

**Oral History Interview of
Gary Elbow and Wendell Aycock**

**Interviewed by: David Marshall
May 23, 2018
Lubbock, Texas**

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Transcript Overview:

This interview features Gary Elbow and Wendell Aycock as they discuss the tenure controversy that occurred at Texas Tech in the eighties. In this interview, the two explain the reason for the controversy and the faculties point-of-view on the issue.

Length of Interview: 01:17:19

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David Marshall (DM):

The date is May 23, 2018. This is David Marshall interviewing Gary Elbow and Wendell Aycock at the Southwest Collection, Texas Tech, Lubbock, Texas. We're going to talk today about the tenure controversy that arose in the late seventies and 1980s, especially during the term of Lauro Cavazos. But you know, you mentioned, Gary, in your article a little bit about earlier tenure issues. I wanted to see if you knew any more information about the thing that occurred in, I think it was—I have the year here—

Gary Elbow (GE):

Nineteen fifty—

DM:

Thirty. [everyone speaking simultaneously] Oh yeah, way back.

GE:

The first one.

Wendell Aycock (WA):

That was a big one, yeah.

DM:

Nineteen thirty-two.

GE:

Oh yeah.

WA:

I wasn't even born then. [laughter]

GE:

Well, I wasn't either, Wendell. [laughter]

DM:

But you might have heard about it. So yeah, I was wondering if—the information in your article says that you know the governing board, which was—I guess it was Board of Directors at that time, wasn't it?

GE:

Yeah.

DM:

Made unilateral decision to refuse contracts renewals on eighteen faculty members, and that included the chair of the history department.

GE:

Yeah.

DM:

Do you know who that chair was?

GE:

No I don't.

WA:

No. Me either.

GE:

We could go back through the old catalogues and probably figure it out.

DM:

Right, right.

GE:

But I don't know.

DM:

Or did you ever hear of any of the other names of those faculty members? It's got to be in the record.

GE:

No, I never went back and tried to clarify that.

DM:

I'm sure all that information is right here in this building, but finding it might not be the easiest thing. [laughter]

GE:

Yeah. My information, I think, came out of the AAUP [American Association of University professors].

WA:

They wrote a lot of that up in there.

GE:

There was the second big tenure crisis when three people were fired in the fifties. That was the one where the AAUP got involved. They then made references back to the one in the thirties. But they didn't provide a lot of detail.

DM:

Oh okay. Well you did mention in your article that the AAUP investigated in '32 and reported possibility of fundamentalist pressure.

GE:

Yeah, there was. The story was that there was a preacher in town who was concerned about—and I don't remember the exact details of what the concern was—but that he presumably had some influence with some of the members of the board and also, I suspect, with the *Avalanche Journal*, although again that's speculation.

DM:

Right, right, okay. Well yeah, I was just wondering about that. But it was so common in other parts of the country at that time. That kind of pressure. So, but no names of leaders? Nothing we can tie into there?

GE:

No.

DM:

Like you say, this came—your information—came from the later report?

GE:

Yeah, it's about fourth hand by the time I got it. [Laughter]

DM:

Okay. Well, let's talk about the 1957 one just a little bit then. Just trying to establish a little background to this whole thing. So what I have on the 1957 is that the governing board, which I guess at this time was still not called board of regents?

GE:

I think that's right.

WA:
Yeah.

DM:
Still board of directors, or something like that? Again, made a unilateral decision to refuse contracts on three faculty members. This time the AAUP censured the board of—the governing board specifically, I guess. I'm not sure how that worked back then?

GE:
Yeah, and I'm not sure exactly how that worked, either. It was—if it was the board it still was censure on the university as well. So kind of packaged kind of thing.

GM:
The amazing thing here is that censure lasted for ten years.

WA:
Yeah, the person was our dean when we first came. I guess, with the history department. What was his name, anyway?

GE:
The dean was, uh—you're thinking of Laurence Graves, I think.

WA:
No. Yeah, I am. Yeah, I am. Graves.

GE:
But Graves came a little later than that.

WA:
But he had a hand in that, though. Help him Tech off the—

GE:
Oh yeah, that was—getting us off the issue was—that was when they wanted to hire Murray, and Murray—one of the stipulations that Murray laid out was, “Before I agree to come and be president, you've got to clean this mess up.”

DM:
This censure from AAUP?

GE:
Yeah.

DM:
Good. Okay.

GE:
And that involved some compensation for the three people who had been fired. That's never been made public, what they got. What the settlement was.

WA:
They were in the College of Business, weren't they?

GE:
No, one of them was in political science and the other two were historians, I think, I if I remember correctly.

DM:
That's interesting. You don't know their names, though?

GE:
I did. But I don't anymore.

DM:
Okay. Well, so what you mentioned in your article is that the AAUP referred to possible political motives? And also controversial research in publications?

GE:
Yeah, the guy from poly-sci was interested in labor issues. I think they suspected him of maybe thinking about some kind of unionization or organization. Anyway, it wouldn't have been a union.

WA:
Those were the days in nationwide.

GE:
Yeah. Yeah.

DM:
Yeah, right.

GE:

And it was McCarthy era, of course, too. You know. So it was that kind of stuff going on.

DM:

Did you ever hear anything about the controversy over the research in publications? Apparently that the other two faculty members were involved in?

GE:

No, I think I saw something about it. I read back—when I was doing that—I read the AAUP report on it. But it's been so long I can't remember the details.

DM:

Yeah. Well, that report has to be available still somewhere.

GE:

Oh yeah. It was—I think it was in the AAUP—you know, they had a journal that came out. They always listed the universities that were on probation. Censure is the term they used.

DM:

Right. Right. If you ever come across your research that you did for that article, if you would be interested in putting it at the Southwest Collection of course we would—

GE:

Well, I think you may already have it but I'm not sure. If you don't have it I know where it is.

DM:

Okay. Yeah, that's something that we would like to have on hand. And then, so 1967 is when things started to turn around. When there was compliance with the AAUP, and like you say, that was Grover Murray initiative, right?

GE:

Yeah. And that was when we got our first real tenure policy. That was Murray's. Another part of the initiative and the compliance with AAUP. The policy was patterned after the AAUP had a model tenure policy, and we just essentially adopted it. I'm sure there were some minor changes, but it was basically the same policy and that's what led to some of the problems later on.

DM:

There were a couple of omissions in that policy, I understand? Like the lack of a clear amendment procedure?

GE:

Well, yeah.

DM:

And then appeals by an appeal's committee? How'd it designate an appeal's committee? Does that sound familiar to you?

GE:

Well, vaguely. You know, those kinds of things could easily have been taken care of.

DM:

Yeah. Yeah.

GE:

But there were some issues, and one of those issues—and Wendell will remember this—is that there was—well, let me put it different. The governing board for faculty was the faculty council. And the executive committee of the faculty council. And the faculty council was the faculty as a whole. And so we would have faculty meetings in a big auditorium. I can't remember which one it was now. Murray would preside. Then this committee would meet separately and they would lay out what they thought—policies they thought we needed and things like that. Then it would come up to a vote of the faculty council, which was the whole body.

DM:

Yeah.

