly wanted to do that, and the military court agreed to give me a leave of absence so I could take that job. Roberta had just given birth to Robbie, our fifth child. I took her home from the hospital and left the next morning for Springfield to work for Adlai for, I don't know, how many months. It must have been from July till November.

DePue: Were you working on his presidential campaign?

Walker: Well, some, but mostly I worked on state government. Under the state constitution at that time, the Lieutenant Governor took over state government if the Governor left the state. That's no longer true. So I worked a lot with Lieutenant Governor Dixon who became Governor whenever Adlai left the state, because I knew more about state government than the other assistants. So most of my time was on state governmental matters, not the campaign.

DePue: But it got you back into the thing that you really loved most, it sounds like.

Walker: State government, yes.

DePue: And Roberta and the family came back to Springfield then?

Walker: Oh, no. No… no, they stayed in Washington.

DePue: Okay.

Walker: Yeah, they stayed in Washington.

DePue: So, she sounds like she was living the fate of most Army and Navy officers, a lot of time away from the husband then.

Walker: Well, that's very true, Mark, and you know what that's like, of course.

DePue: Yes.

Walker: Nobody complained about it. That was just kind of, well, that's the way things were. And Roberta was always a good soldier, as they say. She accepted the role that was thrust upon her by her husband's way of life. She was always very good about that; never complained about it at all.

DePue: After the Stevenson campaign, what was next for you?

Walker: Well, then I went back to the court for a year or whatever it was, I don't remember, six months, eight months, a year. I didn't have to do it, but I felt morally obligated to do the two years that my classmates were doing. And so when that was up, I submitted my resignation and came back to Chicago to practice law.

DePue: It's probably worth saying that when you were with the U.S. Court of Military Appeals, you were not actually in uniform at the time, were you?

Walker: Oh, no; no, no; no, no, it was just a civilian job.

DePue: I guess when I first encountered that it didn't make sense to me; I would have thought you would have been a military lawyer representing, but that…

Walker: No, no. It was a, a civilian court, the entire court.

DePue: So that was the court of last resort literally for somebody making an appeal through the military system?

Walker: Yes, to appeal a court martial. It was created by the Uniform Code of Military Justice that was adopted in 1951, I think, and created this new court. I worked for the Chief Justice of the court.

DePue: They didn't want anybody in this court who was actually in uniform, in the service?

Walker: No, there was nobody in uniform, nobody on active duty. They did say that they wanted Deputy Chiefs. There were three: one who had served in the Army, one who had served in the Marine Corps, one from the Navy, and the Chief was from

the Air Force, so all branches of the military were represented but not in uniform, not on active duty.

DePue: So when they set up the court in the first place, they wanted to have this separation of military legal systems from the civilian?

Walker: Definitely, definitely

DePue: In our system the civilian takes precedent ultimately?

Walker: Yeah. You put your finger on it. The whole objective was to have civilians running the legal system on appeals to get it out of the military command posture into a civilian review so command and control wouldn't be a factor in appealing a court-martial as it would be if these were uniform people.

DePue: Did UCMJ no longer applied for these people – Uniform Code of Military Justice?

Walker: To the employees?

DePue: No, to the defendants if you will.

Walker: Oh, sure. The whole system is built on the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

DePue: I'm sorry. You'll have to forgive my ignorance on this.

Walker: Oh, no. That's alright.

DePue: I'm just trying to figure it out.

Walker: Come on, you're not alone. You're not alone.

DePue: So, this amounts to civilians administering UCMJ? They're interpreting it from a civilian perspective?

Walker: At the appeals level, not at the court-martial level, the trial court level. But once you get into appeals, then civilian.

DePue: It strikes me, you're a still a very young man, you've been involved in state government, you've been involved in precinct government and seen how that's worked, you've clerked at the Supreme Court, you've seen military law, you've (laughs) pretty much been able to touch all of those key parts at different aspects of the legal profession.

Walker: Yeah. It was very exciting but of course, at an unreal level, that is to say, you're not dealing with trial work on the legal side, you're dealing with appellate work, which is totally different, as you know. So, well that's just a different world, a different world.

DePue: Was all of this not exactly the vision that your father had for you when he said, "Dan, you're going to be a lawyer"

Walker: He was not very specific about it. I reckon he didn't know enough about it to be specific, but he just wanted me to be good lawyer. He didn't know what or where except don't be a police court lawyer. He didn't want me to be a criminal lawyer, he wanted me to be a civil lawyer and a good one working with classy clients and that kind of thing.

DePue: So after your tour is done with the U.S. Court of Military appeals, did you then go back to Chicago?

Walker: Yes.

DePue: Okay. And what did you find there for employment?

Walker: I went with a major law firm, Carl McGowan M-c-G-o-w-a-n. Carl was Counsel to the Governor in Adlai's [Stevenson] last year as Governor of Illinois. He was the Counsel for the Governor, and I got to know him, of course, when I worked in Springfield during the campaign, and Carl and I hit if off. When Adlai lost, Carl, who was a Chicagoan, wanted to go with a major law firm, and he asked me to go with him, and I did, and the law firm accepted me. At the same time he became a partner, they hired me as an Associate. At that time, though, they were called Clerks, not Associates, Law Clerks, the old fashioned way of referring to the young lawyer jobs. So I joined Carl with the law firm of Daley, Dines, Ross, and O'Keefe, a very large law firm for that time. It was a real stodgy kind of a firm representing major utilities, that kind of thing, and they didn't cotton to either Carl or me, so of course the partners didn't give us much to do. They didn't care for us, and so I didn't have much to do. Partners didn't give me matters to work on, so it was a pretty easy life; it was too easy for me. There was another law firm called Hopkins, Sutter, Owen, Mulroy and Wentz, and Tom Mulroy was a trial partner in that firm. I'd worked with Tom because while I was in law school another thing I did was help him draft criminal laws, for the Chicago Crime Commission. I did that while I was a law student, and Tom liked me and he tried to hire me. He found out too late that I'd gone with this other firm, but he pursued me, and finally I got tired of twiddling my thumbs at this other law firm, so I accepted Tom's offer and went with Hopkins, Sutter.

DePue: Tom?

Walker: Mulroy.

DePue: Tom Mulroy.

Walker: M-u-l-r-o-y.

DePue: This might be an unfair question, and any time I ask a question like this you don't want to answer, you don't have to.

Walker: There's no such thing as an unfair question.

DePue: Do you have any idea what it was about the original law firm that they never warmed up to you?

Walker: Well, or Carl McGowan either. They were just staid in their ways, and that's the only way I can put it. They just were more comfortable with the older guys and their way of life, and these were new people and they resented Carl coming in as a partner. The top guys, of course, were the ones that brought Carl in. They thought he'd bring in business. But the other partners just didn't like this idea at all, and I was a protégé of Carl's, so they didn't like me either. So they didn't give me anything to do.

DePue: Okay. I want to take you back to the end of the Stevenson campaign and he loses. What was your feeling at the time? You know you'd invested a lot in this man. What was your feeling's at that time?

Walker: I was heartbroken. First my intelligence told me that he was going to get beaten by Eisenhower, but you know how it is when you're in a political campaign. You believe that, by God, people are going to wake up and we are going to win even though the polls show we're not going to win. You just believe in your cause. You're young and full of steam, so I really thought we had a chance of winning. We didn't realistically and, as you know, Stevenson lost badly to Eisenhower.

DePue: But this is a great apprenticeship for somebody who has an interest in pursuing some politics down the road yourself. Were you thinking of it at that time as a possibility?

Walker: No, and I would not say an apprenticeship, because the kind of work that I did was not of any consequence. I handled correspondence. I remember one of the subjects. Adlai was a Unitarian. Did he believe in Jesus, the divinity of Jesus? I handled those letters from people who (chuckles) wanted to know about what he really believed about Jesus. Not very exciting stuff.

DePue: What was your answer for that one?

Walker: Oh, duck, dodge, and weave, you know (both laugh). You would imagine, duck, dodge, and weave.

DePue: Yeah.

Walker: Yes, I believe in the message of Jesus. You know, you can write it yourself.

DePue: Yes.

Walker: So, that's what I did. I really enjoyed the state government part of it, working with… oh come on, the Lieutenant Governor…Dixon. We formed a very close relationship, he and I.

DePue: Did you learn any lessons, political lessons per se, that stuck with you based on that particular campaign?

Walker: Well, I certainly learned at the state level how the system worked better, and the relationship between Chicago and Springfield in terms of state government, the mayor and the governor. I learned more about that and, yeah. That was the part that informed me the most. I learned how the system worked because the power that the State Central Committeemen –I don't want to bore you with this –have in the system, and how the whole system works. I understood it much better as a result of that experience.

DePue: Maybe you were too far removed from this, but did you learn any lessons in terms of how to run a campaign and how not to run a campaign?

Walker: No, I don't, I don't think so. I don't think I learned anything about that. Not at that time, no.

DePue: Okay, then, let's take you back to Chicago and now you're finally getting your feet on the ground and doing legal work and making some money and supporting the family, but that wasn't by any means all that you were doing at the time that you were a young man in these law firms in Chicago.

Walker: No, I got active in a number of things. On the law side, I focused on anti-trust law and worked in the Bar Association committees, local, state, and national, on anti-trust laws, so I learned a lot about that it became my area of expertise, anti-trust. I worked with the Chicago Crime Commission, again on legislation, and I also started working on campaigns of individuals running for high office, for senator, for governor. I formed the Committee on Illinois Government, which dealt with state government and spent considerable time on that and was the president there.

DePue: Was this the time, also, that you were involved, pretty deeply involved, in precinct politics?

Walker: Yes, I was doing that, I was Precinct Committeeman in the suburbs in Chicago. The, the precinct captains are appointed in the City of Chicago by the ward committeeman. In the suburbs the job is called precinct committeeman, and it's elected. So I was elected Precinct Committeeman in my precinct in Deerfield Township, which is where we lived on the north shore of Chicago.

DePue: Okay. I thought you had a couple of years, though, after you came from Springfield to Chicago when you lived in Chicago proper?

Walker: Yeah, lived on the south side. That was when I was Assistant Precinct Captain.

DePue: Okay.

Walker: Then we moved to the suburbs, Deerfield, and then I became a precinct committeeman.

DePue: Well, I've got to tell you, Governor, the part of your book that I found most fascinating was the part where you talked about the things you were discovering when you were working the precincts in Chicago. I wondered if you could talk to us a little bit about some of the things that you were discovering in that experience?

Walker: The primary thing was learning how a precinct captain worked and how the organization functioned to help people at the lowest level. I mentioned that earlier, helping people with the daily problems of life. The captain was an intermediary who made life more doable for people. Sometime it was as basic as getting food, sometimes it was, as I said, fixing a traffic ticket. All of the things that you do when you run into government as a citizen, the captain was there to help you out. I'd never encountered that system before. I didn't know it existed. I should have, of course; it was well-known in the country, particularly with respect to immigrants. As you know during those periods of our history in the big cities, the political organizations really helped the immigrants survive. I was very interested in how that worked in calling on people and to get their vote and learning that you don't try to talk issues to them because they don't have any interest in issues, which I was always interested in. You talk about what you can do for them that makes their daily life better, things that I mentioned. And that's just a whole different orientation and approach to politics. The emphasis on jobs and things that people wanted, needed for their lives. That part of politics was a real awakening. There was the dirty side of it, of course. There was also the relationship between the church, for example, and politics in Chicago. The power that the ward committeemen had, that the political system had, all of those things were just real awakenings to me. I'd never, never heard of them before.

DePue: What was it that rankled you so much about the way the Machine, if you will, worked in Chicago then?

Walker: Two things. Number one: the refusal to face up to issues. That was number one, that is, the party did not make any effort to get people interested and vote because of Civil Rights or other issues that were of importance to them. Rather they voted because they were party adherents and were taken to the polls by the captain (laughs). And the way that votes were bought and sold, voting the graveyard, the winos, the drunks getting their votes. Learning how all that was done was just a real eye-opener to me and made me very… I didn't care for machine politics because it did not concentrate on trying to do bigger things for people's lives, it concentrated on nitty-gritty. I thought politics should be much better than that.

DePue: Were you expected, working at the precinct level, to participate, to help out with getting out the vote, with doing some of the shady things involved with getting out the vote?

Walker: Oh, sure, oh, sure. Captains did that and assistant captains did that, and I volunteered to do some of those things simply because I wanted to learn. I worked with a captain on, another captain on voting the cemetery and learned

how they did that, rounding the winos up and getting them to the polls and how that was done, and I did that, sure. And little things like (I always found this amusing) long lines at the polling places. In areas where your opponent was strong, getting people into the lines at the voting place so the line would be long and they would get tired of staying in line and just not vote. And so you'd pack the lines, and when the people you packed it with got up close to the place where you vote, they'd just leave. They never voted, they weren't intending to vote, they were just making the line longer so that the people who did want to vote and could vote would get tired of waiting. It was those kinds of tricks and using a policeman to deal with your opponent's candidates. Well, all kinds of things like that. The tricks of the trade. Some of it's perfectly fine, helping people get food for example, but to do the other stuff like voting the graveyard, and the winos, was pretty sickening.

DePue: Did you have a feeling sometimes, when they were expecting you to participate in some of these things that once you went down that road, they kind of had you, that you were theirs?

Walker: Well, to this extent, Mark, yes is the answer to your question directly. You you get sucked into the system. You begin to believe that that's okay, and once you start accepting it, well let me give you a comparison. It's like bribery. You take a bottle of wine as a gift. The next thing you know it's something more than that, the next thing you know you're selling yourself.

DePue: Yeah, when the first thing seemed pretty darned innocent.

Walker: The first thing seems innocent, but then gradually it gets worse and worse and worse, and then by the time you become really aware of what's going on, you're caught in the system. You've gone too far to turn back. It's the insidious way that machine politics works, and you can justify it a long ways… lulled into doing nothing about it. I hated machine politics and …well, I hated it.

DePue: What year did you and the family move out to Deerfield then?

Walker: I think that was '53 or '54. I think it was '54.

DePue: So that was before Daley became the mayor then?

Walker: That was before Daley became mayor, I believe, yeah.

DePue: Okay. Would you say he was just the beneficiary of the machine politics and he'd grown up in that system, certainly?

Walker: Yeah. He certainly grew up with it, very much so, an avid practitioner of it and believed in it, believed very strongly because he believed that the Democratic Party would do best for the country, and you could do most anything to support the Democratic Party. Independence was unknown to him, just like to all

machine politics, it's, you've got to toe the party line. And I didn't have any problem with that part of it, as I've said.

DePue: With voting a straight Democratic ticket?

Walker: Yeah, yeah.

DePue: Those kinds of things?

Walker: Yeah, that didn't bother me, that didn't bother me.

DePue: When you were out in Deerfield, you were still working for Hopkins, Sutter?

Walker: Yes, yes. That was known as a slave shop: long hours, very long hours. I would work, oh, three or four and sometimes five nights a week and Saturdays.

DePue: Were you getting some trial work then as well?

Walker: Yeah, I was working on trial, on litigation that's called trial work, yes, but very few trials. Most of it is motions and discovery, it's called, and the pre-trial stuff really in the law, and working with documents, witnesses, and depositions, and … Yeah, that kind of nitty-gritty of trial work, and you don't really get an opportunity, because these are mostly major cases, to shine until you've got a lot more experience. So they call it sitting in chairs. First chair is the trial lawyer who's in charge of the case, second chair works for that guy, third chair works for the second chair guy, and it's a team, of course.

DePue: Yeah.

Walker: But you don't get much actual trial experience until you get in the first chair.

DePue: But did you enjoy this work?

Walker: Oh, yes, yes. I enjoyed it. It's a challenge because you win or lose. That's one of the great things (interviewer laughs) about being a litigator, you win or lose.

DePue: So you liked the arena of legal contests?

Walker: Absolutely, Mark. That's what I could never understand … nobody getting any fun out of being a desk lawyer. You write a will, and who knows how it's going to turn out. But you try law suits, you're going to win or lose. So it's just a lot more stimulating.

DePue: Well, it's kind of like politics in that respect, winners (both speaking) and losers in that.

Walker: Winners and losers, absolutely. That's why I enjoyed both of them.

DePue: What was different about politics in the Deerfield area from what you had experienced in the city, in the Machine, if you will?

Walker: Well, in the suburbs there's still an emphasis by the regular organization on jobs, which is what everybody in a political system in Illinois at that time was concerned about, getting jobs. Issues didn't matter much, so outside of being a precinct committeeman and getting the Democratic vote out in my precinct, I didn't go to county meetings or that kind of stuff. I got the voters out, which is what I was supposed to do as precinct committeeman. But then, for a real activity, we had Democratic clubs that supported candidates who were independent minded, I mean independent of the regular organization, and I was very active in that in Deerfield.

DePue: Was that the Committee on Illinois Government?

Walker: No, that was statewide; that was not Deerfield. I formed that organization. Stratton beat Stevenson, wait, Stratton beat Lt. Governor, whatever the hell his name was, and so I formed the Committee on Illinois Government to keep track of the Stratton Republican administration through clipping newspapers and everything we could to build a record of incompetence on the part of the Republican governor. And I'd enlisted people who had been Stevenson people, young people, lawyers mostly, in that organization. We clipped newspapers and did that kind of thing, wrote issue papers for Democratic candidates for state office, and that was a lot of fun. And then because I wanted to get more active in the actual warring of fighting political campaigns, I helped form another organization, called the Democratic Federation of Illinois, which was Democratic clubs all over the state. There were over 100 of them, and I became president of that.

DePue: Both of these organizations seem to be distinctly different from the machine in Chicago itself?

Walker: Definitely, and Daley didn't like them because it was not machine politics.

DePue: Was that the overt intent of these institutions or these organizations, that they weren't the Machine, that they were independent and not beholden (broadly speaking)?

Walker: Yes, plus, as I keep saying over and over again, trying to capitalize on the issues as opposed to things like jobs. And that's what we worked on.

DePue: What were the issues you thought were so in need of being addressed that were being ignored?

Walker: The major one at the time was civil rights.

DePue: Well, that's probably a fair thing to ask you at this time. You're in Deerfield and you got a taste of civil rights activism at a different level, did you not?

Walker: Yeah, I sure did. That was the integrated housing issue in Deerfield. Morris Milgram was a developer and he wanted to develop a moderate-income housing development in Deerfield that would be open to blacks and whites, be integrated, which there wasn't any of in Deerfield at that time. So the public… people got up in arms about that, they didn't want an integrated housing development, they didn't want blacks in Deerfield. So I formed an organization called the Constitutional Rights Committee and tried to say to the public, "Come on now. There's such a thing as constitutional rights here. Some black families coming into Deerfield is not going to ruin the value of your house." That's the way, you know, talk some sense to people. I founded the organization and so I got some public exposure, which –

DePue: What was the community's response to all of this?

Walker: Well, they didn't like what I was doing (chuckles), and they wanted the development to be kyboshed, and so what they did was got an ordinance adopted turning the area he wanted to develop into a park and worked it out to get a referendum on whether that would be condemned, that portion of the town to become a park, which, of course, would ruin the company. I fought that and we lost, of course.

DePue: Were you surprised by the response you got in the community?

Walker: Well, initially I was, yes, Mark. Initially, I thought that these were all, not all but mostly college educated people. I thought, sure, that they would wake up and we would be able to get something done here. I was amazed at the amount of prejudice that existed.

DePue: You thought they would be more enlightened in part because they had good educations and good jobs?

Walker: Yeah, … yeah. They would see the issues, the constitutional rights that were involved, civil rights and so forth, and wake up to that, but they were more concerned about what they perceived to be the value of their homes than they were about the constitutional rights. I tried to educate, of course, to point out that there's not really any evidence that a minimum of blacks moving in is going to adversely affect the value of your home.

DePue: Well, did it play any different though in Chicago, that issue particularly?

Walker: Issue's the same everywhere, and the …

DePue: Chicago had the reputation at that time of being these little ethnic enclaves that were pretty distinctly defined.

Walker: Yeah, but the black issue was totally different than ethnicity - no relationship between the two. If the Italians lived in a neighborhood, nobody got excited about it. But I'll tell you, when blacks came in, people did get excited about it.

DePue: So the lines between Italian and German and Polish and Irish communities might kind of blend and move back and forth, but it worked differently for the blacks.

Walker: Absolutely, absolutely. The feeling was extremely strong in Chicago at that time, and continues in some respects to this day. You know the old saying, "some blacks start moving in and there goes the neighborhood." You've heard that phrase, I'm sure. It was just plain racism and prejudice. I tried to combat it at the Springfield and Deerfield level but we lost friends; children, our kids, were subjected to a lot of baiting on the play grounds. It got to be pretty vicious, which again, surprised me. I didn't think people in Deerfield would do that kind of thing.

DePue: And you said baiting, not beating, right?

Walker: Baiting B-a-i-t-i-n-g, yes. You know, nigger lover, that kind of thing.

DePue: Okay.

Walker: And I was just amazed at being called a "nigger lover," in Deerfield. I didn't (laughs) think people there would react that way, but they sure did. I don't mean everybody, but too damned many of them. It was very, very disappointing.

DePue: Was all of this then, a couple of years before Martin Luther King came to town to protest about housing.

Walker: Yes, yes.

DePue: Can you talk a little bit about that?

Walker: Yes, I got involved in that. I was then Vice President, General Counsel of Montgomery Ward. I'd left the trial practice and become a corporate executive, Martin Luther King decided to make a fight on integrated housing in Chicago because it was a very segregated city, very segregated.

DePue: Was this 1965?

Walker: I think we're talking, … I'd have to go back again and look at the dates. I think that's right. I think it's in the mid-'60's, yes. I had worked on projects in the city like a new charter for the City of Chicago: schools, issues with the executives of other major corporations, working with the mayor, Daley, and trying to be of assistance in solving some of these problems. And also, I learned more about big city education problems, big city police departments and how they work, and how city government would work with the charter system. The real learning experience to me and, as I said, working with other corporate executives. But then this issue came along, the housing issue, and Daley, of course, was very upset at Martin Luther King's coming to Chicago. "Damn commie", he'd say.

DePue: What do you think really rankled him the most about King's coming there?

Walker: Getting people riled up. Exposing the bad side of machine politics in Chicago. That is to say, the way in which it fostered segregation and denial of civil rights. He didn't like to talk about those things. He didn't like to admit that they existed. Yup. And he was an interloper. He was an outsider. King. Daley said, meddling in affairs that he didn't have any right to meddle in. So King decided to conduct some marches in some of the white neighborhoods, and I joined that effort, along with a few other corporate executives, whites, and marched with them. And… that was an experience. Again, people yelling "nigger lover," "commie," etc. I wasn't present on the day when violence broke out and they threw stones at Martin Luther King. I wasn't there that day. But on the others I was, and Daley actually called up my boss and remonstrated with him and said, "Why are you letting that guy, Walker, get out there and, and help King"? And Tom Brooker, the CEO of Montgomery Ward, said … I don't know what he said. I really don't. Anyway, they ignored him, and he told me about it and said, "You just do what you feel like you've got to do, Dan."

DePue: Brooker did?

Walker: Yeah, yeah. He encouraged me. He really didn't encourage me. He just refused to stop me. "You do what you think you've got to do, Dan."

DePue: Uh, huh

Walker: And that really impressed me. I was very fond of the guy. But that was another thing I did that Daley didn't like. He didn't care for me. Also in the meetings that I had with him, it became apparent that we just talked a different language. He didn't understand independents and the Democratic Party. I don't mean running as an independent without label; I mean within the party being independent of the regular organization. He just couldn't comprehend why anybody wanted to do that. So we had very little in common politically except the love of the Democratic Party overall. But communication was difficult.

DePue: Can you finish off on the housing thing?

Walker: I participated in the negotiations between Daley and King, along with some other people, of course, not just me, and the outcome of that was forming the organization called the Metropolitan Open Housing Organization, and I became the president of that and worked on that for several years.

DePue: Was that organization meant to apply to both Chicago and the suburbs?

Walker: Yes. Open housing. Trying to get realtors not to discriminate, to give blacks as much an opportunity as whites to buy houses and so forth.

DePue: Did you find Daley cooperative in those?

Walker: Oh, absolutely not.

DePue: But did he not always, or generally, have the black vote? Didn't they support him?

Walker: Oh, sure.

DePue: How do you explain that?

Walker: Well, because there are two different worlds. The blacks voted automatically at that time in great numbers, and still huge numbers, for the Democratic Party candidates. From the top down they vote the straight ticket, Democratic, and the captains work with them to get them out to vote. They don't relate; the black folks don't draw a distinction in there about machine politics creating what it did to a segregated city like Chicago. Mark, this is a very difficult issue and I have to choose my words carefully. Black people, African Americans, are not in this respect unlike Italians or Germans. They like their own kind. So there is a self-segregation that goes on in cities, certainly observed in prison; it's the same thing. The blacks want to be with the blacks. They don't want to be with the whites. So it was very hard to get the ordinary African American to get upset about open housing and segregation because he wants segregation. He wants to live with the blacks. You're following me, I'm sure?

DePue: Sure, but that translates, to a certain respect, into poor schools and poor city services.

Walker: Yes, but regarding that relationship that you just mentioned it's very hard to persuade the African American people that one follows from the other. Rather, they will put it down to racism and discrimination, not realizing the extent to which the mere voluntary segregation is inevitably going to result in that kind of a second-rate school system for a lot of reasons, one of which being that, what do you know, good teachers don't want to teach in those schools. Kids are harder to handle, etc., etc. It's a complicated issue, and one of the real problems we have in this country is that it's very hard to discuss this subject without being labeled politically incorrect, without being a labeled a racist because you discussed the problem. It's one of the biggest problems I think we have in the country today, and it applies not only to race but to gender and to other subjects as well. That is, there are certain things you can't discuss openly. You just can't.

DePue: I think you could say it's extended into the issue of foreign affairs and the war right now as well.

Walker: That's very true. That's very true, and it's very unfortunate. Take the problem of Latinos versus Blacks. I noticed recently that Obama gave a speech in which he said, and to a Latino audience, he said "Look, we've got a lot in common, us African-Americans and you Latinos, so let's work together. We're brothers really." And you know very well, and everybody knows that, I don't whether everybody, everybody but most people know that the African-Americans and Latinos don't get along. They just don't. A lot of violence out there is associated

with that division. Look at the gangs, Latino gangs and the Black gangs in the big cities. They're fighting tooth and nail and yet, going back to my theme, it's very hard to talk openly about that. Obama rightly gets praised because he goes to Mt. Prospect, goes before Black audiences and talks about equating responsibility with rights on the part of the Blacks and their seeming unwillingness, many of them, to do that. But Obama can do it, but if a white politician goes into a black neighborhood and talks that way, he's got trouble. So he can't talk about it openly and honestly. Let me give you another example: the refusal of young black people to take the jobs that the Latinos are taking all over the country. They just won't take those jobs. They won't do that kind of work - gardening work, dirty work, that kind of stuff. (Well, look at those pelicans, a whole line of them.) Again, that's the subject that you have to be very careful about discussing without being called racist. It's a real problem in America; was then, is now.

