

Edwin Caldwell
Tape 3 of 7
May 30, 2000

RG: This is Bob Gilgor interviewing Edwin Caldwell at 107 Caldwell Street on May 30th, 2000. Good morning, Ed.

EC: Good morning.

RG: I want to go back and revisit two things that you said to me. One of them was that when you were stopped by the police and handcuffed as a young man for a traffic violation, that you knew that you'd get beaten with a rubber hose. And yesterday after we turned the tape off, you said something to me about distrust, African American distrust of the police. And I wonder if you would discuss that, tell me what, what your feelings are about that.

EC: Well, throughout history you know, an African American has really had a mistrust of the police, mainly because the police have abused. And this is something that your parents warned you against, this is things that you knew about. I've known several cases where the police took someone in and they beat them, you know. The rubber hose didn't leave the kind of bruise marks and so forth. So you know, you knew that if you got carried in, this was something that was going to happen. One of the things as you begin to look, traditionally, is the kind of persons that the police used to hire. I think it's a stereotype of Smokey and the Bandit that the police used to hire, especially in Chapel Hill-Carrboro, mainly in Carrboro, persons off the farm, not very much education, and this gave them a sense of power. Since that time the, after the um, the, back in the '60s where we had the integration, the police made a better effort of who they were recruiting. They did a much better job of giving the police training. And so as you begin to look at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill began to have a very good police department, and that was mainly because of the criticisms that they got during the civil rights movement and the kind, and the fact that the police had to interface with students. But if, you knew that if you went into other communities, you just didn't challenge the police, you know, you had to be very subservient, you know. Whatever they said, you said yes sir or whatever. Mainly so that you could get away. But that was just sort of a known fact. Now you did every once in a while run into a good policeman. You know, but you cringed at the fact that you were stopped by the police. I was stopped as a, just before retirement, I was a sixty-some year old man, I was stopped by the police in Raleigh. I knew the way he put his hat on and he strutted up to the car that I was in trouble, okay. I didn't think that he was going to beat me, but I knew that he was going to give me a ticket. I didn't really know whether or not to get out of the car or sit in the car. My thing was to get out of the car to show that I didn't have anything in my hand, 'cause I don't really want to be shot by the police, because there have been cases of African Americans shooting police, mainly out of fear or out of stupidity or whatever, but the African Americans really fear the police. So I got out of the car, you know, to show that I had nothing in my hand, and he very discourteously said

get back in the car, you know. I don't know if he called me a boy, but I really felt no respect whatsoever. I immediately went down and talked to the people at the Raleigh Police Department, but they pretty much went along with their policeman. It's sort of a, I don't know, they stick together. And this was a black sergeant that I talked to, but he took the position of defending his patrolman. I had planned to go back to court, I just felt that I needed to go back, and it slipped my mind because I was working and that sort of thing. But we were always warned from your parents never, ever, you know, challenge the police. Let me give you an incident that, when I was 12, Dinwiddie, Virginia was a speed trap, okay. If you were going through and you were African American or you were anybody, they pulled you. That's the way they made their money for the city. Well, as a 12-year-old boy, we were pulled. We were moving my uncle back to Chapel Hill. Well my uncle filled the cop full of his prize alcohol, and during those days you weren't supposed to carry but so many quarts across the border, or you were considered bootlegging. And at that time there was rationing, and the cop stopped us because, you know, we were sitting too high up on the back seat, me and my cousin, you know. So he asked us to get out and he went through and he found the alcohol. He was really looking for gasoline. And he took us to jail in Dinwiddie, they confiscated the car. They put my uncle in jail, and they were getting ready to put me, my cousin and my father in jail. Well, my father had the right of one telephone call, so he said I want to make my telephone call. Well he called the Secretary of the Army, who was, whose name was Kenny Royal, that I mentioned to you before. Well the judge, I mean well, let me explain a little bit more, that the person who pulled you over also changed hats and he became the judge. You know, and he tried to right there, and well my father called the Secretary of the Army, and it so happened that he was in. And he came on, he said I have a collect call from Edwin Caldwell, you know. He said to his secretary, and his secretary said, I'll take it. And so he said Eddie, what's wrong, you know, and my father explained to him that we were in jail at Dinwiddie, and so he said, put the guy on the phone. And it so happened that the judge and Secretary Royal were friends, and had gone to school at the University of North Carolina, and law school, and whatever. And they started talking, and they immediately, you know, were told to put us on a bus and me and my cousin and my father were put on the bus and we traveled back to Chapel Hill. They kept my uncle in jail, I guess as collateral. I don't know why they kept him. But my father went back and he had to buy his car back at auction, you know. So he tells that story, and I have a tape, you know. And that's a true story. And they just couldn't believe that here is this black man that would know the Secretary of the Army. But I've been stopped in Virginia and other places, and I was always very subservient. You just don't challenge the police, okay. One of the things now, with so many Hispanics coming in who don't understand the language, the police give these orders and they don't understand. What they're finding out now is that they're going to have to have interpreters, because I would imagine Hispanics must also fear the police. And whether or not they have their green cards, or whatever. So they panic, and whatever. I heard that on the news. So I would imagine Hispanics and blacks also feel pretty much the same way. That's pretty much it.