GE:

When Mackey came—when Cecil Mackey became president after Grover Murray resigned, then one of the first things Mackey said was, “Well, it's not appropriate for the president of the university to preside over a meeting of the faculty.” And that was when the faculty senate was created in '85.

WA:

He was only here for a short time, but he did a good job there.

DM:

Who was that?

WA:

Mackey.

DM:

Mackey. Yeah. What about under the Grover Murray administration? Was in—generally speaking—a good relationship between administration and faculty?

GE:

My impression was that it was. I came in 1970.

WA:

We referred to him as “Grover the Good.” [Laughter]

DM:

Some people referred to him as “Groovy Grover.” [Laughter]

WA:

Groovy Grover. Well he was a regular faculty member himself.

DM:

Right, okay.

WA:

And so he published and did research and things like that. Some of the later ones didn't.

DM:

But everything worked okay even though there were these little omissions in the—?

GE:

I mean I don't know that the faculty were terribly upset about the arrangement, but Mackey thought that this was not an appropriate way to do it based on his experience. I was a **shaved tail** [0:11:09.8] assistant professor at the time, so I—that was all kind of Greek or Chinese or whatever. [laughter]

WA:

Just concerned with getting dinner.

GE:

That's right. That was the big thing. What do I do next? So anyway, my impression—I'm in total agreement with Wendell—it was a pretty comfortable relationship. I think the faculty felt that getting us off the AAUP censure, which Murray had insisted on, was a good thing. Of course at the time that all this was going on we had a governor from Lubbock, we had a Korean general from Lubbock, we had George Mahan who was chair of the House Appropriations Committee,

we had two strong senators from Texas, and we had a lot of oil money. And so this was the period when Tech really started to move. And kind of, you know, the shift from being a cow college to being a real university. Murray was the leader in all that, and faculty I think, generally were very pleased with those kinds of changes. The law school, school of medicine, lots of new buildings going up at the time.

DM:

Enrollment growth, wasn't it?

GE:

I'm sorry?

DM:

Some enrollment growth during that time?

GE:

Yeah.

DM:

That's what I hear from everybody, actually. That that's kind of the golden era in Texas Tech history. So just kind of wanted to hear your thoughts on that also. But that kind of went hand-in-hand with no tenure problems.

GE:

Yeah. And I think overall, if you looked at the history of presidencies at Texas Tech, probably you've got to look at Paul Whitfield Horn, look at Grover Murray, and then Cecil Mackey—but not here long enough to really have a big impact. And after that I'm not sure.

WA:

[Laughter] They're kind of iffy.

DM:

Yeah, yeah.

GE:

So I don't think we've had really terribly strong presidents since then. That's in part just because of the situation with the board of regents—the relationship.

WA:

Well then we moved from having a strong president to having a president like we've got now who's also under the—I guess he's not under the thumb or anything like that.

GE:

Well, sort of.

DM:

Under the system?

WA:

Under the system.

DM:

Yeah.

WA:

So.

GE:

Yeah, and that's been a problem ever since the system was created. That the relationship between the university and the system has never been really—

DM:

System is a politician and then you have an academic under. By the way, Wendell what year did you come out here to Tech? It was early?

WA:

Nineteen sixty-nine.

DM:

Sixty-nine? And when did you come out again?

GE:

Seventy.

DM:

In '70. Okay.

WA:

Actually, I was here earlier. I was a student here years ago. Then went to the University of South Carolina and then came back.

DM:

Okay. But y'all came in as faculty members in '69 and '70? So you came in under the '67 document? Okay, all right. Well, tell me about Cecil Mackey. There was some question, wasn't there, about his using a—referring his tenure policy to a former military vice president to—I don't know how that clicked with the faculty. Do you remember anything about that?

WA:

I don't remember that.

GE:

I don't know. Sid Kennedy [00:15:00] was the provost, or vice president for academic affairs at that time.

DM:

I might have—my information garbled here.

GE:

He had a military background.

WA:

Oh boy, did he ever.

DM:

Okay. Well yeah, I wrote down here that Mackey—you know, he was interested in the tenure policy, but that he submitted a revised policy to the board of regents directly, and not through the faculty. Is that—is that wrong? Or do you recall that?

GE:

I didn't know about that either.

DM:

So basically, from y'all's perspective, things were going well under Cecil Mackey? It was the continuation of the way it had been under Grover Murray?

GE:

Yeah, and he was—my dealings with him, he was very professional.

WA:

Other than he was he helped establish the faculty senate as opposed to—

GE:

Yeah.

DM:

Okay. Then everything changed in 1980? That's when the big change occurred?

GE:

Yeah, I think—you know, in like a lot of things it was progressive. I don't think it was big—this way in. A lot of it had to do with the composition of the board of regents.

WA:

Yeah, we had a pretty tough board of regents.

DM:

Right. Do you mind naming some of the key individuals that seemed to oppose faculty involvement in the appeals and this kind of thing?

GE:

Well, J. Fred Bucy.

WA:

J. Fred Bucy.

GE:

And John Workman were the two who were—

WA:

Yeah, Bucy was a leader.

DM:

Yeah.

WA:

And Workman was also hardnosed.

DM:

Was Bucy chair of the board of regents at that time?

GE:

I don't remember.

WA:

I don't know.

DM:

Okay. Anyway, he was the kingpin in that?

GE:

Yeah.

DM:

Did you ever hear anything about their philosophy on tenure?

GE:

Oh they didn't like it. [Laughter] Straightforward. They would have just done away with it.

DM:

Done away with it completely. Yeah.

WA:

You've got to be able to fire people if they're not doing good jobs. [Laughter] This isn't a good job.

DM:

Yeah. Was it from just not understanding that this is a—this is what happens in American universities? Were they just out of touch with AAUP and tenure policies across the country?

GE:

They would have seen AAUP as a quasi-union, I'm sure. They certainly wouldn't have liked that. I used to characterize it—this is probably not fair—as a rancher with the ranch hands. That kind of—

WA:

Well, with Cavazos that was definitely right. With Cavazos.

DM:

Yeah, so it was a business approach. "Hey, you know, we can axe you any time."

GE:

Yeah, and looking at productivity and how you would define that.

DM:

Can you talk about some of those issues that began to creep up in '80 or after? Like, for example, tenure limits?

GE:

Well, I don't remember that specific issue.

WA:

Until it actually did come with the—

DM:

It was something like there was a 57 percent tenure of faculty on Tech campus, and the national average was sixty-some-odd percent, so we were well within—

GE:

Oh yeah. There was—yeah, now I'm—there was some concern about how many tenured faculty you should have.

DM:

And yet, at that time, Tech was below the national average on tenured faculty, but it was still a concern for them. I don't know if—I wonder if they were really worried about a percentage, or if they were just trying to do away with tenure as much as possible. Just weaken it.

GE:

Well, probably a first step toward.

DM:

Right.

GE:

The argument would have been, of course, that if you've got a large number of tenured faculty—a large percentage of tenured faculty—then it limits your ability to bring in young hotshots. And of course you've got all these old folks, like Wendell and me, who are hanging around longer than they should have been or whatever. [Laughter]

WA:

I'm retired! I'm retired! [Laughter]

DM:

Yeah, you can't be thrown in that category, can you?