DePue: It sounds like in terms of where this started, your relationship with Daley and the Chicago Machine, if you will, or insistence of being independent, your insistence on talking about issues and in particular the issue of race relations in Chicago, is what keeps getting you at odds with those in power there.

Walker: That's true, that's true.

DePue: Were there other issues? I know later on we'll talk about the Walker Report, but I don't want to get there yet.

Walker: Yeah, yeah. Well, no sir, those, that's certainly a major part of it. The school system and the public housing were certainly issues that the Machine was unwilling to face up to, and for years did not face up to, and that bothered me and other people as well. Public housing was a mess in Chicago for years, and some of us tried to discuss that with Daley, but he would hear none of it. He didn't want to hear anything about that, didn't want to talk about it.

DePue: But some of this is happening, you know, this is during Johnson's War on Poverty, and this is during a time when there are lots of public housing projects going up in the city.

Walker: Yeah, but lots of people felt, as certainly I know I did, that it was just the wrong way to go about it. To spend all that money to build these huge high-rises on the South side and the West side of Chicago for Blacks, and they turned into just slum-breeders. And it was just the wrong way to go about it.

DePue: What in particular did you object to in that?

Walker: Because you just crowd huge numbers of people into a single area, which is an invitation to crime problems, drug problems, whereas if you use scattered public housing, it would make a lot more sense. But the Machine would not go that way because the residents of the 35th Ward didn't want black people in their ward, and the Machine went along with that. And scattered public housing was an issue for years that the Machine kept from bringing about, and that was too bad. They put

them all in these big high-rises, give them apartments there, which is the wrong way to go about it as we've learned.

DePue: There aren't too many of those huge high-rises that are left up there anymore.

Walker: Yeah. Cabrini Green was a disaster, and there are others like that that were worse.

DePue: Let's talk about your private career here a little bit. I know that you worked for Montgomery Ward. Can you talk about how you came to work for Montgomery Ward?

Walker: Well, I was with a law firm, as I said, Hopkins, Sutter, and engaged in litigation which I did constantly. There came a time when I began to be worried about that because I was then viewed as a real comer, the next, amongst the lawyers in Chicago, like John Paul Stevens who was one, that were going to be the top trial lawyers in the city. And I looked around at those top trial lawyers that had made that jump, and I didn't like what I saw. They spent a lot of time downtown working nights, particularly when they were on trial, take a hotel rooms and live downtown, drinking heavily, fooling around with women, all those things, and I looked at that and I didn't care, didn't like what I saw.

DePue: It was the lifestyle more than the long hours though?

Walker: Yeah. The long hours didn't bother me. Yeah, you're right, lifestyle. Separation from family, total, not total but, almost total, and the excessive drinking. So, when, out of the blue, Tom Brooker called me up and asked me to consider becoming General Counsel at Montgomery Ward, why I, I listened, and after giving it a lot of thought decided to take that job. Sweetest job I ever had in my life. Beautiful job, boy what a beautiful job. Nice, big office, nice staff, and 45 lawyers working for me. Nine to five job; no reason to work afterhours; travel whenever and wherever I wanted to. I had kids in college in Colorado and California, and whenever I wanted to go see them, I could find a Montgomery Ward reason to go there (both laugh). To go to legal conferences in whatever big resort, you know, and, it was a sweet job, really sweet job. And I got paid well. For the first time in my life, I was out of debt, piling up stock options, a retirement plan, which I'd never had before. It was really sweet.

DePue: But it took you away from the arena of the courtroom, so to speak.

Walker: Yeah, I missed that. And it also, … you call it, what, a garden path. You go down that road you get kind of used to that life. Some of the fire is gone. And then in politics, I said to Victor and Dave Green, two of my closest friends, "Why should I go fight those battles, political battles, relax and enjoy life, enjoy my family."

DePue: By this time you had some kids who were going to college or were heading to college and …

Walker: That's right.

DePue: That's an expensive proposition too.

Walker: That's right. That's a very real part of it, facing up to that. Because I hadn't, and I had no money laid aside for that. That was a powerful inducement to make that shift, but I finally did it, as I already said that I did and I enjoyed it. Then that day came when I had lunch with Dave Green, and Dave said "Vic and I have decided that the time is right for you to run for either Governor or United States Senator". He got my attention (laughs).

DePue: Did it take some convincing, some arguments for them to convince you to do that?

Walker: Not very much.

DePue: Well.

Walker: It did, to persuade me that it was practical, could be done, yeah.

DePue: What I'd like to do, Governor, is we're getting close to 2 hours and 15 minutes here in this session. I wanted to talk a little bit about the Walker Report and finish off this session with that and then the next time we sit down and talk we can really go in and have the serious discussions about the decision to pursue a political career, and especially the Governorship.

Walker: Sure.

DePue: So, '65. You have Martin Luther King there, stirring up the community. Obviously, '68 Martin Luther King is assassinated and …

Walker: Right.

DePue: Chicago like… (both speaking)

Walker: All hell breaks loose. (both speaking)

DePue: Scores of other towns just… (both speaking)

Walker: All hell broke loose. Yes. And Daley appointed me a member of the commission to study that riot on the West side, primarily, of Chicago probably, almost certainly because I was president of the Chicago Crime Commission and was a corporate executive, so he thought it would be a good appointment, and he didn't have any reason to believe that I would cause him any problems in connection with the report.

DePue: And this is before the Democratic Convention?

Walker: Yes, yes. And so I did that, and I worked with Ralph Metcalf, wonderful guy, black guy, and some other black leaders and established very good relationships with them. The report was like most such reports, it was critical of the police and made some recommendations and was put on a shelf and forgotten about.

DePue: So you published this report in pretty short order then?

Walker: Yes.

DePue: This happened before the Democratic Convention?

Walker: Yes, yes.

DePue: So that was a different report than the one that you did for the Democratic Convention itself.

Walker: Yes, totally different. It was also different, of course, from the, the, report on big city riots that people often think I wrote, that Kerner [Governor Otto Kerner] wrote… the national report.

DePue: The one that dealt so much with Detroit and Newark and a couple of the other …

Walker: Los Angeles and the whole, the whole bit.

DePue: Yeah.

Walker: The urban riot problems.

DePue: You were not involved with that one?

Walker: Not at all, not at all.

DePue: So, now we get to August and the Democratic Convention itself. How did you end up getting the assignment to write on that?

Walker: Well, Vic and Dave Green and I thought that this was an opportunity for me to emerge. So we looked for ways to do it, that I could get involved in that very controversial subject and increase my stature. Finally this alternative presented itself, that is to say, the report for the President's National Commission on Violence. And I don't remember all the different alternatives we considered, there were several, that I could wangle an appointment to do so as to get involved in this. Then that one came along kind of out of the blue and the commission Executive Director called me and said, "Would you consider doing a report for the commission"? It was headed by Doctor Eisenhower, President Eisenhower's brother, who was president of Johns Hopkins University. Seeing this was the opportunity we wanted, I said "Sure, I'll do it." And so then, well, you know the details, I don't think you want me to go into detail on that, do you?

DePue: I think the part I'm interested in obviously is what's going to cause you some friction in the report itself.

Walker: Yes. Vic and I argued that when I discussed that in great length in connection with the report and particularly the usage of that phrase "police riot." When we went into that on the study part of it, we were not aware of what had gone on out there. It wasn't until we had gotten pretty far along in terms of witness statements and analyzing what had happened that we became aware of how bad the police conduct was. Actually it was much worse even than we reported. If anything, we played it down. It was very bad, Mark, very bad. Brutal conduct. We knew, though, that if we were really critical of the police, that that could have political ramifications that would harm me because these are law and order times, you'll remember, in the nation and certainly in the state, and to seem to be supportive of those crazy idiots that were the demonstrators like, what were their names, Jerry Rubin …

DePue: Abbie Hoffman.

Walker: Abbie Hoffman.

DePue: Those are the two [most notorious] ones.

Walker: …to seem to be supporting those guys could be argued to be political death. But we felt very strongly that the facts were the facts and you just couldn't shove it under the rug if you wanted to be honest. And story after story and picture after picture and hundreds of witness statements just painted a picture that we could not avoid. So we talked about it at great length. I don't remember whether it was Vic or I who came up with actual words "police riot," I think it was myself, but I'm not sure. And then we talked about using those words and finally decided to do it.

DePue: Would you say that what you were describing was the performance of all police, or was this a small group of police?

Walker: Well, it was neither. It was in the middle. It was a substantial number, but it certainly was not all. It certainly was not a small minority. It was less than half. I can't quantify it much more than that, Mark, but certainly a substantial number in varying degrees of participation in the actual violence, condoning it, looking the other way, all kinds of combinations of activity and inactivity involved there.

DePue: Condoning of it within the police department or within the Daley administration itself?

Walker: Both, but within the police department, observing it and doing nothing to stop it. Officer breakdown, that is command officers' failure in the field, not controlling the cops, not telling them to stop it, and just looking the other way when they're beating up on people. That kind of thing, which is, if anything, worse than actually swinging the club. It's the police commander's not doing anything when a guy underneath him swings the club and busts somebody's head open.

DePue: And, of course, in a lot of respects you had film to prove some of this.

Walker: Oh, absolutely, we had film to prove it, we had still pictures to prove it, and we had hundreds, hundreds of eyewitness statements that were taken by FBI agents. I had to fight to get those statements because the FBI would not give them to me. That's when I had to go to Washington and meet with the Attorney General personally and say that I've got to have those statements, that I want them. And the FBI argued strongly against my having them, but the Attorney General was Ramsey Clark (laughs).

DePue: Made some news lately too (Walker laughs). [Ramsey Clark also served as one of Saddam Hussein's defense attorneys.] He's been around for a while.

Walker: And he was on my side, so I got them. Had it been a different Attorney General, I probably wouldn't have gotten them. But I did get them, and there were … the number is in the report … I think it's in the thousands of statements, and we read all of those. I read a hell of a lot of them myself, Vic did, staff did more, and they were just incredibly one-sided, I don't mean prejudice but reporting on the violence, it was just over and over again, you couldn't avoid it. And there was no reason for it to be massive lies, it had to be accurate to a degree. So we couldn't escape the conclusion.

DePue: What was the thrust of the report as far as your discussion about the protestors themselves?

Walker: Very critical of the protestors, that is they deliberately provoked the violence, no question about that. When you have a scruffy looking guy, dirty, hasn't shaved, stinks because he hasn't bathed, and tattered clothes and he walks up to a policeman and says to his face "Well, you fucking pig,", a policeman, you know, doesn't take to that very nicely. That's provoking problems, and there certainly was a lot of that. But again, a police officer should be able to handle that. Now I know that's asking a lot, but that's what police officers are supposed to do. We tried to make allowance for that, to the extent to which you could. These police are human beings. But then what came through again and again in the statements was this reference to Daley's order to the policemen to shot to kill, which was taken out of context, as I pointed out. But still, he said that, and the police officer took it literally whereas he didn't mean it literally. That, the establishment accepting, condoning, yeah condoning the use of violence, the police establishment condoning the use of violence was a major part of the problem and unforgivable in my book.

DePue: You say that Hoffman and Jerry Rubin and some of the others, they got exactly what they were hoping for. They got that overt response from the police that was broadcast on national TV?

Walker: Absolutely you could say that. It was true, that's right. They provoked it and they got it. That was part of their game plan. But since when do responsible law

enforcement officials allow themselves to be manipulated that way? They shouldn't. Now police have learned from that experience. One of the things that I'm proudest of is the extent to which the report was used by police departments around the country to learn how to do it the right way. It was used in classes, police training classes, and I'm very proud of that fact.

DePue: So that document alone is quite a legacy then?

Walker: Yes, I believe so, I believe so. The public reaction was interesting as I have pointed out The public was very upset right away after these incidents were reported and, oh, police were awful. But within two weeks, three weeks, it turned around completely, and the public was saying they got what they deserved. That is, the rioters got what they deserved, and the responsibility of the police was just as though it didn't happen.

DePue: How much of the public response was because they were now watching the trial, or did that come later?

Walker: That came later, and there was a good deal written about how bad the demonstrators were and that certainly had an impact. People in Chicago traditionally do want to believe that their police are doing a good job, so all those things combined to cause this reaction on the part of the public It exists to this day. I am amazed or have been at the number of people who over the years have continued to have feelings about that subject, that violence at that convention, the amount of praise that I get for the report on the one hand and the depths of the feeling against the demonstrators on the other hand. That whole incident or series of incidents struck a chord with the American people in a way that I never guessed would happen, but it did.

DePue: How did you evaluate the performance of the National Guard?

Walker: It was okay. They didn't really play any major part in anything, major part. They certainly played a role in law and order and they did a good job. They did not allow themselves to be caught up with any of the violence. I think the National Guard did a fine job, and my report spells that out.

DePue: In the next session we're going to talk about politics in a much more serious way, but do you want to have any closing comments on what we've talked about so far today?

Walker: No, I don't think so Mark. … This is more of a kind of footnote, the argument that Vic and I had about the title of the report. He wanted to call it *DemCon '68*, and I wanted to play up this conflict between the rights that are involved, the right to demonstrate and the right to have law and order, and I came up with the title *Rights in Conflict*, which I believe was a very apt title. I wanted to have a more, what should I say, scholarly discussion in depth about the dangers when you have rights in conflict like that. More of a philosophical kind of discussion, but Vic talked me out of that so we didn't do that. Just, I think, one paragraph in the

summary. The summary was what caused the major problem with the commission itself because they didn't want that summary. They knew it would be controversial.

DePue: When you say they, who's 'they'?

Walker: The President's Commission on Violence, and the Executive Director, Lloyd Cutler, wanted me to drop the summary, and I refused. I said that I was hired to file a report and here's the report. I'm not going to change it.

DePue: I think on that note we will stop for today. Thank you very much Governor, and we will pick this back up tomorrow.

End of first CD.

Interview with Governor Daniel Walker
ISG-A-L-2007-015.02
Interview # 2 of 3: August 22, 2007
Interviewer: Mark R. DePue

DePue: Today is the 22nd of August, 2007. My name is Mark DePue. I'm the Director of Oral History at The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. I'm here for my second session with Governor Dan Walker. Governor, good morning.

Walker: Good morning, Colonel.

DePue: Thank you very much for your hospitality. It's great to wake up on a beautiful morning like this and look over the Pacific Ocean. As we mentioned yesterday, what I wanted to start with today is a discussion about your politics. We got through, basically, up to 1970, and you talked a little bit about that important decision to run for Governorship. I certainly want to talk about that in more detail, but I want to back up just a little bit because I believe your first actual run for office was for the Attorney General's position. Was that in 1960?

Walker: I don't remember the year for sure. I think that's right.

DePue: And can you tell me a little bit about the decision to run?

Walker: Well, I was interested all along, in some day running for a statewide office. I had no desire to follow the usual ladder in the Democratic party in Chicago, which meant start out at local office, and becoming an active part of the Chicago machine, which I didn't want to do. So this came along and just kind of, I don't know, derring-do. We decided, Vic [de Grazia] and I and Dave [Green], let's have a try

for it. So I went in before the slating committee, it's called—that's a handpicked group of committeemen from the State central Committee and the County Central Committee of the Democratic party, handpicked by Mayor Daley. I guess there were ten, twelve men that I met with and made my pitch, and talked about what I would like to do as Attorney General. I had visions of a much more active Attorney General. Forgive me, I was ahead of my time. I talked about doing some of the things that the State Attorneys General are doing now and have been in the last recent years, like the cigarette cases and the other big cases that have been brought in a civil nature. They wanted only to hear about how much money I could raise to make the race, and then they asked me the loyalty oath question, it's called loyalty oath commonly, "Do you agree that you will run for whatever office we decide we want you to run for, or none, if we don't decide on any?" I said, "No. The only thing I'm interested in is Attorney General, and if you don't slate me for Attorney General, that's all I want." So I failed the test on that front.

DePue: The way you describe this in the book, this is almost the old fashioned, smoke-filled room that you walked into, and it was basically chaired by Mayor Daley himself?

Walker: It was chaired by—well, it was formerly chaired, I think, if I remember correctly, by the Chairman of the State Central Committee, Jim Ronan, but no question about the fact that Daley ran it. It was smoke-filled yes, and guys sitting around, some of them paying attention, some of them not paying attention. It was old style politics, the smoke-filled room, et cetera. I remember coming out—I'll never forget this one; I was walking down the corridor and Jim Ronan came out. I guess they took a break or something, and he clapped me on the shoulder and said, "That was a great presentation you made Dan." I said, "Thank you very much. What are my chances?" He said, "None" and I said, "Why not?" He kind of laughed and then he said, "Well, it's not a good year for Catholics on the ticket, Dan, because we've got Kennedy up there and we've got several other Catholics on the ticket, and we don't need one more Catholic on the ticket." I said, "Well Jim, I'm not a Catholic, I'm a Methodist." And he dropped his hand off my shoulder and was at a loss for words for a moment; his alibi was gone. And so he said, "Well it wouldn't make any difference Dan. With seven kids, everybody would think you were a Catholic." I'll never forget that one. He had no intention of course, of thinking I would get it, but I did. That was the surprising part.

I went to the hospital. My daughter Robbie, my fifth child, was born, and my wife was in the hospital after the birth. I was in the hospital room that night and got a telephone call. Well the only one that had the number or knew where I was, was Vic, and he'd given it to a reporter, John—I forget his name, Madigan? No. I don't remember. He was a reporter for Chicago's *American* newspaper and he said, "Dan, they picked you, you're the candidate for Attorney General." He said, "I'll start calling you general," which is what they call the Attorney General in politics. I just found it hard to believe but he said, "Yeah, yeah, that's for sure. I got tipped off by the guy who was in the meeting." So the next morning I called the Mayor's secretary and she confirmed it and said, "Yes, get your public

statement ready and we'll let you know when we'll have a public statement." Then about an hour later she called me back. I was at the office with Vic preparing a statement and she called me back and said, "No Dan, I'm sorry, it's out, you're not going to get it." I learned later that Bill Clark got the job. What had happened, I'm told, was that his mother went way back with her husband in Chicago politics. She, it is said, knew where a lot of the bodies were buried and so forth, and she contacted the Mayor. Bill Clark had been slated for Secretary of State but he didn't want to run for Secretary of State. [Charles] Carpentier was the incumbent and he was very popular; Clark didn't want to run against him. He wanted to run for Attorney General, so Daley shifted it and knocked me out and put Bill Clark in for Attorney General, and so that's what happened there.

DePue: So Daley basically deferred to family ties and loyalty to those who had been loyal to him?

Walker: Exactly, exactly. Now this is a story. I don't really know whether it's true or not, but it has some logic to it. You know, Colonel, I never have understood why he decided to select me. I never have understood that, because I wasn't a pet of his. As far as I knew he didn't care much about me, but anyway, he did at that moment.

DePue: So you were convinced, at least at that time, that you would have never gotten the nod initially had not Daley said this is the guy we want?

Walker: Well that was true of everybody. He made the decisions.

DePue: So the rest of the people in the room were very deferential to him?

Walker: Oh yes. Well it was just understood that he had the say. Now I'm sure that he bargained some with them and that kind of thing, but in the final analysis, it was his choice.

DePue: One of the things I want to ask you about: you made it clear that one of the things your father taught you was the importance of loyalty, and especially the importance of family loyalty. Now here we have a case where perhaps the loyalty to people in the Daley machine kind of worked against you in that respect.

Walker: Well that's certainly true. I don't have any problem with loyalty. As a matter of fact, like most chief executives, you can't really operate in a top position, whether it's in the business world or the governmental world or politics or whatever, without having a core of people who are loyal to you. Loyalty means an awful lot. If you've ever had that kind of a position, you know that you've got to have people who are loyal to you, and if you're going to have people who are loyal to you, then you've got to be loyal to them. As we used to call it in the service, in the Navy, "Loyalty down begets loyalty up." And that's very true. You know very well Colonel, if you're not loyal to your men that are fighting for you and with you, then they're not going to be loyal to you going up.

DePue: Right.

Walker: So loyalty is a two-way street.

DePue: Let's talk about some of the people who were very important to your political career, ones you got to know during these crucial years, during the late fifties, early sixties. At the top of the list, and you've mentioned his name a lot already, is Vic de Grazia. How did you first meet Vic?

Walker: I met Vic when we organized the Democratic Federation of Illinois. We needed a full-time guy and we looked around and there was Victor. He was a Hyde Park Democrat, very active in politics down there and helped elect Abner Mikva to the State Legislature, and he was our kind of guy. He felt the same way I did about politics and government in general, and so anyway, we hired him as Executive Secretary of the DFI, and that's how I got to know Vic.

DePue: I've read that you and Vic remained very close all the way through your life. What was it about the two of you that really clicked?

Walker: I think it was a common view about government and politics. He knew that I was ambitious, I was. I wanted to get somewhere, I wanted to hold high office some day, somehow. It didn't seem like it was going to be possible, but I always had that in the back of my mind. He loved Adlai Stevenson as I did, and he worked very hard for Stevenson, we had that in common. We had a common view about politics and the Democratic Party. Both of us hated machine politics and both of us had ideals about what government should do and what the Democratic Party should be. We just struck it off well together. We complimented each other. He had a much better ear for politics than I did. I've never been a good politician, never. He was a good politician.

DePue: But he had no political aspirations of his own, at least for himself personally?

Walker: No, no, he never had that. He wanted to work in government and he did, under Otto Kerner. Vic was a very talented guy, he was a very talented musician. He was a violinist and he composed, and he was damned good at music. He went to music school and he was kind of a renaissance man, had a lot of interest in the arts. I was not in that world at all. He and I just hit it off. He named one of his sons after me, Daniel, and he and I just hit it off. We became very close friends.

DePue: Again, I don't want to belabor this too much, but it strikes me that here's obviously an extremely talented man in his own right and yet, he's very comfortable, in fact he prefers to be the person behind the scenes, if you will.

Walker: Some people are that way. Look at Karl Rove for example, and [George W.] Bush, another good example of that.

DePue: I would assume he's that kind of personality and that kind of quality is invaluable to you in your aspirations then.

Walker: Absolutely, absolutely. Particularly, he had, as I said, a good ear for politics, and he could deal with people. I'm not good at that. I was a trial lawyer, that's what I was most successful at in terms of my profession, but in terms of handling politics, dealing with people, bargaining, making deals, that kind of thing, I was not very good at that. Vic was very good.

DePue: Another person that I know was very close to you and very important was Dave Green.

Walker: Yes.

DePue: David Green or Dave?

Walker: Pardon me?

DePue: Was it David?

Walker: Yes, David Green, G-r-e-e-n. He was a remarkable guy, a businessman, and he was a very close friend of Victor's before Vic and I got together. They worked together on politics down in the Fifth Ward, the Hyde Park area. David was a very, very smart guy, a very successful businessman in later years. Actually the business that he started then, he stayed with and while they were at the top, I think he sold it out for something like $150 million. It was a huge success. It made bulletin boards. It was the number one bulletin board maker in the United States.

DePue: Well, there's money in everything if you can find the right niche.

Walker: That's exactly right, Colonel, exactly right.

DePue: What role did David then play in your campaigns?

Walker: Well David was certainly the pollster. I mean he read the polls for the public, and that was part of his job. He had a mind that worked like a computer and he was a number man, he was a number cruncher. He looked at the records and the past, and had surveys taken, and he was just a very canny, all around guy. He had a very good mind and he and Vic worked together very, very well.

DePue: And again, from everything I've heard about him and read about him, he stayed loyal to you throughout; he saw you as something that would be beneficial for Illinois politics.

Walker: Yes, yes, David was very loyal. It was a trio. It was Dave and Vic and I, but in terms of the actual thinking and planning and that, it was Vic and David. I was very busy being a trial lawyer, and I would get together with Vic and Dave at regular intervals. They were a pair that worked at it, really worked at politics.

DePue: So would it be fair to say that without those two men behind you all of those years, you would have not considered running for Governor later on?

Walker: I never would have gotten anywhere without those two. Never.

DePue: How about Bill Goldberg? That was another name you mentioned.

Walker: Bill is a lawyer of course, and Bill and I became friends when I was with the law firm Hopkins & Sutter. I was the guy for the firm that did the interviewing at the law schools to hire young lawyers. I went to Harvard one year, as I did every year, and came back with a couple of names. One of them was Bill Goldberg. At that time there were no Jews in the major law firms in Chicago. There were Jewish firms but amongst the major firms, there were no Jewish partners. I liked Bill, thought he was a really fine young man. I remember very well, I met with Albert Hopkins, the Senior Partner of the firm, when I came back from Harvard. As I always did, I met with him and talked about it, and I said, "I want to bring a couple of guys down from Harvard for interviews. One of them is really my choice, he's a wonderful guy." And he said, "Is he Jewish?" He always asked that question; he was very anti-Semitic. I said, "Mr. Hopkins, I don't know." I lied of course. He said, "Well what's his name?" I said, "Goldberg." He looked at me and he said, "Well ..." And I said, "Mr. Hopkins, this man is very well qualified, let's at least get him to come out here, and you'll see what a fine young man he is." Well Bill came out, he was interviewed and they liked him, but Albert Hopkins said no. I said, "Mr. Hopkins, I'm sorry but I won't do any more recruiting work if you're not going to take Goldberg on the ground that he is Jewish. I don't want to have any part of that. So it's me on the recruitment or not." So he gave in and Bill was hired. We broke the barrier for Jews in major law firms. Bill and I became very close friends. He worked with me on major litigation matters and was just a hell of a lawyer. As I said, we became good friends also.

DePue: Did he work on the *Walker Report* as well?

Walker: No.

DePue: But de Grazia did.

Walker: Yes. Vic spent full time on that. I don't remember where he was working then, but he just took a leave of absence and spent full time. We got space in a hotel downtown and rooms where the staff worked. I worked half a day. I would work half a day at my office, at Montgomery Ward, and then come down and join him and work the other half of the day and into the night on the *Walker Report*.

DePue: Bill Goldberg, as I recall, wasn't the only Jew that was close to you during this time.

Walker: Oh no, no. There was Elliot Epstein.

DePue: Was Dave Green also Jewish?

Walker: Oh yes, Dave Green was number one, and there were some others too. My father was very respectful of Jewish people. I never really understood how he got that,

because he came out of Texas, and there weren't many Jewish people in the Navy. So I don't know where he got it. When I'd ask him he said, "Well, I read the *Old Testament*. There's a lot of wisdom in the Old Testament and those Jewish people really know what they were talking about." He was not a religious man but he thought the wisdom of the *Old Testament* was important. So he said to me, "If you ever get into public life, make sure you have a Jew on your staff; those guys are smart people."

DePue: But you didn't necessarily go out looking for Jews. You just found the talented people who happened to be Jewish, it sounds like.

Walker: It just worked out that way.

DePue: How about Norty Kay?

