

“Green Mountain Chronicles”
Oral History Transcriptions, 1981-1989 (bulk: 1987-1988)
MSA 199 & 200

Introduction

This transcription is one of approximately 42 transcriptions of interviews with individuals conducted primarily in 1987 and 1988 in preparation for a radio program sponsored by the Vermont Historical Society entitled “Green Mountain Chronicles.”

Scope and Content

The transcriptions in this collection represent interviews of approximately 42 individuals conducted primarily in 1987 and 1988 by Mark Greenberg, Mary Kasamatsu, Eleanor Ott, and Tom Davis in preparation for a radio series entitled “Green Mountain Chronicles.” The series of 52 five-minute programs was broadcast by commercial and public radio stations throughout the state in late 1988 and early 1989. The earliest interview in the collection was conducted in 1981; the latest was in 1989.

The interviewers spoke with well known Vermonters such as Governors Philip Hoff, Deane Davis, and Madeleine Kunin; lesser known personalities such as Catherine Robbins Clifford, one of the first women to hike the entire length of the Long Trail; and historians such as Weston Cate. The following inventory of the collection highlights the major theme(s) of each interview. The following list of program tapes gives the title of each radio program.

The goal of the radio series was to tell the history of Vermont in the twentieth century using archival sound recordings and recent interviews. The project was undertaken by the VHS in celebration of its 150th anniversary in 1988 and was funded by a \$14,000 grant from the Vermont Council on the Humanities and Public Issues with additional support from New England Telephone Company.

MSA 199, Folder 0 contains background information on the project. The VHS website at www.vermonthistory.org/gmchronicles contains a list of the Green Mountain Chronicles radio broadcasts and audio files of those broadcasts.

Bishop Robert F. Joyce
July 29, 1987

Mark Greenberg
Interviewer

MG This is July 29, 1987 and I am speaking with Bishop Joyce in Burlington, Vermont for the Green Mountain Chronicle series for the Vermont Historical Society. To start things off so that I have this on tape Bishop Joyce. If you could just state, start a sentence with I am Bishop Joyce, however you wish to identify yourself and what your relationship was to the shall we call it the Novicoff case. Just a nice piffy little statement that we might be able to use. (Telephone ringing)

BJ Are you ready for me to start? This is Bishop Robert F. Joyce of Burlington. I have lived in Burlington a great part of my life having gone to the University of Vermont and graduated there. Served at the local cathedral for several years and have been back here now as Bishop for 15 years and 15 years in retirement. Do you want something about the Novicoff?

MG What was your official position in the ???

BJ I was a trustee of the University of Vermont from 1948 to 1954. And during that time, chiefly in 1953, I was greatly involved in the case of Alex Novicoff, Professor at the Univeristy College of Medicine. Not only as a member of the Board of Trustees, but when the committee of trustees and faculty was named to study the Novicoff case when it first came up, I was named Chairman of that committee. So I had considerable to do with the study of the circumstances of the case and coming to a decision about the final action the University would take. And I became very closely associated with Professor Novicoff personally you know from this investigation and from these studies we made of the committee and I have always had great admiration in regard for him and great sorrow that the University should release him and send him away, but very proud of the fact that the University later realized this was a mistake and invited him back to speak two or three times and finally gave him an honorary doctors degree with a great deal of ceremony and a great deal of honor paid to him. I was friendly with him and saw him from time to time after this, after these events were all over up until the time of his death and have very high regard for him personally and great respect for his principles as a scholar and as a citizen.

MG What were the circumstances as you recall of the case? If you could give some background about the times, ??? period?

BJ Yes, my relationship with him began during the McCarthy period in the early '50's when there was great fear of communism all over the country. And many people somewhat thoughtlessly it seems to me got greatly stirred up over the

fear of communist influence in our country. They began looking around for people that might be suspected of communists influence and went to many of the universities and looked up the careers of the people engaged in university work and found that while he was a student at City College or Columbia, I am not quite clear in my memory now, where he studied in New York, but he joined a communist club or a club that had communist association of some kind. That was enough to involve him and then they tried to call him before some investigative committees. I think something that came from congress or from the United States Government, I think. He was supposed to be called to testify and give information about colleagues who might have been with him in this communistic club in college. And he refused to testify. He wouldn't involve anybody else in this and because he refused to testify, this was charged against him as further indication that he was a communist activist and that he deserved serious investigation and very probable, probably should not be allowed to continue in teaching. So this matter was brought to the attention of the University of course too, and the University trustees. And when the matter came up before the trustees, the President, the name escapes me at the moment.

MG It's Borgman I believe.