- RG: Um, I wanted to get into one other area that you mentioned yesterday, but make it part of another question. What I'd like you to do is tell me about the jobs that you had and the ethnic interactions, and how you have seen that change over the years. But you have mentioned how the black man needs to act yesterday, and somewhere in there could you cover that as well?
- EC: I know it's been my case, you really can't come across as being too smart and bright. It's very threatening to whoever you may work for. That happened, I guess when I went to Chemstrand, I had a supervisor that was a Duke graduate, he really felt himself, I had been doing most of the work so I became very familiar with what we were doing and that sort of thing, as far as the research. And on a couple of occasions, you know, I got my voice right or whatever, and I just said why are we doing this? Why don't we do it this way, you know. And he immediately bristled, and said I'm the supervisor, I graduated from Duke, you know. You do what I say. And you know, and I realized there that you just didn't challenge, you know, what he was saying. Um, others, you know, began to understand that I had a good grasp of the knowledge and whatever. When he left, I got put in charge of the research project, because I had more knowledge than anybody else. Chemstrand surely didn't put a B.S. chemist in charge of no research project, you know. For the status of the company, you always had a certain number of Ph.D.s, and only a few persons that had B.S. degrees were given research projects. Bill Blackburn is one that you know, Bill Blackburn was a very smart person and knew what he was doing. He got to run a project. They put me in charge of a high temperature fiber project, because nobody else knew anything about it, and we, when my supervisor left, we were scaling up from the research in the lab to see whether the application was practical, so we scaled it up, you know, for the plants. I got put in charge of that, okay. I did a little bargaining, okay. I told them that there were cases where people were put in charge of projects, and I wanted to have the opportunity. And they did. I got to run that project, I got to write it up, I was weak in my writing skills. They said that they would promote me if I could demonstrate that I could write technical research papers and so forth. I could do the work and whatever, but I was weak there, so. I went to Beuknit, and also the same thing. I worked for a man named Bob Cottingham, and I mentioned him briefly yesterday when he asked, he questioned a decision that I made on the school board, okay. And we had a very good working relationship, and that was the only time that he had questioned me. Bob Cottingham taught me a lot, I mean just absolutely everything that he did, he taught me. I learned how to make, blow glass and make apparatus, I mean, you know, I just learned a lot. And he trusted me. Now when I went out to the plant, okay, the plants were in Tennessee. And here they're sending this person out, man, to troubleshoot in the plant and find out why we were making nylon, the raw materials were good, you know we tested them in the lab and we got very good nylon in the lab, and they sent me out there to find out what was happening at the plant. Well, I found out that, I had a difficult time trying to tell them what they were doing wrong, okay. What they did was, they hired people with less than college educations to run those plants and make that nylon, and they just did not adhere to specific conditions and so forth, they just sort of made it. And so the nylon was coming out inferior. And when I tried to say you've got to maintain the