Walker: Norton. When I agreed to chair and manage Adlai Stevenson's campaign for the Senate, this is Adlai Stevenson III, who was then State Treasurer. He had been in the legislature and was then elected State Treasurer, and I worked on his campaigns. When he ran for the Senate he asked me to run his campaign, and I did. I hired Norty to be Press Secretary and got to know Norty and liked him and then later, when I decided to run for Governor, I brought Norty on board as my Press Secretary.

DePue: I know there are others. Is there anybody right at the top of the people who were very close to you throughout your career that you'd want to mention here?

Walker: Those are certainly the main ones, yeah. Mort Kaplan is another one I should mention. Mort was in the public relations business, and when we made the decision to run for Governor in 1970, there were five of us that met at a motel. Pheasant Run was the name of the motel, out in the suburbs. That was David and Bill and Norty and Mort Kaplan and myself.

DePue: How about Bill Holtzman? I know he played a role during that initial campaign in '72.

Walker: He was a character, Bill. He was an advance man, and if you've ever known guys who worked a lot as advance men, they're all characters, they're crazy. That kind of started with Kennedy's campaign, when advance men came to be known in Presidential campaigns. They didn't really exist before that time, or at least they weren't called that. In any event, Bill Holtzman worked with Eugene McCarthy when he made a Presidential try Then when I ran Adlai's campaign I hired Bill to be Chief of Schedule and Advance. And then he also joined me when I ran for Governor.

DePue: Okay. Let's—

Walker: Bill was a character.

DePue: Well just looking at his picture in your book, you get that impression of him. There's a little bit of a beard there and ...

Walker: What a character.

DePue: But a necessary prerequisite if you're going to be an advance man, to have that kind of personality, I would think.

Walker: I think that's right.

DePue: You mentioned very briefly yesterday about this important meeting you had in 1970, where apparently Vic and David approached you with a proposal, and I wanted to talk more about that particular incident.

Walker: I had lunch with Dave Green at the Mid-America Club. I had, at that point, decided to give up on politics and just concentrate on making money. I had to face up to the fact of seven kids going to college and all that kind of stuff, and so I decided to really settle down and concentrate on making money. Dave called me and said, "Let's have lunch." I did and we met at the Mid-America Club and towards the end of the lunch he said, "Dan, Vic and I have decided now is the time you can do it. It's either Governor or United States Senate, in '72." This was 1970 when we had this lunch. Of course he got my attention right away and we eventually had that meeting I've already referred to. We kicked it around and decided that [Richard] Ogilvie was vulnerable, that we could beat Ogilvie. I didn't have much taste for the United States Senate, never did as a matter of fact. My love was state government, but we did consider running against Chuck Percy. We finally decided that Governor would be it and of course, that's what I wanted most, and that was the decision. We spent all day kicking it around.

DePue: What was it about Ogilvie's administration you thought made him vulnerable?

Walker: Well he did have some unpopularity in certain circles because of the income tax. The state adopted the income tax in 1970?

DePue: Nineteen sixty-nine I believe.

Walker: Nineteen sixty-nine, and the state had to do it; I never felt otherwise. There just wasn't enough revenue to get things done that needed to be done in education and other areas, and so the income tax was an absolute necessity for the state, and I supported it at the time, but he was vulnerable because of that.

DePue: Was there any fallout because of the 1970 constitutional convention?

Walker: I don't believe so. I don't recall there being any political fallout from that. I don't remember that Ogilvie played any substantial role in the convention. Maybe he did that I'm unaware of, but I don't recall that he did. I didn't play any role in that either.

DePue: So the opportunity existed. What was it about your personality, do you think, about you in particular that people like Vic and Dave and the others saw so much potential?

Walker: Well I'm not a good judge of that. Come on, Colonel.

DePue: I put you on the spot here.

Walker: They were impressed with the way I ran the Democratic Federation of Illinois, the Committee on Illinois Government, and the fact that I was a good trial lawyer. I could handle myself they thought, and they thought that I had the makings. Of course I had an intense desire, which is a big factor, and they thought it was a good ballot name, as they say, and that I could learn how to be a good candidate.

DePue: You mentioned it yourself, and another word for it is ambition, that you had a burning ambition to do this.

Walker: Yes I did, Colonel. The Governorship was something that I thought about over the years, and I really carried it in the back of my mind. If I had a choice in public life, that's what I wanted to do, was run for Governor. But it was really kind of more of a dream than a reality; a dream, but one that just might happen some time and then all of a sudden it did.

DePue: There are certainly plenty of people, especially outside the political arena, who can see the kind of burning ambition you had as both an incredible strength, but also a particular flaw in some cases, if that ambition gets out of control. Would you care to react to that comment?

Walker: Sure, and that's a danger, that's a very real danger. I have always read a lot and I'm aware of that danger and was aware of it at the time, but I am a strong believer, as I mentioned earlier in this conversation, in self-discipline. I was confident that I could handle that, that I wasn't going to get so much caught up in the ego part of it that it would control me. I think there is something about being a trial lawyer that is helpful in that regard, because no matter how good you are as a trial lawyer, the jury is sitting there and there's a judge there. You can't run it. You've got to recognize that they are the ones that are going to make the decision,the judge and the jury. You learn that as a trial lawyer. Well, the same thing with being in public life. There's the public out there and they are the ones that have the say, and if you get cocky ... I've seen trial lawyers get cocky and go down to blazing defeat. So I watched that and learned from that experience.

DePue: Let's go back to this important 1970 meeting. As far as I know, you had never actually won an elective office, is that right?

Walker: No, it's not. I was elected Precinct Committeeman in Deerfield. (laughs)

DePue: But most people were rather awestruck to find out, when the announcement was made, that you were actually running. I mean this was an audacious undertaking you were about to start.

Walker: "Dan who?" "Dan who", you know? Oh sure, nobody gave me a chance, and we knew that. But the thing that swayed us in that meeting was when we got to the nitty-gritty—can we beat the machine in a primary—because that's what we were talking about, a primary fight against the machine. From the beginning, that's what we were talking about.

DePue: That was the tough piece to conquer.

Walker: That is the tough piece right there and we knew it was tough, but Dave had done his homework. He had gone back over the state elections for as many years as they've got records and he said, "The magic number is a million five. If we can get the turnout in the primary up to a million five, customarily the record shows it was six, seven hundred, never got over 750,000 people voting in the primary. I think once 800,000." We had to double that and that was our task. He said if we do that we'll win, because the machine can't produce any more votes than that, no matter what they do. The machine turnout limit is going to be 750,000. So if we get that turn-out up to a million and a half, then we're going to beat them. It was simple mathematics. It was such a powerful, logical presentation, that we all agreed with it and that became our mantra, "A Million and a Half."

DePue: And yet, at that particular moment, was there a lot of discussion about how you generate that turnout?

Walker: Yes. There was discussion about organization. Vic had studied that a lot and had worked a lot in organization, in the campaigns that he had been active in down on the south side. He thought the key was organization, so he believed that we could do it.

DePue: Was that organization the focus on Chicago or downstate or both?

Walker: Statewide. He thought we could apply downstate the lessons he'd learned in Chicago.

DePue: Okay. And yet you already knew the way the machine worked in Chicago, didn't work nearly the same way in the suburbs and probably wasn't going to translate down in the southern part of the state either.

Walker: Well no, because what Vic had in mind and what we did, was to train our workers the way we precinct captains were trained by the machine, that is what's called a plus minus zero system of organizing and getting out the vote. It was actually started by Abraham Lincoln back in the 1850s. That's a method of canvassing, where you, the captain goes out or the worker goes out in the area and knocks on the doors and marks everybody down, every voter, plus, minus or zero. Plus for me, minus against me, zero undecided. They make another round a couple of

weeks later and try to persuade people and re-marks them, and then you never call on the minuses. You never call on a minus again. You only call on the plusses and the uncommitted until the week before the election. A week before the election you only call on the plusses. Then you get your list of plusses and you turn them out on Election Day, and that's hard work. Vic thought we could use that system statewide.

DePue: So it's a little bit ironic that you're going to beat the machine by using the machine's best tactics.

Walker: Exactly.

DePue: Okay. I wanted to go through some things. This is an important moment in your life. I guess I'm asking these questions and what I want you to do is come up with particular character traits to describe yourself and maybe talk about those. I've gleaned some of those things out of some other things that I've read here, but I wanted to give you a chance first to say what particular characters, strengths, values, probably, did you see in yourself that were going to help you be successful?

Walker: Self-discipline, …decisiveness, …listening to other people. I would say those are three of the absolute most—oh, and of course hard work. Self-discipline, decisiveness, listening, hard work.

DePue: So that perseverance to see your way through, which you had to know at that time was an insurmountable task, but you had the faith that you could do it?

Walker: Correct. Again, I've harkened to it several times and I will again. You do a lot of big case trial work, you know that preparation and hard work is what it is all about. You outwork the other guy, you out-prepare, and you have the perseverance, the guts to carry out the game plan when you get started.

DePue: In this initial meeting in 1970, you're a year and a half or more out from the actual election itself. Did you know who the other guy was going to be?

Walker: No. I had no idea who we'd be running against in the primary.

DePue: Now let me just bring up some of the other things that have been said about you in terms of your personality, if you will.

Walker: Sure.

DePue: Stubborn.

Walker: Stubborn?

DePue: Do you see yourself as a stubborn man?

Walker: No, but of course, that's natural. No, I don't see myself as stubborn. I see myself as being steadfast yes, but that's something else.

DePue: And the difference between the two?

Walker: The difference between the two is the stubborn guy doesn't listen. The steadfast guy listens and knows when to change course.

DePue: And when not to change course?

Walker: Exactly. When I say when to change course: you think something through, you decide on a course of action and you stay there until things happen or you have new advice. Otherwise you listen, you decide you've got to change course, so be willing to change. Stubbornness is just carrying steadfastness too far.

DePue: So what are the kinds of issues that you would decide—I need to be steadfast on this, and others might interpret that as being stubborn?

Walker: Well, steadfast on the issue of machine politics. That was at the core of my campaign from the very beginning and throughout my tenure in public life. I do not like machine politics. I want government and politics to be open. Transparent is the word that is popularly used now. Transparent and honest. I do have and I've always had a strain of idealism, I freely admit that. A romantic if you will, yes I am. I don't mean in the lovemaking sense, I don't want to talk about that.

DePue: Exactly. I know what you mean.

Walker: But I am a romantic and an idealist. I'm the eternal optimist, and I believe in people. I'm not a cynic, never have been a cynic, don't want to be a cynic. I carry that over—I don't know why it comes to my mind but cynics—have you ever noticed—are often sarcastic people? I hate sarcasm. I don't understand it. I don't understand sarcastic humor. I dislike sarcastic humor. I really think A to B, and that's one of the reasons why Dave Green and Vic were so good for me, because I tend to just march down A, B, C, D.

DePue: A linear thinker?

Walker: A linear thinker, and Vic and Dave, well Vic particularly, thinks at a curve and sneaks up on you from behind, kind of thinking. Dave Green was very introspective. But anyway, I was just too direct because again, and I know I mention it maybe too much, that's what a trial lawyer does.

DePue: Well you've talked about it. One of the things you're not willing to compromise on then is machine politics, that you are uncompromising when it comes to that.

Walker: Yeah, and the other thing is money. I've never been a money person, and of course that has played out to my disadvantage. I've never paid any attention to money and I dislike money as a matter of fact. I dislike money and I certainly dislike money in

politics It's gotten worse and worse and worse over the years that I've been involved in government, the extent to which money—I call it pay-to-play—and boy, it's just endemic now. It was then, although not as much as it is now.

DePue: But of course it is what lubricates campaigns. Did you talk about how you were going to fund your campaign in that first meeting?

Walker: No. That's one of the interesting things Colonel because nowadays, if you sit down and talk about running for Governor or Senate, you start immediately with "How much money can we raise?" And you know, it's going to be a huge amount. When you talk about a statewide race for Senate or Governor, you're talking six, ten… What did [Rod] Blagojevich raise? I think it's $16 million he raised for his campaign last time around.

DePue: Yeah, and he was able to bury Judy Baar Topinka because she raised hardly a fraction of that.

Walker: That's right. But you know, we didn't discuss one word about money in that meeting. We never even mentioned it.

DePue: Do you think in retrospect that was unrealistic?

Walker: Well no, because we won. (laughter)

DePue: That's hard to argue.

Walker: Yeah, the proof in the pudding is in the eating, but could you do it today? ... No, no. We were just totally unrealistic about money. I didn't want to talk about it, I didn't, none of us talked about it. We just kind of assumed blithely and stupidly that if you got out there and ran a good campaign, you'd be able to raise enough money to keep the campaign going. And boy, were we wrong.

DePue: Another one of the things, especially at this point in your life, a criticism, was that you came across rather aloofly, that you were sometimes perceived to be humorless, that you had this kind of a wooden appearance about you.

Walker: Yeah, there are two things there really. One is a sense of humor and the other is wooden. I had not worked with the public in terms of socializing. I'm not a good socializer and never have been. People find that surprising, but to this day I'm not a good socializer. I don't mix well with people, never did.

DePue: Individually, but not in groups?

Walker: Individually …or in groups. Cocktail parties, that kind of thing, I never liked.

DePue: Well it just strikes me you do better on a one-on-one kind of relationship.

Walker: Exactly Colonel, exactly. So I was kind of reserved and wooden in my public appearances, and I was very painfully aware of my inadequacies in that department. I also have never had a real good sense of humor. I have a difficult time getting jokes. Strange, but I just am not able—I hate it. I remember I tried to get Vic—this is after I became Governor—Vic , would you get me a good speechwriter? Get me some jokes I can tell so I can loosen up an audience, because I just couldn't do it. I'm no good at that, absolutely, though I liked to listen and I like to laugh, but I don't have a good sense of humor, never have had.

DePue: But you obviously were able to overcome a lot of that during the campaign itself.

Walker: I developed an ability to do what's called retail campaigning. You know the difference Colonel, between wholesale campaigning and retail.

DePue: Yeah.

Walker: I became an expert at retail campaigning, and the walk did that for me. I loosened up and I learned how to be with people, to move around with people and to do one-on-one campaigning.

DePue: Was it a very deliberate attempt on your part to do that, or did it just kind of happen by virtue of what the walk represented in the first place?

Walker: Survival. You've got to do it. When you're out there walking you're going to meet people, and you learn how to do it by doing it. You just kind of…you get into the flow of it and you pick it up and do it.

DePue: So you were surprised, pleasantly surprised that that was the result.

Walker: I never gave it a second thought, so I can't say I was surprised. I never even thought about it.

DePue: Here are a couple of things that I would certainly think that people like Vic and Dave saw in you. Did you see yourself as an efficient administrator/manager?

Walker: Yes. I could manage and I also—I don't want to sound pretentious, but I have a genius IQ—and I did not know that for a long time. As a matter of fact, I didn't know it at that time. I didn't learn that I had a genius IQ until I was in jail and the jail psychologist gave me that test or whatever you call it and said, "My God, you're a genius." Nobody ever told me that before.

DePue: But not all geniuses are efficient managers by a long shot.

Walker: By a long shot, and I had that combination. I can manage, I can organize, I can think. Yes, I can do all those things, but I have my defects like everybody does.

DePue: Did you see yourself as accessible? You already mentioned that you thought you were a good listener.

Walker: Yes.

DePue: That you could be approached, that people were willing to speak their mind if they had disagreements with you?

Walker: Yes. I have always believed in listening to people. My father taught me that. Yes, you've got to listen.

DePue: One of the other things that was attributed to you, a criticism certainly, is that you were thin-skinned.

Walker: Was what?

DePue: Thin skinned, especially in the kind of criticism that you're obviously going to get from the media—all politicians do.

Walker: No, I was never thin skinned. I don't know how that got started or who said that, but I've never been thin skinned.

DePue: Okay. Was that one of the things though, that you heard as a criticism about yourself?

Walker: I don't recall hearing it but maybe…so many things were said. (chuckles)

DePue: And you had a long enough political career that almost everything was said.

Walker: Well let me put it this way. I think what gave rise to that, now that you mention it, is the same kind of thing that came up, let's say, in the [John] Kerry campaign for the presidency. I learned early on that you've got to respond to attacks. You've got to or else they'll get rid of you. Kerry learned that the hard way; you've got to have fast response. So, is that being thin skinned? I don't think so. It's just being sensible enough to know that if you don't respond to attacks, they're going to knock you down. You've got to come back.

DePue: Here's another thing that has been attributed to you, that you are charismatic.

Walker: …I can't address that Colonel. I can't address that.

DePue: That's kind of an elusive quality.

Walker: Yes. I don't know… I don't know. I do remember the first time it happened. I remember Jack Kennedy, of course, he certainly was charismatic. People would really come up to him and want to touch him. That happened to me—the first time was in a little town called West Frankfurt, down in Southern Illinois—and Dan and Charles and I walked into town and there were people gathered there, more people than we'd ever encountered on the walk. There were whole bunches of them, and as I walked along the street, people started yelling, and people would run out and come up to me and want to touch me. Actually, that was the first time that ever

happened to me. One woman said, "Oh boy, look at that red bandana!" and "You're tanned." and "Oh wow! and that kind of thing. So was I charismatic? I can't really answer that. Some said I was and some said I wasn't.

DePue: Well one of the things that I have encountered a few times is the eyes, that you have a way of looking at people and conveying the very positive message as you do that. Was that a conscious thing or is that just something that's part of your personality?

Walker: I've always been that way. My kids used to remark on it. They said I didn't have to punish them; I'd just give them the old eagle eye and that was enough. But I do have large eyes, relatively speaking, and I have that—which is a little uncommon—not many people have it—you can see the whites of the eyes underneath the eyeball, [points] the whites of the eyes there. Not many people have that. It's called interestingly—I learned this—do you remember the Smothers Brothers?

DePue: Yes.

Walker: Well one of them was on an airplane with me. He spoke at a rally down in Springfield for me and then I flew with him or he flew with me in my airplane back to Chicago. This is while I was Governor. He said to me on the flight, "Governor, do you know you have sympokku?" S-y-m-p-o-k-k-u, something like that, S-i-m-p-o-k-k-u, something like that. And I said, "What's that?" He said, "It's whites underneath your eyeballs, that's sympokku." And I said, "Well what does it mean if you've got sympokku?" He said, "You don't want to know." I said, "Well, sure I do, come on." He said, "Okay, it means you're going to die a violent death."

DePue: You weren't prepared for that. (both laugh)

Walker: I thought—you know—I reared back in my seat—what the hell is going on here? Anyway ...

DePue: What I want to mention here, the decision then comes in November of 1970, where you declare, and I'm going to quote you, if I can—hopefully this is an accurate quote—that when you declared for the Governorship you said, "We will eliminate the patronage system and the political prostitution of our courts." I'm sure you said much more during that time, but what strikes me about that comment was, right from the very beginning, from the opening shot, you're throwing down the gauntlet to the Daley machine.

Walker: Yes, that's very true. We talked about that at some length, that opening statement at the Water Tower Inn in Chicago, and we decided to go all out against the Daley machine—pull no punches. You don't go halfway. If you're going to take on Daley and the machine, you might as well go all the way, and so we did. We made it very tough, very tough, and those were mild compared to some of the other things I said about the machine. I detested it. I thought I was accurate. Did I exaggerate sometimes? Sure I did; everybody does in politics, everybody does. Do you ever think about it, Colonel, in humor, in tragedy, in comedy, in writing, in

painting and almost everything, speaking, you have to exaggerate some in order to—you wouldn't have any humor if you didn't have exaggeration.

DePue: In November of 1970 did you know who your opponent was going to be?

Walker: No. I had no idea…no idea.

DePue: What I want to do next then is to get to that point, because again, you're in the political wilderness at that time. Everybody is saying, "Who?" "This guy, he doesn't have a chance in hell", if you will. So what led to that decision a few months later to do the walk?

Walker: It was desperation. We were getting nowhere. I had thought that my candidacy would be picked up and talked about because it was unusual, but it didn't, it fell flat.

DePue: Because taking on the machine was the kind of good copy that any journalist would want to pursue?

Walker: Well we thought so, but it didn't turn out that way. It was just not interesting enough. So anyway, the candidacy was flat. What can we do? We kicked it around to liven it up, to get the public's attention. We talked about canoeing the rivers of Illinois, we talked about a whole variety of things and finally… I had known Lawton Chiles down in Florida, a United States Senator, and he had walked the state. I was a friend of his and knew about it, so I suggested that and we kicked it around, and we finally decided to do it. Yeah, that was it.

DePue: Was it your idea primarily?

Walker: Yes.

DePue: Were there any in your inner circle that were arguing against it?

Walker: Victor didn't like it. He wanted me to concentrate more on just getting out in the Chicago area primarily, but he wanted to be able to move me around and he thought the walk would take too much time and spend too much time downstate. So he argued against it to begin with.

DePue: The walk started at the very tip of Illinois and then worked its way north. You could have taken a lot of different approaches. Why not north to south?

Walker: It just seemed more dramatic, south to north.

DePue: Because you finished off where all the votes were?

Walker: Yes, and it just seemed kind of natural, south to north: a picture of an uphill walk, going against the odds. It just kind of fitted better to do that way.

DePue: The very tip of Illinois is Cairo, and you didn't start in Cairo. Do you recall the rationale there?

Walker: Oh sure. We talked about it, and by the way it's "Karo" and not "Kie-ro." Karo is, you know, the syrup?

DePue: Yeah.

Walker: That's the way it's pronounced.

DePue: I should have known better, because I've heard the debate about how that's pronounced for the last 15 years.

Walker: Anyway, there were really tough civil rights battles down there in Cairo for several years, and we thought to get mixed up in that at the beginning was just not a good idea, so we chose Brookport, which is almost as far south but not as far south as Cairo.

DePue: I've read that just after the first day or so it kind of sunk in: the depth of the undertaking you were starting at that time.

Walker: We didn't have any idea what we bought, what we were getting into. It was hot and the pavement was hard, and we got blisters. I think,…Colonel, I'm going to suggest that I poured my heart out on the subject of the walk in the Maverick book. I spent a lot of time on that, and there is the written journal that's available to anybody. I love to talk about it, but I think that for our purposes…I could go on forever about the walk.

DePue: Sure.

Walker: But I think for our purposes ... Gosh, I love it so much. It commanded a huge portion of my life, much more important actually than it should have been, I guess.

DePue: Let me just ask you two quick questions then, about the walk.

Walker: Sure.

DePue: What time was it in the walk when you started to garner the kind of press and public attention that it was meant to generate in the first place?

Walker: That's a good question, Colonel. It was a gradual thing, so I can't give you a point. It was a very gradual thing and you understand that we didn't know. When we're out there walking, we didn't get any newspapers, we didn't see television, we didn't listen to radio, so we didn't know what was going on. We had no idea what kind of an impact—by "we" I mean my sons—and Vic, bless him, wasn't very communicative up in Chicago.

DePue: He stayed in Chicago?

Walker: Yes. He stayed in Chicago the whole time. And so we were pretty much—we didn't know. The only thing that persuaded me that it was having an impact was the reaction of people. I'll just never forget the first time a big rig came by and the driver of that truck leaned out, pumping his fist like this, and yelled, "Give 'em hell Dan!" That happened a couple of times and I realized that I was catching on with some people.

DePue: That's the kind of bumper sticker you'd like on your campaign isn't it?

Walker: Isn't that the truth. It was a wonderful feeling I tell you, when you're hot and sweating and tired and slugging along on that country road and there's that guy yelling, "Go get 'em Dan, keep fighting Dan, give 'em hell Dan", I tell you, that pumps you up.

DePue: I would have to believe, when you get to West Frankfurt and you saw the way the crowd treated you there, that you figured you were making some kind of connection with the people at least.

Walker: Yes we did, but as Vic would tell me on the telephone, "Dan, there's not very many people down there. You may be exciting them, but nobody up here ever heard of you."

DePue: But eventually you worked your way up north. Did that campaign, the idea of walking, generate the kind of publicity you needed once you reached the northern regions and especially the suburbs and Chicago itself?

Walker: Well it did come through because of television, of course. If television hadn't picked it up it wouldn't have happened. But I did get on television and became a figure in people's minds, of a guy out there working and fighting. Those two words summed it up and it got through to the public all over the state that I was out there working and fighting. That's an image that people like, I learned.

DePue: And certainly the whole concept of the underdog is a very prevalent theme in American history.

Walker: Exactly, exactly. People like the idea of a candidate who is fighting, fighting, so that's what I did.

DePue: What point in all of this did you find out that your opponent in the primary was going to be Paul Simon?

Walker: I don't really remember, Colonel, that was late in the game. For a while there it looked like it would be Tom Foran, and then I think it was—well I just don't remember the exact time. Now, I can go back in the journal and get it out but I don't remember Colonel, it was late in the game.

DePue: Okay. The last question I have in reference to the walk itself is, in retrospect do you think you would have been successful in your campaign without that particular—some called it a political stunt, I'm sure.

Walker: No.

DePue: That that's what pushed you over the top, that's what made the difference?

Walker: If you had to pick out one thing, that would be it. Of course, you'd have to say the walk yes, but I became the candidate that capitalized on the walk. So I don't mean to sound pretentious, but if I hadn't been the person that I was and developed and capitalized on the walk, it wouldn't have been successful either.

DePue: I can tell you Governor, that even as a young lad—in 1972 I was heading towards West Point at that time, in Iowa of all places, in a neighboring state—I had heard about the walk. I didn't pay much attention to it of course at that time, but I had heard about it.

Walker: Really?

DePue: I knew about it.

Walker: I'll be darned, how about that? Well the word did get around but I'll tell you, I remember very well, the columnist, the famous Washington columnist… Oh, isn't that terrible? Anyway, he came out and walked with me for an hour, from Washington, and he wrote a column that went nationwide, in which he laughed at me. "That guy Walker out in Illinois thinks that he can walk in the cornfields and beat the Daley machine… it is to laugh." He was wrong of course.

DePue: These are strange political times for American history; in the depths of the Vietnam war, [Richard] Nixon is running for re-election, there are some rumblings, just early rumblings, about Watergate and all of those implications, but a real disillusion with American politics in the first place. How did that play in to your campaign, do you think?

Walker: Well, I think it helped, because there was that disillusionment, and here's a guy who is coming out of nowhere, not a part of the establishment, and untainted by the establishment. So yeah, a fresh kid on the block, new kid on the block, fresh face, fresh breath of air. Yes, I think that the times fitted it, yes.

DePue: Your opponent of course, in the primary, was Paul Simon.

Walker: Yes.

DePue: A downstater from Troy, Illinois and not at that time, perceived as a machine politician.

Walker: Not at all. I knew Paul well. We had worked together on founding the Democratic Federation of Illinois, and he was the first acting President of that organization. I became the permanent President at the first convention, when I was elected, and Paul didn't contest me. He had been the acting President. I liked Paul. He was a fresh breath of air in the Illinois legislature and a very honest guy, exceedingly honest. I liked Paul but he, well he wasn't my kind of guy, Colonel. He just wasn't my kind of guy. Anyway, that's beside the point. He got where he had to have support from Daley. He had that trait that Ab Mikva, Adlai Stevenson and some others had; when push came to shove, they truckled to Daley, all of them, starting with Paul Simon or starting with Adlai Stevenson. They truckled to Daley, the power. I, of course, capitalized on that with respect to Paul.