BJ Borgman, a very fine man, named a committee of trustees and I think there were and they were also faculty members. The committee totalled 6 members. I can't quite remember distinctly the proportion. I think there were 3 trustees and 3 faculty members, all of whom were asked, this committee was asked to investigate his communist background and report to the Board of Trustees what their recommendations were and I was named Chairman of that committee. And we had a number of meetings. We had meetings with Novicoff himself. Inquired a great deal about him and about his background, his attitude toward this country. His attitude toward communism, attitude toward loyalty to his country, reasons why he would not name other people who might have been in the same club with him as a student. Well we investigated every phase of his life that we could think of and that we could find anything about. And we could find no association of real connection with communism except that he joined apparently just nominally this club as an undergraduate student. And having been an undergraduate myself and of us that are so likewise, we knew that undergraduates often sign up with any society, any organization that comes along, but many times not active members. And we tried to inquire into that with some degree of seriousness and couldn't find any trace of any communist activity on his part. There was record of his having joined

this student club, or this student association of some kind that did have communist leanings, but never could find any sign that he had been active in it or that he promoted it or followed it in any way. Then we also interviewed members of the faculty here at the University who had known him during his service here. He was still in service of course at that time. No sign of this of any kind. We interviewed students who had studied under him in the medical college and never find any sign of his showing any communist activity or sympathy or propoganda or speaking of it or promoting it in any sense. Then we made some investigations at his undergraduate years back in New York. As I say, I can't remember at the moment because of advancing age and failing memory. I can't remember which institution it was but made investigation there also about his life as a student and anything that could be learned about him since then. And we made what I think was a serious study about any sign of communism in his thinking, and his speaking and his acting. And we could find none. And the committee when it came to its final vote, voted 5 to 1 that we found nothing that would even permit rightly any action against him or any University ruling about his presence on our faculty and staff. The one person who voted against him was a trustee, but he had been serving in the legislature. He was a lawyer and serving in the Vermont Legislature. Following probably a little trend of the times, you know, the public servants would be very, very wary of communist and would have to be against them. In any case, the vote of the committee was 5 to 1 that no action should be taken and should in no case asked to resign or lose his tenure and his position at the University. This was fine at the moment, but when the Board of Trustees came to act on the Committee's report, we had something unusual occurred. The Governor of the State is Ex Officio, a member of the Board of Trustees. I never saw a Governor at a meeting of the Board except this one time that I am going to tell you about. The Governor never came. He was Ex Officio, but because it was a State University, I think that's why he was named an ex officio trustee, but normally never took an active part in its operation or never in my time as a member of the Board. But he came to the meeting at which this report of our Committee was to be submitted. He had been carried away, no doubt sincerely by the fear of communism at the time and he made some very eloquent speeches at the meeting against Novicoff and against communism. And very strongly advocating at least in connection with the University had to be broken because of communism. There was opposition to his views of course and I spoke myself very strongly about Novicoff's record and how we should retain him and pointed out too; I remember this much I didn't have any prepared speech. I don't have any notes about it, but I remember saying that nothing had been

found of communist association or activity on his part, but not only that, but the head of the university should protect and energize and direct and help people of Novicoff's standing and ability in research. We should protect men of learning and men who promote learning and promote research, protect and guard and promote them and help them, rather than persecute them or fiddle around about their private life unless there is something wrong with it, which we could not find in his case. But the Governor and the feeling of that time, you know the McCarthy spirit of that day prevailed and the Board by quite a considerable majority, at least the majority and I think a fairly large one, voted to end his tenure and his association with the University.

MG A number of questions that what you just said bring to mind. What was the atmosphere in Vermont at that time? This case as part of it, but in our research really, this is the only public case that we see of early manifestation of McCarthyism in Vermont. Was there much of an impact for people aware of what was going on with the army McCarthy trials greatly watched the way say the Iran Contra hearings are today?

BJ I don't think so. I don't remember getting excited about it at all or feeling that our people were greatly disturbed. Vermonters are rather conservative type. I am sure there were many Vermonters that were touched by McCarthyism, but I don't think it was a fever. I don't think that there was great ??? fervor in interest in acting against communism. I don't think it was a stirring issue. Of course this case brought it to public attention. This was publicized at the time it was going on of course and the Governor taking so strong a stand and this of course being well publicized, I am sure there was sympathy with his attitude. I'm sure when a majority of the responsible people who are trustees at that time and having to do with the University's management, I'm sure there would be some you know who would be carried away with the McCarthy spirit. But I don't think it was a powerful spirit in Vermont. I don't think there was great excitement about the danger of communism. I don't recall that there was. That of course is some 34 - 35 years ago and I can't clearly picture the atmosphere of that time, but I don't think it was an outstanding part of our Vermont atmosphere.