temperature, vacuum and whatever, these got to be adhered to or you're going to get a bad product. They almost had to get me out of there, because they wouldn't listen to me. I mean they walked off the job, man, you know. So even though I had skills, they would prefer to have a bad product than have a black man tell them what to do. And I went out several times to the plants to supervise and find out why we weren't making a good product. When Cottingham left, they put me with some other professionals, and I felt very good about what I could do. And I just had, I just seemed to rub people the wrong way. They, I knew what I knew, and they knew that I had worked for Bob Cottingham, and nobody liked him because he's a very bright man, so they sort of took that out on me. When I went to work for the State, I also had problems with Orange-Chatham Comprehensive Health when I worked there. That happened to be a black man, his name was Paul Austin, and he was paranoid and I had a lot of skills and so forth, and he was also paranoid of my abilities and so forth. And I had to put up with that for five years, and I just said I can't put up with it any more. So I went to work for the State. Howard Lee asked me to come over and interview for a directorship of the Appalachian Housing Program. I knew that I had the experience, you know and whatever, and I was suited for that particular job. I knew grant writing, I knew everything there was to be known. I went over for the interview, and it was a joke. You know, they just went through the motions, with no idea of hiring me, okay. And I went back to Howard, and I said man, why'd you waste my time sending me over here, these people are not going to hire me. You know, I could tell by the way the interview went. And they didn't ask me no questions to find out my abilities and whatever. So Howard hired me from secretary of the department and put me there, which was, they didn't know I was coming. He told me to report to work. I reported to work and they were shocked, okay. They made it tough for me.

RG: Were you the only black man there?

EC: Um, at that time yeah, I was. But the lady that was operating the program was going to leave. She was in Winston-Salem, and the program was in Winston-Salem. My job was to go and train with the lady that was leading the program that I was going to take her place, and move the office back to Raleigh, okay. Before I talk about the lady in Winston-Salem, I didn't have a desk, I didn't have an office, I was working out of shoe boxes, they didn't make any effort to find me any place to sit. So I sat in the director's office of the program for the housing, you know, and it was a little awkward, you know, because he was making telephone calls and I was getting up every five minutes because I didn't want to listen to his telephone calls. And so as I began to learn my way around, I went and found my own self an office. And moved into it. Let me talk a little bit about when I went to Winston-Salem, nobody informed the lady that I was coming to be trained. And she was peeved, which, you know, and here's somebody that's being sent to Winston-Salem and she didn't know anything about it, and she didn't know I was hired. I sat there for three days. She didn't talk to me, she let me sit there, okay. She didn't train me or whatever. And here I'm sitting here, man, and you know, I said well, you know, am I being set up to fail, or what? So I wrote a memo, I'm sitting there in that room where she is, we ain't talking, I wrote a

memo and got somebody to type it up, and told her that she had started this program, she had a responsibility to train me and let the program go down the tubes, okay. And I expected a lot more out of her because I had heard a lot about her skills and whatever. And in the next two days, I expected her to train me, okay. And I put that memo on her desk, and she came and she apologized. She said that she was angry, it wasn't at me, it was at the way it was handled. And she did the best she could, man, to train me in two days. You can't train nobody in two days, okay. And what she said was, I'm wrong, I will continue to help you even after I go off the payroll, you know. I was put at a real disadvantage. It took me a while to really go through and learn how that program worked. Here I was supposed to be dispensing federal grants and whatever, and I really didn't know what I was doing. So nobody else knew but this one person, okay. So I went and got me a plane ticket, I went to Washington, and I made the people at the Appalachian Regional Commission office in Washington train me, okay. Which then ran me again in with my boss, 'cause he said, well who gave you the right to go to Washington? I said I gave myself the right to go to Washington. I thought I was an independent person, and supposed to operate this program. This program just happens to be in your department, in your division, but the responsibility is with the Governor's office, as well as Washington. And I'm not going to fail. Y'all are not going to set me up to fail. I'm going to learn what I'm supposed to do. And so that's what happened. The people in Washington assigned people in the Governor's office to work with me personally so that I didn't mess up no grants, okay. After that they began to, I guess get used to me and whatever, and they sort of accepted me into the division, you know, but I had a tough time. My whole working in State government was very, very tough. I didn't get a lot of help. Howard took me out of the position of ARC just as I was getting comfortable of how you operate that program, and made me Assistant Director of Housing. You know, they had two housing programs, and at some point they were going to merge the programs. They wanted to merge the Division of Housing in with the Housing Finance Agency and make it one agency. Make it a stronger agency. Therefore I became the Assistant Director. The Housing Finance Agency had a board of directors, and they didn't want to combine the Division of Housing in there, so there I am running up against the board of directors that didn't want, you know, the housing. Um, as I mentioned yesterday about becoming the interim director, and I won't go back over that stuff, I will take up from at the point that they hired a new Director. And I mentioned yesterday, the Director came in and he wanted me to resign. The board felt that I may have some trouble. They made me Deputy Director of the Housing Finance Agency. (phone rings) You want to cut that off, let me get that. So the board of directors made sure that I had done such a good job as interim director, I ran that program for a year until they found somebody. And when the new person came in, I met with him, okay, to try to convince him that he ought to take the job. He was the Executive Director out at, gracious, I can't even remember the state that he was in, but he was very bright, had good credentials and whatever, and very personable. They set it up for me to talk to him and interview him. I guess I came over too strong or something. As we talked, I talked about what I had done, what we were doing, and so forth, and he got a strange look in his face. And he went back and told the people that he didn't think he wanted to come into this job, okay. I was threatening. He asked me if I