DePue: You mentioned already that in any campaign, there's a tendency to exaggeration. Do you feel that was the case with the way you portrayed Simon, in terms of how close he was to the Daley machine?

Walker: Certainly yes, some exaggeration there, yes Colonel, but the core of it was accurate. That is, he kowtowed, and that's the heart of it and that's the measure of the man in my opinion. When you separate the men from the boys, that's the critical decision. Are you going to truckle, are you going to bow to power? Are you going to hold your head up and say, "Look, I am what I am".

DePue: Let's go back to that label you got, of being uncompromising. In this case you are not compromising when it comes to the Daley machine, with the Democratic Party machine.

Walker: I would not. I never did.

DePue: That was the fatal flaw that you saw in people like Stevenson, and we're talking about Adlai Stevenson III, and Simon and others then?

Walker: Yes, because I was convinced, then and now, the only way that Illinois politics and government will be improved to any considerable degree, is to change the power structure. It's just as true today as it was when I ran for Governor. Daley has too much power, downstate has too little power, there is not a balance there and the emphasis then was all on patronage and jobs. Now the emphasis is sure, some of that, but that's coming under control as a result of the Shakman decisions as you know, but money is pervasive now, those two things.

DePue: Okay. Why don't we just take a real quick.

(pause in recording)

Walker: Okay?

DePue: Okay Governor, after that quick break, what I want to ask you next is, at what point in this campaign against Simon did you and your colleagues realize that you were

going to be successful? Because everybody, all of the smart money was betting against you.

Walker: We never did. It was close all the way and I was the least informed. Vic and Dave believed strongly that the candidate should not know where he stood. They believed that very strongly. Vic taught me, very wisely I think, don't talk about the polls, and we didn't have any anyway, but don't talk about that kind of thing. You just talk about what you're going to do and what you want to accomplish.

DePue: So stay on message.

Walker: Don't talk on politics, don't talk about how your campaign is going and how the other campaign is going. You said it, stay on message.

DePue: So the election night comes and you're successful and you defeat Simon. I've got to believe that's one of the best moments of your life.

Walker: No question about it. Very exciting, tremendously exciting, and the family was all there. It was a glorious time.

DePue: And yet that was just step one. Did you think, at that time though, that the campaign against Ogilvie was going to be easier, if you will?

Walker: Yes. We thought it would be easier. We thought we would have solved the money problem, that after I became the Democratic candidate for sure, that after the primary, the money would come in that normally comes in to a Democratic candidate. But it didn't, and that was a problem then and forever after.

DePue: It didn't because much of the money that normally would come in had connections with the machine and old fashioned politics in Illinois?

Walker: I think that's a part of it. I don't really know the answer to that. A part of it was that I didn't seem like—this is what I was told by some—that I was a kind of a candidate that money would not do anything with. That sounds pretentious but it's true. Anyway, for whatever reason, we just were never successful in raising money. Then, while I was Governor in '76, we were always in debt,…always in debt.

DePue: I don't want to read anything into this, but your comments about fundraising, that some people who normally would contribute to campaigns didn't contribute to you because they didn't think they'd get the payoff for doing it?

Walker: Well, yes. Putting it bluntly, yes, and they were right. They were right. (laughs) Yes.

DePue: Would you say that the press was on your side during the campaigns?

Walker: No, they never were.

DePue: Neither during the primary nor for the general election?

Walker: No. Well, you know, you can't speak monolithically. Sure there were some, but by and large the media was for Paul Simon and the media was for Ogilvie.

DePue: Okay. One of the things I want to ask you about is the Democratic primary in 1972, and I can't recall what city that was in. This is the national Democratic primary. You elected not to attend that primary. It was normal procedure that the Democratic candidate for Governor would typically attend the primary, the national primary. Do you recall the reasoning for not going there?

Walker: The National Convention?

DePue: Yeah.

Walker: There weren't any votes there, simple as that.

DePue: I was speaking incorrectly then.

Walker: No. You were, but I knew what you meant. But no, there weren't any votes there. [With the] people was where I wanted to be.

DePue: And that was a tough convention for the Daley machine too, was it not?

Walker: Yes it was. That was when the Daley delegation did not get seated at the Democratic National Convention, and the rebel slate, led by Jesse Jackson and Mary Lee Leahy, did get seated. Mary Lee Leahy of course, was one of my people and Jesse Jackson was not, of course.

DePue: Did you have anything to do with that?

Walker: Nothing. I played no role in that whatsoever.

DePue: I suspect though, that the Daley folks attributed that to you. (laughs)

Walker: I'm sure they did. But no, I had nothing to do with that. (laughs) I did not get involved in that, didn't want to get involved in it. I was very focused on what I was doing, running for Governor.

DePue: But I'm sure that's not the kind of thing that Daley and his people easily forget.

Walker: No, and that's how they sacked Mary Lee Leahy when I named her to my cabinet; they tubed her, to use the expression that was used in Springfield at the time, they knocked her off.

DePue: What were the main things then, that you were emphasizing during the general election against Governor Ogilvie?

Walker: I talked about efficiency in government. I talked about we wouldn't need to raise taxes if we would just tighten up the ship. I also talked about changing the system, making it more honest, doing away with the evils and abuses of the patronage system. Many of the same themes that I hit on in the primary, I kept up in the general election. Of course, I wasn't as vehement against the machine and people could accuse me of being…you know, I was fighting the machine and now you're not fighting the machine… To a degree that's true.

DePue: But your opponent obviously was not the machine in the general election.

Walker: That's right, that's right. My opponent was Richard Ogilvie. But I ran against the system more than I ran against Ogilvie. I ran against the system.

DePue: Were you critical during the campaign of the decision to adopt an income tax in the first place?

Walker: No, I never was. I always praised Ogilvie for that…always. I never, never criticized Ogilvie for the income tax. I did criticize Paul Simon during the primary, for his proposing that we shift the payment for schools from the property tax to the income tax, which at that time I thought would be a bad mistake. The public wouldn't stand for it.

DePue: A bad mistake because it wouldn't play well politically or because it was—

Walker: It wouldn't have played well politically and it wasn't needed at that time. It was both governmentally and politically a wrong approach. I think now that change probably should be made, but I'm not real knowledgeable about Illinois finances at this point.

DePue: Was Ogilvie advocating an increase in taxes?

Walker: No, no, not at all.

DePue: So on that case, both of you are talking that same issue then.

Walker: That's right. There were no differences there.

DePue: Were you suggesting, in your campaign, that Ogilvie probably would or that he was too ready to impose new taxes?

Walker: No. Taxes was not an issue of mine.

DePue: So one difference in the campaigns was your emphasis on efficiency in government then?

Walker: Yes, efficiency in government, and I also said no new taxes. Yes I did make taxes an issue that way, that is, saying I will not increase your taxes. I said that over and over again to the people, and I did not.

DePue: How did you portray the issue of efficiency then?

Walker: Number one, just that, efficiency. I harked back to my work on the Little Hoover Commission and said there's a lot of waste in government, which there was and is and always will be. I talked about getting rid of that waste and I used it, had a figure I talked about. I think I talked about $500 million that could be saved if you really went after it, in terms of making state government lean and mean. I made that an issue, yes. I talked about the evils of the patronage system a lot, and I talked about the scandals. There were a lot of scandals involving the Supreme Court, the Paul Powell case, all of that.

DePue: That's right. This was the time when Paul Powell was on people's minds.

Walker: "Shoebox Paul."

DePue: Eight hundred thousand dollars in a shoebox, [found in Powell's home when after he died] how does that happen?

Walker: Right, exactly.

DePue: Going back to the efficiency issue then, did you talk specifically about consolidation of some of the divisions of the branches of government?

Walker: No, not a lot about that, because I've never been much of a believer in that. People talk loosely about consolidation and fewer agencies. I'm not convinced that that makes much difference in terms of the efficiency of government.

DePue: Just tightening up the administration of each one of the agencies?

Walker: Yeah. Go into each agency, get rid of middle management. Too many jobs…too many jobs. You can cut the payroll, I said ten percent, and that's exactly what I did. That saves a lot of money.

DePue: And a lot of those are perceived as patronage positions.

Walker: Of course —the media said at that time, well sure, Walker is cutting a lot of jobs, but he's just making room for more Democrats by getting rid of Republicans. And I said, "Well the test will be a year from now, and we'll see if those jobs get filled." And they weren't.

DePue: Your campaign strategy, or maybe it's more appropriate to say Dave Green's and Vic de Grazia's campaign strategy for you.

Walker: No, I wouldn't say that, Colonel. The strategy was to make government better, more open, more transparent. That wasn't their thinking; that was my thinking. That's what I wanted from the very beginning, so I chose those issues.

DePue: So, it certainly helped to hear Vic say stay on message and don't worry about the politics.

Walker: Yes. Vic never really got into that kind of thing a lot. Governmental policy—he was always very careful to leave to me.

DePue: And you kept your own counsel in that respect, or did you have a couple of others that were very helpful to you in framing that kind of governmental concept?

Walker: No.

DePue: That was primarily you?

Walker: Yes.

DePue: Through the general election, were you confident all the way that you would be successful and win?

Walker: I've always been optimistic. I think you have to be optimistic in a tough battle in order to win. You can't open your mind to defeat.

DePue: And by the margins in the general election, you won a larger majority than you did in the primary, did you not?

Walker: Yes. The margin was about 30,000 in the primary, very narrow, extremely narrow. In the general election it was bigger but it wasn't overwhelming. Of course, that was the year of the Nixon landslide, when Nixon carried the nation by big numbers. So I was fortunate to squeak through and I did squeak through, but more than I did in the primary.

DePue: If I recall, 54 percent, does that sound right?

Walker: No, no, not anywhere near that. It would be more like 51 percent, 52, along in there.

DePue: But what did that feel like, when you realized that after this incredible uphill battle, where nobody had given you a chance in hell to begin with, that now you were the new Governor of Illinois?

Walker: Awesome, awesome. Yes, awesome.

DePue: Was it somewhat intimidating or it was not even a thought in your mind in that respect?

Walker: Well yes, intimidating, because it hits home when you realize that you've got that job now and what are you going to do? It's a big job and how are you going to tackle it? Yes, it is. The shift, from being a candidate to being the Governor, is a major shift.

DePue: And you have just those few months to put your team together.

Walker: Too short a time, and you have to—remember, you have to come up with a budget by March, so you have very little time to put together your first budget and pick a cabinet and do all those things that you have to do.

DePue: What did you see? What was your vision for this new government, your goals that you had coming into the administration?

Walker: A step at a time. The first goal was to put together a good cabinet and top flight people, and I spent a lot of time on that, that was the first step. The second step was the financial side of state government; getting people who would do the work and tell me exactly where we stood and what we had to do, and start putting a budget together.

DePue: When was it that Vic had his heart attack?

Walker: That was in December of '72.

DePue: So this is after the election but before you actually took the Oath of Office?

Walker: Yes.

DePue: And as we mentioned, that's a crucial time for you.

Walker: It was a very, very difficult time, extremely difficult, and I really needed Vic. However, I will say that certainly not as needed as a month earlier or two months earlier, when we were in the campaign, because I needed Vic yes, in terms of advising on putting the cabinet together. Just to sum it up quickly, a cabinet has to be, I thought, a mixture of politics and government. You've got to have politics in the cabinet; you've got to reward people who work their tail off for you. You've got to, that's what it's all about, but how many of those and how many are you going to choose for political reasons and how many are you going to choose just because I need the guy who can do that job and has experience and ability? I did need Vic on making that balance, but I was able to do that. Much of that had been done by the time he had his heart attack.

DePue: Would you say it's a fair statement to say you struck a different balance than previous administrations in that respect?

Walker: Yes. We had more minorities, more women, and fewer politicians. I was disappointed…of course I remembered how much praise people like Adlai Stevenson had gotten for the cabinet they put together…and I was really proud of that cabinet. I never have understood why I did not get credit for putting together a really competent group of people.

DePue: Did you encounter a lot of friction right from the start from the Legislature on some of your nominees?

Walker: Well, two things here. Number one, I made a mistake with one guy, Tony Angelos. That was a bad mistake—how that happened I still don't know—that he was able to get by the screening process and he turned out to be a bad guy.

DePue: He was the insurance…?

Walker: Insurance Director, and that was a bad mistake on my part, no question about it.

DePue: But you have people on your staff who are supposed to be vetting these things.

Walker: Yes, and the vetting wasn't done, but still I blame myself because I wanted a newcomer. I wanted a non-establishment guy as Director of Insurance. I made a mistake. I should have gone to a superior lawyer who would be squeaky clean, and I blamed myself for that one and the staff, but mostly myself. Then I spent a lot of time getting the other people that I wanted. A number of them were from out of state because if you want people who've got experience, who have done these jobs before and have a reputation and a track record, where are you going to find them, except in other states. I did some of that. A lot of people said too much of that.

DePue: Was your criticism on that one strictly from those folks loyal to the machine or was that across…?

Walker: No, it was the newspapers. Others said there must be just as smart people in Illinois, why do you have to go to Kentucky or Massachusetts or California? Well the answer is that I looked them all over and these were the best qualified people I could get.

DePue: Do you recall any of the battles that surprised you, in the Legislature itself and confirmation?

Walker: Oh yes. I never expected that. Traditionally in Illinois, as in other states, and the Federal Government, a Governor or President is given wide latitude in choosing his cabinet, and they did not give me that latitude. The Republicans and the Daley Democrats joined together and just ruined my cabinet selections, one after another, down, down. Very disappointing, I was very surprised. I was really taken aback by that.

DePue: I recall one of the comments you had. You had a group of legislators over for breakfast and Cecil Partee, I think it was, told you that, no Governor, there's no problem with your agenda, there's nothing on the horizon here, and then you turn right around and encounter this.

Walker: That very day. That very day they sent four of my cabinet nominees down the tube, and he knew damn good and well they were going to do it. Yes.

DePue: So he just didn't want to have that direct confrontation? Going back just a little bit to your inauguration. You made a decision that was a little bit different from

previous inaugurations, of having it on the steps of the State Capitol, rather than in the chamber itself.

Walker: Well, in the State Armory, just because they needed a big building and the State Armory was the place that was conventionally used, and tickets and all that kind of stuff. I wanted it so anybody who wanted to come could come. I didn't want it to be reserved for just the people who had clout to get tickets, so I wanted it out of doors. We did and it was cold but what the hell, we did it. There were other constitutional officers being sworn in the same day and they chose to stay inside, so they took their oaths in the State Armory, with the tickets and all that kind of stuff. I was by myself out there, but that didn't bother me in the slightest.

DePue: Well of course you know that Bob Howard, in his book about all the Governors of Illinois, had an interesting chapter on you, and he was very critical of that decision. He basically said your motive in that respect was snubbing the Legislature.

Walker: Was what?

DePue: Was to snub the legislature, that you were doing things differently and that was kind of sticking it in the eye of the legislators if you will.

Walker: It had nothing to do with the legislators. It had all to do with letting the people who had worked hard for me all over the state, ordinary people, come to the inauguration. That's what it had to do with and I believed strongly in that. I didn't think much of Howard's book by the way; there was not much depth in it. He kept saying, I think he said over and over, "Walker never accomplished anything". Well, I had a tough time accomplishing things that's for sure, but it sure wasn't for lack of trying. It was because of the Daley machine and the Republicans working together to defeat me.

DePue: Well certainly you got to office because you were taking on the machine, seen as an outsider, seen as a breath of fresh air if you will. What was the message that you conveyed in your inauguration speech?

Walker: Well, I tried to make it a mixture; it was certainly some of that. I kept the flavor of the campaign in talking about people, but then I also said, in one notable sentence or two, to the legislature, "Let's have a partnership here. Let's work together to get things done. Let's lay aside the acrimony and let's get things accomplished." I honestly believed that they would listen; not all of them but I thought that there would be enough, that we would make some progress and they would see the opportunity as well as I. But how wrong I was.

DePue: Did you believe at that time, that Daley and his inner circle would be willing to compromise with you, or did you hope that the legislators themselves weren't necessarily so closely tied to him?

Walker: I thought we would be able to work out a rapport with the Daley people. Daley had after all, supported me in the campaign and I thought that he would recognize that I

was the Governor of the state and that we could work together, but boy was I wrong about that.

DePue: Let's talk about these Executive Orders that you issued out fairly early on. You've already mentioned you had a tough time getting your governing team in, but you were confident that it was the right group of people once you got them on board. But I know that another initiative that you took, that you felt strongly about, were these Executive Orders.

Walker: Yes. It became apparent that the legislature was going to be hostile and also, that they would never adopt the kind of changes that I wanted, and so I turned to Executive Orders. I said that to myself and to Bill and Vic and the others, that they can't stop me here because, as to the 60,000 odd employees under the Governor, I set those rules, not the legislature. So I worked with Bill Goldberg and he and I put together that series of Executive Orders. It was very far reaching and changed the entire system in terms of the relationship between politics and government in Illinois. As I've said publicly, no Governor since me has ever had the guts to copy that, to put those kinds of Executive Orders into being. One or two, but the full put in play, none.

DePue: Well, I want to talk about some of the specifics of those Executive Orders, but to pursue what you just mentioned, why do you think future Governors have been so reluctant to take that approach?

Walker: Because you had to have those practices, they thought, to win campaigns. Take the critical one, that is, using state employees to raise campaign contributions. Most Governors in the history of Illinois have built their campaign funds, in major part, by using state employees to raise the money: dinners, rallies, tickets sold, ad programs, all those kinds of things.

DePue: That certainly has been the demise of George Ryan.

Walker: Right. And state employees went out there and did the work I said no, we'll stop that. It will not happen in the Executive Branch. No state employee will be required or asked to do political fundraising and if it happens,, people are going to get fired for it. I enforced that but it didn't last beyond my term. But there were others. It was a practice before then, for an employee to get a job you had to get a letter from your County Chairman. The County Chairman also literally owned some jobs. It was just understood that the county chairman of Jackson County would fill jobs X, Y, and Z, and I stopped all of that. None of it would be permitted. I created the State Board of Ethics, appointed by the Governor of course; I required people who made over X dollars in state government to file a copy of their income tax returns with that board. Nobody had ever done that before and by the way, nobody has ever done it since. That goes right to the heart of it. There were other Executive Orders. One got knocked down by the Supreme Court. Several of them were challenged in the courts and only one got knocked down.

DePue: What was the nature of the challenges?

Walker: The challenges were just I exceeded the executive power under the Constitution of Illinois. I did too much. But the courts upheld all of them except one.

DePue: And that one was?

Walker: It was a wonderful one—I love it! I love it!—requiring every corporation or business that does business with the state to list the campaign contributions made by every officer, director and owner of more than 15 percent, I think, of the stock of the company, to report all of their campaign contributions. So you could look at XYZ company and go to the file and there it is. Now, you can get that information now but you have to go around it. You have to find out who the directors are and then go find out which one has contributed and so forth. I wanted it in one package and the key was, if it was a company doing business with the state, we're entitled to know that. The Supreme Court knocked that one out, so I had gone too far.

DePue: Based on what?

Walker: Just gone too far, that the executive power intruded too much into the rights of the individual corporations. I just had gone too far.

DePue: Was it a freedom of speech issue?

Walker: No, executive power as opposed to a law could have been passed that would do that, but do you think there's any chance of getting that law through the legislature? Not then and not now.

DePue: So the general thrust of all of the objections to all these Executive Orders was that you were overreaching your powers then?

Walker: Correct.

DePue: Obviously that wasn't your opinion and that wasn't Bill Goldberg's opinion?

Walker: That's right, and we were right on all of them. I still think we were right on that one by the way, but the Court disagreed with me.

DePue: The nature of the Court then was primarily Republican nominees.?

Walker: Yes, they were at that time; it was a Republican Court.

DePue: Okay. Early on in your administration, there were a couple of issues that came up that were near and dear to the Daley administration as well. I'm thinking primarily about the Chicago Transit Authority.

Walker: Yeah, that was a major battle. It was the first major battle with Daley. He wanted money from the state for the Chicago Transit Authority. That was okay because

state government subsidized public transportation around the state, but instead of a one-on-one grant—that is for a dollar that the city puts up, the state puts up one dollar. He wanted the state to put up two dollars for every dollar that the city put up, and I said that's wrong. If we do that all over the state, it's just going to cost too damn much money and besides it's wrong. It shouldn't be the state putting up most of the money for local stuff. And so I fought Daley on that and it was a grand battle. In the end I won that one. Did I?

DePue: Yes.

Walker: Yes I did, I won that one. It was a bitter fight though.

DePue: Was it practiced previously, that it was always a one for one deal, not just Chicago but other cities as well?

Walker: It was in the major cities around the state, it was one for one, never two for one. This was a bold break with the past.

DePue: What was your major objection to the two for one? Was it a principle or was it a process; okay if I do this, I can't possibly balance the budget?

Walker: It's both. It was too much money because you can't do it for one city and not do it for the other cities, and that would just pile up too much money going for local stuff in the cities. The other thing was, it was just a question of singling out Chicago and giving Chicago something that's not given to other people in the state.

DePue: What were Dave Green and Vic recommending at that time?

Walker: That we fight it, and we did.

DePue: So there was unity in your administration on that issue?

Walker: Oh absolutely, absolutely, down the line.

DePue: There was certainly criticism then and a lot of the criticism since that time, that if you had had found some way to accommodate, to find middle ground if you will, between yourself and Daley, you could have had a much more successful administration.

Walker: Well let's take that issue. Where's the accommodation and where's the compromise? It's either up or down. It's two for one as he insisted, and I insisted one for one. What are you going to do, compromise on one and a half for one? No. It just didn't work that way. Anyway overall, that criticism was certainly leveled at me and I would always respond, "Why are you guys always asking me why I don't accommodate with Daley? Why don't you ask Daley why Daley doesn't accommodate with the Governor?" Daley didn't accommodate, but nobody criticized him for that. He was the one who wouldn't accommodate. Sure, when he wouldn't accommodate, I wouldn't accommodate. It takes two to tango and he

wouldn't tango, never would tango, but the media made it out that I was the one who wouldn't accommodate. Well, that's just not true. But did I get my back up on occasion? I sure did, on things that I felt strongly about, absolutely, and I wouldn't accommodate on something that I felt really strong about because I don't work that way.

DePue: And yet you say that Daley had the same attitude going into these fights.

Walker: Yeah. We're talking about a whole panoply of things, yes. It's well known with the Daley father and son, usually you accommodate on their terms. That's the way they played the game.

DePue: Because they had the power, in part because they—

Walker: You got it Colonel, you got it. They had the power and it was a power game all the way.

DePue: I would think the ultimate example of that is the slate-maker procedure you were talking about before.

Walker: That's very, very true, but it carried over into the littlest things. It always used to amaze me how the machine, the Daley machine…nothing was too little to escape their attention, from a single job all the way up to millions of dollars. They fought everything.

DePue: Were you surprised at how that influence translated into the legislature itself?

Walker: Yes, very definitely. I really thought that the legislature would be more amenable but it wasn't, but of course it was a combination. The Republicans didn't want me to succeed and if you add the Republicans to the Daley Democrats, then they've got a lock.

DePue: Did you anticipate that you might get some cooperation from the Republicans?

Walker: No… Colonel, these questions remind me. I was not all tied up with the legislature personally. I left a lot of that, maybe too much, to Victor. He knew what I wanted to get done and I let him handle the negotiations with the legislators almost totally. I felt then and I feel now, very strongly, that too much attention is paid to the Legislature. Colonel you've observed that. The Legislature comes to Springfield and the media starts covering state government. The Legislature goes home and the media stops covering state government. There's very little written about state government when the Legislature is not in session, and that causes the people of the state to feel that the legislative part of it is the heart of state government. Well it isn't. Sure it's important. I don't mean to denigrate that in the slightest. If you're going to make major changes, then you've got to use the Legislature, but most of legislation is peanut stuff, most of it, and the action should be more with the departments that run and operate the state government. I think I may be repetitive here, forgive me. To use an expression the kids use, "That's

where the rubber meets the road." That is, how the people's problems are being solved on a day-to-day basis by the departments of state government. How Children and Family Services works, how the Department of Revenue works, how the Department of Transportation works, the Department of Conservation. That's where people get impacted in their lives, by all of those government employees, by what they do. That part of government is largely ignored by the media until there's a scandal. If there's a scandal they write about it but if there isn't, it's ignored. Well, I think that's unfortunate and I set about, from the day I sat down in the Governor's chair, to try to concentrate on making government work better and, as I've said before, make it more transparent. I wish the media would pay more attention to the workings of government.

DePue: I'm looking for the phrase here and I wish I could recall it. One of the budget initiatives you took, a way that you wanted to approach addressing specifically how efficient each one of these agencies was.

Walker: Yes, accountability, an accountability budget. That's the second budget, when I really had time to work on it. The second year it was an accountability budget, where you quantify, you set goals. I'll give you some specific examples. You'd say to the Department of Public Health, how many inoculations did you make for X disease out there? To the Department of Transportation, how many lousy bridges did you correct and bring up-to-date and check out and everything, how many? I want to know how many for the whole year and then break it down by quarters, so that I can sit there as Governor, at the end of the quarter, and get the head of the Department of Transportation in here and say, "Look, in the budget you said you were going to have 543 bridges repaired this quarter and the number right now is 413. Well what happened to what you promised? Come on tell me, I want to know why, right now, look me in the eye and tell me." Well that kind of man on man, mano a mano management is unknown to government. It's practiced rigorously in the private sector but it's not practiced in government. I wanted that. I wanted a budget that made people accountable and then I wanted to hold their feet to the fire. I'm getting carried away I know; I'll finish here. It takes a tremendous amount of time to do that because the Governor has to do it. You can't just let staff guys do it, because the head of a department doesn't pay much attention to that kid on the staff, but if it's the Governor, looking him in the eyeballs, then he pays attention. So it takes a tremendous amount of time and that's one of the reasons why, a major reason why, I had this division of responsibility with Victor. Victor, you take care of those legislators and what they want and so forth. I'm sure I'll sign off on it, and consult me on policy and all that kind of stuff, but I want to concentrate over here, on making government work better.

DePue: Going back to your comment about "this is the way things are done in business", where there is a bottom line, it's a profit or loss, and forgive me, but I'm seeing that that's the same kind of approach oftentimes you encounter in the military, where it's direct—not confrontation—but what do the statistics say, how successful have you been, give me the facts.

Walker: Exactly, and give me success. Give me success. I want success stories but I don't want just words, I want numbers.

DePue: What was your definition of success in terms of managing this administration, because it's an awe inspiring task.

Walker: The measurement of success was getting the departments onto the system. You have to start with the budget and get the budgets and get them used to thinking that way and put those figures into the budget and get them on the line and published and everything, so they're committed. Then the follow-up, quarter by quarter. But to get that, it's a whole system and you've got to get the Bureau of the Budget working with you, to help you implement it. One man can't do it all. You've got to do the meetings, of course, but otherwise staff has got to do it. I got, I think, four major departments on accountability by the end of my tenure. It's hard work and everything else pulls you away from it.