GE:

Well, I'm on my way.

DM:

Well, can you just kind of give me an overview of what happened, starting with Cavazos? Can you reconstruct that in your mind, how this thing proceeded and it culminated in—what—1985? '84. September 28, 1984. There were a few years there where this thing just began to build.

GE:

Yeah, I think Cavazos came to us from a school of medicine.

WA:

Tufts, wasn't it?

GE:

Yeah, Tufts University. He had been the dean of the school of medicine there. Medical schools operate very differently from regular universities.

DM:

More along a business model?

GE:

Well, I'm not sure they would appreciate thinking it's a business model, but they're much more flexible in terms of who gets tenured and who doesn't. They have all kinds of people who come in and stay for a while or have part-time employment. There really—like, you've got somebody who's a practicing surgeon and may have an adjunct appointment, and come in and work with some of the medical students in his particular specialty or her particular specialty. You know, that kind of thing. And so it's a lot more flexible, I guess, is a way to put it, than the way we operate as academics. And I think Cavazos came in with that kind of a model in mind.

DM:

So this model you're talking about, it had more administrative clout? More administrative control over the faculty?

GE:

Yeah.

WA:
Definitely.

DM:
That's cool. Okay.

WA:
I don't know if it was Cavazos so much as it was Bucy and the board of regents.

GE:
Well, it was—I think it was both. I think—

WA:
He went along with them.

DM:
So you think Bucy was the real driving force behind this and Cavazos fell in line?

WA:
Well, Bucy and Workman. And I think Workman was, you know, they were a team. Probably what Bucy wanted Workman was willing to go along with kind of thing.

DM:
Did Cavazos always fall in line with the board of regents?

GE:
Yep. That was the big problem. We don't, of course, have any idea of what kinds of discussions went on while he was being recruited. But I suspect that tenure was discussed during his recruitment. Again, that's highly speculative.

DM:
Right. Right. Well, that would make sense because I think this came up early in his administration. Okay.

WA:
He came from a ranching family.

DM:
Uh-huh. King Ranch.

WA:

They had the belief that if you were the boss, you had to do what he had to say. You didn't have any say in the business. So you said, "Yes, yes. Yes, sir. Yes, sir." And he certainly expected that of the professors, I think. He was a pleasant enough person, but he should be—I had the feeling he felt like he ought to be able to fire people. [Laughs] I don't know. Just my impression.

DM:

Well, that kind of makes sense. He just responded to whatever the board of regents wanted and he expected the faculty to respond to him the same way.

WA:

That was his attitude, I think.

GE:

Yeah, no, I think if you look at how the tenure crisis began, it was a function of his, essentially, saying that he didn't like the tenure policy that existed and it needed to have some changes. There wasn't much consultation with faculty.

WA:

He came up with this five year program. If you weren't good in five years, you were fired. And every five years, you should be evaluated, you know. And if you're not good in the next five years you should be fired.

DM:

Wasn't there also an annual evaluation, or was that just departmental?

WA:

Oh yeah. Well, we always had annual evaluations, of course. But they didn't involve firing.

DM:

Right.

GE:

They would impact your promotion and they'd impact your salary, but once you were tenured—

WA:

Once you got tenure you were more or less safe, I suppose.

GE:

You had to build a case—a pretty strong case—to budge somebody's tenure.

WA:

There were people who were fired who were tenured. That's one thing that people forget sometimes.

DM:

Why were they?

WA:

They were fired primarily, I think, in College of Business. They weren't doing their job. They were out making money. And they weren't in the classroom, and that sort of thing. [Laughs] They'd find out they weren't in the classroom. They'd say, "Well, you've got to go." And most of the time they were making enough money they didn't much care. So I don't think that happened very many times, but I know I heard it happened a couple of times.

DM:

Were there other instances that you know of? Not needing to name names if you don't want to, but—

WA:

I probably could. [laughter]

DM:

--other instances. Like, outrageous instances. Outrageous behavior or things like that that got people.

WA:

There were people who were fired for outrageous behavior, yeah.

GE:

Usually what would happen is they would quietly resign.

WA:

Yeah, quietly resign.

DM:

Oh.

GE:

Disappear from the scene.

WA:

When I was in the English department we had a—I don't think he was tenured yet—but he told—a couple of young girls came up to him and wanted ask him about something on the exam, and I don't know how he said it, but he said something about, "Well, I'll tell you the answer to that if you just take off your clothes," or something like that. He was just joking with them, of course. They went immediately to the chair of the department who immediately fired him, and there wasn't any question. He just was out.

DM:

But he was non-tenured.

WA:

Yeah. And I don't know what would have happened if he'd have been tenured. But he always maintained, "I was just joking with them. I didn't think they would do that, take it seriously."

Chris **Kluso** [0:27:08.4] was his name.

GE:

Yes, I remember that case.

DM:

What was his name?

WA:

Chris **Kluso**.

DM:

Kluso. Okay.

GE:

Yeah, he was German.

WA:

He was a good professor.

GE:

Well he went on to have a career at another university. He ended up at—wasn't it—IUPUI [Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis]?

WA:

I think so.

DM:
Okay.

WA:
His wife stayed here though. [Laughs] Oddly enough. But anyway, that's beside the point. But people were fired with tenure, aside from—it wasn't an issue.

DM:
Were there times when that was more common than at other times? Like, for example, during Cavazos's administration was there an increase in people being removed or—

WA:
I don't know. I don't think so.

GE:
I don't think so either. I don't think—

DM:
There's not a pattern that fits any particular administrations?

WA:
No, no.

GE:
No. The issue really was the decision in—I want to use this term “unilateral” although I'm not sure really unilateral, but it was certainly limited in terms of who made the decision to change the tenure policy. To draft a new tenure policy. It was essentially handed off to a group of people who were picked, I suspect, by the vice president for Academic Affairs at the time.

DM:
Who was—

GE:
Well, I'm trying to remember because there was some shuffling going on at the time.

WA:
Yeah, there was.

GE:
Who was the philosopher who had been—

WA:

Oh yeah. I can't recall his name.

GE:

Yeah, neither can I.

WA:

But he was vice president back then, and he was here for some time.

DM:

Who?

WA:

He was here during, oh the issue about the play. *Equus* affair.

GE:

Oh yeah, yeah. The *Equus* affair.

DM:

Tell me about the *Equus* affair?

WA:

Oh boy.

GE:

That's Wendell's story. [Laughter]

WA:

Well, that's so long ago I don't know if I can remember it all. But that was a case of somebody having changed the mind of the department. They were going to put on the *Equus* play. It was decided by a departmental vote and approved by them, approved the chair, went to the dean. Dean said, "That's all right with me." He didn't pay a whole lot—that was Graves back then. And then it went up to the vice president, and I think he approved it even.

DM:

And it was nudity in the play, is that what it was?

WA:

And there was nudity in the play.

GE:

Male nudity.