was going to leave and I told him no, I wasn't planning on leaving. I've just been made Deputy Director, no, I wasn't going anywhere. So the board talked to him, they convinced him that he ought to take the job. I had lunch with his wife and another person, and his wife had said that Bob would like to hire his own deputy. You think that you're going to stay, you know, my ears sort of went up. I didn't tell her that I was going to stay, but I wasn't going anywhere. I had worked hard to get that position. The board honored me for the work I had done to give me the position plus the raise, okay. I made more money then than I had ever made, you know. So no, I wasn't going anywhere. There was real friction from the moment he came, real friction. He was not going to let me tell him anything, the board had given me instructions to sit down with, his name was Bob, and go over where I was and have a smooth transition. And he didn't want that at all. He didn't even want to talk to me. I still wasn't going anywhere, okay. And at some point, you know, I went in and we talked. I said I don't plan on going nowhere, okay, all my life I've worked very hard, and they say hard work and so forth, that you can move up. We gotta find a way to work together. And he agreed that if you stay out of these areas, you know, and you concentrate on these areas, I think that we will work very well. What that meant was that I had nothing to do with the programming, okay. And I just ran the administration part of it, personnel and hiring approval, whatever. And that worked, you know, I was a people person, and I liked personnel, I liked administration. By that time I was very well known around government, I made a lot of friends, I could get anything done, okay. That was threatening to him. He'd give me these projects, you know, this is what I want you to do. No problem, because I knew everyone in government and I could go get it done. And it amazed him that I was getting these things done. One time he told me that well, the Governor said that he wanted a stronger Affirmative Action program. He was Republican, and he was trying to recruit blacks into the Republican Party. And so they called on me, you know, to make sure that we had a strong Affirmative Action program. In fact, the Housing Finance Agency had the best Affirmative Action program in the state, of all departments. And I had a direct link into the Governor's office.

RG: What did that mean, the Affirmative Action?

EC: Well, we had objectives that, based on the number of persons working, then we needed to recruit a certain number of women, a certain number of blacks, a certain number of Asians, a certain number of Hispanics, you know. And you had these goals. And not only did we reach these goals, we exceeded these goals. We needed to have good training programs, we needed to look at the number of blacks in supervisory jobs, administrative jobs and whatever, and our numbers were just superb. And we used my numbers as a model, you know, to talk to other departments and so forth. So I had a good relationship with the Governor's office. It made him look very good. My Executive Director came and said we're not going to have an Affirmative Action program any more. Well you know, Bob, I didn't argue with him, I went to the Governor's office, okay. And I told him that my Affirmative Action program is being disbanded, you know. So he called him in, okay. I didn't let him know I had anything to do with it. They called him in, they called him to the Governor's office, okay. He didn't even know where the