DePue: I had heard that one of the approaches you took budget-wise was to ask agency directors to prioritize, if you will. You expected them to tell you what their most important projects were. Part of that rationale was to be able to focus in. "Well," they say, "this is less important, maybe there are more dollars to be saved in that particular arena."

Walker: Yes. It's called zero-based budgeting. That is, you take all the programs of a department and put them in a stack, a whole stack, and put the most important programs at the top of the stack and the least important programs at the bottom. The director of the department does that and then the Governor sits there and looks and says, why did you put this one up here, I want this one down here, up here in terms of priority, and you fight it through. That's called zero-based budgeting. It's used all the time in business but very seldom used in government then. I don't know about now. Jimmy Carter used it in Georgia. Nixon tried to establish it in the Federal Government and failed because he turned it over to the Office of Management and Budget to handle. It's got to be a Governor or a President doing it, the chief executive, and it's hard for a President to devote that much time to it and it's hard for a Governor too.

DePue: And I would imagine you get an awful lot of resistance, because you're goring somebody's ox in the process.

Walker: Yes, and to make a guy quantify. People are used to talking in terms of generalities. I'm going to do more of this or I'm going to do less of that. Well give me numbers, as I said before.

DePue: But ultimately, do you think you were successful?

Walker: I was successful yes, but it didn't last.

DePue: Now you've mentioned before, you were able to achieve the ten percent personnel cuts that you had promised in the election campaign.

Walker: Yes. That stuck for four years.

DePue: Was there any political fallout because of that?

Walker: Yes there was, simply because of jobs. Those county chairmen are always yelling for job, more jobs, more jobs, and I resisted that. So yes, it was a continual fight. Now you know, you've got to do some of that. Vic would call me up and say Dan, come on now, we've got this legislator from Podunk and I think we may get a vote out of him. Now listen, he's got an uncle that wants to be XYZ. Come on Dan, we've got to get that vote. And of course occasionally—I had done it more than occasionally—I would say sure Vic, you tell me you've got to have it, okay you've got that job. So sure, I did some of that, you have to. That's the grease that makes government work. It's the amount of it you do. Some of it you have to do and everybody knows that you have to do some of it. The trick is doing just enough so that you'll make government work, get the squeaky joints oiled, and not do too much of it so it permeates your administration.

DePue: How did the media portray your efforts to cut back on some of the excess?

Walker: They didn't pay any attention to it.

DePue: They were focused on the legislative battles?

Walker: Well yeah. You read the newspapers Colonel. They don't write about that kind of thing. There's only one newspaper in the state, the *Decatur Herald Review*, that would write about the functioning of the departments in detail, and the others just wouldn't write about it; they weren't interested. Tell me this, Colonel. In all the years that I've followed state government, I can't remember a single article being written about the abuses in the Secretary of State's office, where it was most prevalent, on forcing state employees to raise political contributions. That Secretary of State's office, run by Ryan, by Edgar, by Paul Powell, was rife with that kind of practice. Did you ever see an article anywhere, where a newspaper reporter tore that apart? No. Well why not? I can't answer that question. I don't know why not.

DePue: I don't want to get too far into this—but there were some murmuring, whispers about that kind of thing going on in the Ryan administration when he was running for Governor, reflecting back on his time as Secretary of State. But it's kind of on the same scale as you heard about Watergate in '72. It was background noise in Nixon's campaign at that time, and it was background noise, I think, in Ryan's campaign as well.

Walker: That's right, but when he was Secretary of State, did any reporter write an investigative piece about that? Not one, and it's right under their noses, sitting down there in Springfield, right under their noses. Well anyway, I get carried away on that subject.

DePue: I asked you a little bit about the new tone of your administration you were trying to set, and maybe this is just a natural reflection of your personality. I'm talking in respect to some of the more overt symbols of the Governor's office, things like the limousine and your police detail, signs as you cross the border, those kinds of things.

Walker: Yes I did a lot of that and by the way, just the other day somebody sent me a copy of a picture in the newspaper of Blagojevich who has resumed the practice of the highway signs coming into the state. He's got his name up there on the highway signs. I stopped that. I also—and not many people know this—I prohibited all the offices in government under the Governor from showing my picture. My picture will not be on the wall in any state office. Every Governor before me had had their pictures in every office that the public went into. I stopped that. Another one which I really loved: the hunting and fishing licenses were always signed by the Governor, the Governor's name on every license. I prohibited that. Those are little things and this sounds oh, I don't know what's the right way, sour grapes or something. I never got any credit for that. No reporter ever, ever, ever wrote an article about the change, which I thought was small but symbolic of what I was trying to do, but nobody paid any attention to it publicly.

DePue: In your mind it was a deliberate attempt to take your particular ego out of the whole picture then.

Walker: Yes. To not use government for political reasons, that's plain wrong. You don't use government to glorify yourself and your name. That's not what it's all about. You use government for people not for yourself.

DePue: But that's certainly a longstanding process in Illinois, and I'm thinking not just in the Governor's office but things like the Secretary of State. You see that name plastered all over things, like licenses and letters, et cetera.

Walker: Most states of the union are the same way. It's too bad, but I had the guts to change it. It didn't last though. The day I left office … boy.

DePue: This is at the very beginning of your administration, but apparently Governor Ogilvie didn't help you too much in your initial couple of months in the administration.

Walker: Yeah. I don't want to dwell on that. We got no cooperation at all from Ogilvie in the transition, and the same pattern occurred with respect to [James] Thompson when I left office. I again, just operated differently than those individuals. To me, government is important and you do what you need to do, you should do, to make government transitions work. I got no cooperation from Ogilvie, but I don't want to dwell on that. He was a decent guy.

DePue: Okay. I did want to ask you about your relationship with the media. How would you portray that relationship?

Walker: It was a rocky road and part of that was my fault, yes. I've always believed, Colonel, that there should be an adverse relationship between the President or the Governor and the media, and the Mayor, et cetera. That's what they're about. They're supposed to keep us honest, not be buddy buddies, and I don't care for politicians who make buddy buddies and drinking buddies out of members of the media. Jack Kennedy did that and I never approved of it, and certainly Jim Thompson did that all the time, and Ogilvie. Mike Royko was a beer drinking buddy of Dick Ogilvie. I don't care for buddy buddies with the media and I probably went too far the other way. I probably did … yes.

DePue: Norty was your Press Secretary during your whole administration. Do you think he did an efficient job of keeping those lines open with the press?

Walker: Yeah, I think Norty did a good job.

DePue: So, you're more critical of your own performance than you would be of Norty?

Walker: I think I said what I want to say on the subject, Colonel.

DePue: Okay. In much of your administration then, you feel you were successful in the way you were able to manage and administer the government. Do you feel that wasn't getting the attention it deserves in the media itself? The media again, was focused on the fights with the Legislature and the fights with the Daley administration. Do you think they characterized those differences correctly?

Walker: I think there's some exaggeration there but there was certainly a lot of truth to it. Yeah, in retrospect, I could have been less combative, yes. I have maybe too much of a tendency—when I see a problem I want to tackle it and so I do tend to go head on sometimes, perhaps more than I should. Of course if I look at it from the standpoint of my own future, there's no question about the fact Colonel. I could have cut deals with Daley and avoided the primary fight in '76, and I believe I could have gotten Daley to support me for the presidency. Yeah, I could have done that. I didn't go that route. Should I have gone that route? You can make a good argument that if I wanted to be President of the United States and willing to tailor my work as Governor to that end, then I could end on that, that I could have made it. I didn't go that way. I do not recall that I ever actively thought about that though, Colonel; it was only in retrospect. I was intent on doing a good job, I thought, as Governor and fighting, yes. I had no doubt that I could win in 1976 and so I didn't even think about cutting deals with Daley.

DePue: You had defined yourself as the candidate against the machine in the first place, so I'm not surprised that you never gave –at least what you just said –you never gave serious consideration to compromising in that respect.

Walker: Lots of men before me have done that kind of thing. I didn't. Maybe I should have. I don't know. Let's just say that I didn't. I made my bed and so I laid on it.

DePue: Do you have any regrets that you didn't?

Walker: Not really … not really. Oh sure, but I don't—I've never played that game very much. I had lots of opportunities to do that when I was in prison, and we'll talk about that I'm sure, but no, I just don't believe in playing that "what if" game. If I get my mind on that subject I turn it off. There's no point.

DePue: So you're not one to look over your shoulder and second guess yourself?

Walker: No, no …it's useless.

DePue: Let's talk a little bit about the 1974 legislative campaign, the mid-term elections, if you will. Apparently, you made some very deliberate choices in that respect, to get some more allies into the legislature?

Walker: Yeah, we went all out. Vic took a leave of absence from his job and spent full time on it. I did a lot of campaigning all over the state, for Democratic candidates for the Legislature, some up in Chicago running against Daley people and also a lot of people around the state, and we scored. We scored. The Democrats took control of both Houses in '74.

DePue: And both of them previously had been run by Republicans?

Walker: Correct.

DePue: By a very thin margin if I recall.

Walker: Correct, that's correct.

DePue: Once the Democrats got control of both Houses though, I do recall there was also a nasty battle, if you will, over who was going to be the Speaker of the House?

Walker: Yes. That was a very interesting one. It went through 99 ballots I believe, to get a Speaker.

(pause in recording)

Walker: Daley had decided that Clyde Choate would be his candidate. Clyde was from deep Southern Illinois and a real politician of the old school. He was a wheeler and dealer in spades. I didn't get along well with Clyde; he wasn't my kind of guy. He gave Daley what Daley wanted. Anyway, Daley stood by him through all those ballots. A Governor is not supposed to get involved in the choice of a Speaker, but of course your Governor is involved, just like a President is, but you do it quietly. You don't make a public involvement, endorsements or anything, but quietly you're involved. So anyway, we made it clear that we wouldn't stand for Clyde Choate.

DePue: Did you think he was just too close to the Daley administration?

Walker: No. I didn't think he was honest.

DePue: That you did not think he was honest?

Walker: I did not think he was honest. I told this story before. It was 7:00 in the morning. Daley called me at the mansion and the trooper on the telephone said, "Governor, Mayor Daley is on the phone, do you want to talk with him?" I said, "Sure." So he came on the phone and he said right away, "Governor, he lied." And I said, "Who lied?" He said, "Choate". I said, "What did he lie about Your Honor?" He said, "Gov—he rarely called me that but he did then—Gov, he said that he would be able to get enough Republican votes, a few votes to get the majority and then we'd get the Speaker". But he lied. He couldn't produce any Republicans. He said, "Who's our candidate, Gov?" I was just bowled over. Here was the Mayor saying Who's our candidate for Speaker. I said, without hesitation, "Bill Redmond", who was a suburban Democrat, and he said, "Okay, he's our man" and that ended the conversation and Bill Redmond was chosen as Speaker.

DePue: But that was after scores of votes in the Legislature?

Walker: Ninety-nine ballots, yeah. It was a long, bitter one, and Bill Redmond was a good Speaker, I think. He, I think, cut too many deals with Daley but anyway, he was a good Speaker.

DePue: Do you think that was just another issue that Daley was holding against you though, later on?

Walker: I don't think so. I don't think he takes umbrage that way …I don't think so.

DePue: Okay. I wonder if you could talk a little bit about your family life during this time.

Walker: It was not much. We had seven kids. My two youngest children were in the mansion; they were in school in Springfield—high school and junior high school. There were pleasant times. We had a little getaway place out on a lake over in Taylorville and side-by-side—what do you call them? Not a motor home. Manufactured home they call them now. Mobile home they called them then. Anyway, it was very pleasant and I used that as a getaway, but mostly I worked. If you're going to try to have a base with people, which is what I had to have, my only source of power was the people of the state. I didn't have power in the legislature. I had to go to the people, I had to keep that up, so I had to move around the state a lot and give a lot of speeches, do a lot of talking with people. That meant long days and not much time at home with the family.

DePue: So these were sometimes difficult times with your wife?

Walker: Yes, but I don't want to talk about that. I don't want to dwell on that.

DePue: Okay. One of the things that did come up quite a bit, maybe more outside your administration than within, were the rumors that you had Presidential ambitions.

Walker: Yes, there were rumors about that but it was rumors. I didn't do anything about that at all. I really didn't give any thought to it. That may sound unbelievable, but it happens to be true. I was totally, absolutely preoccupied with being Governor. I didn't talk with my staff about it, I didn't think about running for the presidency in '76. Not until late in 1975 was the first time it came up.

DePue: What were Vic and Dave and others talking about? Were they seeing that as a possibility?

Walker: I don't remember. I am pretty sure David did. … Yes David did, and he undoubtedly talked with Vic about it. They didn't talk with me about it. I learned later that Dave had made it his business to move around the country some and talk to people, but I didn't know about that at the time. I knew nothing about it and Dave was the one who, in a meeting in late 1975, proposed a group of my advisors, a small group, that I not run again for Governor and run for the presidency in the Presidential primaries. We kicked it around at some length and decided not to do that.

DePue: Was that a surprise, that they mentioned it at that time?

Walker: Yes it was a surprise. I had not thought about it one bit. Dave had not discussed it with me. Vic had not discussed it with me. Now I had read about the speculation, of course, articles in magazines, newspapers and so forth, but we never discussed it.

DePue: Now all of those years in the fifties and sixties, I gather it's a fair thing to say that you did have ambitions of being Governor of the state.

Walker: Yes, … always.

DePue: Did you also think about the concept that you might some day pursue the presidency?

Walker: No.

DePue: And again, why was it so appealing to be a Governor and yet you weren't necessarily interested in being the President, because that's the natural next step for somebody who is ambitious, and clearly you were?

Walker: Well, I wouldn't say that I wasn't interested in it. If somebody had asked me, "Would you like to be President of the United States", I'm sure I would have said, "Well, sure I'd like to be President". But did I think about it and plan on it or anything like that? No. I had a strong ambition to become Governor and do something about state government. I was focused on that and that's what I did, and I didn't allow myself to think about the Presidential race. Absolutely not … Nope.

DePue: So it wasn't a tough decision for you, in late 1975, to say no, I don't think I want to do that?

Walker: No. No, it was not a tough decision.

DePue: Do you think either Dave or Vic was disappointed at that point?

Walker: Well Dave was very disappointed; Vic wasn't. Vic thought that we would win in '76 and that we could go on from there. He thought that was the way to go: that if I whipped the Daley machine twice, I would be a national figure.

(break in recording)

DePue: ... be a good place to break I think.

Walker: Yes, good.

DePue: Okay. We have just taken a quick break here. Let's talk about the '76 campaign. So at the point in time where you decided to put behind you any speculation about running for the presidency, then you're totally focused on winning the '76 general election?

Walker: That's correct, and on running state government. That was tough because I really had my heart in what I was doing with respect to the departments of government that I mentioned earlier, but I knew that this was going to be a tough campaign. We made the mistake of daring Daley to get somebody to run against me. I should have just laid low and maybe he wouldn't have run somebody against me. That was probably a mistake.

DePue: Whose mistake was that, yours or your advisors?

Walker: Well both. Anyway, so Daley persuaded Mike Howlett to run, and we thought we could beat Mike Howlett. We had no doubt that we could beat him, but we were wrong.

DePue: Was part of your strategy that you would not expend too much energy in defeating Howlett—that you would focus on the general election and stay focused on government?

Walker: No,… no, no. We went all out, because we knew it would be tough. When you run against the Daley machine and the Daley machine wants to get you, you know it's going to be tough. So we never viewed this as being a piece of cake. We thought it would be a tough one but we thought we would win it. Indeed we did, because the surveys that were taken, all of them—there were several taken by other people, including us—showed in November of '76, ahead 52-48 statewide. So we thought we were going to win, but we didn't realize how all-out Daley was going to go in terms of turnout, and we didn't get people out. Vic has always said that the mistake we made was not building a field organization to get out the vote. Our people didn't turn out.

DePue: You made the comment before that you don't like to characterize the media in monolithic terms in this respect, but do you think the media was generally supportive of your campaign at the primary election?

Walker: I don't think that the media played any kind of a role that was disparate in terms of my loss, no. I don't blame the media at all for that. It was a turnout thing, not an issue thing. … It was a turnout thing.

DePue: So you were successful in '72 because of what Dave Green said, "It's all about turnout."

Walker: We had the organization and as Vic has said, quoting him, "In '74, we should have realized that Daley was going to go all out in '76 to defeat us. We should have built a field organization in Chicago, starting in '74, and we didn't do that."

DePue: So I guess the Daley machine reversed the tables on you in '76. They were the ones who got the turnout.

Walker: Exactly.

DePue: And primarily in the Chicago area?

Walker: Yes, in Chicago itself, particularly on the southwest side but also the northwest side. You can go through the wards and see where it happened, and also in the close-in suburbs. Daley sent captains from a number of wards out into the suburbs to help get out the Democratic vote—his vote—in the suburbs. Again, we didn't counter that as we should have.

DePue: You have mentioned before how the machine worked to turn out votes in the fifties and sixties, and obviously a lot of that was not legitimate in the first place. I would assume you had to believe that the same kind of vote getting, ghost votes and things like that, were going on in your campaign as well. Was there any thought that you would challenge the outcome?

Walker: No. … No, no. The margin was too great for that. We were just wrong. We thought our people out there, my voters, felt strong enough about me that they would come out, but they didn't and it surprised us. There were other factors too, like the Catholic thing really hurt me and the education thing really hurt me in '76.

DePue: The education thing? Specifically, what was that?

Walker: I was perceived as being against state support for public education to the extent that a couple of people wanted. That went back to the fight in '75 with the legislature over funding for the public school system. The picture was painted of me of cutting the funds for education when that recession hit in '74. Actually I didn't cut the spending, I did cut the budget, and the media portrayed that as a cut in spending. We're seeing the same thing recently.

DePue: That's kind of a general trend in the way the discussion about budgets occurs. Even though it might be an increase, if it's a decrease from what was initially budgeted, it's a cut.

Walker: That's right, that's right, which is unfair. But anyway, the telling thing there was that we recognized what was happening and we actually put together television commercials all over the state and ran them to dispel that myth, showing exactly how much I had proposed to increase funding for education. They were very powerful commercials but the Chicago stations wouldn't run the commercials. The Chicago television stations are owned by the networks. Around the state they're owned by private individuals but the ones in Chicago are owned by the network and the decisions are made in New York. They refused to run our commercials.

DePue: Why would people in New York who care about the bottom line and making money, object to running campaign commercials?

Walker: If you can find them, I suggest you call them up and ask them. I don't have the remotest idea, but all I know is they refused to run them.

DePue: That had to really gall you.

Walker: Well yeah, that's the biggest number of people in the state. That really galled us but we couldn't do anything about it, and so that showed if you analyze the returns. Yes, that really hurt us. Then on the Sunday before the election, in a number of parishes on the southwest side particularly, the priest passed out cards that said, "Mike Howlett is right on abortion." Well it didn't matter that Mike Howlett and I had exactly the same position on abortion, but they passed those cards out. That had an impact. How big? You can't tell.

DePue: How about the economy? This is a tough time for any incumbent to be running, because the American economy, as you mentioned before, was in a serious recession, and that translates into painful decisions about well, you either raise taxes or you cut the budget.

Walker: I don't think the economy played a major role in the '76 election, no I don't.

DePue: I guess the one outcome of that though was—

Walker: You're talking about a primary election now.

DePue: Yeah.

Walker: If it had been a general election we would have won, but a primary election is just a totally different thing.

DePue: We're going to close this session, but I wanted to ask you this. You thought, on the eve of the primary election, that you were going to be able to defeat Howlett?

Walker: Yes.

DePue: What was your reaction when you found out that you had, in fact, been beaten?

Walker: Deep disappointment. I remember the family of course was gathered at a suite in the hotel when we got the returns, and I learned that we were dead. It hadn't been said yet on the media, so I got the family together in a conference room in the hotel and told them that it was all over, that we were lost. They started crying and you know, that kind of thing. It was a very sad time … a very sad time.

DePue: Now you just said that you were the one who told the family, but was there a part of you that was fighting that realization itself?

Walker: No, because the facts of life—the facts of life, Colonel—you know enough about facing the facts of life. When you're a man you face the facts. That's it.

DePue: Well that kind of echoes what I'm sure your father had taught you and raised you to believe and be in the first place, that you face up to your successes and you face up to your losses.

Walker: Absolutely. And as you know very well, if you're going to be a successful general or admiral, you've got to face up to your losses, your wins and your defeats, and when you get defeated, you come right back. What's the best example that I can think of off the top of my head? … [Ulysses S.] Grant after the Wilderness, when they whipped him and he came back.

DePue: Actually, it's one of my favorite stories from the Civil War, because Grant encountered some troops after the battle and of course the troops in the Wilderness had been under all these other failed commanders, who always knew that when you get beat, you fall back and you lick your wounds for months and months, and then you come back at them again. And Grant says, "No, we're moving forward", and they cheered him.

Walker: Yeah, he was a powerful leader, Grant was quite a guy. Did you ever read his memoirs?

DePue: I have only read portions of them. Of course they're classics of military literature. Well, any final comments that you would certainly want to get across about your years as Governor, your administration?

Walker: I think we've covered the waterfront, as they used to say. I think that we have hit the major points. … Yes.

DePue: Okay. Well, we'll pick this up then with the last phase of your life and career. Thank you very much Governor.

(End of Audio File Part 2)

Interview with Governor Dan Walker
ISG-A-L-2007-015.03
Interview # 3 of 3: August 22, 2007
Interviewer: Mark R. DePue

DePue: Today is August 22, 2007. This again is Mark DePue with Governor Dan Walker. This is our third session, and we both believe our last session that we will have. Governor again, I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to interview you, and especially for your candor and your honesty as you've gone through all of these sessions. I'm sure that will continue in the future here.

Walker: Yes sir, let's go.

DePue: Okay. We got you through your administration and the realization, that election night, that you had been defeated. You mentioned your first reaction to that. Did you find it difficult in the long run, in the next couple of months after that, to adjust after you were out of office?

Walker: Yeah, very definitely. It takes a long while to recover from that kind of life that you lead when you're a Governor. It's a very protected life in some respects. You've got people looking out after you, you don't carry any money, you don't carry any identification. You don't make hotel reservations, dinner reservations, everything is done for you. You live, in a sense, in a kind of a bubble, and it's very hard to get accustomed to coming back to regular life. I can't tell you the number of times—well, no it wasn't many—the few times I walked away from a motel without paying my bill or got up from the table in a restaurant and walked out without ever thinking about paying. You do those kinds of things and it takes a while to come down, to decompress if you will. I've talked with other Governors about that and the usual period—this will surprise you—is five years it takes to completely get over that experience and get it out of your system. About five years, some people are faster than others of course.

DePue: Did you find that prediction of five years was fairly accurate in your case?

Walker: No, because to me things happened. But it certainly took a while. There were some gossip columns written about me, that I was arrogant with waitresses and so forth. I think there probably was some of that, because it's just—you're coming out of a dream, if you will. It's very hard to explain so that anybody will understand it. So there were some instances where I think I was arrogant, was not intending to be, with people during that period of time when I was getting adjusted. But then I was thrown into a different life entirely because of the woman I married.

DePue: Well let's go ahead and talk about that then. Are you willing to discuss your divorce from Roberta and what led to that?

Walker: No. I don't really want to get into that. There were differences and I blame myself in great part for it. It's very tough life, to include a wife in the heady job of being Governor, particularly when you're a Governor like I was and had to be out with the public so awfully much and had little time to spend with the family. And so a lot of problems arose from that. Roberta, bless her, she's now passed away; a wonderful woman, wonderful mother, raised the kids marvelously, but she didn't really enjoy being First Lady and she didn't get along at all with Vic de Grazia, my Chief of Staff, and that caused problems. But I don't want to dwell on that.

DePue: Okay.

Walker: Let's just say there were problems there, which led to a divorce.

DePue: One of the things, I would think, would be very difficult to adjust to, coming out of being Governor for four years, is just the pace. You're so busy, so consumed by the job during your Governorship and then suddenly, much of that pace that you're used to slows down so much. Would that be accurate?

Walker: That's very accurate Colonel. It actually is very painful, because you are used to going at a hard pace for oh, 14, 15, 16 hours a day, and then all of a sudden there is nothing. It's a dramatic decompression.

DePue: Looking back at your administration, of that moment, being so disappointed obviously, at not being re-elected, how would you assess the success of your administration? This is from the perspective of 1976/'77.

Walker: Well I think given the obstacles that I had in dealing with the Legislature and the media, I think it was reasonably successful. Certainly we accomplished some things that I'm very proud of, and I've written those up in my book, *The Maverick and the Machine*, so I assume you don't want to spend a lot of time on that, but I could go down a list of a number of accomplishments that we did make, and I'm very proud of those.

DePue: Okay. Any disappointments or things that you were convinced that you would be able to be successful with, that ultimately you were not?

Walker: Oh yes … oh yes…very definitely. The big thing was trying to change the degree of honesty and openness in the state government, which just was not anywhere near as successful as I wanted to be.

DePue: So you are confident that during your administration, you were successful in that, it's just that that didn't carry over to the future?

Walker: Exactly. We weren't able to get them enacted into laws, so I had to rely on the Executive Orders, which of course went out of existence when I left office.

DePue: So coming out of office, the beginning of '77, what were your immediate aspirations and goals with your life?

Walker: Well I had to get a job. I didn't have any pension and I had to get a job, a way to make a living. I didn't have any savings, so that was absolutely essential. I was offered the opportunity to join a couple of the big law firms in Chicago and in retrospect, I probably should have done that, but I didn't. So I set about creating an outdoor club that I thought might make some money. But most of all, I wanted to create a statewide law firm with a couple of my kids who were lawyers, and others, and have offices in various cities around the state. That's what I set about founding, and I put my apples in that basket. It failed. We got it established but it failed.

DePue: Did you have—

Walker: That took a couple of years.

DePue: Did you have some campaign debts that you needed to get rid of, some personal debt?

Walker: Well there were always campaign debts, but I didn't have any money to pay them off—and of course, you can't, as a defeated candidate go around and raise money. So there was nothing I could do about that.

DePue: I would guess though, that people were—I shouldn't guess. What were you being told about your plans to establish this law firm that had offices statewide?

Walker: Well I thought it would work. I thought we would have offices in Peoria, Springfield of course, down in Mount Vernon, over in Rock Island, in perhaps Bloomington, Champaign, Kankakee, places like that around the state, and I thought we would be able to generate business. I thought that as a Governor, having been a Governor and having been a very successful trial lawyer, that I would be able to attract clients. It did not turn out that way, regrettably.

DePue: Were you taking something of a risk to take that approach, versus joining one of these major law firms?

Walker: Oh absolutely, but I thought it would work. I'm always an optimist and I thought it was a good idea and I thought it would work. It didn't. It took a couple of years to fail but it failed.