WA:

Yeah. And so it came back down the same way. The Baptist minister found out about it and the HA helped out too, because we interviewed—I was on an investigating—I must have told you this. I was on an investigating team, and I know y'all have the information because I gave it to you that involves—oh who else? It was a guy from history that was really strange and Ben Newcomb and me. I guess there were three of us. Three or four of us. Three of us, I guess. Appointed by Betsy Sasser. I was a new professor. I didn't—I wasn't even tenured.

DM:

That's something to be hit with as a new professor.

WA:

And so it was kind of an odd situation. She said, "I want you to investigate this." Some academic freedom was involved here, because it was approved by the chair of the department and the dean and all. Well, it got unapproved the same way. [Laughs] Because the *Avalanche*—we interviewed everybody we could. We interviewed the reporter for the *Avalanche Journal*. She said she wrote the article originally, and she mentioned the nudity way down in the bottom of the article. And the guy said, "Huh, nudity? You might move that up a little bit." And she said she re-wrote it about fourteen times until she got it right at the very top. "Nudity on the Tech Campus!" Sort of thing, in this play. And that of course got the Baptist minister [redacted] [0:31:37]. And he read it and got in touch with the provost, or back then the vice president. I guess the president—I don't know if the president had any dealing with that. I don't think he did. But I think we did interview him. We interviewed three regents and the dean. Poor dean. He was on the hotplate there. Ben Newcomb was there. Ben could be tough.

DM:

Now who was the dean again?

WA:

Graves.

DM:

Graves?

WA:

Yeah. And the chair of the department, whose name I can't—

GE:
History?

WA:
Who?

GE:
The history department?

WA:
No, no.

GE:
Oh the drama? Theatre?

WA:
Theatre arts department. He was there for a good long while, I just can't think of his name. Now he was the one that caved on them. Because if he had said, "I was forced. We really wanted to do this. I was forced to change it."

GE:
Was it Schulz?

WA:
No, it wasn't Schulz. Schulz would've finished it up. It was—oh goodness gracious—he was married to TV announcer. He's a nice guy. But when the dean told him, "No, you're not going to do that," he said, "Okay. We'll consider." He went back to his faculty and they all agreed. So they cancelled the play.

DM:
Okay.

WA:
And we were going to make a big deal out of that. We really couldn't because nobody was going to stand up for the play. So it was an interesting time.

DM:
This does sound a little familiar. We must have talked about this a while back.

WA:

Oh I'm sure we did. We interviewed the guy that was a radio owner up in Amherst, I think it was. He was on the board of regents. I kind of liked the guy. But he said he really hadn't a care whether we played it or not. And interesting enough, that same year they showed *Equus* the film here on campus. [Laughter] So they just didn't want their daughters and sons appearing in the nude. Never mind, as they said, they'd done that sort of thing before, just under the shade of—but that was an interesting time. I'm sure you have a better answer [redacted] [0:33:58.7] before when you interviewed me, because probably got a better than I did now—do now. It was interesting period. I'll never forgive Betsy Sasser for putting me on that committee, though. [Laughter]

DM:

As a young professor.

WA:

Yeah!

GE:

What was her role? Was she faculty senate president?

WA:

She was on the—we had a AAUP—wasn't that AAUP? She was president of whatever it was. The committee for—it wasn't AAUP, was it?

GE:

Probably faculty senate, I would think?

WA:

No, no it had nothing to do with faculty—It was a faculty group, but it wasn't organized by the faculty senate. It was AAUP or something like that. But anyway, it was a strange experience for a young professor that didn't know what was going on.

DM:

Really. That's kind of touchy. Well, back to the tenure issues, what was Darlings's role? And what era was that? Does he fall under Mackey or was that—

GE:

No, no. He was a Cavazos.

DM:

Okay.

WA:

He was here—here Columba came up from—the year she was here, and she interviewed with Mackey. She said he wanted to go down to talk to the president at University of Panama. She said that she knew the University of Panama president, and said, “If he’d gone down and talked to him, he would have been dismissed from his presidency.” In the guy’s mind [inaudible] [00:35:42] because he was sort of a strange cookie. But he, oddly enough, moved from here to another place to another place to another place. He got a president job somewhere.

GE:

Yeah, I think it was Pittsburg, Kansas.

DM:

Darling did?

GE:

Yeah. Yeah.

DM:

But was he involved in the tenure issue?

GE:

Oh yeah.

WA:

Yeah.

DM:

What was—where did he stand?

GE:

Well he was the—essentially the person who was delegated to handle it.

DM:

Okay.

WA:

But he was the president’s man and the board of regents’ man.

DM:

And so therefore he was a board of regents man. Yeah, okay. John Darling.

GE:

There was a committee that was put together, and I don't know who all was on the committee, but Bill Conroy who was by that time I think was dean of arts and sciences.

WA:

It was a short period of time he was Dean, if I remember it was.

GE:

And so he appointed a committee and they came up with a policy—with an amended policy.

DM:

Darling appointed the committee. Is that what you're saying?

GE:

I think it was Darling that appointed it, yeah. That would have—

WA:

Are you sure? Darling left when—

GE:

This was the first step.

WA:

The first step? Okay. He was here during the first step, yeah.

GE:

And so this policy was developed by the faculty committee, and it went up through all the stages. It got to the board of regents—it had been approved by the faculty and everything. It got to the board of regents, and the woman who was the university's attorney at the time—

DM:

Was that Phelan?

GE:

That was Marilyn Phelan.

WA:

Marilyn Phelan, yeah.

GE:

She stood up in the meeting—I guess one of the regents—this was probably a setup, but we'll never know—but anyway one of the members of the board said, “Would you approve this policy?” And she said, “No, I cannot approve it as written.” So of course the board—I suspect they just didn't vote. But anyway, it didn't.

DM:

It actually came from this faculty committee through Darling, through Cavazos, and all the way to the board of regents before it was shot down?

GE:

And it was voted on by the faculty. The faculty senate approved it and then the whole faculty approved it.

DM:

Do you remember enough about it to say that would have resolved these issues? At least there was faculty input.

GE:

I think—obviously, it didn't resolve all the issues or it would have been approved. So there was something. It was satisfactory to the faculty, so I think it resolved whatever issues the faculty might have had.

WA:

The faculty's main concern, because most of them were tenured, they didn't want a five year contract. Because if you were tenured already they couldn't fire you without a cause. But with this one, they could fire you without a cause. So nobody wanted to be working in a situation like that. In fact, some professors actually left, because they said, “We don't want to have this.”

DM:

Was it at this same time that they were talking about non-tenured faculty members on a contract basis?

WA:

And it got business?

DM:

Yeah, that came up. That was an issue at the same time.

GE:

Yeah, because what happened with Edna is she had a master's degree in economics and she was apparently a master teacher. So she—and she was an instructor in economics. She was the person who taught—

WA:

She didn't have to publish, did she? And she didn't publish.

GE:

No, she didn't.

DM:

Now, what was her name?

GE:

Edna Gott.

WA:

Edna Gott.

GE:

G-o-t-t. I suspect you've got some information on her.

DM:

I remember the name.

WA:

Her husband was in physics.

GE:

Preston.

DM:

Okay.

GE:

And he was in the same position. He was an assistant professor.