Governor's office was, I had to tell him where to go and how to get there. And you know, the lady told me, she said don't worry about it, we'll deal with him. And when he came back, you know, I'm there just working away like I didn't know. And they had already called me and told me what they had said to him, okay. So I guess I was talking about him being called to the Governor's office, and they laid it down to him. They said we don't really need, what you need to do is go back and work with Ed. He's the best person in government. So we would suggest, highly recommend that you go back and you don't even get in it, you just let Ed run that program. And he came back and he said to me, he said you're well thought of. I just left the Governor's office, and they think very highly of you. I said oh really? But you know, I'd already programmed that, you know, and so the, we were always running into problems. He didn't like me offering suggestions and it just made him very uncomfortable. I didn't get to make reports to the board of directors. They all knew who I was and whatever, it just pained him to make any kind of reference, you know, that I was doing a good job. We had a performance evaluation instrument, and I've had to admit, the one he brought from, he was from Utah, was very, very good, you know, I really liked that. What I did was take the best parts of his evaluation instrument and added to it, and made it stronger. One of the things was, is that we set objectives, and at the end of the six months you looked at a person and you'd see how well they did on their objectives. I knew that he gave me very difficult objectives to accomplish, you know. Bob, I worked my tail off. I was not going to let him give me something, man, that I did not accomplish. Not only did I accomplish everything, I exceeded, you know, what it was that he had given me. And he was fair. I mean, when he wrote it up he gave me credit for what I had done. But they were quantifiable. He couldn't help but give me credit. And everything that he gave me to do, I, you know, not only did I accomplish it, I had superior. I went way beyond. I worked my tail off, okay. I didn't have a secretary, he wouldn't let me have a secretary, man. And he put me on the hardships, okay. I learned to use a computer, because they had a computer back on the shelf. And I told the people, put it on my desk, okay. And I started typing all my own reports and all my memos and whatever. I had mentioned to you that when I worked for Chemstrand, writing was a difficult subject for me. Not only did I learn to write, because he was a very good writer, I mean, I give him credit, he was an excellent writer. And I learned these skills from him. You know, I just watched how he wrote. He, I think in school his subject matter was writing, English, you know, so he was good. But I worked to be just as good as he was, you know. He would critique my writing. I got better. I was determined that I was going to be able to be a good writer. Because he had written up that my writing needed to improve. And in the end, you know, my writing was very good, okay. But I learned from him. I learned how to be brief, to the point, and whatever. I took a lot of time. I proofread, I edited, you know. I may write a memo three or four times, you know, till I got it where it said exactly what needed to be said. So I learned a lot from him. But he pushed me, you know, he was also uncomfortable if I did anything where people complimented me. Somebody outside the agency complimented me on doing an excellent job, made him very uneasy, made him uncomfortable, okay. Therefore then he tried to make sure that I didn't go out, you know, into other departments and whatever. I never got a chance to travel to the meetings, you know, we had conventions and so

forth. I never got to go to any conventions. And everybody that I had met as interim said, where's Ed, you know? We never see him at any meetings. I resigned myself to the fact that well, hell I'm not going to get to go to the meetings. So I made little games and so forth, I stopped asking to go, because I stopped, I hated to be turned down all the time. And so before he started to plan to go to a conference or a convention, you know, I always said, well I'll stay back here and run the agency while you're gone, okay. I got to go to certain state things in the state, but I never got to travel outside. Very noticeable by board members, by staff. They knew that the working relationship was very strained at most. At the point that, when my father got sick I was working on a salary study. I was analyzing all the jobs, number one to see whether anybody, let's see how do I say this. There were some positions, mostly African Americans, that had not been given raises, so therefore as I looked at comparable work for what they were doing, they weren't being paid, you know. So my salary study not only, major looked at women, looked at minorities, people in general, to see whether or not they needed to be brought up to their experience and education and whatever. We had criteria which we used to determine whether or not these people should be brought up to a certain level. Pretty much I worked on that salary study by myself. I did hire me a consultant, you know, that had worked for the State and whatever. I pretty much told her what I wanted. I told her that I hired her because I could do it myself, but if it came from me, it would be suspect. If it came from a consultant, then they would buy into it. And she couldn't believe it, but that's the way it was. I worked on a number of proposals and so forth that the federal government demanded, you know, that we implement. One was a drug, drug enforcement proposal that the government said that anyone receiving federal monies must adhere to these, so pretty much I always wrote these things up and passed them in. He didn't even know that they were being passed in, okay, until they came back and people said hey, this is good, you know. Which then also made him uncomfortable. If I had gone to him and he was going to change it, but he didn't know what he was looking at, okay. He had never read the guidelines and so forth, so I just bypassed him and sent it in. I did a lot of things, man, like that, where we had reports and so forth that came back from people in government, and it said these things are very, very good. Still made him very uncomfortable, okay, for me to be complimented.