DePue: I might be making too much of this but certainly, the decision back in '70, to take a chance, to take that risk of running for Governor, and you put your heart and soul and your finances into doing that. This seems like the same kind of approach to the way you're pursuing your life afterwards—taking some risks.

Walker: Yes. I didn't really think of it as a risk. I knew the campaign was a risk, but I didn't think this was that much of a risk. I thought it was solid and would work.

DePue: Did you have some political ambitions then?

Walker: No.

DePue: In '77?

Walker: No, no.

DePue: You put that all behind you?

Walker: Yes.

DePue: Were you still staying close to Dave and to Vic?

Walker: To some degree, but we really kind of drifted apart, because Dave had his business and Vic started a new firm with Dave to do jury consulting work. They had their own lives and we kind of went our separate ways.

DePue: Okay. Are you willing to talk about your relationship with Roberta Nelson a little bit then?

Walker: Oh sure.

DePue: Okay. How did you meet in the first place?

Walker: We met when I was Governor. She came to my office, had an appointment arranged through Victor, to get my support of legislation for the mentally retarded kids in the state. They call them developmentally disabled, and they have a different name for it now, I don't remember what it is. So I met with her and then told her I would help her … yes. That was how I met her initially, and then I met her again when I was speaking to the White House Conference on the mentally ill. She was on the program and she helped me on my speech. Those are the two occasions that come to my mind.

DePue: And both were during your Governorship?

Walker: Yes.

DePue: Okay. But it was after your divorce was final then, that the relationship flowered more?

Walker: Yes. I had made a promise, in that speech I gave to the White House Conference, I said that when I leave office, I'm going to devote a substantial amount of my time to the handicapped. She called me one day after I left office. She was running an epilepsy association or organization and asked me if I would come on the board of directors, reminding me of that promise I had made at that conference that she was present at, and so I agreed to serve on the board of directors. She was establishing chapters. It was going to be a statewide organization to help people with epilepsy.

I moved around the state with her some, in terms of getting these chapters set up. It was just one of those things; we got more and more involved with each other. I'm sure every man has had that experience, not every, but many. She was a very attractive woman, a very beautiful woman, and had a great personality and we hit it off together. What's the old saying? One thing led to another.

DePue: I thought you were remarkably candid in your own book about that relationship, and so I don't want to rehash this territory too much, but I was struck by the comments that you apparently were getting from some of your closest friends and advisors, from Vic, from even some of your family members, that suggested that maybe she wasn't the right kind of woman for you.

Walker: Well Vic certainly thought that and Dave thought that. Dave had met her before, I don't remember how, but Dave's wife had worked with her on some cause. Anyway, Vic thought she was just not my kind of person and they were very bothered that I made this relationship. Certainly, members of my family were very unhappy about the divorce. Then when I started this relationship with Roberta Nelson they were very unhappy about that. So yes, it was a time of travail with family and friends when I embarked on this life with Roberta Nelson. She was a wonderful woman though, she was a very exciting woman … and yes, I fell madly in love with her. I make no bones about that. We had a wonderful time together. Some of the most exciting social times of my entire life were with her, because she knew how to entertain; she knew that world of charity balls and full dress and all the glitter and excitement of that life. By then, as time went on, we started making a lot of money with the oil change business that we had started and with the small savings and loan association, and we led a very rich life, no question about it. We flew high.

DePue: Her social acumen, if you will, was a perfect complement to—you had mentioned before that you were not necessarily [comfortable] in those kind of social environments?

Walker: Yeah that's very true, and she brought it out in me, no question about it. She led me by the hand into the social world, which by myself I would never have done. I was not really comfortable with, but she made me comfortable. It was just a very giddy time. I think of those words like giddy, and of course I was still on a high from being Governor. It was exciting, something I had never experienced before in my entire life. It was—I use the same word—it was exciting. It went to my head. No question about it, it went to my head.

DePue: What about her caused Vic and others, maybe some members of your family, to caution you about the relationship in the beginning?

Walker: I can't answer that. I don't really know. A feel is about the best I can say, because she certainly was loyal to me and she was a very intelligent lady. I think … the social part of it. I think that Vic and Dave knew that I was not oriented that way, and seeing me involved in charity balls and all that kind of thing, going to the

opera and the symphony and parties like that, as Vic said to me, "That's just not you Dan, you're not that way." And I said, "Well I am now." But he said, "No, no, that's the wrong path for you."

DePue: Do you think they were concerned that she was so used to the finer things in life and that you had, you know, grown up on the tough side of the street?

Walker: Well I wouldn't say the finer things in life. I think that's kind of an exaggeration Colonel. She was not well-to-do, but she had moved in those circles because she was active in the charities themselves. She worked with the Easter Seal Society for example, the Epilepsy Society, those kinds of things, but she was working in that field. She wasn't a social butterfly herself, but because she was working in that field she helped put on those balls and parties and everything. Then she liked that life, and so she also liked the opera very much and the symphony, which I had never done anything with. And so again, I got caught up in the whirl.

DePue: So it would be fair to say that because doing charity work was her profession, if you will, she had to move in those circles if she was going to raise the kind of money that she was seeking.

Walker: That's very accurate, that's extremely accurate. But she was a very outgoing person and had a great personality, and boy, was I in love with her! I used to have more fun with her. Gosh, to this day, I have wonderful memories despite what's happened with her and me. I still have wonderful memories of her.

DePue: Well if you don't mind, I'd like to read a quote from the Taylor Pensoneau and Bob Ellis book about this.

Walker: Sure.

DePue: One of the quotes was that during the time you were in office, "You insisted on austerity in everything, and you eschewed the fancy cars and other perks." But then they go on to say afterwards that you pursued a different lifestyle.

Walker: Correct, that's correct.

DePue: They also quote you as saying, "I was riding high but like the champagne, it went to my head, it got out of hand."

Walker: Yeah. That's a fair statement, a very fair statement, yes.

DePue: It seems this comes up a lot, and maybe this is just indicative of that kind of a lifestyle—the situation with the yachts. What caused you to become interested in getting the yacht in the first place?

Walker: Well that's a story. I'll try to encapsulate it. I had what I thought was a series of serious heart attacks. It turned out they weren't, but I didn't know that at the time. I had always wanted to get a boat just to fool around with, a motorboat you know,

go out on the lake and run around and have fun, that kind of thing. Roberta and I looked at a couple of them and then I got the series of heart attacks and didn't think I was going to be around much longer. So I remember calling the broker and saying, "I want to buy that boat". Then when I got the relief, that is, they found that what was wrong with me was not my heart but my esophagus, I was so relieved we went ahead and bought the boat. As every person knows who has bought seriously in the boat field, one boat leads to another. You always wanted to go up and up and up, and get a bigger one, and we went through that process. I'm short- cutting it now in telling the story—we ended up finally with an 80-foot yacht. We had the money. We had to borrow money of course, to buy the yacht, but we could afford it and everything was going along swimmingly. I loved that life too. I loved cruising over to the Bahamas and taking guests, the Florida Keys. It was great fun, great fun, very, very rewarding.

DePue: Well and of course that yacht, and as I recall, 650K to purchase the second yacht.

Walker: Yes.

DePue: That yacht personified your new lifestyle.

Walker: Yes it did. It personified the exciting, social, fun kind of life that I was involved in, and I enjoyed it up to the hilt. We had two good businesses, they were making damn good money, and we could afford it.

DePue: So you obviously had to take loans to get the yacht, but just based on what your comments were, you saw absolutely no difficulty in paying those loans off?

Walker: No problems whatsoever.

DePue: I think some have felt that it was Roberta's influence that caused you to suddenly become interested in yachts in the first place. Would that be fair to say?

Walker: No, I don't think so. It was a joint thing. We both wanted to do it. Well, I remember when we bought that big yacht for $650,000 and she went out and

spent--- I think $200,000—on decorating it, getting it furnished and decorated. So she enjoyed it as much as I did but I enjoyed it as much as she did, so come on.

DePue: It doesn't surprise me that a Navy brat, a graduate of Annapolis who spent some time in the Navy, that you would be naturally drawn to doing that in the first place.

Walker: Absolutely, it was great. It was wonderful.

DePue: Well, let's talk a little bit about your businesses. We touched very briefly on that first business of setting up law offices around the state. What caused you difficulties in that? What surprised you about the challenges you had there?

Walker: Just not enough clients. The clients didn't come in the door. It's as simple as that. We couldn't get major business clients You can't have a law firm of that size unless you have major business clients, and we didn't get them.

DePue: And that clearly surprised you.

Walker: Yes.

DePue: Was it, in part, a factor that immediately out of office—I don't know who would initiate this—there were some Grand Jury investigations going on?

Walker: No, I don't think that had anything to do with it, because the Grand Jury investigations were not publicized. They happened but the media didn't associate me with it. I was called as a witness once, and then another time towards the end. But no, and they weren't serious Grand Jury investigations, we thought, and they weren't. I mean they never came up with anything at all. So no, that was not a factor. I think part of it was that I was perceived as being very anti-establishment, because of everything I had done in my life, including opposing the Daley machine. The business establishment in Chicago is very pro Daley, exceedingly so. So I thought that my service as General Counsel at Montgomery Ward and my work as a trial lawyer would rise above that, but it didn't. I had just gotten nowhere with business executives in terms of getting legal business. Whether the Daley thing played a role in that? I think it did but I can't put my finger on any particular thing. It's just my feel. I don't have any doubt about it, by the way, but I can't prove it.

DePue: You still think it was a good idea. I mean, other people have tried it since that time and have been successful, is that correct?

Walker: That's right, that's right, very successful.

DePue: So you turned to the oil change business.

Walker: Yeah. I had a client whose uncle started that business down in Indiana, who had one. It was very successful and my client wanted to get into the field. I was helping him legally, and I learned about it. So then Roberta and I decided to take a look at it, because we weren't getting anywhere with the law practice, and that business took off. We had the misfortune though that—it was very hard. That business is capital intensive. You've got to buy land and build buildings to have an oil change center, and that means you've got to borrow money to get a building built. Getting loans was just very, very hard. It was a new kind of business. Banks didn't want to lend money to do it. We finally got some help from a friend of Roberta's, Paul Butler, who was a very wealthy man, a very successful businessman; he financed us or helped financed us, and took 50 percent of the business. We started it with our joint names, Butler/Walker, and that was the oil change business, which immediately took off and was very successful in the Chicago area. When we ultimately sold the business, I think we had about 40 units either in operation or under construction.

DePue: The title for these was the Butler/Walker Fast Oil Change?

Walker: The Butler/Walker Ten Minute Oil Change Centers, BW. We called it BW, Ten Minute Oil Change. As I said, they were very successful. Gosh, it just took off like mad and made a lot of money.

DePue: I think the thing that surprises me is, I guess my question is, what drew you to the oil change business? This sounds like quite a stretch from what you had been doing up to this point.

Walker: Just the fact, quite coincidental to this client, whose uncle was in the business, and it sounded like a new kind of business and exciting, and the client wanted to go on it and we did too. So it was just as simple as that.

DePue: And certainly everything, for the first few years especially, everything reinforced your initial faith in it.

Walker: Absolutely. Well, it continues to. The company that bought us out, Jiffy Lube, is the number one oil change centers all over the United States. It's been tremendously successful.

DePue: What kind of a guy was Paul Butler then, your partner?

Walker: Oh he was a sweetheart of a guy. He was in his eighties I think. He was a wonderful guy. He had contributed to me when I was a candidate for Governor—never asked me for anything. He was just a sweetheart of a guy and I liked him. Independently of me, Roberta knew him. He had helped her finance her epilepsy and retarded children's work, and she was close to him in terms of a friendship. He liked her a lot and he liked me, and so he helped us get this business started.

DePue: So the personalities seemed to mesh.

Walker: Yes.

DePue: What was Roberta's role in these business ventures?

Walker: Well, we were partners, if you will. We worked together in getting it started. Every decision was the two of us and we spent ultimately—well she was then an officer of the Easter Seal Society, had a full-time job. So she worked part-time and I worked full-time at the law office, doing legal work and getting the oil change business started, getting it cleared for franchising, and that takes a lot of legal work and so forth. And then she pitched in and when we got going, she quit her job and worked full-time on the oil change business with me.

DePue: And it sounds like, because of the success of the oil change business, that certainly encouraged your social activities and encouraged you to go out and purchase the yacht to pursue that kind of a lifestyle?

Walker: Yeah, and then we got that Savings and Loan Association started. That was a small S&L down in Southern Illinois that I was asked to serve on the Board of Directors of after I left office as Governor. So I learned something about the S&L business. Then the opportunity came along to buy that business and its charter for $100,000. Roberta and I raised the money and bought it, and then we moved its headquarters up to Oakbrook, a suburb of Chicago. It became quite successful. So we were making very good money.

DePue: This is in the early eighties now, when a lot of the de-regulation of banking in the first place caused that boom in savings and loans?

Walker: Yes, yes—exactly, yes.

DePue: You said you had to borrow money to purchase the savings and loan?

Walker: Yes, but that was paid off rather rapidly and that was no big deal. What caused a major problem was that when we bought the S&L it was regulated by the state, not the federal government. One of the things that we did, we went into franchising the oil change centers. We made a lot of money off of that, because you'd sell a franchise for a fee and then the royalty fees, and that brought in a lot of money, and we had some company owned stores that made good money. But in the franchising and building of our own new centers, you have to borrow money to do that. We arranged for the service corporation subsidiary of the Savings and Loan Association to work on financing the oil change centers. We got that approved by the S&L regulators at the state level. Then the law changed and it became a federally regulated business instead of state regulated, and the federal regulators didn't like this idea of our financing the oil change centers in a business that we owned. They knew it had been approved by the state, so they didn't want to stop it, but they made it clear that they didn't like it and they didn't like me. I think also, I was abrasive with them and I got off on the wrong foot with the federal regulators. Anyway, it was a rocky road in terms of the regulation by the Feds, but that's just a part of the whole story.

DePue: Another part of your financial difficulties, as I understand, is when Paul Butler passed away very abruptly.

Walker: Yes, Paul died and his 50 percent interest was passed on to his son Frank. Frank Butler was, and for all I know still is, a very openly active homosexual. That posed real difficulties, because he held a 50 percent interest in the business and was a director of course. He persisted in coming to the oil change centers in the evening and picking up the young kids. We had a lot of kids working in these oil change centers; they're 17 years old, 18 years old, that kind of thing, and he'd pick them up and take them out. There were two suicides, jilted young boys, and parents, of course, outraged. It was a very difficult time and I banned Frank from coming to the centers. I told him that I don't want you to come to any of the oil change centers. "Look, I'm an owner" he said, and I said, "I don't give a damn. You're not going to come to the centers and if I hear you are, I'll come and throw you out

physically." It got very difficult, extremely difficult. Well that raised all kinds of problems. Then he stopped coming to board meetings and of course, you have to have board resolutions to get financing.

DePue: Right.

Walker: You're aware of that of course. He wouldn't come to the board meetings and we couldn't do any financing; we couldn't do anything. We were locked on that 50/50 ownership. So I finally decided the only thing we could do is sell it, and of course he wouldn't cooperate on that. I had to go to court and I did, and got a court order. The judge got very upset at him and ordered him, in open court, to attend meetings and to cooperate, which a judge doesn't really have the right to do, but he was so mad at Frank Butler that he made him do it. So then we just had to sell it. But of course the word was out in the industry of what was going on, and it was a fire sale kind of thing. Jiffy Lube was the only entity that made an offer, and it was a lowball offer but...

DePue: They saw an opportunity?

Walker: That's right, and so we had to sell it for a very cheap price.

DePue: Was this played out in the press?

Walker: No. There was never any mention of this in the media.

DePue: So you were at least successful in that respect.

Walker: Yes. I was very grateful that it didn't even get into the gossip columns. I was very grateful for that. I feel sorry for Frank Butler. When a person has that kind of a situation, it's you know—what can I say? But it sure did ruin our lives.

DePue: Did you end up being saddled with substantial debt coming out of this then?

Walker: No. No, we did not. We had a couple of oil change centers that we owned ourselves, and our children owned a couple.

DePue: Is that Dan and Kathleen?

Walker: Well, Dan owned one I think, I forget the names, and then her children owned several that had come in as franchisees. (Look at them, ooh boy, boy is that a sight.)

DePue: It's just amazing here. We're looking at—are those pelicans we're watching?

Walker: Yeah, pelicans.

So anyway, no there was no big debt, but it chopped off our income to a great degree and then, the S&L got into trouble. At that time, you will remember, the interest rates just went up like mad.

DePue: Yeah. That's when it went from eight to ten to twelve to eighteen percent interest rates, which was unheard of.

Walker: That's right. A Savings and Loan Association, in order to make money, has to make money off of money. So you've got to have a spread between what you pay for money, that is you have to borrow money to loan money, and there has to be that spread between what you pay to get the money and what you get when you loan it. So let's say in the ordinary S&L, home mortgages are let's say seven percent. If you can get your money, by borrowing it or whatever, for three percent, then you've got a four percent spread there, profit, and you can make fair money, decent money that way. But with interest rates going haywire, to get money to loan out you have to pay inordinate amounts for it. So the S&L went insolvent, that is, the liability exceeded the assets.

DePue: Do you recall roughly when that occurred? Is it the '85, '86 timeframe?

Walker: Along in there. It happened nationally and we were no exception. We made loans and we made some that were a little risky, but we made some good loans and we were making really good income through the service corporation subsidiary, on the oil change centers that we'd financed. That was very good income but it wasn't enough, and so that's when the Feds moved in and took the S&L over and threw us out.

DePue: Your income from the oil change businesses dropped dramatically.

Walker: And all of a sudden there's no money from the S&L—our salaries there are gone.

DePue: And this is when your lifestyle, the yacht and all the other expenses associated with your lifestyle—

Walker: All went kaput. Roberta was the Chief Financial Officer for the S&L. We had a professional who ran it on a day-to-day basis. He did a good job, but Roberta was the Chief Financial Officer. I was Chairman of the Board and the professional was the President. I focused mostly on the franchise business of the oil change business: getting approved for franchising, negotiating the franchises and all that kind of stuff.

DePue: Because that's essentially a legal issue.

Walker: Yeah, and I did legal work, of course, for the S&L and as I say, Roberta was the money person for both businesses. She was very good at that.

DePue: And you both were salaried officers of both businesses?

Walker: Yes, we used to pull a salary. We didn't milk that S&L at all. I was amazed when the judge at the sentencing said we operated it like a candy store, and that was just absolute nonsense. We had reasonable salaries. Sure we had travel expenses, because we were franchising in Florida and in Texas. So sure we traveled and certainly we stayed at hotels and that kind of thing, but it was not extraordinary. Anyway, I get irritated when I think about that statement. Things just went haywire.

DePue: Of course the press at this time is starting to pick up your difficulties in some of these things, and they're making direct connections with your "lavish lifestyle" and the financial difficulties that both of these businesses are encountering. Was there a direct connection between those?

Walker: Well no, because the amount that we spent on our "lavish lifestyle" was amply supported by the amount of money that the businesses were making. When the turndown came, when we lost the oil change business, and then when the S&L went under, our lifestyle was not at all excessive. We didn't do anything. We couldn't. We didn't have the money to do it, and we couldn't sell the yacht. We tried to sell the yacht and of course the expenses of the yacht are horrendous. What is it they say about a boat? It's a hole in the water into which you pour money, and that's what we did; we poured a lot of money.

DePue: And I suspect, because the S&L business went kaput across the country, suddenly there wasn't nearly the market for expensive yachts either.

Walker: That's for sure. Boy, it was a bad time …bad time.

DePue: So you were saddled with the expenses and no way to get rid of the yacht and recoup your losses on that.

Walker: And our income was way down, yes. It was a very difficult time. I still think we could have pulled it out, and I don't think there was good reason for the Feds to take over the S&L. It was insolvent, so they had the legal right to, but there were insolvent S&Ls all across the United States.

DePue: That they were not taking over.

Walker: A lot of them they didn't, yes. Some of them they did, sure. A lot of them they did but a lot of them they didn't. We were, unfortunately, one of those that they did take over. I think that whole thing was badly handled by the regulators, that whole S&L debacle was badly handled by the regulators, and I'm not alone in thinking that.

DePue: Do you think they had some specific motives, the regulators, in seizing your S&L versus others?

Walker: No, I don't think so, except that of course, I did not get along with those guys, and that played a role I'm sure. If I had handled that differently, they might not have

taken us over, so I blame myself for not having better relationships with the regulators.

DePue: But there is one District Attorney I believe, Anton Valukas, that did seem to have your number, or at least he thought he did.

Walker: Well he did. Anton Valukas was Director of Corrections for Jim Thompson and ran the jails for the state. He was very close to Jim Thompson, and he was also Jim Thompson's personal attorney, which I didn't know at the time. I didn't learn that until many years later. So he was very close to Jim and when the S&L went under, they routinely do an inquiry, understandably, of the S&L's affairs, and they take a deposition of the chief officers. They did that in our case, on me. They didn't take [a deposition from] Roberta—I don't remember why—but anyway, this was done by the Department of Justice, for the regulatory agency again, is a matter of almost routine. But for reasons I don't know, the results of that investigation were sent to the United States Attorney, Anton Valukas. He saw this as an opportunity obviously, to get me. He started an investigation in which we cooperated of course, and I retained counsel and we were informed, both of us, that we were targets, they call it. Roberta got independent counsel and that's when it got serious.

DePue: This was not the first time though, that Valukas had investigated you.

Walker: Well, I don't know about him personally. I do know that a couple of times there were the Grand Jury investigations. The extent to which he was involved in that personally I don't know.

DePue: Well the impression I got from your book though, I mean you thought there was a definite motive in what Valukas was trying to do, and you saw that as an extension of Thompson's fear of you as a political opponent in the future?

Walker: Well we certainly did. Vic and I talked about that, and Bill Goldberg and I talked about that because Bill was acting as my counsel. Yes, we did, we were concerned because the DOJ continued this Grand Jury investigation. I had been out of office for several years, and we couldn't figure out what they were up to because why, after all this period of time, would they still be digging into campaign finances in my administration, when they'd done a lot of digging before and nobody had ever come up with anything? That was about the third time we'd learned about a Grand Jury investigation. Nothing had come of the other ones. This one—that was when Roberta and I were visiting with a friend of hers up in Wisconsin, at Lake Geneva—when the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] descended on us one night, which was a Keystone Cop kind of thing from the get go. I mean it! About 11:30 at night I think it was, midnight, something like that—pounding on the door and this old lady who was Roberta's friend, answered the door and there's three FBI agents or two or four—I don't remember—I have that recorded somewhere—were standing there flashing their badges. You know, they do the badge flip. I

find it very irritating when they do that, that flop you know, and there's the big old star, looking at your badge, gold badge or whatever it is.

DePue: It's done for intimidation as much as anything I would think.

Walker: Of course, of course. So they did that to her and, "Is Walker in your house?" I heard them. She said, "Well, Governor Walker is a guest of mine." "Well get him here." I heard it and so I of course came to the door. These were FBI guys, three or four. Anyway, a couple were from Chicago and a couple were local FBI guys from Wisconsin. They had come up to serve a subpoena on me and I said, "What's going on here? Why didn't you just pick up the telephone and call me? I'm not running from anything. What's with this?" They were all obviously packing, as they say, and obviously looking very tough. I was really—well I was pissed off! Forgive me for using the expression.

DePue: I suspect that they saw this as quite a trophy, to be able to subpoena a Governor.

Walker: Nail a former Governor, yeah. They had chartered a plane for God's sake, the FBI agents from Chicago, to fly up to Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, to do this. I thought it was ludicrous. Anyway, of course they served the subpoena and I appeared before the Grand Jury, and they asked a ton of questions and nothing ever came of it. That investigation didn't have anything to do with my S&L business or anything else. It was solely on campaign finances of years earlier. They asked me about a lot of names of people and so forth, about which I knew very little. Nothing came of it, but Bill and I certainly talked about why it's going on and on this way, as it had for several years there with three different Grand Juries.

DePue: Was one of the allegations that you were expecting contributions from members of your administration?

Walker: There were no charges made, just asking a lot of questions. What about this person? Do you know that he gave money to your campaign? No, I don't know. How about so and so? Well yes, I did see that person at a fundraising dinner, that kind of thing. Those were the kinds of questions there were. No specific charges were ever leveled, just a fishing expedition I would call it, kind of inquiries. Lots of questions about individuals.

DePue: And certainly you and Vic and others, I would think, discussed a lot about what the motives were behind all of this.

Walker: Exactly. Well Bill and I did. My contacts were with Bill at that time. We discussed it and we came to the conclusion that Thompson was behind this. Maybe that's unfair—I don't know—all I can do is guess, but it certainly went on and he certainly had played a role in the choice of the United States Attorney's selection over that span of years, and he had been the United States Attorney himself of course. So we thought we had good grounds to think that, but we couldn't prove anything of course.

DePue: I'm a bit unclear about the role that Valukas played. You said he was the head of the Department of Corrections for Thompson?

Walker: Yes.

DePue: But I'm also picking up that he was the U.S. District Attorney from Chicago?

Walker: No. He got the United States Attorney.

DePue: Oh, okay.

Walker: United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois. That's a Presidential appointment.

DePue: So he moved on from the Department of Corrections to take that position?

Walker: I don't think the step was immediate but anyway, I think he went with a law firm and then he was named to be United States Attorney, probably by [Ronald] Reagan I think.

DePue: Yeah, that would have been Reagan at that time. So he was no longer directly in Thompson's administration.

Walker: No … no, no. That was long gone. Not long gone but no, he was not in the administration. He had been in the administration and was known as a personal friend of Thompson's, and that was known. He was supported by Thompson to become United States Attorney, that was well known. So the links were there as far as we were concerned.

DePue: How seriously did you consider a run for Governor then? At this point in time, of course, Thompson's first administration was just a two year administration, right?

Walker: That's right. So you've got two years from—I'll take the election year and not the whole office years, '76 to '78 and then '78 to '82. Is that right? Yeah.

DePue: And was a result of the 1970 constitution, that change?

Walker: Yes. That was changed because they wanted to move the election of Governor from the same year with the President to the off year. So that happened. It was when Thompson was running then, for his third term, that Vic called me up and said, "Are you interested in running?" And I said sure, so we got involved and we worked at it. I made some trips around the state, talked to county chairmen, others, and they were receptive, and then I went out and even did some street campaigning in Chicago, just to see how it was.

DePue: That's the real testing ground for you.

Walker: To stick my foot in the water—that was real fun for me. I was really pleasantly surprised at the reaction. I could walk down the street and, "Hi I'm Dan Walker. I'm thinking about running for Governor again. What do you think?" It was great fun.

DePue: Even in Chicago you got a good response?

Walker: Oh yeah. I had a ball, I really enjoyed it, and the response was very good.

DePue: And that was long after Daley was out of the picture and before his son got into the—

Walker: Yes. At that time, Jane—

DePue: Jane Byrne.