WA:

Oh was he?

GE:

And I think he was tenured, but he had a master's degree. The two of them mostly taught freshman classes. And she was very highly regarded.

WA:

She was a good teacher. She actually—I was in one of her classes, as a matter of fact. She was a good teacher.

GE:

So anyway, Edna—where was I going with Edna?

DM:

Well I was asking about the contract? I mean, the non-tenured approach?

GE:

Oh yeah. Yeah, yeah. That was it. That somebody like Edna could have been dismissed. You know, just don't renew her for the next year.

DM:

Was the concern that this would become common and this would begin to replaced tenured faculty?

GE:

Yeah.

WA:

Um-hm.

DM:

Do you think that was the approach that board of regents was trying to—

WA:

Well, I think they probably would have liked that because it wouldn't cost as much money. Somebody that was not tenured wasn't doing as good a job or something like that? Well, fire him and get somebody cheaper. Or her.

DM:

I wonder if there's the concern that there often is in the business world that when you're here a long time you're making a whole lot more money. If we can get rid of you, we can bring up someone young and pay them anything.

GE:

Oh I think that's part of it.

DM:

That's a business model.

WA:

One of the motivations, yeah.

GE:

Yeah, and there was less emphasis in those days on research than there is now. And so what they were looking at was essentially people in the classroom. And yeah, if you were a hotshot researcher maybe you had a little leverage but that wasn't a big deal that it is now.

DM:

Yeah, okay. Now Marilyn Phelan. Was she always a board of regents person? I mean, was she kind of a spokesman for them? I kind of see her as always aligned with Cavazos, but I might be wrong.

GE:

Well, no, I think she was—she was the university's attorney. And so she was, as a good lawyer would be, she was working for the company.

DM:

Her clients, basically, were board of regents and Cavazos.

GE:

Yeah.

DM:

Yeah, okay.

GE:

But that business came way out of left field. I don't think anybody anticipated that, that that was going to happen.

DM:

So it went all the way to the top, everybody knew it was going to pass, and then shot down?

GE:

Yeah. Yeah.

DM:

Wow. And that's kind of what got this whole thing—

GE:

Yeah, because then it went back to Darling. And Darling drafted the new policy.

DM:

Wow.

WA:

It was disastrous.

DM:

And that was without faculty input and therefore, bam, that's a new issue.

GE:

Yeah, and then they wanted to bring it to a vote of the faculty, and of course that set up this whole thing. And that was when there was the vote of no confidence in Cavazos.

DM:

Right. Okay.

WA:

It was really heated around here then.

DM:

Hm?

WA:

I said the atmosphere was really heated around here then. Among some us. I guess there were some people that—

DM:

Were there other things going on at that time? When was the Crosbyton solar—

GE:

That was at about the same time.

WA:

It was about the same time.

DM:

That was a hot—

GE:

Yeah, yeah. That was a big one.

DM:

Do y'all mind talking about that a bit? Do you know a little about that?

WA:

Well, that was—I know hearsay, basically. But I wasn't in engineering. My uncle, however, had the land they were using that project for. He was donating that land. But that's neither here nor there.

DM:

Well, with the understanding here on the recording that it is hearsay, can you just kind of give me what you heard or what your perspective was on it?

WA:

Well, different professors took different approaches. I guess—who was the dean then? Bradford?

GE:

Yeah.

WA:

Bradford was dean and he took the administration point of view. And there were a couple of professors that just left the university.

GE:

Reichert.

WA:

Reichert.

GE:

And I'm trying to remember the other one. They were—

WA:

Seacat. Seacat.

GE:

Seacat, yeah. Russel Seacat. They were top dogs in electrical engineering at the time. They had—the Crosbyton Project was an experiment in solar energy—solar generation of electricity. So you're using solar energy to make steam to run the turbine. And it was part of a Carter administration initiative, which I think made it suspect immediately.

WA:

Well and some of our engineers were flying planes to Washington without approval of the president of the university. And that got them upset.

DM:

Well, it seems like with that kind of federal initiative there would be federal funding?

GE:

Oh there was. That was really what precipitated, I think, that the university's decision was not to continue the project. These particular faculty members who had—

WA:

Who'd been involved in it.

GE:

Well, they built a little empire around it, you know? I think that was—

DM:

Well, who were the administrators involved in that opposition to the—that was Cavazos, right?

GE:

Well, yeah.

WA:

And Bradford was the chair.

DM:

And Bradford.

GE:

The dean of the college.

DM:
Wow.

WA:
I don't know how much he was involved in it, but I think he probably just went along with what the president wanted to do.

DM:
That sounds like a controversy on the college level, then, between the dean and the faculty.

WA:
Um-hm. It was.

DM:
Anyway, part of that heat that was building at that same time during the Cavazos administration, were there other issues rolling along that just kind of might have fed into this no-confidence vote, or do you think it was all 100 percent about tenure?

GE:
Well, I think it was 100 percent about tenure.

WA:
Yeah, tenure is what caused it.

GE:
Those other things were more localized, I think. If you asked about unrest within the department of electrical engineering, yeah probably. Or maybe even in the college of engineering. But beyond that I don't think.

WA:
No, it was all about the tenure issue.

DM:
Okay. Now what about with the board of regents? Were there other issues between faculty and the board of regents besides the tenure issue at this time?

WA:
Well, I don't know the answer to that. Do you?

GE:

No, I think that there was a tendency, because some members of the board were pretty outspoken for faculty not to have a lot of confidence in what they were proposing. But that's more at the level of grumbling.

DM:

Right, right.

GE:

Rather than, you know, getting up to the point where you're ready to go out and charge the ballot, the barrier, go over the wall.

DM:

Yeah, exactly.

WA:

I remember Jack Collins was one of the people—leaders—of the opposition to the tenure policy. His wife—he lived right over the corner from us—his wife and my wife said, “Look, you all can't put on your cap and gown and march around like administration with Placard signed, ‘No.’” We had it all planned, and they said no. They said, “You're ridiculous.” And they were right. [laughter] We were half-way joking, I guess.

GE:

AJ would have had a great good time with that one.

WA:

They would have.

DM:

I remember hearing that Jack Collins was pretty much involved in the opposition.

GE:

Yeah, oh yeah. He was.

DM:

Can you remember if he was on committees or what? How?

WA:

Well, he must have come up with these newsletters that were published.

GE:

Cage's Corner?

DM:

I'm sorry?

GE:

Cage's Corner.

DM:

Cage's Corner.

WA:

You've got the newsletters?

DM:

We might have.

WA:

The weekly newsletters?

DM:

Oh yeah, I think so.

GE:

I bet you've got some.

DM:

I think so.

WA:

Because Jack, Edna, Gary, and I were the ones that were involved with that.

DM:

Okay.

WA:

We didn't always self-identify.

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GE:

It was Collins, Aycock, Gott, and Elbow.

DM:

This was a kind of an underground newsletter, then?

WA:

Definitely.

DM:

Golly, I need to be sure that we have that.

WA:

You still have copies?

GE:

I think I brought them over here.

WA:

I think I did too.

DM:

Did you say Cage's?

GE:

C-a-g-e-apostrophe-s.

