

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Arnold Kanter

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Illinois Statecraft – Jim Edgar Oral History project

Interview # ISG-A-L-2009-043

Arnold Kanter, Gov. Jim Edgar's (1991-1999) first chief counsel (1990-1992), was interviewed on the dates listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Illinois Statecraft – Jim Edgar* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: December 17, 2009 Location: Kanter office, Northfield, IL

Date: December 29, 2009 Location: Kanter office, Northfield, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mike Czaplicki, ALPL

Transcription by: Audio Transcription Center, Boston, MA

Edited by: Mike Czaplicki, ALPL; Rozanne Flatt, ALPL Volunteer

Total Pages: 61 + 52 = 113 Total Time: 2:43 + 2:40/ 2.72 + 2.7 hrs = 5.42 hrs

Session 1: Kanter's early life through work in 1990 gubernatorial campaign

Session 2: Kanter's work as counsel, from transition to his resignation in 1992.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on (date).

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in
Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Arnold Kanter, *Illinois Statecraft*, ISG-A-L-2009-000

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Arnold Kanter was born on December 9th, 1945 in Chicago, Illinois. His father's family emigrated from what is present day Belarus to the U.S. in the late 19th century, and his mother's family emigrated from Poland to Chicago in 1920. Arnie grew up on the west side of Chicago, in the city's 24th ward, before moving to Peterson Park on the city's northwest side in the late 1950s. After attending college at the University of Illinois-Navy Pier and Roosevelt University, he entered Chicago-Kent College of Law in 1968. Nineteen seventy was an especially important year in Arnie's life; he married Yvette Morris and interned in the U.S. Attorney's office. Following his graduation from law school in 1971, Arnie joined the office of the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, a job that brought him into contact with future political luminaries like Jim Thompson, Samuel K. Skinner, and William Bauer.

Arnie left the U.S. Attorney's office in 1977, working for a series of private firms and occasionally advising his friend, 6th Ward alderman Eugene Sawyer; most notably during the chaotic period following the death of Mayor Harold Washington in 1987, when the city council elected Sawyer as Washington's replacement. Through his association with Sawyer, Arnie met many influential people in Chicago's black community, and later drew on this network when he and Erhard Chorle organized Jim Edgar's 1990 campaign efforts in Chicago. Arnie was named counsel for Edgar's transition team after the successful campaign and was named chief counsel for his administration. He served until December 1, 1992, when he resigned his position.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Chicago, Illinois; Congress Expressway; Chicago parishes; Ronald Reagan; Governor Jim Edgar; William J. Scott; Jim Thompson; Samuel K. Skinner; Fred Hampton; Eugene Sawyer; Harold Washington; Erhard Chorle; Lutrelle "Lu" Palmer; Eddie Read; Black Contractors United; William Ghesquiere; Mike Belletire; Paula Wolff; Janis Cellini; Elena Kezelis; Mike Lawrence; Howard Peters; Tim Degnan; Daniel Rostenkowski; Robert H. Michel; Alan Dixon; Charles Percy; David Mosen; Lake Calumet Airport; Richard Luft; Aldo DeAngelis; Chicago machine politics; Chicago airports; 1990 gubernatorial campaign; chief counsel for Gov. Edgar; Illinois environmental politics; Hospital Assessment Program; pinstripe patronage; administrative staff; Springfield politics;

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