Walker: Jane Byrne was Mayor and her husband was—oh my goodness. I can't think of his name right offhand, but anyway, at a big party that Jane gave for a lot of Democrats, a cocktail party, a reception, and I went to it and got to talking with her husband and he said, "Dan, Jane wants you to be the Democratic candidate for Governor." I said, "Are you putting me on?" He said, "No, no, she's made up her mind. She wants you." So we thought we had a pretty good crack at it, because if she supported me, then I would almost certainly have gotten the Democratic nomination. She turned on me and she went for Adlai, and Adlai got the nomination. I didn't contest it. I didn't want to go through another primary fight, particularly one against Adlai Stevenson, so that was the end of that.

DePue: Do you know why she suddenly changed camps?

Walker: She's told me—I called on her after this, after I had heard that she was going to support Adlai, and she said to me, face to face she said, "Adlai has said he'll run a primary contest against you if I choose you, and we can't stand a primary contest, we don't want that." So she said, "I've decided that I've just got to support Adlai and I can't support you." So that was the reason.

DePue: Your comment there suggests that there was some animus already between you and Stevenson at that point in time, that he did not like the idea of you being Governor again.

Walker: That's right, there was definitely animus. There was animus between Adlai and me from the day that he became a United States Senator. I have to go—back then, I was running that campaign. [for U. S. Senator] (telephone rings) Would you mind?

(break in recording)

DePue: Okay. We took a short break to allow the Governor to answer a phone call. We were just talking about the relationship between you and Adlai Stevenson III.

Walker: Yes that's right. What happened in the course of that campaign, Adlai listened more and more to Daley and less and less to me. Vic was working on the campaign with me, although Adlai did not like Victor; he dismissed him from the campaign, said he didn't want him around, and so Victor, of course, did not go around to the campaign headquarters but he worked with me, Victor did, because he's a valuable asset. Those of us, the staff, were very upset at Adlai, most of the staff, because of his kowtowing to Daley and not listening to us, because we thought he could easily win and he could easily win. Daley needed him more than he needed Daley. Adlai and I had some heated arguments about that and he gradually brought in Tom Foran as a co-chairman. I said, "Okay. If you want to do that, Adlai, it's all right with me. I don't care." So I gradually receded from my role as managing the campaign, and Adlai and I kind of drifted apart. Then, when I announced for Governor on the day he was sworn in to the United States Senate, he thought I did that deliberately, to steal the scene from him, which of course was totally untrue, because I didn't associate the two things at all. My decision of picking a day to make the announcement had nothing to do with his being sworn in to the United States Senate. I didn't even know he was being sworn in.

DePue: So the beginning of your difficult relationship with Stevenson was back in 1970, late '70?

Walker: Correct. Very correct. And it was strained throughout the time that I was Governor. For example, a United States Senator usually, if he's going to do something of consequence in the state—if the Governor is of his party—puts in a courtesy call or his staff does, informs the Governor as to what's going on so the Governor won't be surprised. That's what a Senator is doing. After all, it's the Governor's state, and that's kind of protocol, but Adlai never did that. In fact Chuck Percy did it more often than Adlai did, which is not at all. And he bad mouthed me a good deal with other people, said I was arrogant and I'd do anything to get elected, that kind of thing. It was very sad. I like Adlai but he certainly—well anyway, enough, we drifted apart. That doesn't detract at all from my respect for Adlai, because he fought a good fight in the United States Senate for ethics, and to do something about pay-to-play in the Federal Government. I'm very proud of that fight that he waged in the United States Senate; he incurred the displeasure of his brother Senators in doing that. So he was a stand-up guy on ethics in the United States Senate.

DePue: So much the same kind of campaign you were waging at the state level in Illinois?

Walker: Well quite different though, quite different. He was talking about the ethics for the United States Senators, which is quite different from establishing rules of conduct for the employees of the state. But anyway, it is on the same subject, that is, ethics and honesty. Yes … yes.

DePue: Now if I caught you right, you mentioned that Tom Foran was his campaign manager, or he was associated with—

Walker: Co-chair yes. Adlai brought him in at Daley's request to be a co-chair with me of his campaign.

DePue: And it's probably worth mentioning, this is not the first time you've encountered Tom Foran. I don't know whether you had any direct relations, but he was the prosecutor for the Chicago Seven trial as well?

Walker: Yes, he was.

DePue: And what were your dealings with him?

Walker: He was United States Attorney. I didn't have any dealings with him. I didn't even know him then. I never met him. I never met him during that whole time.

DePue: The last time that you were entering the political fray or at least considering it for the Governorship, was just prior to the time that your businesses started to run into trouble?

Walker: Yes.

DePue: So let's go ahead then if we can. What I want you to do is discuss the charges, if you can, that eventually led to your going to jail.

Walker: Yes. There's been a great deal of misunderstanding about that subject.

DePue: Should we approach that maybe charge by charge, or do you want to take more of a chronological approach to that?

Walker: Well I'll run through them with you. There were three charges; bank fraud, perjury and false financial statement. Let's take them in the order of least serious. The false financial statements. When our savings and loan service corporation subsidiary would borrow money, which it did from other banks in order to finance the building of these centers—

DePue: Which was standard procedure throughout the industry?

Walker: Oh yes, yes. Nothing new about that. The officers of the corporation file personal financial statements—I've never really understood that—to support the loans to the S&L. In other words, we are guaranteeing the loan, so if a loan fails we're personally liable. It makes us, the officers, personally liable, Roberta and I, on those loans by the Savings and Loan Association. Am I making sense?

DePue: Yes.

Walker: Okay. And on those personal financial statements, no question about it, we exaggerated income and we minimized what are called contingent liabilities. So that was pointed out as a false financial statement, and it was.

DePue: Now the income you exaggerated: you certainly had your corporate officers receiving a salary from both the S&L and the oil changing business.

Walker: Yeah, yeah. And so we put down the total amount, but the total amount was exaggerated. We wanted it to look good. I say in my defense that everybody does that on financial statements if you can, to make it look good, you know. But that's, forgive me, being human. You're not supposed to because it's a lie. So it was a false financial statement, but it was understood that the financial statements aren't relied on by anybody to make a loan. It's a form kind of thing. Of course, as it turned out, the judge gave me probation on that one. She realized, the judge, that that's not really viewed as a serious crime. Anyway, that was one. Then there was perjury. The perjury was, when they took that deposition that I told you about, when the S&L failed, the Department of Justice lawyer took a deposition and one of the questions was, "Did you derive any personal financial benefit from any loans made to your children?" The implication being, of the question as I understood, did they kick back? Did they borrow money from the S&L and then give me some money, because I helped them get the loan. I quickly said, "No, no, that never happened" and it didn't. Well, what did happen though was that my son Dan got a franchise from the oil change business, and he borrowed money from the S&L to pay the franchise fee.

DePue: Were you aware of that transaction?

Walker: Oh sure, it was a perfectly legal transaction. There was nothing wrong with it but the argument was that, because I was a stockholder of the company, I derived a benefit from his action. That had just never entered my mind when that question was asked, because I didn't associate it at all with that. The other thing was, Dan had a loan outstanding for the law firm that I was a part of. We had borrowed money from a bank in Chicago—I think it was $5,000, something like that, it wasn't a big amount—and then when I turned the law business over to Dan and left the firm, he got all of the debts that were due, the fees that were due, and he took over all the liabilities, including this one, but I was still on the note because I had signed the note. So when he borrowed some money from the S&L once, for a personal loan, which was entirely proper and okay and nothing wrong with it, he used some of that to pay off that note. Well I derived a benefit from that because I was on that note originally. Although he had taken it over, I was still on the note.

DePue: Was this the $45,000?

Walker: No, no. This was just a $5,000 one with Dan. Well the perjury … I just … you know, I was amazed at the thought that that was perjury. But anyway, that was the charge of perjury.

DePue: Part of the charge of perjury is intent to deceive or intent to lie?

Walker: Well, part of it is that you've got to have what's called criminal intent. That is, you've got to know that you are committing a crime, know that you are lying.

Well you know it's perjury, realize it's perjury. Well my defense would be in that case, that I didn't have any idea. It had never occurred to me that those things involving Dan were financial benefits to me. I didn't even think of it.

DePue: And would it be accurate to say that the onus is on the prosecutor, to prove that you had criminal intent?

Walker: Oh sure, but it can be affirmed by the Jury. So the only way you can beat that at a trial Colonel, is to go on the stand and testify, and then the question is whether the Jury believes you or not. The track record is not very good with juries believing in that kind of a situation. But anyway, we didn't get to that point. So there was that one.

The other one, the most serious one, was bank fraud. I had borrowed $45,000 from a friend of mine who was a graduate of the Naval Academy. He was a contractor and he built schools and businesses, that kind of thing. He had borrowed money from, you know, a number of institutions in his contracting business and one of them was First American, the S&L. He had borrowed money from them without my knowledge. I mean, I wasn't even involved in that. He just borrowed money, he was a contractor. But he was a friend of mine, so I borrowed $45,000 from him, but it wasn't related to or dependent on any loan he had made from the S&L, although he had borrowed money from the S&L.

DePue: What was the reason you borrowed the $45,000?

Walker: Because we were having financial difficulties with the damn yacht and had to pay to get it repaired, and I had to come up with the money to pay those bills.

DePue: Before you could then turn around and sell it?

Walker: Yes, exactly. So I borrowed the $45,000 and let's see—yeah, that's right. At that time though, I should add this, I was up to my limit. The director can only borrow so much money from the S&L that he's the director of, and I was up to my limit, so I could not borrow any more money from the S&L. So the argument is that I was doing indirectly that which I could not do directly.

DePue: This $45,000?

Walker: Instead of borrowing money from the S&L, I borrowed money from a guy who owed the S&L money. So that was the bank fraud: $45,000. The way it was written up though, they tied it to the U.S. Attorney in the plea agreement; I blame myself for not doing something or getting Tom Foran to do something about it. They tied it to the amount of money that he had borrowed, which was $250,000, which I had nothing to do with and got no part of. He had borrowed it for his business: $250,000.

DePue: This is your friend, the Annapolis grad?

Walker: The contractor, yes. Then, in the subsequent publicity, that count three that involved the false financial statement, there were millions of dollars involved there because of huge loans that were made by the service corporation subsidiary to finance buildings, in connection with which my wife and I had signed these financial statements. Well the reporters got those millions of dollars mixed up with this over here and said that I had gotten millions of dollars. Well. I hadn't! It was just nonsense!

DePue: That it was $45,000.

Walker: All I ever got was $45,000. God, I was sick when I read those articles but what are you going to do about it? Anyway, those were the three counts, and I finally decided to plead guilty. Tom Foran, my counsel and I talked about it at length. I did not have the money for a trial. That would have been—oh gosh, easy forty, fifty thousand, many more—for a trial, a long jury trial. I didn't have any money at that time to speak of, because everything had gone kapooey.

DePue: So you had no salary coming in, you had no pension?

Walker: No pension.

DePue: No salary coming in from either the oil change business or the S&L.

Walker: Nothing.

DePue: Roberta was not on salary with either one of those either?

Walker: No.

DePue: Did she have any income otherwise?

Walker: No. We had no income. We had some income from the few franchises that we owned in the oil change business. We had that income and that's what we had. That was enough to live on but not enough to pay off the bills that were due on the yacht loan, and I had a hard time making the mortgage payments and all of that. It was a mess. I'm sure I was drinking some then, yes. I was really in a funk. Anyway, I decided to plead guilty. This is after Tom Foran met with Valukas, who was handling the case against me. He came away from that meeting saying to me, "Dan, if you plead guilty you're going to get, in my opinion, probation." That was a major factor in my decision, the probation versus time in jail.

DePue: Is that because he had been led to believe that from his meeting with Valukas, do you think?

Walker: Yes, I have to say that definitely. The impression I had from Tom was, after that meeting, that a deal had been made between him and Valukas, but that's a difficult area because those things aren't usually, you know you don't write them up or anything, it's just a deal. I understood Tom to say to me, "Dan, I've got a deal." I

came away from my meeting with Tom with a very solid impression that we had a deal. Whether he did or not, I don't know.

DePue: Can I ask Governor, why you picked Tom to be your legal counsel on this?

Walker: He had a very fine reputation as a criminal lawyer and that's why I picked him.

DePue: Okay. Now was there any doubt in your mind that if you—you said it would have been very difficult financially to sustain going through the trial in the first place and that certainly weighed in as part of the decision—but was there a doubt in your mind that you would have been successful if you had pursued the trial?

Walker: Of course. It's a jury and you know how juries feel about public officials.

DePue: And as a trial lawyer, you understood the dynamics of the courtroom.

Walker: Very well, very well. I had to look at it as a 50/50 proposition and of course, if I fought it all the way, inevitably, the sentence is going to be worse than if you plea bargained. And I thought that I had a deal. So you weigh a 50/50 chance over here, of avoiding jail entirely, be free, or a 50 percent chance you'll go to jail, and over here you've got a probation deal and you don't have the money to pay for this trial. You know, it's a tough decision, that's all I can say, a tough decision.

DePue: Certainly at that point, when you're making this decision that you knew was obviously going to be one of the most important decisions you make in your entire life, part of that decision process is who the Justice is, because that person determines what the ultimate sentence is?

Walker: Who the judge is, yes.

DePue: Yes. And the judge was, I believe, Ann Williams?

Walker: Ann Williams.

DePue: What did you know about her?

Walker: I didn't know much. I knew she was appointed by Reagan. She had worked in the U.S. Attorney's office on narcotics cases. Mrs. Reagan, Nancy Reagan, came through town and this lady was assigned from the U.S. Attorney's office to help her because Mrs. Reagan was on an anti-narcotics trip, and so naturally worke this lawyer worked with her. Then Reagan went back to the White House, I was told, and recommended to the President, "Look, you've got a black—she was a black lady—a black Republican lady out there, why don't you put her on the bench? It would make a great appointment, a black Republican woman. I mean, gee whiz, you're scoring". So anyway they did. Reagan appointed her to a judgeship. She had never been a trial lawyer, very inexperienced, but anyway, she became a Federal Judge and I got her.

DePue: Was it part of your reasoning? I mean you had to be weighing lots of different alternatives and scenarios here, but was it part of your reasoning that you're thinking, here's a black woman sitting in the chair, the Judge, who would look at you favorably because of your record on civil rights?

Walker: I don't remember. I don't think that went through my mind … I don't think so.

DePue: You don't know if she knew about your past record on that?

Walker: I would have no way of knowing whether she did or not, so that would be a wild kind of supposition. No, I don't think so. I'm not even sure that I knew who the Judge was when I made up my mind to plead guilty. I'm not sure of that, probably not. I knew a number of the Federal Judges and of course, it was just the luck of the draw. If I had gotten any one of five or six of them that I had known and worked with personally as a lawyer, it might have been a totally different result, but I got that one, and that's luck of the draw. They do that by a lottery system.

DePue: Well you discussed quite a bit in your book about that particular day when you appeared before the Judge. Do you want to go through that?

Walker: I don't see much point in it. I was shocked! I just will never, never forget that moment when she said, "Seven years." I just could not believe my ears! I was absolutely in shock! I had no anticipation of that whatsoever. Seven years! … Jesus …seven years?

DePue: Were you thinking that this was going to be parole and that there would be no hard time?

Walker: I felt very strongly that we had a deal, that I was going to get probation. And seven years, I'm saying it now, I mean when you're 65 years old and you get a seven year sentence in jail! … Jesus. Well, enough. Dan was with me at the counsel's bench because he was a lawyer, at the counsel's table. Charles was in the audience and came up immediately to help me. So Dan and Charles took me by the arms and I made it out of the courtroom.

DePue: Roberta was not there though that day?

Walker: No, that was one—oh, I didn't tell you that part of the whole "deal" that I thought we had was that she would not be prosecuted. She had her own attorney and was a target, but the U.S. Attorney agreed not to pursue her. I thought that was one of the reasons for the whole deal, that I got her off the hook.

DePue: So I hear echoes in this, in what your father had told you long, long before that time, about the importance of loyalty and especially loyalty to your blood, to your family.

Walker: Yes. Well I believe that very strongly and I did not want her to get prosecuted. She was the Chief Financial Officer. She was involved as much as I was in

everything that went on at that S&L, but I didn't want her to be prosecuted and so that was another—I didn't mention it at the time, I'm sorry I should have. When I decided to plead guilty, that was certainly an element in that decision, that is that she would go scot free. Now interestingly, Roberta never accepted that, never.

DePue: Well that certainly came across strongly in the book, that she was, and probably forever after, in denial about all of that.

Walker: Yes, that's very true and undoubtedly still is. I mean, that was very real. … Bless her, bless her.

DePue: A seven year sentence.

Walker: Yes.

DePue: Plus five years probation.

Walker: Plus five years probation, yes.

DePue: And there is also some restitution involved.

Walker: Yes. I would have to repay everything that McCarthy, the construction guy, didn't pay of that $250,000, which I thought was utterly ridiculous, because I had nothing to do with that loan, nothing, absolutely nothing. Bob paid it off himself so I didn't get stuck with that, but there was the $45,000 that I had to pay off, so I did pay that off.

DePue: So at this point in your life, $45,000 must have seemed to be an insurmountable sum as well.

Walker: Yeah, it was a pretty steep hill up there, yes absolutely. I was pretty—well anyway...

DePue: Why the decision then, to be sent to Duluth?

Walker: Well that decision was made by the Bureau of Prisons.

DePue: Did the judge have anything to do with that one?

Walker: The Bureau of Prisons does that. Now the Judge can override that but normally a Federal Judge does not—just goes with the Bureau of Prison's recommendation.

DePue: Is that a matter of geography as much as anything?

Walker: I don't know. They say their rule of operation for prisoners is as close to their home as possible. Well Duluth isn't very close to Chicago and that place in Wisconsin—the name slips me at the moment—was a lot closer, and that's where a number of defendants from Chicago went in the federal system, to that prison in

Wisconsin. Why she sent me or why the BOP sent me to Duluth instead of there, I don't know. I don't have any idea.

DePue: I had a question in my mind and it just, it was a fleeting question I guess.

Walker: That happens.

DePue: Oh, I know what the question was. Did you have any understanding of the reputation that these various minimum security prisons had?

Walker: No. I knew nothing about it.

DePue: So at the time, you didn't know that Duluth had the reputation for being one of the tougher places to go.

Walker: No, I knew nothing about it, nothing.

DePue: Although you knew it was in Northern Minnesota, you probably didn't have a real good sense of how the climate would play into this either.

Walker: No, I did not, I sure did not Colonel. I'll tell you, that is one cold place, God it's cold.

DePue: Well I wondered if you can share with us the first day or two that you got to prison.

Walker: Well, my three sons drove me up. It's about an eight hour drive—I forget--whatever it is. It was a long drive. We got there a little early and kind of circled around the place driving, and I saw just a fenced in compound. So it came the time and they dropped me off at the gate. I had a little satchel which instructed you what to bring; it had the bare necessities: a toothbrush and that kind of stuff, a razor and specified clothing items, very limited. I was directed to go into a barracks kind of a building, the counter there, and a woman behind the counter and other clerks around. There were five of us, four of them were blacks and me. A guard was there who told us to take off all of our clothes, which we did. Put them in a pile on the floor, which we did, and then go one-by-one over to the counter and pick up the clothes that they were issuing as the prison garb, and follow the guard to a room, carrying the clothes and the shoes. Then the guard put me through that squat and spread routine, which was a shock. I mean, I've had proctologists, and you have and everybody has, but when somebody does it under those kinds of circumstances it's—I had no idea what was coming!…. Pretty much of a blur after that, going to a room in a barracks building, a room about half the size of this bedroom, less than half the size of this bedroom, two double bunks and two tables, four lockers, four guys.

DePue: You wrote quite a bit about the relationship you had with the warden.

Walker: Yes.

DePue: I wondered if you could comment on that a little bit.

Walker: Well the first warden was okay. I didn't have anything to do with him. I never met him I don't think … no. I managed to get this job. I met the fellow who was clerk to the Chaplain and I applied for that job, because he was a short timer. He was going to leave within six months, something like that, so I applied for that job. Meanwhile, they put me to work over in the factory. The prisoners, the inmates, made furniture in a factory there, and if you didn't have a job doing something else, you worked in the factory. So they put me to work over there. … Then I got the job with the chaplain, which was a nice job, it worked out very nicely. Then the new warden took over and he found out, I don't know, where I was and what I was doing. He called me into his office and told me I would pick up cigarette butts with a stick that he handed me that had Governor Walker on it, burned onto the wood you know, a nail on the end of it. And he said, "You'll do that from—I forget the hours—from before lunch and after lunch, for an hour and a half or two hours, I forget, each time spearing cigarette butts.",… and then the rest of the time I was assigned to cleaning toilets.

DePue: You're being very kind, I think. I know the background that the warden had. Do you think the fact that, he was a West Point graduate and you're an Annapolis Graduate, and you're a former Governor, played into it?

Walker: Colonel, who knows, who knows? I'm not very good at reading minds, so I don't know. Do you think that's possible, that a West Point graduate would think that this guy has so dishonored the service academy that he deserves to be kicked around? It's quite possible.

DePue: Well, it certainly comes across in the book that he had some strong feeling against you in particular.

Walker: Yes he did; there's no question about that. He made that very clear when he stripped my ring off, the ring that you have on your finger. By the way, the reason I don't wear it is because my finger got swollen, so I had to cut it and take it off. I couldn't get it off and I haven't had it re-fixed to get it back on again.

DePue: You had lots of time in prison to reflect on why it was that he took an interest in you in particular.

Walker: Well I think it was undoubtedly a combination of the Governorship and Annapolis. The only clue I have there was the episode with the ring, but he certainly was vindictive to me in tone of voice and everything. He obviously detested me and took great pleasure in humiliating me. So that's why I'm very hesitant to say to the reporters—like one just asked me now, "Do you think that Ryan will get the same kind of treatment you got?" I can't answer that question. He might not. How much of my treatment was due to this Warden's particular feeling about me? I don't know the answer to that.

DePue: Well, there's quite a bit of chance involved in all of this. It was chance involved with which one of the justices would actually determine what your particular sentence would be.

Walker: That's right.

DePue: And who would end up being the Warden of the prison once you got there.

Walker: That's very true.

DePue: How about your relationship with some of the other inmates?

Walker: Oh, I developed very close friendships with two or three people. Joe DePeri was one. He was a Deputy Commissioner of Police in Philadelphia who, unfortunately, succumbed to the blandishments of the mob. They treated him to trips over to Atlantic City where he gambled. They nailed him for that and he got 12 years. Then there was another guy that was the clerk for the Chaplain, who became a close friend. He was a podiatrist who, rather unfairly I think, got a quite long sentence, because he was allegedly writing prescriptions for dope for his patients. Then the other one was a very dear friend, Evan Miller, a young Jewish fellow; we became very close friends. Those three. That's all.

DePue: But there were other inmates in there that you had a different relationship with?

Walker: Yeah. There were some black guys that went after me because I was Governor and you know, you're a hotshot and so forth. That was when I told a story that Joe DePeri overheard them threatening me once when I called them on breaking into the chow line, and these black guys said they'd take care of me. Joe DePeri overheard that and he went to them and said, "Look, if you touch the Governor, my friend, when you get out of here, I still know some mob guys and you're going to pay for it. They'll get you, I promise you that," he said. He told them they would get you—whenever you get out of this prison, they are going to get you. So they laid off me and Joe DePeri. I've been grateful for him to that. He's now dead.

DePue: In the vernacular of the jail I would think—you had the reputation, you were the jailhouse lawyer, so to speak—and I would imagine that didn't ingratiate you to the guards and especially to the warden himself?

Walker: That's very true, because I did run a class which I had the right to do under the regulations and they couldn't stop me, at least legally. I taught the inmates what their constitutional rights were and what the procedures were to follow to file petitions, to get their sentences reduced and all those kinds of things. I held that class. It was very well attended and I achieved some results, I'm proud to say the warden clearly didn't like that. The guards let me know that he didn't like that, but I didn't back away from it.

DePue: Was this going on before the warden arrived there, or is this something that you started after he had arrived?

Walker: After, after, it was after.

DePue: And from the very beginning it was clear that he had issues with you.

Walker: Well, witness the jobs he gave me, yes.

DePue: Well you, I think did a wonderful and a very honest portrayal of your experiences in jail.

Walker: Well there's one other part of it. Well … …no, there's no point in going into that and I'll end it there.

DePue: I did want to ask you—and this is probably not the question you're expecting—but in the book you decided to discuss your jail experiences as the preface, if you will, to every single chapter in the book. Why that approach?

Walker: The family felt very strongly about this. I talked with my kids and I said, that I'm going to have to discuss the jail thing, going to jail and all of that, and they very much wanted me to play that down. "Sure you have to say you went to jail and that kind of thing, but play it down, Dad."

DePue: You didn't play it down though?

Walker: No I didn't, and then when I wrote my autobiography, the whole thing, I had long conversations with my niece, Leslie Walker, my brother's daughter, who is a very competent writer and has been a reporter for the *Washington Post* for some years, a very, very competent journalist. She looked at it and she thought it had potential, but she said, "You've just got to get help Uncle Dan on this. A memoir is a very difficult thing to write and you need help." So I asked around in looking for somebody and I found, to my amazement, there was a lady that had a class in teaching people how to write memoirs, in La Mesa, in a suburb of San Diego. So I contacted her and asked her, "Would you help me on this?" And so she said, "Send me what you've got." So I sent it to her and then she, after some discussion, finally got interested in it and quoted a price of $5,000. I didn't have $5,000 but Dave Green agreed to come up with the money and so we hired her. She tore the whole damn thing apart and had me go back to work on it.

DePue: As a good editor will do.

Walker: As a good editor will do. Then it was her idea to do this prison thing that way, and she was correct. People at least tell me that it makes it a much more readable book.

DePue: I think it was a very effective thing. It really places the focus on those years as one of the defining points in your life, certainly.

Walker: Yes. Okay, are we done?

DePue: Well, Governor, I had hoped that there's a little bit more.

Walker: Well go ahead, go ahead.

DePue: Okay. I wanted to ask you who was it that stayed loyal to you when you went to prison?

Walker: Who what?

DePue: Who stayed loyal with you when you went to prison?

Walker: Well, all of my people did; certainly Vic and Dave and Mary Vaccaro came up to see me and helped me when I was filing a petition for parole. I had to hire a lawyer, which I did. He was very expensive: $10,000, for the parole process. My friends helped me raise the $10,000. So there were lots of people who were loyal and helped me and they wrote me, and some of them came to see me. Yes, there was a lot of loyalty there. … Very heartwarming … very heartwarming.

DePue: And you mentioned that you didn't want family to come see you very much.

Walker: No I didn't. It was a long, long drive and the prison atmosphere is such …why do I want to put them through that, coming up to a prison? We didn't have much time. On a Sunday afternoon you'd get two hours, and I was in miserable condition anyway, so why put them through it. So I discouraged their visiting me and my wife of course, didn't visit me at all.

DePue: Did you discourage her from visiting you?

Walker: No. No, I didn't. She just never came. Roberta did though, first Roberta, my first wife came up to see me several times, God bless her.

DePue: I'm sure that meant the world to you.