DM:

Okay. Okay. Corner.

GE:

Wendell drafted his son to do cartoons for it.

DM:

Okay.

WA:

Yeah, he did the cartoons.

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DM:

That does sound familiar now. Who all was involved? The two of you--?

GE:

Collins and Gott.

DM:

Oh, Collins and Gott. Okay. Okay.

WA:

We were the ones that wrote the thing, put it together and distributed it. There were a lot of other people that were—

DM:

What's the time period there? And how long did it last?

GE:

It lasted, what, a year and a half maybe?

WA:

Something like that. It didn't last too long.

DM:

About what time? What years do you think?

GE:

Oh it's—

WA:

Well, let's see, I'd have them here—here are the years listed there.

GE:

Okay, let's see what we got.

WA:

It's a beginning and an end, sort of.

GE:

[Reading] "May 16th, 1986: Board of Regents vote on a revised tenure policy." [flips page] So probably '85 is what we're talking about.

DM:

Around '85? Circa '85? Was it all about the tenure controversy? Or did you—

GE:

It was mostly about the tenure controversy, but of course we were taking pot shots at certain administrators. [laughter]

WA:

We had a good time with it.

DM:

And when you say “administrators” are you talking about deans and chairman?

GE:

We're talking about higher level. We're talking about Darling and Cavazos. That was our real target.

DM:

I'll have to see what we have. And if y'all have anymore, maybe we can fill gaps in that. I need to sit down and read that sometime.

GE:

Well, I've got to go through a file cabinet over in Holden Hall. It's got spider webs and dust and all kinds of stuff.

DM:

You know what? We love those kinds of things. Send them our way.

GE:

Well, if I haven't already done it I'll try to track it down and get it to you. But I have a feeling that I already sent that over and I think you probably have to.

DM:

And by the way, while the recorder is running here, let me just cite this *Symposium* edition and the journal of the Texas Faculty Association. Volume II, Number II, Fall 1986 is your article, Gary.

WA:

That's mine.

GE:

That's Wendell's.

DM:

Oh that's Wendell's.

GE:

You've got one from me. An earlier one with me.

DM:

I've got yours. Yeah. You know, that's—I saw this and I thought that was Gary's article that you had opened up. No, I haven't seen this.

WA:

Well, you can keep that.

DM:

So that's yours. That's page ten. I've got these over here. Gary, so the other *Symposium* article by Gary Elbow is Volume I, Number I, Spring of 1985, page five.

WA:

Okay, that's when we started. This was the end of it, because—

DM:

Well, good. I'm going to read that then. Between those two articles, though, there's a lot of good information on the tenure controversy here. Were there other key individuals that should be mentioned? Either on one side or the other that—

WA:

Well, we got a lot of help from the law school. They were particularly eager to fight over this whole thing.

DM:

Really? On behalf of the faculty?

WA:

On behalf of the faculty.

DM:

Was Marilyn Phelan part of the law school at that time?

WA:

I think she was.

GE:

Yes, she was.

DM:

Well that's—that would be some interest dynamics over there, wouldn't there?

GE:

Yeah, I don't think they liked her very much. I don't know who's left over there. Dave Cummins would be a good person for you to talk with.

DM:

Dave Cummins.

GE:

He's gone. He's retired.

DM:

Okay, but local?

GE:

But he's still in town. But you better hurry, because he's going to be leaving, I think.

DM:

Oh is that right?

WA:

You're talking about a long time ago, '86.

DM:

What was Marilyn's position at the law school at that time?

GE:

She was a professor of law.

DM:

She was a regular professor? She wasn't an administrator over there?

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GE:

No.

DM:

She was a professor of law in the law school, but she also represented—she was also the attorney for the university.

GE:

She was the university attorney, yeah.

DM:

Wow. That's a story.

GE:

Yeah, that doesn't happen anymore.

DM:

Yeah. I mean that dynamic in the law school at that time between her and the rest of the faculty.

WA:

Well, not all the people in the law school agreed, but most of them did because most of them had their tenure and they didn't want to lose it.

DM:

Right.

WA:

Basically what we're talking about is the loss of tenure, because of that five year program—tenure what it was at the time.

DM:

You know there was a small sliver of faculty members that continued to support the board of regents. That I think it was very, very small. But did you ever get an indication of why they had a different perspective on this? Because my outside first thought is they had tenure and they were comfortable and safe where they were and they really weren't concerned.

GE:

Well, I think it probably was a political thing and a political conservative who would think you should be kept on, on the basis of your merit.

WA:

These people would support Trump no matter what he did. [Laughs] Shouldn't say that.

GE:

No, but I think it's that kind of mentality that is just a philosophical thing.

WA:

You obey the person in charge.

DM:

Yeah, so in other words like they were like Cavazos in that perspective.

WA:

Um-hm. Um-hm.

DM:

"Yeah, you're the boss. Okay, whatever you tell me I'll go do."

GE:

Yep. Yep.

DM:

But they were a very small minority.

WA:

They didn't make much noise.

GE:

No, they were—

WA:

We were pretty silent ourselves for a while.

GE:

But one person—and somebody else you might want to talk to—Henry Shine.

DM:

Oh yeah.

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GE:

Henry gave a speech before the faculty at a meeting—you probably remember this—that was just really outstanding. I mean Henry was a—

WA:

Horn professor.

GE:

Yeah, he was a Horn professor and he was the oldest Horn professor left.

WA:

He's still around. [Laughs]

GE:

He's still around. Yeah, he's in his nineties now and he's still got with it too. But he gave a very impassioned speech before this group of faculty when we were going to vote on Cavazos. This was the meeting for the decision to have a formal vote on him of no confidence.

DM:

Is this the meeting that was occurring at the same time of the board of regents meeting? It think I heard—

GE:

I don't think it was simultaneous with the board, no. In fact, I'm sure it wasn't. But Henry was a key player, and the other person who's no longer with us was William Mayer-Oakes, who was the chair of the anthropology department at the time.

DM:

I'm sorry, tell me that name again?

GE:

Mayer—hyphen—Oaks. O-a-k-e-s.

DM:

Okay.

GE:

William Mayer-Oakes.

DM:

William Mayer-Oakes. Okay.

GE:

And he had become—he was the vice president of the faculty senate and the guy who had been elected president of the senate from the law school—I'm trying to remember who it was now. He's also now dead—resigned. And I think he resigned because he didn't want to get involved in what was coming down the road and Mayer-Oakes took over and led the senate. Really did a good job of leading the senate.

WA:

Is he still around? Mayer-Oakes?

GE:

No, he's dead. He died five-six years ago.

DM:

It sounds like there were some really strong personalities on behalf of the faculty during this time, which is—

GE:

There were.

WA:

There were.

GE:

There were.

DM:

I mean is this one of the reasons that it actually came to the point of people being willing to take on the board of regents?

GE:

Well, I think that was part of it. I don't know if you would agree with this or not, but I think also faculty had changed. We were getting younger faculty coming in and they weren't influenced by the McCarthy era and that kind of stuff. They were much more willing to confront—

WA:

Authority.