MG Who brought this matter of Professor Novicoff's affiliations to the attention of the University?

BJ I think through some Federal, I think because of the fact that he had refused to testify against others. To name others who had been in this student organization with him.

You know some of the McCarthy activists were investigating the careers and the background of anybody that they could find their name associated with communist organizations. So I think it came from, my idea would be that it started in Washington. Not necessarily with the Federal official Federal organization but with McCarthy and others that he must have organized to promote his great fight you know against communism everywhere.

MG The research that we've done and the notes I have here indicate that again and it was Governor Emerson who approached President Borgman of UVM to convene the faculty committee and I wonder whether this was the Governor's idea or whether in fact he may have been receiving, there may have been pressure upon him from McCarthy's people or the FBI. Do you know anything?

BJ Yea, I couldn't say no. I never have known that. See I didn't live in Burlington at the time. I lived in Rutland about 70 miles from here. And was not intimately associated with the University. I am a graduate myself at the University and very devoted and grateful alumnus, so I have always been close to the University. But not living in Burlington at that time, I, my association then was chiefly as a trustee. But all the meetings which I attended very faithfully and followed the committees of the University unusually closely of course during those years.

MG You just made I think a very eloquent reference to your defense of Professor Novicoff in the second round of votes after the 5 to 1 vote. Would it have mattered if he were a communist?

BJ Boy, I hadn't thought about that. Let me stop and think and see if I can see. If he was an active communist, probably. I am sure it would have at that time at least have had an effect. I don't think it would have had any serious effect upon me, because I never felt that we were in danger from them. I knew that they were active around and people were being carried away with the idea of everything being reformed and everybody being on the same plane, but I wouldn't dare to say whether if he had been a communist whether the action would have been different. If we knew that he was a communist, we would have had to report that. If we found that, we would have to report that to the trustees and I don't remember every thinking what I would have done if that were the case, because I was not myself at all disturbed by the fear of communism. So I really couldn't say how I would have felt because I don't think I ever was fearful of communism. Whether I would have gone along with the possibility of such a person influencing our

young people. I can't say, because I can't recall facing that at that time.

MG Who was the descending vote on that 5 to 1?

BJ His name was Brown. I can't think of his first name. He came from Brandon, Vermont. He was a lawyer there. Had been a legislator and maybe was at the time, I am not sure. But had been at least in the Vermont Legislature. And being in public life, you know, and feeling perhaps the necessity of or being influenced by public opinion and public fever, I always felt then that he was a good man. I liked him personally. He had been on the Board with me for 3 or 4 years before. I am not just sure of his motivation or his feelings, but apparently he feared that he was enough of a communist to not to favor his retention.

MG Um, I just had a question, it just slipped right out of my mind. Perhaps we can get back to it. You said you came to know Professor Novicoff?

BJ Yes.

MG You hadn't known him before all of this?

BJ Never knew him, never heard of him.

MG Can you give me a description of him? What kind of man he was?

BJ Yes, he was a very quiet, not an unusual person. I think typical of a deep thinking person who would not impress you extraordinarily. He was a likable person to meet, not high strung or not very strong in opinions, reasonable man whose opinions seemed to be done rationality and has judgment about life and problems of life seemed to be very logical and natural one. And not an extremist as far as I could see in any way. And I got to know him personally much better later. Everytime he has been in Burlington, he has always, we have had a visit together and have corresponded two or three times a year right along until his death. So I found him a very balanced man. Always deeply concerned; I was deeply convinced of his concern about research. He was dedicated to his work. Dedicated to being a researcher in medicine and working for the welfare of human beings and not concerned about politics and not all worked up about every movement going on around him. A truly academic man and a good sense of academic that he was totally devoted to his work, but still a very normal, likable human being. And I was so much impressed I had never been deeply concerned about research but when this thing, when I became involved

in this, I began to realize what a contribution people at universities, teaching and researching, what a contribution they make to the world. A contribution that is often unrecognized. You probably know that he was candidate a few years ago for one of the nobel prizes. I don't know which one. I can't, I just heard this. I never investigated and found out the details, but I know that he has made such a name that the Einstein University that and in his research that he was considered for one of the nobel prizes. So I think this is typical of a description of him. That he was a man dedicated very very fully to his profession and to his work and that there was no indication that that dedication or other associations had any influence on his life as an American.

MG What was his reaction to all of this? How did it effect him personally?