RG: What years are we talking about?

EC: Um, this is the '90s, just before I retired. This is five years before I retired. I knew at that time that I had to, I had to leave, okay. Just too difficult for me to work under these kind of conditions, where I had to pull myself back and never know if I did too much, whether it was going to be frowned upon or that sort of thing. But I also knew that I was not going to fail. I was going to do my very best, okay. I made up my mind I'm going to always do my very best. Whatever I turned in, you know, it was going to be good. And when I say turned in, the Governor's office and other departments required us to turn things in. The federal government required us to put things in place and so forth. Drug-free workplace policies and things like that. And they were very good. Still, that was my area, we had agreed that, you know, I would do these things. I wrote a policy manual, very good. I had

written policy manuals, man, with the Chapel Hill School Board. I mean, making policies was what we did. I wrote a policy manual for the North Carolina School Board Association. Wrote it for the Housing Finance Agency when I first went to work there before he came. So we had difficulties. He brought his policy manual from Utah. And it had a lot to be desired, okay. The State dictated, man, that you had certain policies in place. And every time General Assembly passed a statute, these things had to be written up and put in place. And he's saying to me, no, I don't think we need to put that in. I mean, that's State law, okay? I did it anyway. I mean, who am I going to listen to, General Assembly, or him? So I did it anyway. To take my consequences, you know. And when he found out they were in place, you know, we always had these frictions, telling me that I shouldn't do this or whatever. And I just gauged, man, what was law and what the federal government said you needed to do, and that's what I did. I was not going to come up short, you know. Somebody said well where's your work-free, I mean drug-free workplace policy? You know, I'm going to have it. Because it had to be done by a certain period of time, you know. One was a personnel policy for the agency, okay. Also I was working on a salary study that I had mentioned, which was very difficult. I knew what needed to be done, and when I found inequities, I took it upon myself to correct those inequities. I ran into difficulty because some of the department heads challenged whether or not I should go over there and make these corrections without going through them. But they created it. They created it by giving raises to their friends and to their white counterparts, man, and not giving them to other minorities. Blatant, okay. Hiring, you know, I had from the Governor that, to achieve certain Affirmative Action goals, you know. When they came in and they didn't even hire, I mean didn't even interview any minorities, I sent them back. And if I looked and found a minority that had superior credentials, I hired him over them, okay. 'Cause I had the backing from the Governor's office to do that, and I had to make reports to them. Well, you know, they didn't particularly like that. So you know, I hired a number, you know, I questioned, I sent them back, you know. I told them I want you to interview this person, and you give me a report why you hired this person with less education, less experience, over this other person that was a minority. I mean it just showed up, blatant. They were hiring their friends, you know. So, which meant that I had, I had some power, okay. And they knew that I had power, and they knew that I was very, was in with the Governor's office. They didn't want no trouble, so therefore I did have some power. And I made them adhere to it. And that's the way that we got very qualified people into that agency. And once they got in there they were very glad that they were there. And I would send notes to them, next time we hire you really need to look at this area, you know. And if they didn't, you know, I just sent it back and held it up. Until they put the best qualified person in. Salary study, I went and took care of people man, who had been discriminated against, and salary raises and so forth. I brought them up to the level that the job criteria says that they should be at. And they were below that. Well they disliked that. What gives Ed the right, man, to...and I said if you read the salary study, it says that anybody that had previously been denied raises should be brought to this level. And I did that. So my boss, they went to my boss and they, he called me in, you know, and I said now wait, we had an agreement. You read your salary study, we had an agreement that wherever I found any

inequities, then I had the right to bring them to that level, and that's what I did. He said yeah, I guess I do remember something like that, you know. My father got sick. I had written the family and he was sick, I can't even think of the name, the policy that the government put in. In other words, the federal government says we give you 11 weeks of family medical leave if you have sickness in your family. I wrote the policy, okay. And I wrote the policy by the guidelines, so I knew the policy, and I put it in. My father got sick, I took family medical leave. He wasn't there. I couldn't ask him if I could have family medical leave. I gave myself family medical leave.