GE:

Authority, yeah. And that sort of thing. So it was—there was a change in—

WA:

And many of them had gone through some sort of struggle to get tenure.

GE:

Yeah.

DM:

Here at Tech?

WA:

Yeah. And they thought, Well I don't want to do away with tenure at this.

DM:

Right. Right.

WA:

There was a change in faculty. It's true. I was trying to think of other people that would have been involved.

DM:

Yeah, that's interesting. That different perspective coming in and kind of feeding this willingness to stand up and—

GE:

Well Bill Conroy was involved in it and Harrigan was involved in it. But they were already in the administration, so they were limited.

WA:

But they had been faculty members and they had gotten tenure themselves, so they understood the importance of tenure.

DM:

Well, Harrigan, what was his position at that particular time? Was he a dean at that point?

GE:

He was, I think when—

WA:

First he was dean.

GE:

He was associate dean.

WA:

Associate dean. For one year or something like.

GE:

Yeah, and then Harrigan—I mean Conroy left and Harrigan became dean. He was dean for about a year and then he became the vice president for academic affairs when darling left.

DM:

So Harrigan was under Cavazos at that time? Okay. Interesting position, but he was still a bit outspoken at that point?

WA:

Well, I wouldn't say he was outspoken.

GE:

Yeah, I think he was a sympathizer.

WA:

And he got the ear of the regents. He got them to listen a little bit. So he said if—he told them—he said, “Look, we're not going to have any faculty here if we keep doing this. It'd be good to do it if other universities do it, but they're not doing it. So why should you do it?”

GE:

Harrigan is the kind of person who could go to regents and kind of deal with them on an equal basis. He was—I don't like to use this term, but I will—he was kind of a good ole boy. He could get along with them in that way.

WA:

He always had a joke. Tell jokes all the time.

GE:

Yeah.

DM:

So he was able to straddle the faculty and the board of regents.

WA:

Sure. Faculty trusted him.

DM:

That kind of fits the personality I've seen of Harrigan right there. Kind of a peace-maker, it seems like.

GE:

Yeah, should have been in the department of state. [Laughter]

DM:

He's in Austin now, right?

GE:

Yes.

WA:

I guess he's still alive, I don't know.

GE:

She's still alive, but she doesn't know it. She's got Alzheimer's. She doesn't even recognize him anymore.

DM:

Oh wow. Can you tell be about that meeting? Just kind of detail the atmosphere. Where you were meeting on the no confidence vote, and then talk a little bit about the fallout afterward. The media response and all of this.

GE:

I can't remember where we met. It was a big lecture hall, and I've kind of—maybe it was Biology.

WA:

It's somewhere where—I was thinking Biology.

GE:

Biology or Chemistry.

WA:

I think it was Chemistry, actually.

GE:

Yeah, Chemistry, the basement, there's a big lecture hall in the basement of Chemistry. It think that's where it was. I don't know who all was there, but it was probably—what would you think—a couple hundred?

WA:

Yeah. A lot of lawyers. They were talkers. [laughter] Lawyers was talkers.

GE:

And it was essentially whether to put the issue to a vote of the faculty. Of no confidence in Cavazos. This was over this whole business of having Darling write the new tenure policy without any input from faculty.

DM:

But this wasn't happening at the time of the board of regents meeting?

GE:

No, no, no. This was after the board meeting. It would have been a matter of probably, couple or three months, because Darling had to have time to write the new policy. And so that was what precipitated that this policy was presented to the faculty as a fait accompli.

WA:

"This is the way things are going to be."

DM:

Yeah, right.

GE:

"So take it or leave it."

DM:

They never sent it out as a general vote to the faculty? And at this point did most of the faculty—almost all of the faculty—participate in this vote, as far as you know?

GE:

It was about 80 percent. And I think the vote was about 80 percent. So you've got maybe two thirds of the faculty.

WA:

Voting no confidence.

DM:

Right. Right. Wow, that is pretty substantial. What about—I know that this hit the papers afterward. I think we have some of those articles, in fact.

GE:

Well, what I remember most about the—I think it was the meeting where we were deciding whether to vote no confidence—Cavazos came. You remember that?

WA:

No.

GE:

And he almost had tears in his eyes. You know, essentially, “Why are you picking on me?” kind of a thing. I think he was—

WA:

Well, if he'd said that, they'd have said, “Why are you picking on us?” [Laughter]

GE:

He was clearly deeply hurt by what was—what we were proposing to do.

DM:

Did the media respond on one side or the other?

GE:

I don't remember what the media were doing.

WA:

You know, actually Jack and I went to see him one time. I don't know if we told you that. I'm sure we did. Went to his office.

GE:

No, you probably didn't. I forgot it.

WA:

Talked with him about it.

DM:

You do mention that in your article. That y'all went and had a discussion. This was before the no confidence vote.

WA:

Yeah.

DM:

Well, what was your opinion at that time?

WA:

Here was a weak person, as far as I was concerned. He couldn't stand up to the board of regents. He had Darling, who was trying to change things. I think Darling got most of the blame for this, but we both left there feeling sort of sorry for him, but—

DM:

For Cavazos?

WA:

For Cavazos. But without—we couldn't do anything. He wasn't going to do anything.

GE:

Well, and I think you're right about most of it was Darling's doing. He drafted the policy.

WA:

Well, it was Darling with Bucy and the board of regents telling him to do it.

DM:

Those were the kingpins, then, on that side. They were Bucy and what? Workman, did you say? And then Darling. Okay.

GE:

Yeah, and I don't know. The other members of the board were much less public.

WA:

Yeah.

GE:

And so it's hard to know—

WA:

I couldn't even name them now.

GE:

--it's hard to know where they stood. But Workman and Bucy both made public statements, and they were very, very open about they just didn't believe in tenure.

WA:

"Get rid of all this deadwood," they called us.

DM:

So it was those three then? The two board of regents—the two regents and—

GE:

Darling.

DM:

--and Darling and then Phelan fell in and Cavazos fell in. Okay.

WA:

Cavazos was just doing what he was told. And Darling was happy to have him do what he was told.

DM:

Okay. Do you have any other thoughts on this tenure controversy? I know we have the two articles, we have the overview today, are there any key components?

GE:

Well, there's kind of funny quota to the Darling story, and that is that not too long after all this happened he went off to Michigan—to Mississippi State to be interviewed for their presidency. Somebody asked him about the tenure controversy at Tech, and he laid it all on Cavazos. There was a reporter from the Starkville newspaper there and so there was an article in the Starkville newspaper, and it got back here before Darling did. And the story was—this is rumor—that by the time Darling got back his office was empty and he'd been moved over to the college of business. [Laughter] But he was a tenured faculty member, so they couldn't fire him. [Laughter]

WA:

There's the irony there! [laughter]

DM:

Oh well, I need to find that article. It was, what, the Starkville newspaper?

GE:

Yeah, Starkville newspaper and it would have been probably '86, '85-'86. There is probably—you can probably go back through the *Avalanche Journal* and find something in there that would give you a tipoff on the date.

DM:

Yeah, I'll take a look at that.

WA:

Well, it'd have to be in '86 or something like that.

GE:

And I think that may be when Harrigan became vice—you know, Harrigan replaced him.