BJ I think it was a great blow to him because I think for 1 or 2 years, he, I don't know what he was doing. Of course, he lived, I think he moved away from here when this happened. I am not sure about this. We didn't become close friends at that time you know until after he was very grateful that I was on his side. Of course, every time he came to Burlington, but I can't say whether he stayed in Burlington for a few months or not, but I think for a year or nearly two years maybe he didn't make the connection at Einstein. I don't know, I couldn't tell you what he did. I don't think I have ever heard or thought. I probably knew at the time, but I don't remember it. I didn't become closely associated with him, I mean, as a personal friend until after the affair was over. He was always very grateful, so he always came to see me when he'd be here in town. So he was just another, he was just a person whose case was before us in which I judged about it only on the evidence that we could find, and not from, not from personal friendship. I had known him before the thing came up. Not heard of him I guess even.

MG After you did become friends, did he ever speak about what had happened and his feelings about it or how it affected his life and family?

BJ No, I don't think in detail. He was always very grateful and very happy that he as so fine an association down at Einstein. I think, as I said, I think he was very happy there and enjoyed his work. As I say, he must have made an unusual mark to have been involved in Nobel Prizes. When he came here to Burlington, to speak at the universities, he did two or three times at the University's invitation, we always had a visit and he seemed to very very happy. He had

married I think in the meantime after leaving here. He may have been married then, but I couldn't say. But I think he had a new marriage, either by death or divorce, I don't know, I couldn't say, but my impression is that this was his second marriage after he went to Einstein and he seemed to be very happy. I met his wife one or two times with him. And he appeared to be very happy in his home life as well as in his life at Einstein.

MG Aside from the impact, the personal injury if you will to Professor Novicoff, what do you think, what lessons might there be from this case or what ramifications are there from these sorts of investigations and dismissals?

BJ Well, I think it would be much less likely that these things would come up, at least on the grounds that were used then in these days. Although, as you know, around the country the faculty members are becoming more and more inclined to go to law if they are losing their tenure or not being reappointed if they don't have tenure. They have some cases pending here now at the University. People, not on political grounds as far as I know, I just read about it in the newspapers. I'm not closely involved in it now. Sometimes it is a matter of ??? personal relationships in the faculty, charges of one thing or another here and I hear about them occasionally around the country. Everybody now as you know doubt realize goes to law. We are having all kinds of appeals to the first court and then going to a court of appeals, then to Supreme Court and then sometimes to Federal Court. And this is, I think this is going about universities, about people suing in courts if they lose their position on a faculty or lose their tenure. We are having some here at this present time.

MG At the time of the Novicoff affair, however, I'm sure you had, well you seem to have had a strong feeling about what this would, the unfairness to this man personally, but what I am trying to zero in on here, what feelings you may have had then or what perceptions you may have had about what the kind of McCarthy investigations on the Federal level, State level and the University level, what those meant in terms of our society?

BJ Oh I think it was one of those fevers that occasionally occur. I don't know why so many people would be aroused at that time about communism. I don't remember ever fearing it. I mean fearing its influence on us. I really couldn't say except that I think that universities have to have a certain degree of independence. We can't be, I don't think universities actions can be judged by the people in the same way as the university itself would judge them, because the

average person is concerned about a university as a place where you get training for a profession and for a lifetime of work. The fact that retreat, or that, what's the word, research, that research and teaching and freedom to investigate theories and knowledge, understanding of history and of the meaning of life and the purpose of life, that's an aim, that's an obligation of universities. The average person is concerned about you know his own life and his own success. So sometimes the aim of an individual person in regard to universities is, differs from the aim of the university itself which is not just to provide individuals with training for life, but to stand before the world for eternal principles of teaching and of learning and of study and of retreat, research and setting standards of study that the ordinary person would never be engaged in. You know the average student at a university is not engaged at all in research and won't be. It is only a fraction, tiny fraction of the number who follow-up their education beyond preparing themselves for some walk in life.

MG Did you feel, do you feel that these kinds of investigations are a danger to the democratic system to our social fabric?

BJ I don't think the investigations are. I think when questions arise, it causes a flurry. When movements start, you know, it causes a flurry certainly but I don't think its any serious threat to the life of the universities or to the life of the country.

MG I see from what I have read that the main descenters other than yourself seem to have been mostly members of the clergy. Bishop Veter Van Dyke, Methodist Minister Mr. Buckline, Rabbi Wall and several faculty members. Was there a shared feeling among these clergy men? Did each reach a independent point that just happened to coincide with the others or was this more than just coincidence?