Walker: Yes, yes. Yes, that was very heartwarming that Roberta had no real—you know, after all she'd been through, to come around and do that was very heartwarming. And the kids came up. I have told, in excruciating detail already in what I wrote, about my consideration of suicide. This reporter got me going on that just now again today.

DePue: With the book, all of that is obviously a matter of public record.

Walker: Yes it is.

DePue: As is your deep disappointment with Roberta Two, if I can refer to her that way.

Walker: Yes. Yes that's true. I forgave her though. I met her and we tried to put it back together again but it just...

DePue: Did you ever get the sense that she forgave you or accepted the outcome?

Walker: I don't know the answer to that question, Colonel. I did get a letter from her, this is a year or two ago, a very, very bitter letter, which kind of surprised me, in which she reiterated some of the problems. I got the impression from that, that no, she had never gotten it out of her system.

DePue: Has she remarried afterwards?

Walker: Yes. I understand she's remarried, yes.

DePue: And she actually went through the divorce. She divorced you while you were in prison?

Walker: Yes.

DePue: Was that then, one of the darkest periods while you were there?

Walker: It was very bad. It was very bad, Colonel. Yes it was. … Yes it was.

DePue: And I would imagine at that point in your life you have cause to reflect on everything and all of the decisions and everything that brought you there. What sustained you through those very dark days?

Walker: Well several things Colonel. Number one, I was raised in a school that said don't ever let poor little old me get you down. PLOM my father called it: don't let PLOM get you down. Don't start feeling sorry for yourself. It's a path to disaster, to start feeling sorry for yourself, and I believed that very strongly. I also believe very strongly, as you know from our conversations, in self-discipline. That's what a man has to do, is exercise self-discipline. That's what being a man is all about, in great part, is taking control of yourself and keeping control of yourself. And with your experience and training, you know Colonel, exactly what I'm talking about, exactly. I was raised that way, I learned that at the Naval Academy, and it's a part of my core beliefs all the way.

DePue: And all of that stuff sounds great, but the proof of it is when you're in very tough times, like certainly you were.

Walker: The proof of the pudding is in the eating, that is for sure. I almost gave up. I almost committed suicide, but I told myself, when I got to thinking about it, considering it, that I'd call myself a coward. As soon as that thought came into my mind, I had used the word coward, and almost said it out loud, "You're a damn coward, Dan. You're a coward." That was when also, that I had started working—and I detail this in the book of course—on my book about Christianity. I fell in love with Jesus long before I ever went to prison. I had been working on this project for several years, very enamored of the life and message of Jesus. I continued that study in an effort at writing, although I didn't get too far while I was in prison, but my children sent me books that I asked them for, so I could continue my research. Then an occasion happened when I had that vision of Jesus, which I conceive today in my mind's eye as well as I could then, although I can't visualize

it now like I did then. It was right there in front of me, a not unusual phenomenon, I'm told, for persons under great mental stress. I don't know about that. All I know is that he was there. And I did keep a diary of sorts. No, it wasn't a diary, it was a prayer book. I still have it and I can show it to you. I made little notes in it from time to time. I made them in code because the guards had a way of going through your locker and taking things or reading things, and so I noted when that apparition, that image first happened, the date. And then I recorded later, the date when he disappeared, and I could not—up until that moment, I could close my eyes like this and there was Jesus, and then that didn't happen any more.

DePue: Do you recall any particular things that were going on during that time, why it would have stopped appearing, that Jesus would have stopped appearing to you?

Walker: …No.

DePue: But certainly, you found great comfort and encouragement while that was happening?

Walker: Absolutely. I don't have any doubt about the fact that when I conquered the suicide thing, which I did conquer … I can't tell you because my memory is not that good, as to precise times. Was there a relationship between the time when I conquered the suicide thing and the disappearance of Jesus? … I don't know …. I don't know, Colonel.

DePue: What is it about the story of Jesus that you found so compelling that you actually decided to write the book about those first 100 years?

Walker: The message of Jesus. See, I really believe for myself, just my own personal belief, Colonel, that the thing that is really divine about Jesus is not the person but the message. The message is divine and that's what the real divinity is: the message of Jesus. So I don't have to personally rely on it all, the resurrection and all. To me the divinity is in the message. It's such a wonderful message for mankind, given by a man who was facing certain death and kept his message intact and going in the face of certain death. Tremendous strength. For me, Jesus gives me a message not only what he believed for mankind, but also a message of strength, real strength.

DePue: What else, if you can boil down to the pure essence of that message that so strongly appeals to you?

Walker: It's a message of love, love and understanding. It's not just love like sentiment love. It's a totally accepting love, for all your goddamned warts, I love you, that kind of thing, that kind of love, unquestioning love. Lots of people say, "I love", but they don't mean the kind of unquestioning love that Jesus taught That message is just so pure and so enduring, that it is, to repeat myself, a divine message.

DePue: I know from the book that you struggled long, and I'm sure you prayed many times, that you were going to be able to get parole. Can you talk a little bit about how that eventually came about?

Walker: No, I never prayed for that. I never believed in prayer for personal things. I don't believe in that. I never did. I prayed for strength to handle what I had to deal with. I've always been that way. But it did happen and of course it was a wonderful feeling to have freedom at last, yes.

DePue: Who on the outside was fighting for your release for you?

Walker: Well, Tom Foran was my lawyer and he went to see the Judge one day on kind of a follow up. I don't remember the occasion, but anyway, she told him she decided to reduce my sentence to time served. Now I'm told—and I told this in the book—I'm told that a group of black people, men who were lawyers, judges and businessmen—I don't know how many—called on her and said, "Enough is enough. Why don't you let this guy out."

DePue: This is Judge Williams again, the same judge?

Walker: Yes. At that time in the system the sentencing judge maintained power over the sentence for the rest of the time, and she relented. I don't know whether that story is true or not. It sounds good to me. I like it. I like it a lot.

DePue: And your reaction once you found out?

Walker: Euphoria. When I was told by Tom on the phone that I was a free man, I said, "Did the Judge sign the order?" "Yes." And, "When is it effective?" "Effective immediately" I said to Tom, "You mean I'm a free man right now?" He said, "You certainly are, because that order was effectively immediately." So then I left that telephone room and marched over to the warden's office and said, "I'm leaving." And he said, "Oh, no you're not." I said, "Oh yes I am" and he said "Well, three or four days. I've got to get the confirmation in writing from the Bureau of Prisons and it will take some days for that to happen." I said, "I don't give a damn about your procedures. This order was signed effectively immediately and I'm walking out of this place. If you try to stop me, which you certainly can, you've got the force power to do it, then my son will know about it and he's an attorney; he'll get a writ of habeas corpus as fast as you can say the words habeas corpus. Judges don't like wardens doing things like this." And he shrugged his shoulders and went back in his office. So I got somebody to call for a taxicab, picked up my clothes, got my ring back and left.

DePue: Now all you have to do is figure out how you're going to put your life back together again.

Walker: That's right …that's right …yes.

DePue: And what were your thoughts then? What were your goals and aspirations at that time?

Walker: Well it happened so suddenly that I didn't have any, Colonel. It just happened so suddenly, that I hadn't thought it through. So obviously, I would go back to Illinois and back to Chicago and stay with my family, my kids, and I did, with my son Dan. I stayed there for a while and I just couldn't handle it. I'd walk down the street, people would recognize me, and I would be wondering, what they think about me now, and I didn't want to be recognized. So I decided to come out here, to the west coast, San Diego. Well I came to Los Angeles first, because I thought I had a better chance of getting a job as a paralegal.

DePue: I thought there was a period of time you went out to D.C. though?

Walker: Oh that's right, I'm sorry. First I went to live with my brother, that's right, I'm sorry. I went to live with my brother. He was in Virginia Beach, Virginia, that's right. I did that for several months.

DePue: And you performed your community service there?

Walker: Yes. I did the community service working to building a center for the homeless there. Then my brother decided to get remarried and there was no room for me of course. That's when I decided to go back to try to get a job in California.

DePue: I know when you were first released—at least it appeared to you—that there might be an opportunity, a chance that you and Roberta One could put things back together again?

Walker: Yes, that was later. I tried to work it out with second Roberta. We got together, she came out to see me, I forgave her for what she'd done. She said she still had strong feelings about me, and so we talked about it but she didn't want to come out here to live and I didn't want to go back there to live, and so nothing came of it. It sounds like I'm going from one to the other. It didn't happen that rapidly you understand. (door bell rings) Come in. I tried to patch it up with my first wife, and she came out.

DePue: Let's go ahead and pause this for just a second.

(pause in recording)

DePue: Can you talk a little about your attempts to get back with Roberta.

Walker: I think probably, if things hadn't happened, Roberta One, that is my first wife and I would have gotten back together, but I lost my job; I got fired The long arm of that damn Daley machine, I believe, reached out for me, but maybe I'm paranoid on the subject Colonel. It's awfully hard for me to be objective about that.

DePue: You got fired from your position as a paralegal?

Walker: Yes. I do know this much. In Illinois, the Supreme Court some time back handed down an opinion that a convicted, disbarred attorney, which I am—because I was a felon, I was disbarred of course automatically—cannot work in a law office because people might misinterpret it; a disbarred attorney in a law office, that is giving legal advice to clients is just not kosher. Anyway, the Supreme Court said you couldn't do it. Well that rule, which I was unaware of at the time, totally unaware of, but in retrospect what I would liked to have done or could have done maybe, is worked as a paralegal in my son's law office, but I couldn't. I didn't know this at the time, but I couldn't because of the Supreme Court ruling. So anyway, somebody, I don't know who, called a Justice of the California Supreme Court and said, "Illinois has this rule that a disbarred attorney cannot work as a paralegal in a law firm, and Walker is out there working in a law office in California." We think, this person said, allegedly, that the Illinois rule ought to apply because Illinois disbarred him, which I think is nonsense. But anyway, the person at the California Supreme Court called the senior partner at this law firm I was working with and asked him whether he was aware that I was a disbarred attorney. The senior partner said yes, but said it didn't make any difference in California. The guy told him about this telephone call, so that's how I knew about the telephone call. Then two weeks later, the senior partner called me in and fired me. He said that I was getting paid a pretty good salary. I was getting $60,000 a year as a paralegal, which is pretty high for a paralegal, but I was earning it, every cent of it. He said they had to cut back on their overhead and so he was going to let me go. Did it have anything to do with the telephone call? The partner who was the litigation partner in the firm, whom I worked with, I'm very close to. He and I were very good friends in addition to my going to court with him and helping him on trials, and we became a very bonded friendship. He told me that the real reason was that telephone call. It was his brother in-law that was the senior partner. Anyway, at the time, Roberta One or Two was out there and all of a sudden I have no income.

DePue: And not very many terribly good prospects, I would think, either.

Walker: No good prospects at all, particularly with this hanging over my head now as a paralegal. What the hell am I going to do?

DePue: You're eligible for Social Security. Were you already drawing Social Security?

Walker: I was eligible yes. I don't remember when I went on actually. It must have been close to it. Sixty-five to—twenty-two, that's '87—yes. I was definitely yes, on Social Security.

DePue: But that's nowhere close to $60,000 is it?

Walker: No way Jose, no way, although I lived, Colonel, when I came out to San Diego and got a job with Father Joe Carroll, who runs the center for the homeless in San Diego. A wonderful guy, a wonderful guy, the Monsignor in the Catholic Church, but he's been known familiarly and lovingly as Father Joe. He gave me a job.

You're on Social Security, you can earn so much and then they deduct it from your Social Security at a certain age. Anyway, I said I'll work for you for that amount, whatever that is, that doesn't take away from my Social Security. So I think my total income was $22,000 a year when I worked for Father Joe, including Social Security. Hell, I got along all right. I had a little apartment, a real small apartment, the car my brother had given me and you know. I had a pretty decent life. I don't have any sympathy with those people who talk about difficulties of living on that much money. Anyway, so there, where was I? Roberta had to go back to Illinois and we had to give that up because I couldn't even pay rent. I had been dating Lily off and on, and so then we went back together and she offered me a home. So I moved in with her and then we got married.

DePue: And what was it that attracted you to Lily?

Walker: She was a very strong person and a very caring person obviously. We just kind of hit it off. I'm sure you understand those words, most men do, you just hit it off with somebody of the opposite sex and it works. The chemistry is there and it works. We were both older of course, but it worked. We kind of cottoned to each other and we're comfortable with each other, and love develops yes. So that's it.

DePue: And after you met Lily, I mean most of the options were removed. You weren't going to be a paralegal, but you obviously have kept busy after that point in time, and a lot of that was focused on writing?

Walker: Yes. I wanted to teach and I tried to teach, and I told you this when we were not on the record, but I found out I couldn't teach because a felon can't teach in California in any college or school that is funded by tax dollars. So I started writing, because I've got to have something to do, got to have a challenge. I wrote books about San Diego. The first one was with Lily; we wrote a book about picnicking in San Diego. It's called *Delicious Walks*, because we picked places where you could have a nice picnic, with all the accoutrements of a picnic, and then room to go for a long, long walk, not on city sidewalks. So we wrote that book together and there are about 300 recipes in it for picnic foods.

DePue: So that's the cookbook?

Walker: No, that's not the cookbook. I did a cookbook called *Gov's Cookbook* for the family. That's a separate book, but that was never published. We self-published our book, Lily and I, and then I went to work on the military book, *Home Base for Freedom*, and then I wrote the *San Diego Water Story*, and both of those were published by publishers but they have not been very successful.

DePue: Do you find though, the act of writing to be therapeutic for you at this stage in your life?

Walker: Oh yes. That's a good way to put it, Colonel. Yes, very definitely. I enjoy writing very, very much. It can be hard work, as you know.

DePue: Yes.

Walker: You know that very well.

DePue: Yes.

Walker: But it's also mentally stimulating, as you know very well. So that kept me going … yes.

DePue: And also, the other thing that kept you going, I'm sure, is the family that you seemed to enjoy so much.

Walker: Yes. I have a very large family; seven children, twenty-two grandchildren. Lily has six children and I think five grandchildren. They like to visit and so we have—particularly in San Diego, and now this place down here in Mexico—, so we have a lot of company.

DePue: I noticed in the book a wonderful family portrait where Roberta is involved with [the family] as well.

Walker: Yes. Yes, very definitely. Ours has been, over the years, the first Roberta and myself, a very close family, very close, much more so than most families even. The kids all are together and the grandkids, the cousins as they call them, they're all together a lot and it's very heartwarming. I don't see them as much as I would like to.

DePue: But it appears that even though you two are divorced, that the kids manage to not take sides in all of this and have kept a close relationship with both parents.

Walker: Yes, that's very true. I know that it was much harder on some of the children than on others. That happens in any family when there's a divorce. It was hardest on the young ones, Will and Margaret. They took it the hardest but they did not disassociate themselves from me when I divorced their mother, thank God.

DePue: Well I'd like to go through a few closing questions for you.

Walker: Certainly.

DePue: I would hope that you have an opportunity here to reflect on your entire life and career, both the good and bad of it. What strikes me, in looking at your career is, if you'll permit me Governor, there's a certain sense of tragedy here. Like any Greek tragedy, there are your incredible triumphs and those downfalls as well. As you look back on things, the accomplishment for which you're most proud?

Walker: Being Governor. … Yes, being Governor….Being Governor, yes.

DePue: And what in particular, are you most proud about your accomplishments while you were Governor?

Walker: Achieving a degree, not as much as I wanted, but a degree of change in those two things; honesty and transparency of government. Letting the light in. Letting people—I held those accountability sessions, we didn't get into that, but lots of it. I tried to make government more accountable in the budgets I put together, to make government more responsive to people and accountable to people, and to make it more honest. To get as much as I could of the pay-to-play out of government. The intermixture of government and politics was money, in the wrong way, and I'm very proud of what I accomplished in that regard. I didn't get the laws through that I would like to have gotten through in that regard, although I did get the big one, that is, the first campaign contribution disclosure law in the history of Illinois. I had to call a special session of the Legislature and fought that one through. I did get that, but the other things that I did by Executive Order I couldn't get established into law.

DePue: So you tried to get those translated into law as well.

Walker: Without success.

DePue: Well I might have just touched on it, but in terms of your administration, what are your greatest regrets, this far removed from it?

Walker: Well that one, of course, that is, not being able to get what was in those Executive Orders enacted into law, but then that's the major one. I did make progress on transparency and accountability. I did make good progress on that when I was Governor, but that's something that can only happen with the Governor, Other Governors didn't have that kind of interest in it that I did, so that just kind of faded away after I left office.

DePue: We've talked about this one an awful lot, but any second guessing or regrets in terms of your relationship with either the Daley administration or with the Legislature?

Walker: No, no. I could have done a better job with the legislature. I could have buttered up Daley. Yeah, I could have done those things and maybe I should have, but I don't let myself play that game, Colonel. As I've said before in this interview, I just don't see much point in "what if", I really don't, and I don't do it now—occasionally I'll find my mind drifting like all of us do, daydreaming, that kind of thing, but I chop it off and just don't go down that road. I don't go there, as the kids say.

DePue: I think it was Taylor Pensoneau, when I was reading his account of your Governorship, who said that you and Vic had an ability to make enemies, that that was a talent that you had more than mending fences necessarily. Do you think that's fair?

Walker: Well I don't think that's exactly what he said. I certainly did have a talent for making enemies, but I would put it differently. I wouldn't put it that way. I was a polarizing figure, yes. People liked me or disliked me, yes that's true, but I

wouldn't say making enemies. I certainly did turn people off and people were that way, but then I also had people who loved me. So I was a polarizing figure, yes. Was Vic that way? I guess so, yeah.

DePue: Well I also read—and again, you can correct me when I'm off base here—that you and Vic made a very conscious decision, repeatedly obviously, that you were not going to accommodate with machine politics.

Walker: Yes, that's for sure. I'm absolutely sure. Vic was rock solid on that and I was rock solid on that: not going to get into bed with machine politics, no way, and we didn't. As I've said earlier, people have said to me—although I don't think that way, as I've told you—they've said to me, "Look, if you had only gotten along with Daley, you could have become President".

DePue: But no regrets on that one?

Walker: I'm shrugging my shoulders. None., No.

DePue: I would imagine part of what you're proud of was a whole legion of people who, especially because of that campaign in 1972, you got excited about Illinois politics, and some of them are still around. Some of them had a very substantial career and their own part in Illinois politics.

Walker: Yes that's very true. I'm sorry. I'm tired. I should have picked up on that, and I didn't mention my family. I'm very proud of the way my family has turned out. All seven of them are great kids, they're no longer kids, and they've had successful careers. They've all turned out very well, not a failure in the lot, and I should have mentioned that and I should also have mentioned, and I apologize, the number of people that I brought into state government and who have gone on and succeeded in government and otherwise, some great people, really wonderful people, and I could never have done that. I could not have been elected, obviously, without those people.

DePue: Any names you want to mention in particular in that regard?

Walker: I'm afraid to, because if I mention some and then don't mention others. There's a lot of them in my book and to sit here and pull them up at my advanced age, those names. It gets increasingly difficult with each year that goes by Colonel, and I hope that's understood.

DePue: Well I'll just mention a few here. I guess I beg your indulgence for mentioning a few myself, but Roland Burris.

Walker: Oh yes. Roland was a fine Member of my Cabinet, went on to be Attorney General. He was also Treasurer wasn't he? Attorney General then ran for Governor and almost became the first black Governor of Illinois. A wonderful man, yes.

DePue: Mary Lee Leahy.

Walker: Yes. She was director after she got tubed for the first job that I named her for. Then I brought her in later, after things quieted down a little, as Director of the Department of Children and Family Services. She did a great job, and, as an attorney, has won some notable victories in the courts against political hiring and firing of state employees. A very talented lady.

DePue: And it sounds like a very good match with Child and Family Services then.

Walker: Yes. She was wonderful. And there's a couple, Sid Gardner and Natalie Gardner, a couple I stayed with on the walk, got to know, brought him into state government. He became my energy consultant and went on to make a real name for himself in the energy field. He lives in Springfield. They're a wonderful couple.

DePue: Pat Quinn.

Walker: Pat Quinn, who was a member of our team and then went his own way. Now of course, he's Lieutenant Governor, and I hope he goes even higher. It would be wonderful to see Pat become Governor.

DePue: Well, he's got an interesting position right now, given the current climate of affairs back in Springfield.

Walker: That's for sure.

DePue: Vince Demuzio: would you say he was a protégé?

Walker: Well, no …no, no. Vince was a State Senator and he was a poker playing friend of mine, and I liked Vince and Deanna his wife, a wonderful couple. Vince of course, went on to chair the Democratic party and has been a successful Senator. He still is, isn't he?

DePue: No. He passed away.

Walker: Oh I'm sorry. That's right, he passed away. Yeah, there's a whole bunch of them. I'm sorry. I should be able to reel them off. I guess I'm getting old, well that's obvious.

DePue: Here's a couple tough questions for you Governor and again, I beg your indulgence on that, but we'd like to have you reflect on what you would consider your greatest character strength, the thing that led to your triumphs, if you will.

Walker: [long pause] Willingness to work hard,… self-discipline,… imagination. Yes … those three things.

DePue: And obviously the flipside of that, a character trait that ended up to be the fatal flaw if you will, that led to your downfall?

Walker: Well the fatal flaw in later life was carelessness. I didn't do my homework and I was careless when we had those businesses. I didn't handle that well. I think that was my greatest flaw there. If I had a flaw in government, it was that I spent too much time on government and not enough time on personal relationships and "politics." I think my balance there was askew. I really loved the art of governing, of running the state government, making those departments work better. I spent probably too much time on that and I didn't reach out. I could have reached out to the business establishment in Chicago, I didn't do that. I should have done that.

DePue: And yet, if I can jump to this conclusion, you saw governance, being a Governor, is quite different than your predecessors and successors, and that was very much part of what you saw as the differences, the importance of being an effective administrator, making government run efficiently?

Walker: Yes, no question about it. I thought that was an important role and I still do, but maybe I spent too much time on it. Maybe I didn't spend enough time doing the other.

DePue: Well I'm going to read a couple of different portions, very brief things, out of your book. This first one is something that you quote your father as having told you, and I think he said, "Never let cockiness take over your decision making. Pride comes before the fall."

Walker: Yes. I think that may have happened to me in later life, as I talked about, when I was riding for a fall …in those glory days when we had lots of money. Yes, I certainly agree with that.

DePue: I recall another point in your book where you also quoted your father, who warned you, or predicted that women would be your downfall?

Walker: "Women and liquor", he said, "will be your downfall, Dan"

DePue: Do you think he was prescient? Was that accurate?

Walker: Well I certainly have had my problems in terms of drinking. At one point in my life I drank too much, yes. That was never while I was Governor though …never. I never allowed drinking to interfere with the Governorship. I didn't drink except in the evening and then moderately. But later it did and certainly women. I think that to the maximum extent that it's possible,… my private life is my private life, Colonel.

DePue: Okay.

Walker: I've said all I want to about women.

DePue: Okay. There have been a couple times in the last day or two when you've received phone calls because of what's currently going on in Illinois politics. I wonder if you're willing to reflect at all on George Ryan's particular situation right now.

Walker: Well, I really feel sorry for George. I don't want anybody to have to go through what I did in prison, and I hope he doesn't have to go through that. I hope they treat him respectfully, with his age and so forth. I certainly hope that. On the other hand,… if you do wrong you've got to pay. He did wrong. I did wrong and I paid my price. He's done wrong and he's got to pay his price.

DePue: Would you agree that his failures, that his wrongdoings are more serious, more flagrant than yours?

Walker: I'm not going to be a god and judge that. I am going to say that my wrongdoing had nothing to do with being Governor. I never, never let down faith to the people in me as Governor, never … never, never. I did nothing that anybody could ever criticize in the least as being dishonest when I was Governor. I fought, as is well known, for the opposite, for good government all the way. Mr. Ryan has been a part of that venal system of politics and government called pay-to-play in Illinois, for many years as Secretary of State, and he never did a darn thing to change it, although he had the power to change it. He never tried to change it, never lifted a finger to do anything about it and he got nailed. I have no sympathy for him in that regard, although I would wish, that given his age, they would just say look, he's paid his price now, really, at this age. No jail I would say.

DePue: So, if you'll allow me to reflect: perhaps the tragedy of your own administration and your own record is that even though the reason you went to prison had absolutely nothing to do with your administration, that inevitably tarnishes the administration and what you were trying to accomplish in ethics reform?

Walker: Certainly it tarnishes. All you have to do is pick up the newspaper and every time the subject comes up, well, Dan Walker went to jail too. So yeah, that's very hurtful, but I'm very comfortable with myself in that regard, very comfortable.

DePue: I'm going to quote another point in Pensoneau's and Ellis's book, and I want you just to respond to that. "Walker's followers knew that they were part of something special when they signed up and embarked on an improbable drive to capture Springfield from the entrenched interests, and they did, and for most of them it was the time of their lives. God it was exciting!"

Walker: It was exciting. I tell you, there is just nothing like young people getting caught up in politics and government. I remember the first time in that campaign, when I came into a room, a big room filled with people—this is after the walk—and I'd never, ever had a cheering, go mad, big audience before in my entire life. I walked into that room, it was in—oh, it doesn't matter what town it was in. That room was chock-a-block with hundred and hundreds of my workers, and it was bedlam, absolute bedlam, and I tell you, that was a wonderful feeling. Young people, they

were all young. Not all, but certainly most of them were young people. What an exciting, wonderful experience!

DePue: I'm sure a big part of that was because they bought in on the same vision and goals that you had.

Walker: Yes … yes, and God bless them. They believed in me and I hope that all of them feel that I delivered to the best of my ability. I hope they do. I don't know of course. I certainly hear from a lot of them that say that I did, but I don't know of course.

DePue: Okay, one final question then, and then I'll turn it over for any final comments that you have. What advice, at this point in your career, with incredible successes and some very deep valleys, would you give to future generations, and particularly to your children, your grandchildren, your successors.

Walker: Get involved. Get involved in politics and government …yes. Yes, yes. Get involved. I can't say those words enough, get involved. Go out there and find a candidate for alderman or for garbage collector or whatever, and help get good people elected into government and yourself participate and run for office. But get involved and stay involved; that's my total message. Get involved and stay involved. This is a wonderful, wonderful system that we have. It will stay wonderful so long as the citizenry is involved in making it that way, and it's the younger people that have got to do it.

DePue: Any final comments you'd like to make?

Walker: No, I don't think so Colonel. You've been a very excellent mentor and interlocutor here.

DePue: Well thank you.

Walker: You've done a very wonderful job of keeping me on the track and bringing out things. I hope I've done a decent job of responding to your very good questions. I don't think that I have anything to add to what I've said. I've tried to capture what I was about in those years and I hope I've managed to communicate that.

DePue: Well, I think that's come across loud and clear. Governor, I thank you for the privilege it's been for me to have this opportunity to meet with you. I especially thank you for your candor and your patience in putting up with me, if you will.

Walker: You've done a great job, thank you.

DePue: Thank you.

(End of Interview)