DM:

Right.

GE:

As an interim, and then—

WA:

It would have been before '86 then, maybe. A little bit before, '85.

GE:

Harrigan, if you could get Harrigan up here to talk, you probably already—

DM:

I have interviewed Harrigan and I think we touched a little bit on the tenure. You know, he had a lot to talk about in other areas.

GE:

I'm sure he did. [laughter] A whole lot.

DM:

All of his interim positions. What was he called?

GE:

“The Epitome of Interimity”.

DM:

[laughs] Love it. Anything else you can think of to add to the information we have on the tenure controversy?

GE:

Oh call me up about midnight.

DM:

Well, if you think of anything along the way let me know. We'll just turn the recorder on and get little snippets as we can.

WA:

Well, one thing we might say was Legal Action Association.

GE:

Oh yeah. Yeah.

WA:

That was an important thing.

GE:

That was very important.

DM:

Well, tell me about that.

GE:

Okay.

WA:

That's what got us—

DM:

Go ahead.

WA:

Well, go ahead.

GE:

Well, you started it. [Laughter]

WA:

It was important, the way it worked out. And what was important—everybody had to pay a hundred dollars and that got us associated with this group in—

GE:

Texas Faculty Association?

DM:

Okay. Okay.

WA:

And if we got enough money together they had some good lawyers. They could tie into the NEA lawyers. We had better lawyers in our university at that point. [Laughter] That was our thought. So anyway—

DM:

I remember. Yeah, I think you mentioned that in your article, in fact. Something about the legal possibilities that you could pursue.

GE:

Oh yeah, it was—

WA:

Yeah, we kind of had them in a bind there.

DM:

Everybody paid a hundred dollars?

WA:

Everybody paid a hundred dollars.

DM:

Every faculty member?

WA:

Everybody paid a hundred dollars that joined the Legal Action Association.

GE:

We had—

WA:

The good—

GE:

Go ahead. Go ahead.

WA:

Well the real secret was there weren't that many people that joined it. [Laughter]

GE:

I think it was a hundred and fifty or something like that.

DM:

A hundred and fifty people joined?

GE:

Faculty.

DM:

That's a pretty good—pretty good number.

GE:

But it still exists, although it's in the process of decommissioning itself because the members are all like Wendell and me. So it's—

WA:

When they finally resolve this, what to do with the Legal Action Association, because we had the money. So we decided to give scholarships. Yearly scholarships to students. They would write an essay and judge them, that sort of thing.

DM:

Golly, that's great. That's great.

GE:

Create an endowment for it.

WA:

That's been going on for years afterwards.

DM:

Wow. Wow. What was the AAUP's response immediately after the vote of no confidence?

WA:

The AAUP? The national organization or?

DM:

Yeah. Was there a response?

GE:

I don't think there was any.

DM:

Okay.

WA:

They didn't help us as I much as I was hoping for.

GE:

No, it was—

WA:

They came down and listened, but.

GE:

The AAUP and the NEA—

WA:

Yeah, NEA.

GE:

--were kind of competing for faculty. You know, quasi union kind of stuff. I mean, with the NEA it wasn't quasi. But the AAUP was trying to move in that direction too. And this Texas Faculty Association was the NEA's counterpart to the AAUP.

WA:

That's where we were going to get our lawyers, because the AAUP wasn't going to.

GE:

Yeah, and they were willing to pitch in and help because it would give them more status, you know.

DM:

Right. I see. Did you ever hear if there was any concern or worry on the part of the board of regents because they knew that faculty members were putting money into this?

GE:

I don't think so.

WA:

We didn't hear anything.

DM:

Surely information trickled.

GE:

Oh I'm sure they were aware of it.

WA:

Somebody showed them the newsletter that we were pulling out too, I'm sure.

GE:

Yeah. Yeah.

DM:

Well, just a very interesting chapter in Texas Tech history.

WA:

If you find those news, I'd like to look back at them.

GE:

I think I brought all that stuff over here, but I'll go back and double check.

WA:

I know I did. If you can find it for us I'm kind of curious about it.

DM:

Sure.

WA:

I'm sure Daniel would like to have a copy.

GE:

I'm sure he would. We had a great deal of fun putting that together.

WA:

He was just a kid.

DM:

And he was cartooning it?

WA:

He was cartooning. And right now he owns an art gallery up at Manhattan.

DM:

Wow! So this was his start.

WA:

His start. [Laughter]

GE:

It was while he was junior in high school?

WA:

Um-hm.

DM:

Oh isn't that something?

WA:

He went on and studied art here at Tech and went on up to New York almost **work** [1:14:34.4] for him staying up there, but he's still up there and has a going business, I guess.

DM:

There are some other underground newsletters or newspapers on campus. I don't know if it was in that same era or earlier.

GE:

It was earlier.

WA:

It was earlier.

GE:

You're thinking about the *Catalyst*, probably.

WA:

Yeah.

DM:

Yeah, know about the *Catalyst*.

WA:

Right. Have to check with Dick about that.

GE:

That was already gone by the time I got here.

DM:

Oh was it?

GE:

Started like '69, I think. You probably—

WA:

I didn't. Well, in '69 I just came in. Didn't know much.

DM:

I think we've got pretty good run on the *Catalyst*. Were there others that y'all ever heard about?

WA:

No.

GE:

I don't remember anything.

DM:

Okay. Okay. Anything else to add?

GE:

I think we've probably worn out your machine.

DM:

Well, you know, if something occurs to you at two a.m., you can give me a call. Maybe not at two a.m., though. [Laughs]

GE:

More likely send you an email.

DM:

There you go.

GE:

That's quieter.

WA:

Well, I can say I'm sort of proud of it. Faculty and their response. I would liked to have had more members in the Legal Action Association, but we had enough money.

GE:

No, but we had—you know—

DM:

There was some solidity there, wasn't there?

WA:

Uh-huh. There was.

GE:

Yeah, it was quite unusual to have that many faculty agreeing to stand up to the president. And I think what it tells you is the miscalculations that Cavazos and Darling had gotten involved in.

WA:

I often wonder if what would have happened if they'd continued on and we'd had a lawsuit, and what would have happened along the way. It would have destroyed the university.

DM:

It would have been problems. As it turns out your money went to a good cause.

GE:

Yep.

WA:

Thank goodness we didn't have to pay any lawyers. [Laughter]

DM:

That's right. Something to avoid, if possible. Anything else to add?

GE:

I don't think so. Have you ever interviewed Collins?

DM:

I think we have an interview with Collins, but it wasn't me that interviewed him. Is he still around?

GE:

No, he's living in Wisconsin.

DM:

Okay. A lot of history faculty moved up to Wisconsin. I think that's where Nelson went.

GE:

Well, Nelson is in Minnesota.

WA:

Nelson is in Minnesota.

DM:

Minnesota, is he?

GE:

And Bryan—

WA:

Blakely is in Wisconsin.

GE:

He and Jack are kind of neighbors up there.

DM:

Right. They were always friends.

WA:

Yeah.

DM:

Okay. Well, okay. I'll go ahead and turn this off then.

End of Recording



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