BJ This is something that I didn't know about. I didn't realize until maybe it is in some of those clippings. See I was living away from Burlington, 70 miles away. I didn't know that there had been a petition signed as one of those clippings says by sixteen clergymen. I didn't know that until, or if I knew it, it completely passed out of my mind. It is very possible that I might have known it at the time it happened, but I wouldn't be reading the Burlington paper back in those days. I ??? the main paper for the southern part of the state was the one I used to read then; the Rutland Herald which you must know about of course. So I can't remember ever knowing until yesterday or the day before reading some of those clippings in that file I have on Novicoff that there was a petition by other clergymen

about him. Maybe my stand which of course was publicized at the time, my stand may have brought the thing to their attention more vividly than it would, then normally would have been the case. Or maybe just the newspaper reports and the fact that there was defense of Novicoff and that I had a part in it may have stirred other clergymen to give it thought. Normally, I think, I don't remember any occasion when clergymen, when the number of clergymen here in Burlington have taken publicly a stand on some issue that before the public. Individual clergymen, of course, have many times, but I don't remember any collective group such as we had on that occasion and I don't remember knowing it at the time it happened. Probably I did, but I don't recall it now.

MG I am going to stop the tape for a second. I want to gather some ambience here.

BJ Fine.

MG Okay, that should be good. Was there any pressure brought to bear on you to change your position?

BJ No, no, I don't think anybody ever, certainly nobody ever pressured me. I don't remember any great comment. I know there were many who were very pleased in my stand and it has been said ??? some of it was public, some newspaper writers have said and I am not sure that this is true, that at the end I stood alone in his favor. I don't recall that happening. I remember making a very strong defense of him and I recall some meeting of the trustees in which I had to leave before it was finished. I had a speaking engagement somewhere outside of Burlington and had to leave the meeting before it was completely finished, but I took time to make very clear my stand and I was very happy about certain circumstance in my life at that time. I had already been in the military service. I served as an army chaplain during World War II and had been three years in the army and served overseas as well as in this country. So I remember saying in my final talk the day I had to leave the meeting before it was ended, that I was very grateful, I was very grateful to have served my country in the military service, but most grateful now that nobody could claim that I was an anti-communist or that I was supporting communism. The fact that I had layed my life on the line just a very few years before and my country service would give pretty good indication that I was not a communist or communist sympathizer.

MG Was the church supportive of your stance?

BJ The church never took any stand on it. Nobody ever blamed

me. Nobody ever found any fault. In fact, I got very little criticism one way or the other. I mean I got very little that I knew about. There may have been, some people may have been very, very positive maybe, suspecting me, I don't know, but I never became personally involved. I mean, it was never a problem for me or a worry for me or a source of difficulty for me to have taken the stand I did and to have been involved in it. I know many people of course were very pleased, but I don't remember hearing and getting letters. I may have had some, but I don't remember any letters or any unfavorable action toward me by anybody because of it.

MG How significant did this case loom in the public eye at the time? Was it a major case causing headlines and a lot of broadcasts, or was it just something that sort of passed by unnoticed?

BJ I don't think so. You will find in the, I didn't realize and forgotten, you will find in that file with those clippings, a clipping from the New York Times. At least the Times had something to do about it and mentioned my name in defending him and I guess mentioned the Governor's action coming to the Board of Trustees. It must have had influence, it must have influenced people outside of Vermont, but you see there was so much of this McCarthyism going on around the country that this may not have been an unusual case. It involved a professor, it didn't involve anybody in public life and Novicoff wasn't so well known then as he is now in research, and educational circles, because he was still a rather young man.

MG What about in Vermont? Was there an impact much notice in Vermont?

BJ There must have been. I never read at that time any paper except the Burlington Free Press. I read the New York Times all my life until fairly recent years. At that time, I am quite sure I read the Times every day. As I say, there is a clipping in there showing that the Times, somewhere had reference to the matter. I couldn't say really whether it was, got nationwide attention or not. I would be surprised if it did because this kind of thing was going on you know around the country.

MG And Vermonters weren't discussing it everywhere. It wasn't...

BJ You see, we are a small state and I couldn't say that there was any great public attention about it. I would be surprised if there was because of the fact that this

movement was not confined to Vermont at all.

MG I am going to turn this tape over. Okay continuing with Bishop Joyce. Bishop Joyce, maybe I could use a little background about you. Where you were born and tell me a little bit about your life.