RG: The Executive Director wasn't there?

EC: No, he wasn't there. And I left him a memo saying that I'm out on family medical leave, my father is terminal. When he came back I called him, told him I had to leave. I hated to do it this way, but judging from what I felt that I needed to do, you know, I did. I don't think he, I don't think it bothered him that much, because I did try to say that I tried to get in touch with him. Well, I was working on the personnel policy manual and it was just about ready to be adopted. I was working on the salary study, I had a consultant, and it was ready to be adopted. By the consultant and myself, it was a very good document. We worked very hard on that. When I came back after 11 weeks, nothing had been done, okay. The moment I walked, you know, after my father's death, man, I walked in there and they converged on me. Where's the salary study? Where's this, where's that? Well, I'm grieving, okay, you know. I mean, I just couldn't gear up the way that they wanted me to. Everything was just left for me until I came back. I tried to work, Bob, I worked on small stuff, and I could not work on the salary schedule, I mean studies or whatever, I just didn't, I just couldn't do it, so to get back in it I worked on small stuff. Got that out of the way, and that sort of thing. And I just said to myself, I don't need this, okay. I don't need this. Let me back up and say, when he came I made sure I didn't spend no money. I saved money, I had me a financial advisor here. We met periodically and I said to him, if I left today, you know, how long could I work before I could find another job? Until just before I left, he said well Ed, you could go for two years or, you don't need the job. I knew that at 60, I could take early retirement. So I went in, you know, and I just felt I couldn't take this anymore. I had an agreement with my father that I would take early retirement if I could, to take care of my mother who had health problems. You know, and her health was deteriorating. So I told them, I said look, that was November, the first of November I went in and said Bob, I'm retiring, I'm leaving, okay. Just out of the blue. Surprised him. His comment was to me, can you retire? You have enough money to retire? I laughed like that and I said, hey, if you notice, I ain't spent no money since you've been here, okay. I drive, I've been driving an 11-year-old car, I work very hard, I don't get a chance to spend no money. You have caused me to save money, you know, just by the fact we didn't get along very well. Yes, I can retire. And he said well, I thought that a fellow by the name of Jim Quinn would be able to retire before you would have. I said well, you look at it Bob, Jim Quinn just bought a new house, he got a mortgage, okay. Jim Quinn went and bought a beach house, he got a mortgage on that. Jim ain't going to be able to retire in a long time, okay. All you need to do is

just sort of think. I ain't spent no money, Bob, okay. Drive an 11-year-old car. You drive an old car, if I had bought a new car I would have trouble with you. Yeah, I'm retiring, you know, I said but it's going to be the first of the year, I'm not going to walk out on you. I'll finish these projects that I've got. Salary study, personnel manual, whatever. And you know, I'll try to make sure that we get things up to where I can leave. Which I did. I was very well thought of by the majority of employees. They gave me a retirement party, and they just up and planned it. I had my mother there, I had Esther there, you know. And these are the people that wanted to, in their own special way, to say goodbye to me. And he never showed up. He didn't show up. And that sent a message to me. I mean, he could have graciously found some way, he just said I have something else to do, which was all right. Because I had a lot of the fun, man, with the people that, and I saw who came, and who was my friends, and that sort of thing. The agency said that they wanted to give me a retirement something. Um, during the day, okay, where they had hors d'oeuvres and drinks and that sort of thing. I told them I wasn't coming. I'm not coming to this thing, okay. And so they begged me, you know, the people that were putting it on. Bob wants us to do this, and I said I'm not coming. They had contacted my friend in South Carolina, John ?. He and his daughter was coming up. And that's the only reason I went to that thing. But you know, I just felt in my heart that you know, why should I go to this thing? This thing is phony. All these people in here grinning and carrying on, saying all these nice things about me, it really didn't make that much difference. But John came in, you know.