BJ I was born in Proctor, Vermont. Went through the public schools there. Came to the University in 1913 and graduated in 1917. I don't know whether this is of any interest, but when I came to the University, I was planning to be a chemist. I had liked chemistry very well in high school. I was young. I became 16 early in my freshman, I became 17 rather early in my freshman year and finished high school at 16. Not much experience in planning my life, so having liked chemistry in high school, I started here to be a chemist. My first two years, I followed a full chemistry course. All sciences, physics, chemistry, biology, advanced mathematics, because some of them called it chemistry engineering. You had to take advanced mathematics, mechanical drawing. So my first two years, I was immersed in that kind of study. But I knew then, by that time and I was getting a little older, I knew I didn't want to deal with things or spend my life in a laboratory, but I wanted to deal with people. And I was thinking about teaching, which was very common for men at that time for college graduates to teach. I was thinking about journalism. I was editor of the college paper at the University and associated with that and the place where it was printed, the Burlington Free Press and got to know a number of people down there and the priesthood. And all during my junior year, this was, I was debating this you know, thinking about it, praying about it and toward the end of the year, I sought some counsel and learned a very valuable thing that I have used all my life. The priest with whom I was consulting about it after several times talking with him said to me "I think this is where you belong, the priesthood where you will be happy". But he said not to have to debate the thing forever and forever and keep considering it and studying it, why not assume that it is settled. I think this is where you belong. Assume it is settled, not making any promise to anybody, even to yourself. Assume it is settled and see how you feel, see if you find any reason to be uncomfortable or to change your mind or have any doubt about this tentative assumption of settled matter. And it turned out that this was a very fine piece of advice and in fact I never in my life have had any question since. And I have used this many times all my life long as a priest in advising people about marriage, about jobs, about education, about everything. Study the matter and debate it and seek counsel. Make an assumption that something is settled and if you find the decision

satisfactory, it's not what you want, you've made no commitment to anybody if you change your mind to start over again. And I never known a day since that time back in 1916, that was the end of my junior year, that I wish I was something else besides being a priest. It has been a very happy and satisfying life.

MG Did you pay much attention to politics, social developments?

BJ No, no I don't think I have ever been a national figure. I have, I read them and follow them, but I am not an ardent democrat or republican. I vote all the time and believe in government and believe in public life and have taken an active life in the civic life of places where I have lived where I have been pastor in several places in Vermont and of course later as bishop for the diocese, for the whole state. I have never been, that has not been my chief interest, no. My chief interest has been the church and religious and moral issues. And I have very close association with all kinds of people. My association has been not only with Catholics, but a great many with Protestants and with many many Jewish people. I have had very close friendships in both Rutland and Burlington with Jewish people and Jewish Synagogues. I was just at Rabbi Wall's retirement party about two or three weeks ago. I've known him ever since I have been in Burlington.

MG When you were asked to serve on the panel for the Novicoff case, were you familiar with what was going on at the time?

BJ No, no I might possibly have read about it, but I would be surprised if the Rutland Herald would have known anything about it until it became an issue. No, I don't think I had ever heard of it until this came up at a trustees meeting the first time and when the matter was brought up before the trustees and the president appointed a committee. Then of course, that's when I first became involved.

MG Our research has also indicated you were the lone descender in the final vote.

BJ I couldn't say that. It may be true. I can't say that it isn't true. I don't remember that there was some vote when everybody was against it except myself.

MG Was there any form of pressure that was brought to bear on you or other trustees to change your mind?

BJ Not on me, no.

MG What would you think would account really for the other, at

first it would have seemed to have been a 14 to 8 vote and then I guess became 21 to 1?

BJ I don't remember. Yea, I have no memory of that happening. I would be surprised if that is true. The Rutland Herald, do you know Bob Mitchell by any chance?

MG No, no.

BJ He was owner and editor of the, owner at least of the Rutland Herald for many many years. And he wrote something, and one of the first clippings in the file, somebody sent it to me from Rutland. I don't read the Rutland Herald now. He mentions that I stood alone, but he doesn't give any proof of ever saying what occasion. It seemed to me that after the, I don't remember the thing coming up at trustee meetings after the decision to, not to keep him. It probably did because there must have been discussion and there must have been reactions of some kind afterward, but I don't recall that.

MG The main ??? in changing peoples minds according to what you said before, seems then to have been the intercession of the University President and the Governor?

BJ The Governor.

MG The Governor.

BJ I think the University President tried to remain neutral. I think he was not trying to influence. I don't know personally. I have often wondered. Dr. Borgman was a fine man. I still exchange Christmas greetings with him once a year.

MG Is he still in this area?

BJ No, he is way out in Boulder, California, or Boulder, Colorado I should say. I don't remember his stand clearly. I think that he would be against. I have an impression, but I wouldn't say that this is a fact that he was not for keeping Novicoff. Not whether that was a strong personal feeling or whether it was not to antagonize public feeling and hurt at the University or expose the University to criticism and hostility. I think he was a very evenly, even judging man and avoiding controversy as much as he could without failing to have conviction and express them. But I don't recall his taking positive feeling strong stands for or against Novicoff. I don't remember that. Now you know as I tell you I am 90 years old and nearly 91, so memory has slipped quite considerably in recent years. But the

impression I have is that he was trying to be as President of the University, trying to be neutral, leave the decision to the trustees and to the people who were necessarily involved.