RG: Your tennis buddy from Clemson?

EC: Yeah. And his daughter, his daughter, John really thinks he's my brother. His mother thinks he's my brother. His daughter calls me her uncle. And she comes and she, Joe! You know, and hugs me and whatever, and you know, people were astounded. You know, who is this white fella and his daughter coming in, driving all the way from South Carolina just to be here at my retirement thing? And they had to tell me that John was coming, or I wasn't going to this thing. So I went through that, but you know I left. That was the best decision I ever made. I can go back over and talk to him, but there's still that something there that will always sort of be there. So you know, going back, Bob, you know, I never, it's always been a problem for me of knowing whether, how much to do my best, and that sort of thing. But I've always been determined, I'm not going to fail. You're not going to set me up to fail.

RG: It sounds like you had a long period of time where you had conflict with the Executive Director. What do you think was the cause of the conflict?

EC: I think it was the fact that I had been in the position and everybody had said to him, oh Ed just did a marvelous job, you know, in that position. I thought that was a threat. I do feel that was his problem, because it was not just me. The Executive Director that I took over from, he changed everything that he had put in place. So he wanted to be the person that, well it was almost like the agency only started until he got there. There were many people who made contributions to that

program to get it to where it was. So the other Executive Director just happened to be gone, okay. Everything that he had done, he changed. He changed some very good things. The other person was very smart, you know.

RG: So you think this was a personality conflict, more than an ethnic or racial, black-white issue?

EC: I think the black-white thing had a lot to do with it, okay. I felt that he didn't feel that a black ought to be, well, receiving praises and so forth from people in positions of power.

RG: To feel that he was as competent as you were?

EC: That's right. But you know, I felt, Bob, he wasn't going to like me anyway, I may as well be as competent as I can be. And that's what I did. He made assignments to me that he thought I couldn't do. And I did them with a breeze. I knew a lot of people. Workshops and so forth that I brought in, the one that probably helped me most of all was, we were required to do a workshop on diversity, from the Governor's office. Everybody in government's supposed to have this diversity workshop. So I, I knew who was out there and who was good and that sort of thing. So I brought a guy in, he was excellent, he was good. He was black, but he was very, very good. It caused the Executive Director to look at things that he had been doing, you know, that was obvious, that could be construed as racial. And it helped him, okay. And when he left that workshop, he said this has been very good for me. I expect everybody else to come in here and get as much from that. So he set the direction for everybody else. Because if he had not, I don't think that the others would have, you know, given it their full, undivided attention.

RG: So you're saying that in a way, you helped change his outlook toward black people?

EC: Uh-huh. He was from Detroit. He had stereotypic ideas of what blacks and other minorities were. He had stereotype ideas of what Southerners were like, okay. Slow, stupid, that sort of thing. He felt anybody that came from the North was very bright, anybody from the South, suspect, okay. I think after being here, I don't think he wants to go back North, okay. He's made a pretty good life here. But you know, he and his wife invited us out, I guess at Christmastime, it kind of felt like, I really didn't feel very comfortable being there. It might be me, but I just sort of felt that, you know, being in his home I didn't feel that. Yeah, I, you know I had a, I have a sense, built up over the years, I can go into a situation and feel, by reading reactions or whatever, whether or not people are just sort of being gracious. I can tell who's a friend and who's not. So I just sort of felt like, you know, they just sort of had us there, whatever. He played tennis (laughs). Bob, you knew I wasn't going to let him beat me playing tennis. He tried his best, he just did not have the skills that I had playing tennis. I'd been playing tennis for a while, you know, so he learned, and we started playing doubles. I mean, I carried my Tennis Club ? around, you know. I mean, I taunted him, man. Maybe that was wrong. Maybe my life would have been better. But then, when we started to play

doubles, you know, he always made sure that I was his partner. But you know, I've been playing tennis for a while. As I said, I play social tennis, but I can psych myself up to play well. So he always gave me credit for being a good tennis player, you know. I think it was a mistake inviting him to the Chapel Hill Tennis Club, I should have taken him to the public courts. I think the, just coming to the Tennis Club and seeing the respect and whatever, of people at the Tennis Club and what they thought, I think kind of made him say, well who is that guy.

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