MG Did the committee interview Professor Novicoff himself?

BJ Yes.

MG What was that like? Can you describe the interview?

BJ No, I can't remember the details of it except that we were impressed with him. He is a very honest man. Not a radical, not a man concerned more than the average person would be about public affairs. Concerned about his dedication to research and study. I was impressed with him as a nice person and a person who would be a great influence and a great value to the University. I don't mean that he is a softy or he didn't have opinions, didn't have ideals to labor for, but they were not concerned primarily about political life, concerned primarily about medical research.

MG As I understand it, the main issue was that he refused to speak to this, that he refused to name names before this Federal investigating committee?

BJ That's right.

MG Can you recall what his rational, what his reason was for that refusal?

BJ Well I suppose he, I suppose I am not sure that he ever said this, I don't recall, but I suppose he, knowing that he was innocent himself, you know that he was not a communist and not promoting communism, that he felt for him to name other people who had joined this student society as students do you know join up to almost anything that he didn't want to get them involved as he himself was. And feeling probably that they were as innocent of communist connections or communist activity as he was that he refused to endanger their lives and their security. I mean, I don't mean somebody would kill them, but would endanger their careers anymore than he himself had suffered.

MG Just take a second to look through your file to see if there is anything that catches my eye. If there anything that you, that I haven't touched on that you feel we ought to know about?

BJ I don't think so.

MG Was he bitter about what happened when, in later years when he came back for example?

BJ No, no, no, no he was typical too of a man who was so dedicated you see that he didn't become bitter. He must have suffered something immediately after he lost his position here because I think it was a year or two before he got established at Einstein. I don't know what he did in the meantime. I can't remember whether he continued living here. I never was at his home. You know, never knew him before this thing came up and I don't think knew him anymore after it occurred until he got settled again in life and often times he expressed his gratitude to me. I think the general reaction of anybody associated with the University is sorry that it happened. The University made a mistake at the time and certainly has made amends for it since. I am not sure this, I'm not against it. It is something I would be very proud of, not proud of the fact that everybody, the entire Board and everybody finally was against him except myself. I wouldn't be proud of that. I am proud of the fact that I stood by him until the end. I have no memory of a final vote of 21 to 1. It has been said several times that I stood alone to the end, but I doubt, I question at least whether that, whether there was any official point like that. I can't remember any such thing like that.

MG Okay. Are there other people whom you could recommend my speaking with? I have an appointment this afternoon to speak with a Mr. Lamdon and I just came across a clipping in your file with a letter from him to the Free Press.

BJ Lamdon, yea I don't recall who he is? Who is he?

MG I believe he was another faculty member; at least a friend of Mr. Novicoff's. I think he was one of the people instrumental in bringing, in getting the honorary degree for him.

BJ I think I remember he calling me on the phone several months ago and said he was going to come and call on me. I think he is on the University faculty still or in the Research Department. But I don't, I can't place him as a person that I know, but I am quite sure that is the man that called me and said that he remembered my connection with Novicoff and he wanted; he called to see me, but I don't think that has ever happened yet.

MG Were you, you must have been I'm sure aware of Senator Flanders denunciation of Senator McCarthy?

BJ Yes.

MG How did you feel about that?

BJ Oh I felt very sympathetic toward it. It was in total agreement with my own feeling. Flanders was not a politician you know. He was an industrialist, but somehow, I don't know how he stepped into public life. He came from Springfield, Vermont which used to be a great, for this part of the country, quite sizable in machine tool industry center. And he was very active and prominent in that. How he got into public life, I don't know except that he had been so successful and such a public spirited man I guess in industrial life that his name became known.

MG Did you know him at all?

BJ I have met him just, I have never, I don't think I ever had the conversation with him, not that I recall.

MG There are a few other people who might figure in the series, so I am just going to ask you about them in case you knew any of them and have anything to say. Senator Flanders is one, Governor Aiken is another.

BJ Oh, he and I were very close friends, but I don't remember ever discussing that matter with him. I couldn't say what his stand was on them either. No.

MG Do you remember his speech during the Vietnam war here in Washington about the war?

BJ I don't no.

MG Can you give me a description, your impression of Governor Aiken as a man, as a politician?

BJ Yea, he is a very common sense man. His judgments in Vermont are very highly respected. Not because he was a great sensational politician, but because he had common sense. He was not a man that was highly educated. Was raised on the land in Vermont. And his living was made on the land, not as an ordinary farmer, but some special kind of farming or land use. A man almost universally respected in Vermont and beyond. You probably know his famous statement about the war in either Vietnam or Korea, I'm not sure which one. But he said, "What we ought to do is withdraw and say we were very proud of our victory". Of course we would like to withdraw and claiming that we were victorious that our work was finished, something to that

affect. Well many people have spoken since you know about the common sense and the practical approach to some big problems.

MG Yes that was the speech that I was referring to before. It was I believe Vietnam he was talking about.

BJ Well I think Vermonters, including myself, have thought this was a great common sense approach. I'm not an avid student of national affairs. I don't want to call myself at all experienced in it and I have never have known for sure for myself what we should have done in Vietnam. And these matters like going to a doctor, you don't make decisions about what the doctor decides he should have to do and so and these national questions of whether we should be in Vietnam and Korea, I've never had strong opinions because I never had studied the situation deeply enough. I was so much involved in my own dedication to spiritual and moral work that I was engaged in that I tried to devote myself completely to that and not try to be familiar with every problem that faced the world.

MG Let me try a few other names on you. You would have been a young man at this time, but we are looking for people who have any recollections of Calvin Coolidge.

BJ Yes, I met him. I met him at the White House to shake hands with him. I have great regard for him. I don't think he was an extraordinary man, but he had a lot of common sense. I thought he was a very human person in spite of his rather cold exterior you know and not a man who would inflame people warmly or hostilely. When his son died, I think he said all the glamour of the White House went with my son, something to that effect. So I felt he was a very human man. Very much like the rest of us and became President as you may remember rather unexpectedly. He took a very strong stand in the police strike in Massachusetts and got national prominence by it. I don't think he had been in public life except as Governor of Massachusetts, Mayor of his home city. But I have always admired him.

MG What were the circumstances that brought you to the White House?

BJ A visit to Washington. My first vacation in Washington. I was ordained in the priesthood at that time, but I was principal of the Cathedral High School here in Burlington and a working member of the staff at the Cathedral. At the Easter vacation, one of the Easter vacations of the school, I went to Washington alone. I had friends in Washington however. In those days, the President used to have on

certain days a reception. You go to the White House and the President would be standing some place and you would go through the line and he would shake hands with you and you would go on. That's all. That all the meeting I had with him. But I have been down to where he used to live and where his son was buried. I can't think of the name of the little town.

MG Plymouth

BJ Plymouth, yes. I have been in Plymouth and through Plymouth a number of times in my life. You see I've had to travel all over the state the years as Bishop. That's not too far from my home. So my meeting was he didn't know me anymore than anybody else. Just a line of people.

MG Okay. What about John Dewey?

BJ John Dewey, I didn't know

MG The educator?

BJ I didn't know him. I knew about him. Learned quite a little about him when I was a trustee at the University because he had Burlington connections. Wasn't his wife, or his parents from Burlington. I am a little vague. He had some connections here in Vermont, somehow. I know very little about him. I have known of his life when he was active, but never met him and read except casually of his work.

MG What about Consuelo Northrup Bailey, the first woman to ???

BJ Yes, I knew her. I knew her husband. Her husband was in college with me. He was ahead of me. I knew him and knew her. I knew her until her death, but never intimately. I have great, high regard for both of them.

MG Do you remember when she was elected and what that was like to have a woman elected as Lieutenant Governor?

BJ No, no.

MG I believe it was way back in 1954, which is amazing to think about.

BJ It is. Yea, I don't remember any specialty about that. '54, that's the same time as the Novicoff, just after it. Let's see, I was still in Rutland in 1954. That year I was named Bishop, not for the whole diocese but auxiliary Bishop and a couple years later Bishop for the whole diocese. So I

was very active and busy with new, some new changes in my own life at that time so I don't remember anything special about that time or about her or her husband. More about her husband. I remember an interesting thing about him. He graduated from the University in 1915, two years ahead of me and became a lawyer. I suppose he went to law school, I don't recall. But he comes from Winooski, which is a French-Canadian town and at that time, I suppose, 90% or 85% of its population were French, French-Canadian origin background and all Catholics. But he helped organize the city, as a city. It had just been a town before and he was elected by those people as their first mayor. There was no religious question raised or anything of that kind, but he had been so active and so devoted in bringing about the chartering it up as a city and all the legal business that had to be done that they named him the first mayor and I guess he was a very good one. But there was certainly no religious angle involved.

MG Okay, I think we have pretty well covered what I needed to cover for now. It may be that I will be back in touch with you if I see in listening over this or reading the transcript that there was a hole and that I am missing something, but I think we really covered a lot of territory. So before I turn off the tape recorder, I am going to record another minute of the sound of the room.

BJ Sure.

MG I will do that now.